



Boarding & Landing

Code of Safe Practice

More than Ports



Contents

Foreword	4
1. The Pilot Board	6
2. Leaving the Berth	10
3. Pilot Boarding Areas	12
4. Approaching the Ship	14
5. The Ship	18
6. Pilot Embarkation Operation	20
7. Low Freeboard Ships	24
8. Pilot Disembarkation Operation	26
9. Leaving the Ship's Side	28
10. Heavy Weather Operations	28
11. Restricted Visibility	30
12. Man Overboard Procedures	32
13. Training for Pilot Board Operations and Retrieval of Casualties	34
14. Transfer Operations Involving Non-Regular Ships	36
Annex 1	38
Annex 2	40

Foreword

Peel Ports is committed to ensuring all personnel go home safely at the end of the day. We are committed to ensure we work safely and that personnel carry out activities without endangering themselves or others. To do this, it is recognised that personnel require the correct training, so they can identify the Hazards, evaluate the risks and us the appropriate precautions to carry out the operation.

The act of boarding & disembarking vessels at sea by transfer from one vessel to another is inherently dangerous and starts from the moment personnel step onto the transfer boat until they are safely aboard or returned ashore.

All Personnel need to be vigilant throughout this operation and have completed the mandatory training and familiarisation requirements as laid out in Annex 3 of this document before they embark on the transfer vessel or an outbound ship. (special circumstances will be individually risk assessed and exception to this may come from the Group Harbour Master as the statutory Harbour Master).

This Policy applies to all personnel involved in any Peel Ports boarding operations, irrespective of impetative.

*The Peel Ports, Boarding and Landing Code of Safe Practice, is an adaptation of **THE EMBARKATION & DISEMBARKATION OF PILOTS CODE OF SAFE PRACTICE**; a document prepared jointly by the Marine/Pilotage Working Group of the British Ports Association (BPA) and the UK Major Ports Group (UKMPG) and the Technical & Training Committee of the United Kingdom Maritime Pilots Association (UKMPA). Where appropriate, additions (in red Italics) have been added to this document to meet the specific conditions encountered at our ports.*

The **UKMPA** code is designed to assist Competent Harbour Authority (CHA's) and pilot organisations, in providing the basis for establishing safe operating procedures for pilot boarding and landing operations which should be derived by appropriate and thorough risk assessment.

This 2017 revised edition of the Code of Safe Practice for the Embarkation and Disembarkation of Pilots is considered to be essential reading for all those involved in the Pilotage Service.

The transfer of a Pilot between pilot boat and ship presents significant risks that need to be carefully managed. The purpose of this **Document** is to give guidance about the best practices and to improve the control of these risks within Peel Ports.

This document is produced by Peel Ports as the basis for establishing safe operating procedures for boarding and landing operations across the group which should be underpinned by appropriate and thorough risk assessment.

This Code will assist Peel Ports in establishing safe operating procedures which are specific to each area of operation and which are to be derived by appropriate risk assessment.

Operational procedures are to be developed locally at each port under the policies within this document, the local procedures will be developed following risk assessment

The Code recognises IMO, SOLAS and United Kingdom legislation and has been recommended to be linked in the Port Marine Safety Code, Guide to Good Practice. A list of relevant documents is included at the back of the Code, along with further information on Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) which gives guidance on correct use and self-checks to be carried out on lifejackets and pilot coats.

The Code acts as a guide to safe practice to all those involved in the transfer operations. It not only covers the act of transfer from pilot boat to ship and vice versa, but also addresses issues such as the pilot boat itself, boarding and landing areas, training and use of PPE.

This Document supersedes the 2017 revised edition of the Code of Safe Practice for the Embarkation and Disembarkation of Pilots **and** is considered to be essential reading for all those involved in the delivery of the Pilotage Service.

Disclaimer

Modifications and additions to cater for Peel Ports particular circumstances have been derived from consultation across the Peel Port pilot service stakeholders.

This guidance has been produced jointly by the British Ports Association, the United Kingdom Marine Pilots Association, the UK Harbour Master Association, and the UK Major Ports Association ("the Four Associations") to assist CHAs and pilot organisations in establishing safe operating procedures for pilot boarding and landing operations and while reasonable care has been taken by the Four Associations in its production the Four Associations do not accept any responsibility or liability (individually or jointly) for any action taken or not taken in reliance on the guidance or for the use of the guidance by any person.

