

NOTICE TO MARINERS

Lowestoft – Pilot Boarding Arrangements – Pilot Ladder Requirements and Checks

UTC ☐ BST ☒

This notice is issued following enhanced focus on pilot boarding arrangements, and to highlight the risk posed by pilot ladders that do not comply with legislation and guidance relating to pilot transfer.

Regulatory Requirements

Boarding Arrangements and pilot ladders/rigging of pilot ladders must comply with the requirements detailed in the following documents:-

- SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23
- IMO Resolution A.1045(27)
- Code of Safe Practice for The Embarkation and Disembarkation of Pilots

If no pilot ladder is required due to the boarding area having similar freeboard as the pilot vessel (which is often the case for vessels embarking/disembarking pilots at Lowestoft), then compliance with the regulations and guidelines is still required in all other respects, with particular consideration to the following, to ascertain suitability of the boarding arrangements (from section 7 of the Code of Practice):-

- a) The availability of suitable handholds or stanchions at deck level.
- b) The time taken to affect the transfer, particularly in adverse weather.
- c) The deck condition including if the deck is awash.
- d) Vessel fendering.
- e) Interaction between the pilot boat and ship.
- f) The physical capability of the Pilot.

Pre-Arrival Checks

- Agents are required to confirm pilot ladder compliance at the vessel booking stage. Any vessel deficiencies relating to pilot boarding arrangements must be notified to the port.
- Any previously notified deficiencies must be checked as rectified by Lowestoft LPS/Marine Department, before a booking for pilot boarding can be confirmed.

- In advance of pilot boarding, LPS will contact the vessel via VHF radio for verbal confirmation that the boarding arrangements are SOLAS Compliant.
- Pilot crew will confirm that agreed and compliant boarding arrangements are in place when on route out to the vessel. This will be supplemented by a visual inspection of the pilot transfer arrangements prior to pilot embarkation/disembarkation.

Should any of the above checks not be met, or if boarding arrangements are deemed to be non-compliant, then the pilot transfer will be postponed or aborted until such time that the arrangements are confirmed as meeting the required standard.

This notice replaces previous notices No.17/2013, and No.32/2017, which are hereby cancelled.

Please contact Lowestoft Port Control, VHF Ch14, Tel. 01502 572286 (Option 3) if further information is required.

Divisional Harbour Master East Anglia

21 May 2025

Notice to Mariners Currently in Force:

2006 No.5 **2007** No.13 **2009** No.19 **2011** No.7, No.10 **2012** No.3, **2013** No.19, **2015** No.24 **2016** No.12 **2017** No.22, No.24, **2019** No.18 **2020** No.26, No.29, No.47, No.50, **2021** No.51, **2022** No.25 **2024** No. 42, No. 52, No. 53a, No. 54 **2025** No.01, No.04, No.10, No.11, No.13a, No.15, No.19

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