Log M-384D

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Washington, D.C. 20594

Safety Recommendation

Date: June 25, 1993

In Reply Refer To: M-93-34

State Pilot Commissions
(address list attached)

On August 7, 1992, the United Kingdom passenger vessel RMS (Royal Mail Ship) QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 (QE2) was outbound in Vineyard Sound, Massachusetts, when the vessel grounded about 2 1/2 miles south of Cuttyhunk Island. No injuries or deaths resulted from this accident. However, damage was significant; temporary and permanent repairs cost about $13.2 million. In addition, the total revenue lost for the period before the vessel returned to service on October 2, 1992, was estimated at $50 million.[1]

The Safety Board believes that in this accident, a critical need existed for improved communication between the pilot, the master, and the other crewmembers on the bridge. The master had apparently made incorrect assumptions about the pilot's intentions, and the pilot saw no need to inform the master about what he actually planned to do. Although the pilot expressed

[1]For more detailed information, read Marine Accident Report--*Grounding of the United Kingdom Passenger Vessel RMS QUEEN ELIZABETH 2 Near Cuttyhunk Island, Vineyard Sound, Massachusetts, August 7, 1992* (NTSB/MAR-93/01).

full confidence in the ability of the officers on the bridge to perform navigational tasks and was aware that the second officer was monitoring the ship's progress and reporting that information to the master, the pilot still opted to pilot by his own methods rather than following the courses plotted by the navigator. The master stated that he assumed that the pilot was going to follow the reverse of the inbound course. Thus, the navigation of the vessel as understood by the pilot was not communicated to the master or the bridge watch.

Evidence from the investigation also indicates that the master did not fully understand how the pilot had planned to get to his debarkation point or that the pilot planned a course change at the "NA" buoy. The Safety Board believes that had adequate communication been established between the master and pilot, the master would have told the pilot of his preference to remain on a course that passed Brown's Ledge to the south. Moreover, the pilot probably would have explained his intention to stay north of the shoals near Brown's Ledge, and he and the ship's officers would have discussed the implications for safety in returning or not returning to the base course. Had the pilot and the ship's officers discussed the ship's course either immediately following the turn at the "NA" buoy or during a predeparture pilot/master conference, the factors increasing the risk of striking bottom would have become apparent.

One element that hindered effective communication in this accident was the substance and nature of the master/pilot conference currently required by Federal regulation (33 CFR 164.11(k)). Presently, the briefing only requires details of the vessel's status and its maneuvering characteristics at the beginning of a voyage. No requirements exist for a detailed navigation plan for maneuvering the vessel in pilotage waters or for followup conversations during the voyage. Furthermore, the nature of the conference requires only the inclusion of the master and the pilot. Thus, even if the master and pilot chose to discuss their navigation plans, other members of the bridge team may be excluded from those discussions.

Therefore, the National Transportation Safety Board recommends that State pilot commissions:

> Require that State pilots, upon boarding a vessel, conduct a conference with the master and other relevant deck officers that includes a discussion of the pilot's proposed route, including courses, speeds, squat, and unique maneuvers that may be encountered. (Class II, Priority Action) (M-93-34)

Also, the Safety Board issued Safety Recommendations M-93-17 through -26 to the U.S. Coast Guard, M-93-27 to the Department of Transportation, M-93-28 and -29 to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and M-93-30 through -33 to the Cunard Lines, Ltd. The Safety Board is also reiterating Safety Recommendations M-91-6 and -28 to the U.S. Coast Guard.

The National Transportation Safety Board is an independent Federal agency with the statutory responsibility "to promote transportation safety by conducting independent accident

investigations and by formulating safety improvement recommendations" (Public Law 93-633). The Safety Board is vitally interested in any action taken as a result of its safety recommendations. Therefore, it would appreciate a response from you regarding action taken or contemplated with respect to the recommendations in this letter. Please refer to Safety Recommendation R-93-34 in your reply. If you need additional information, you may call (202) 382-6850.