The Four Associations shall not be liable to any person for any loss or damage howsoever arising from the use of this guidance. This disclaimer is not intended to limit or exclude liability for death or personal injury caused by negligence on the part of the Four Associations or any matter that it would be unlawful for the Four Associations to exclude or limit liability

1. The Pilot Boat

1.1 As the Competent Harbour Authority (CHA) we must ensure that the pilot boat/boats in our service and seek assurance from those operated by third parties on our behalf meet the relevant requirements of:

1. Merchant Shipping (Small Workboats and Pilot Boats Regulations 1998 (SI 1998 No. 1609), as amended
2. The Small Commercial Vessel Code – Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA)
3. Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure, Workboats and Pilot Boats
4. Alternative Construction Standards (SCV Code) Marine Guidance Note (MGN) 280(M)
5. Manning of Pilot Boats – MGN 50(M)
6. The Port Marine Safety Code
7. A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations

A Small Workboat engaged as a pilot boat from time to time, should comply with the Workboat Code as it applies to its duties as a Small Workboat and, in addition, comply with the requirements for a dedicated pilot boat for which the vessel's workboat certificate should be appropriately endorsed.

1.2 All Pilots and pilot boat crew should receive initial training and familiarisation with regard to the position, stowage and operation of all safety equipment aboard each pilot boat they will routinely use.

This initial training and familiarisation should take the form of a Safety Brief. It should cover all safety aspects. The coxswain must also ensure that all other passengers receive a safety brief highlighting the position, stowage and operation of all safety equipment.

1.3 Prior to leaving the berth, and at least once per watch, the pilot boat coxswain should ensure that their boats are in all respects ready for sea.

All openings e.g. hatches, access to below-deck spaces and the engine rooms should be closed when underway at sea.

It is recommended that each CHA develops a set of Pre-Sea Checks to be done by crew before sailing, or at least once per day depending on the frequency of operations.

A planned regime of maintenance and inspections should be in place to ensure all launches are kept in good working order. It should cover maintenance of the hull, propulsion machinery and controls, auxiliary systems and controls, electronics and power generation, navigational and communications equipment, domestic equipment, lifesaving and firefighting equipment.

The planned maintenance system should also include a robust defect reporting and rectification process, a routine survey procedure to ensure compliance with the relevant regulation, and a critical equipment policy to identify equipment, the failure of which could seriously endanger personnel or the environment.

Hatches and access should be clearly marked accordingly and identifying when they should be left closed or open, apart from when access is required.

1.4 Prior to leaving a berth, the coxswain and crew should familiarise themselves with the position and stowage of the safety equipment fitted to that particular pilot boat. They should use the Vessel Safety Plan routinely to familiarise and check the position, stowage and condition of lifesaving and firefighting equipment.

The Safety Brief should make use of a unique Vessel Safety Plan which is to be clearly displayed on each vessel. The Vessel Safety Plan should include information about the provision and location of all lifesaving and firefighting equipment and should summarise the crew's actions in the event of an emergency and what is expected of passengers.

1.5 On joining in harbour or at sea, the Pilots should also endeavour to confirm the position and stowage of the safety equipment fitted to that pilot boat.

This should be done by means of the vessel Safety Plan that is clearly available on the launch.

- 1.6 Where possible, arrangements should be made for the mooring ropes of pilot boats to remain at the berth when the boat is at sea. Any additional ropes, not left ashore, should be properly stowed in a safe location *so that they cannot foul the propellers if they go overboard or present a tripping hazard.*
- 1.7 The decks of the pilot boat should be clear of all unnecessary obstructions allowing clear passage and movement for the Pilot and crew. Where deck lighting is fitted, it should be tested in accordance with the CHA's *vessels' Pre-sea Checks* procedures.
- 1.8 An up-to-date and accurate log should be maintained on board each pilot boat.

Entries should include details of all periodical safety and equipment checks, drills and defects.

- 1.9 Pilots should not hinder the coxswain in the navigation of the pilot boat, for example by impeding his view of the radar, AIS, and/or the use of the pilot boat's VHF. This is particularly important in conditions of reduced visibility.

The deckhand has the primary role as lookout and in order to carry out this function should occupy the vacant front seat. Pilots and passengers should not act in such a way that impedes the crews concentration, including distracting conversation or actions.

