



April 6, 2006

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-08-2006

TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Monthly Canal Operations Summary – MARCH 2006

1. Panama Canal Statistical Summary:

a. Transit Pilot Force	275
b. Pilots in Training	6
c. Tugs	24
d. Locomotives	100

2. Traffic Statistics:

	<u>Average Daily</u>	<u>High Daily</u>	<u>Low Daily</u>
Arrivals	39.74	55	29
Oceangoing Transits	39.39	46	32
Canal Waters Time (hours)	38.97	51.55	29.83
In-Transit Time (hours)	12.15	15.35	9.48

Distribution of Oceangoing Transits:	<u>Total</u>	<u>Average Daily</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Vessels of less than 80' Beam	445	14.35	36.45
Vessels 80' Beam and Over	<u>776</u>	<u>25.03</u>	63.55
Total of Oceangoing Transits:	1221	39.39	
Vessels 100' Beam and Over	524	16.90	42.92
Vessels 900' Length and Over	139	4.48	11.38

Note: For the purpose of this report, the term "oceangoing transits" is equivalent to the number of locomotive transits.

Booking Slots:	<u>Available</u>	<u>Used</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Large Vessels (beam 91' and over)	465	445	96.8
Regular vessels (beam < 91')	279	270	95.8

3. See next page for scheduled locks maintenance work and items of interest to the shipping community.

4. This advisory will be canceled for record purposes on April 30, 2006.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
Maritime Operations Director

Scheduled Locks Maintenance Work:

SCHEDULED LOCKS MAINTENANCE WORK – FISCAL YEAR 2006					
Dates	Miraflores	Pedro Miguel	Gatun	Transit Capacity	Status
May 10-12/06			Lane Outage (3d)	26-28 (3d)	Tentative
Jun. 6-15/06	Lane w-restrictions (10d)			36 (10d)	Tentative
July 11-20/06			Lane w-restrictions (10d)	36 (10d)	Tentative
July 17-22/06	Culvert Outage (6d)			33 (6 d)	Tentative
Aug. 12-14/06			Lane w-restrictions (3d)	36 (3d)	Tentative
Aug. 15-19/06			Lane Outage (5d)	26-28 (5d)	Tentative
Aug. 20-24/06			Lane w-restrictions (5d)	36 (5d)	Tentative
Sept. 12-19/06			Lane Outage (8d)	26-28 (8d)	Tentative

Transit Capacity: The normal capacity of the Panama Canal is 38 transits per day. This capacity is reduced during locks outages, as indicated in the above table. Consequently, vessels may experience delays in transiting. Normally, during these periods, the Panama Canal Transit Reservation System slots are fully utilized. Whenever a set of locks requires a major outage of one of its two lanes for dry chamber inspection, miter gate repairs, tow track work or other major maintenance/improvement projects, advantage may be taken of this requirement to perform simultaneous single lane outages for additional maintenance at other locks. Two-day lane outages have no significant impact on Canal vessel backlog, therefore are not normally included in this chart.

PANAMA CANAL BREAKS TWO RECORDS IN TWO DAYS: RECORD TONNAGE AND TRANSITS OF SUPERS (Vessels over 91 feet in beam), WHILE NEARLY MATCHING THE RECORD IN TRANSITS OF PANAMAX VESSELS.

Demonstrating its ability to handle the ever-increasing demand for its waterway, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) announced today that two records were set last week: one in the total of Panama Canal/Universal Measurement System (PC/UMS) tonnage in a day, and another in the transits of supers, which are vessels over 91 feet in beam. Moreover, the ACP nearly matched a third record when 23 Panamax vessels, the largest vessels that can pass through the Canal, transited the waterway, just shy of the current record of 24.

“Setting these records is a team effort and proof of the Canal’s creativity, focus and commitment to reliability. The hard work by Canal employees has translated into better service for our customers and enhanced capacity,” said ACP Maritime Operations Director Jorge L. Quijano. “We are proud of these accomplishments – everyday we are setting the bar higher for excellence.”

On March 13th, a record 1,070,023 PC/UMS tons transited the waterway, breaking the 1,006,807 record set on March 16, 2004. In addition, another record was set on March 12th, when 27 supers transited the Canal in one day, breaking the record of 26 set on May 4, 2005. The daily average is 19 supers per day. The majority of the 27 supers that transited were dry bulk carriers and container ships that, due to their wide beams and overall length, have greater transit restrictions and limitations and require more resources and time to transit.

“We have assigned additional crews to the locks to continue to achieve daily maximum capacity, and have deployed all available tugs, line handling crews and Pilots to guarantee the waterway’s reliability. The workforce has responded in unison and with resolve to meet the challenge,” said Mr. Quijano.

The Canal continues to push forward with initiatives under its Permanent Modernization Program, with projects designed to increase capacity. Current projects under development are: deepening of Gatun Lake and the Atlantic and Pacific entrances, construction of a second Tie-up station in Gaillard Cut, and further widening and straightening of Gaillard Cut. With these projects, the ACP is maximizing the Canal’s resources with the goal of attaining total tonnage transits of 330 million PC/UMS tons per year over the next two years.