

November 14, 2003

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-49-2003

TO: All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Postponement of PCSOPEP and OSRO Requirements for the Panama Canal

The PCSOPEP regulations were promulgated as a result of a deep concern for public health, the environment, and transiting vessels in the event of an oil spill in Panama Canal waters. The issue of timely response and resource capability is of paramount importance to the ACP, as well as our customers, who have requested additional information and provided substantial feedback in an attempt to comply with the PCSOPEP requirements and established deadlines.

In accordance with previous exchanges of information, and in an effort to comply with suggestions made by our customers, the ACP will delay implementation of the PCSOPEP requirements until an evaluation of the recommendations and necessary modifications can be accomplished.

Our analysis will focus on the roles of the different parties in the response scheme and implementation issues required in order to comply with the objectives of the PCSOPEP regulations. We are seriously considering a suggestion made by several customers that the ACP build up full oil response capability, thus eliminating OSRO requirements and reducing to a minimum QI participation. Such installed response capability would consequently involve a per transit fee.

The ACP has given this matter a high priority, and will keep our customers informed of new developments and deadlines as they occur. Ample time for implementation will be given once the final PCSOPEP concept is published.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
Maritime Operations Director