The deckhand should be trained and competent at the wheel of the launch in the event of the coxswain becoming ill and unable to take the helm. This training can be in house and launch specific.

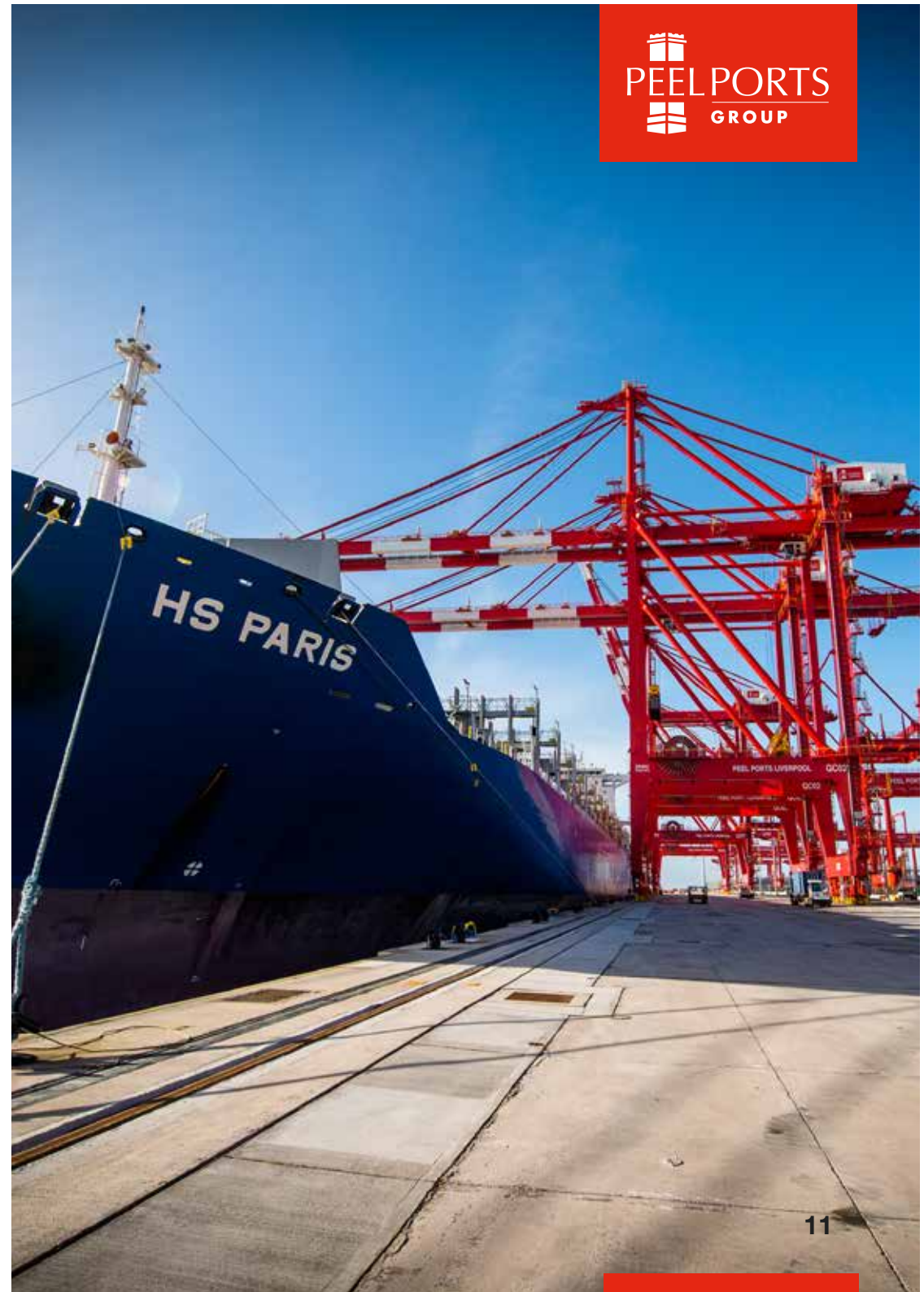
- 1.10 When circumstances require, coxswains should not hesitate to ask the Pilot for advice or for assistance in order to reduce their operational workload.