Chairman VOGT, Vice Chairman COUGHLIN, and Members LAUBER, HART, and HAMMERSCHMIDT concurred in this recommendation.

By: Carl W. Vogt
Chairman

State Pilot Commissions

Mr. E. Robert Leatherberry
Chairman
Alabama State Pilotage Commission
Post Office Box 2188
Mobile, Alabama 36601

Captain Bob Baratko
Marine Pilot Coordinator
Department of Occupation Licensing
State of Alaska
Post Office Box 110806
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0806

Mr. Chris Adams
President
State Board of Pilot Commissioners
World Trade Center
Suite 339
San Francisco, California 94111

Mr. Edward M. Archibald
Deputy Commissioner
Connecticut Department of Transportation
24 Wolcott Hill Road
Post Office Drawer A
Wethersfield, Connecticut 06109-0801

Captain Dick Buckaloo
Pilot Commissioner
14 Horknill Avenue
Lewes, Delaware 19958

Mr. Gary Maddox
Chairman
Board of Florida Pilot Commissioners
Department of Professional Regulation
1940 North Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0773

Mr. Raf Biezenbos
Chairman
Savannah Pilot Commission
c/o Lanport, Inc.
124 Prosperity Drive
Savannah, Georgia 31407

Captain Fred Hoppe
Executive Director
Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs
Post Office Box 541
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Captain Donald J. Short
President
Board of River Port Pilots Commissioners
Post Office Box 848
Belle Chasse, Louisiana 70037-0848

Captain Martin Gould, Sr.
President
New Orleans - Baton Rouge Pilot Commission
3900 River Road
Jefferson, Louisiana 70121

Captain Paul Vogt
Commissioner
Board of Commissioners of the Bar Pilots for the Port of New Orleans
2955 Ridge Lake Drive
Suite 102
Metairie, Louisiana 70002

Mr. Edwin McDuffy
Chairman
Board of Harbor Commissioners
2 Portland Fish Pier
Suite 213
Marine Trade Center
Portland, Maine 04101

Mr. Frank O. Heinz
Chairman
State of Maryland
Public Service Commission
231 East Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21202-3486

Captain Authur M. Knight
Commission of Pilots
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
National Historic Park, Building 32
Charleston Navy Yard
Boston, Massachusetts 02129

Mr. Johnny S. Tillman
Board of Commissioners
Post Office Box 70
Pascagoula, Mississippi 39568

Mr. Ernest Conner
Executive Director
Portsmouth Port Authority
Noble Island
Portsmouth, New Hampshire 03802

Mr. Edward B. Pulver
Board of Commissioners of Pilots
Post Office Box 1022
Rahway, New Jersey 07065

Mr. S. Frasier Sammis
Board of Commissioners of Pilots
17 Battery Place
New York, New York 10004

Dr. W. P. Rabon
Chairman
Cape Fear River Navigation and Pilotage Commission
110 North Caswell Avenue
Southport, North Carolina 28461

Mr. Frank D. Butchart
Chairman
Board of Maritime Pilots
State Office Building
Suite 507
800 NE Oregon Street, #15
Portland, Oregon 97232

Mr. George Shevlin
Chairman
Navigation Commission for the Delaware River and Its Navigable Tributaries
Post Office Box 2649
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105

Mr. Vernon Dunlap
State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
State Pilotage Commission
22 Hayes Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02908

Captain Whitemarsh Smith III
Commissioner of Pilotage
Port of Charleston
Post Office Box 20096
Charleston, South Carolina 29413

Mr. Ned Holmes
Chairman
Port Commissioners
Post Office Box 2562
Houston, Texas 77252-2562

Mr. Robert T. Hassler, Jr.
President
Board for Branch Pilots
Post Office Box 359
Norfolk, Virginia 23501

Rear Admiral Chester A. Richmond, Jr.
USCG, Retired
Chairman
State of Washington Board of Port Pilotage Commissioners
Colman Dock, Pier 52
801 Alaskan Way
Seatttle, Washington 98104-1487