2. Leaving the Berth

- 2.1 The pilot boat should not leave a berth unless it is, in all respects, ready for sea, the crew having completed Pre-Sea Checks, and Critical Systems and Equipment are free from defect.
- 2.2 The pilot boat should be manned in compliance with MGN 50 (M).
- 2.3 The pilot boat should not operate outside the terms of its MCA Pilot Boat Certificate, (PB1), which should be clearly displayed on board.
- 2.4 CHA's should have procedures in place, to ensure that at any time, the location and numbers of persons on board the pilot boat are known. *On leaving the berth, the launch should call VTS/LPS on the VHF to inform of their intended passage and the total number of Persons on Board, and when Pilots board from outbound Ships or disembark to inbound ships.*
- 2.5 Where practicable, the position of the Pilot boat should be monitored from ashore. This is especially important in heavy weather and restricted visibility. (see paras 10 and 11) =
- 2.6 Pilots and passengers should be made aware of the potential dangers associated with wearing auto inflating lifejackets within the pilot boat and the associated difficulties that would arise in a capsized / flooding situation

Pilots Must wear the PPE in line with the specification stipulated by the CHA which has been developed by consultation and risk assessment with pilots, crews and marine stakeholders.



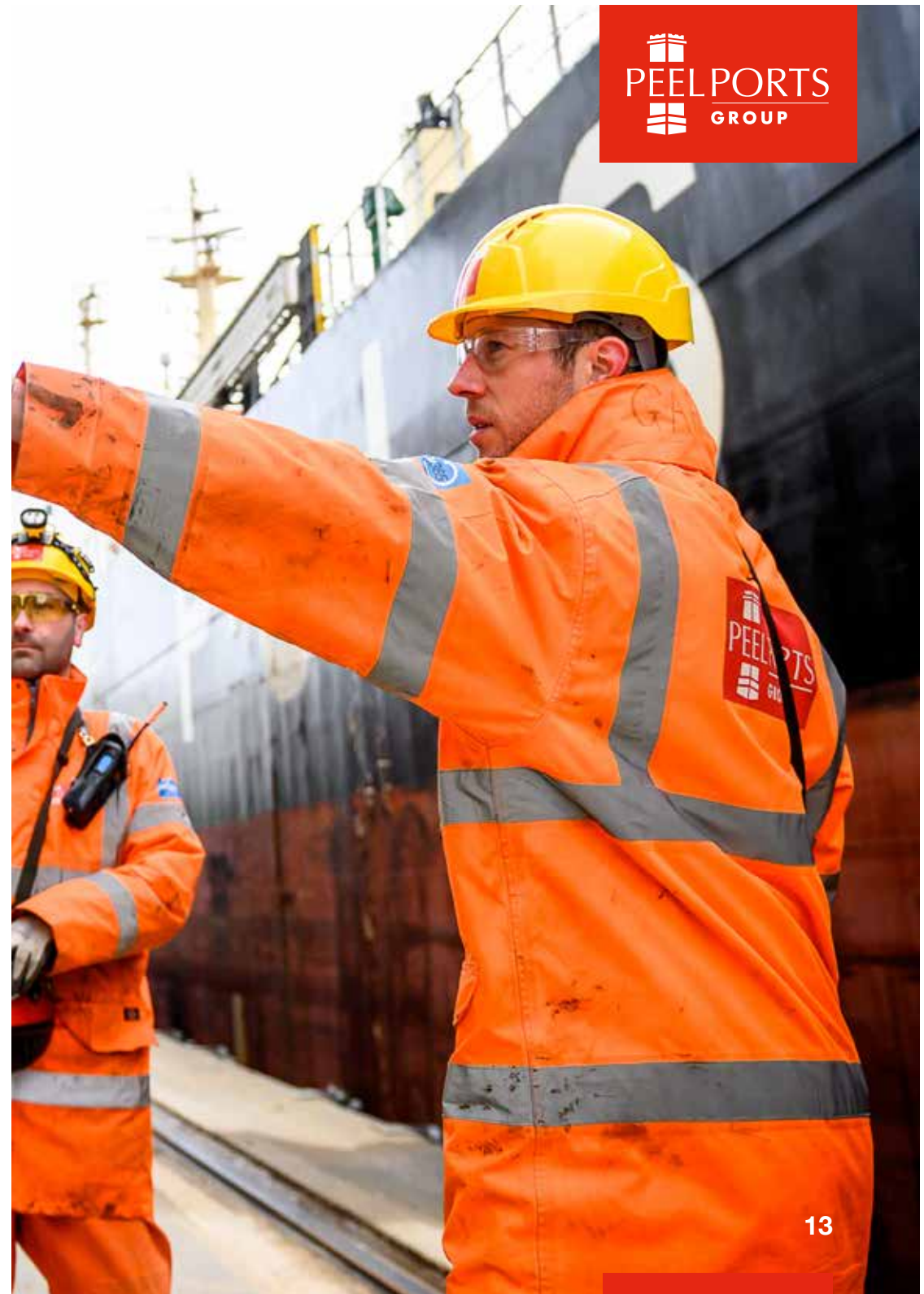
3. Pilot Boarding Areas

3.1 The CHA has a responsibility to identify and evaluate areas for the safe boarding and landing of Pilots. The following should include, but not be limited to:

1. Sea Room for the manoeuvre
2. Depth of water
3. Shelter
4. Seabed gradient
5. Traffic and communication
6. Proximity of traffic and potential wash

3.2 Charted boarding locations provide general guidance for arriving vessels and may be varied as required in order to provide the safest place for a Pilot transfer in the prevailing conditions.

The boarding area should be decided following a formal Navigational risk assessment and be in an area where enough sea room is available for manoeuvring away from the compulsory Pilotage area for any reason during the boarding operation or giving the ability to abort an inward passage once the pilot takes the conduct, should the need arise.



4. Approaching the Ship

- 4.1 The CHA should establish reporting procedures, whereby VHF radio contact is established between the pilot boat and ship (or VTS as appropriate) on the specified channel published in the Sailing Directions.
- 4.2 The coxswain of the pilot boat should establish the position of the ship to be served and where there is more than one ship in the vicinity, should establish the relative positions and expected movement of all vessels in the area.
- 4.3 Before a pilot transfer operation and after consultation with the Pilot involved, the pilot boat coxswain, or VTS should advise the ship to be served:
 1. The side for the pilot ladder and height above the water
 2. Type of ladder, appropriate to the freeboard
 3. Recommended course and speed
 4. Sequence number where more than one ship is to be served
 5. When transferring more than one Pilot, the total number to be communicated between ship and pilot boat.
 6. Any additional requirements, such as heaving lines or man ropes

For ships with a freeboard of more than 9m, when no side door is available a combination arrangement is required.

The Pilot should ascertain that the embarkation area on the ship is free from obstructions, the coxswain should establish this when speaking to the vessel. This should apply even if a ladder is not required.

- 4.4 Masters should must be asked to confirm that the pilot ladder is rigged in accordance with current IMO regulations; Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulation/ 23 and IMO resolution A 1045(27).

A Verbal declaration MUST be made by the ship to the Port VTS/LPS that the Pilot boarding arrangements are within certification and rigged as per SOLAS regulation 23 and IMO resolution a1045(27) requirements. Ship operators have been made aware by a Notice to Mariners that Pilots operating within Peel Ports CHAs will refuse to embark / disembark via non-compliant boarding arrangements resulting in the ship being directed to safe anchorage or holding position until a suitable pilot ladder can be provided.

- 4.5 On approaching a ship from a near head on position on the same side as the pilot ladder is rigged, care must be taken to ensure the wash created by the pilot boat does not interfere with the safe boarding or landing operation. This may require the pilot boat to remain clear of the pilot ladder until the wash created has cleared down the ship's side. Consideration should be given to passing down the opposite side, and approaching the ladder from aft, in order to minimise the effect of the pilot boat's own-wash on the transfer operation.
- 4.6 Particular caution should be taken when serving a ship at anchor, which is unable to manoeuvre to make a lee, particularly at slack water. The ship may need to be underway and making sufficient way so that the pilot boat can maintain position alongside the vessel before a Pilot transfer operation.
- 4.7 During the approach to the ship, both the Pilot and assisting deck hand should remain in the wheelhouse of the pilot boat until it is settled at reduced speed, in the lee of the vessel.

The deckhand and Pilot should usually leave the wheelhouse and proceed to the boarding location together. Some CHAs may permit Pilots to proceed along the outboard deck of the launch alone to account for specific local operational reasons and conditions which will have been identified by risk assessment, The deckhand MUST be clipped on to the Hadrian's rail and be there to assist the Pilot.

The decision of whether Pilots should use the Hadrian's Rail or not will be determined by the local CHA, but must be done by risk assessment in consultation with all Pilot boarding stakeholders and they must be very clear as to the reasons for their decisions.

It is recognised that the decision on whether Pilots' will use a Hadrian's rail or not will depend on a number of local factors including but not limited to weather and sea state, vessel layout, type of vessel to be boarded and a risk assessment on the use of Hadrian's rail as part of the boarding and landing process.

However, as a minimum the Pilots must be trained in the whole boarding/landing procedure including transiting from the wheel house to the foredeck with and without Hadrian's rail, and they must be part of the risk assessment and be in full recognition of all of the potential hazards.

Means of connecting to the Hadrian's rail should always be made available to all those going onto the deck.

4.8 At night the pilot boat deck should be illuminated before anyone goes on deck.

Local risk assessments conducted by the CHA in consultation with all Pilot transfer stakeholder will be used to determine whether both the Pilot and deckhand need to be clipped on to the Hadrian's rail during night transfers.

4.9 During the final approach, the pilot boat searchlight should be turned on to assess the sea conditions, illuminate the pilot ladder and the foredeck of the pilot boat. Care must be taken not to dazzle personnel on deck, or adversely affect the night vision of persons on the bridge, or on the deck of the ship to be served.

4.10 In adverse weather conditions, where risk to personnel as well as the launch may be significant, the decision whether to place the pilot boat alongside the vessel to be served should ultimately be the responsibility of the coxswain.

The authority of the coxswain to make this decision is supported by the Group Harbour Master (GHM).

The Coxswain should be in no doubt that if he/she or any personnel on board feel that it is unsafe to place the launch alongside another vessel, then the Coxswain has ultimate authority to abort the boarding/landing. The Coxswain shall make the decision but with the input of the Pilot and deck hand.

4.11 If there is any doubt at any time about the safety of the transfer operation, the Pilot should not board or land.

4.12 If the ladder presented is non-compliant, or a near miss incident occurs during the transfer, an appropriate report must be made immediately to the CHA/MCA. A non-compliant ladder must not be used until the non-compliance is rectified.

Under MSN 1832 (M), and the 1987 Pilotage Act, section 18(2) pilots are legally obligated to report dangerous situations they encounter in carrying out their duties. Therefore, any Pilots within Peel Ports CHA/SHA who encounter non-compliant

boarding arrangements are required to notify the Competent Harbour Authority who will notify the MCA. This may result in a Port State Control or Flag State inspection.

The means by which Pilots shall report non-compliances shall be in the first instance by immediate VHF call from the launch to VTS/LPS, and then a following call or email to the CHA from the Pilot. Reports shall be backed up by pictures where possible as they may be used as evidence in a vessel prosecution.

The UKMPA Pilot App is now available for download and use on the Google Play Store for Android and on the App Store for Apple. All Peel Ports locations are available on the app. It is hoped that the introduction of the App will simplify the process of reporting non-compliant ladders and aid to the ongoing improvement in this area of concern and additionally unlock a new area of connecting and keeping in touch with UKMPA issues and developments.

The CHA will refuse Pilotage service to the vessel until the defect has been rectified and verified by a Pilot. Launch crew are also expected to report boarding arrangement non-compliances if they identify issues not already identified by the Pilot.

CHA's, Pilots, launch crew and marine managers should be in no doubt that the decision to refuse provision of pilotage services to a vessel on the grounds of non-compliance or defects shall be supported by the CHA and the Duty Holder.

4.13 The Pilot and pilot boat coxswain should consider the hazards associated with undertaking the transfer whilst the pilot boat radar is operational. Any decision taken to suspend its usage during the transfer should only be made after fully assessing the prevailing conditions and the potential impact on navigation and situational awareness.

4.14 During restricted visibility, it is recommended that whenever possible, a ship to be served is approached around its stern and not across the bow. CHAs should ensure that coxswains are fully familiar with the requirements of the collision regulations governing navigation in restricted visibility.

5. The Ship

- 5.1 Ships have a duty to rig their pilot ladders in accordance with The International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulation / 23 and IMO resolution A 1045(27) as amended. A copy of the poster showing IMO requirements and IMPA recommendations – “Required Boarding Arrangements for PILOT” is included in Annex 1 to this Code. Local requirements relating to the ship’s side required and height above the water should be passed via radio prior to the ship’s arrival.
- 5.2 Pilot transfer operations should not be undertaken on ships that do not fully comply with transfer arrangements as referred to in 5.1 above *Unless there has been prior consultation with the CHA*. It is the responsibility of the vessel to ensure a safe working environment is provided for the Pilot once embarked.
- 5.3 The pilot ladder should be rigged and secured at the appropriate pilot boarding position on the ship’s side or at the side door if fitted. This should be as near amidships as possible and on the parallel body of the ship, clear of all discharges.
- 5.4 In order to allow the ladder to sit flush against the ship’s side a list should be avoided. If a list cannot be avoided, the ladder should be rigged on the side which will allow it to remain flush against the side of the ship.
- 5.5 During Pilot transfer, the responsible officer, should be in direct contact with the bridge. This should normally be by radio.
- 5.6 During the transfer, the ship should maintain adequate steerage at the speed requested by the pilot boat coxswain. It must be recognised that turning propellers are an ever-present danger to persons involved in transfer operations.
- 5.7 During a Pilot transfer operation, a ship should not be stopped in the water, or her engines put astern, except in an emergency or when requested by the pilot boat coxswain.
- 5.8 When transferring a pilot with a combination arrangement, the accommodation ladder must always lead aft.
- 5.9 The accommodation ladder must be rigged at a height to allow the pilot boat to lie alongside the pilot ladder section, with sufficient allowance for swell, such that no part of the pilot boat can contact the accommodation ladder. The lower platform of the accommodation ladder shall be a minimum of 5 metres above sea level.
- 5.10 When using a combination arrangement, the accommodation ladder should be secured to the ships side. The pilot ladder must be firmly attached to the ships side 1.5m above the accommodation platform. Securing to the ships side can be achieved by using eye pad, magnetic or pneumatic systems

6. Pilot Embarkation Operation

- 6.1 The decision whether to put a pilot boat alongside a ship is the responsibility of the pilot boat coxswain. In all cases the decision as to whether to board the ship must be the responsibility of the Pilot involved, taking into account the environmental conditions and physical limitations of the Pilot.
- 6.2 When on deck both the deckhand and the Pilot must wear appropriate PPE as required and approved by the CHA and worn in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- 6.3 It is strongly recommended that Whilst on deck the deckhand must be secured to the pilot boat by an approved method, which does not restrict their freedom of movement. This should also be made available to the Pilot.

As Per 4.7

The decision of whether Pilots should use the Hadrian's Rail or not will be determined by the local CHA, but must be done by risk assessment in consultation with all Pilot boarding stakeholders and they must be very clear as to the reasons for their decisions.

It is recognised that the decision on whether Pilots' will a Hadrian's rail or not will depend on a number of local factors including but not limited to weather and sea state, vessel layout, type of vessel to be boarded and a risk assessment on the use of Hadrian's rail as part of the boarding and landing process.

*However, as a minimum the Pilots must be trained in the whole boarding/landing procedure including transiting from the wheel house to the foredeck with and without Hadrian's rail, and they must be part of the risk assessment and be in full recognition of all of the potential hazards.
Any authorised pax onboard the pilot launch must be secured to the Hadrians rail when outside the wheelhouse.*

- 6.4 Provided that the ladder has been rigged at the correct height, the deckhand should proceed forward, using the safest route (normally the outboard side). Some CHAs have a practice of requiring the lower steps of the ladder to be brought on board the pilot boat to avoid the risk of the ladder becoming strained should the boat pin it to the ship's side. This practice is not without risk and is not practiced universally. CHAs should undertake their own risk assessments and decide upon their own control measures to deal with this risk.
- 6.5 In considering the safest route from cabin to the ladder, the following should be taken into account:
 - **The width of the deck.**
 - **The location and usability of the safety rail.**
 - **If the inboard route is taken, the likelihood of the boat rolling against the side of the ship, restricting the area between the deckhouse of the pilot boat and the flat of the ship side.**
 - **The exposure to the elements especially when a good lee is not possible, or there is passing traffic if the outside route is used.**
 - **The heel of the pilot boat during transfer.**
 - **The proposed transfer location on the side deck.**
 - **The ability of the coxswain to view the transfer operation.**

Pilot and Deckhand should always pass down the outside of the Boat to eliminate the possibility of being crushed between Ship and Boat.

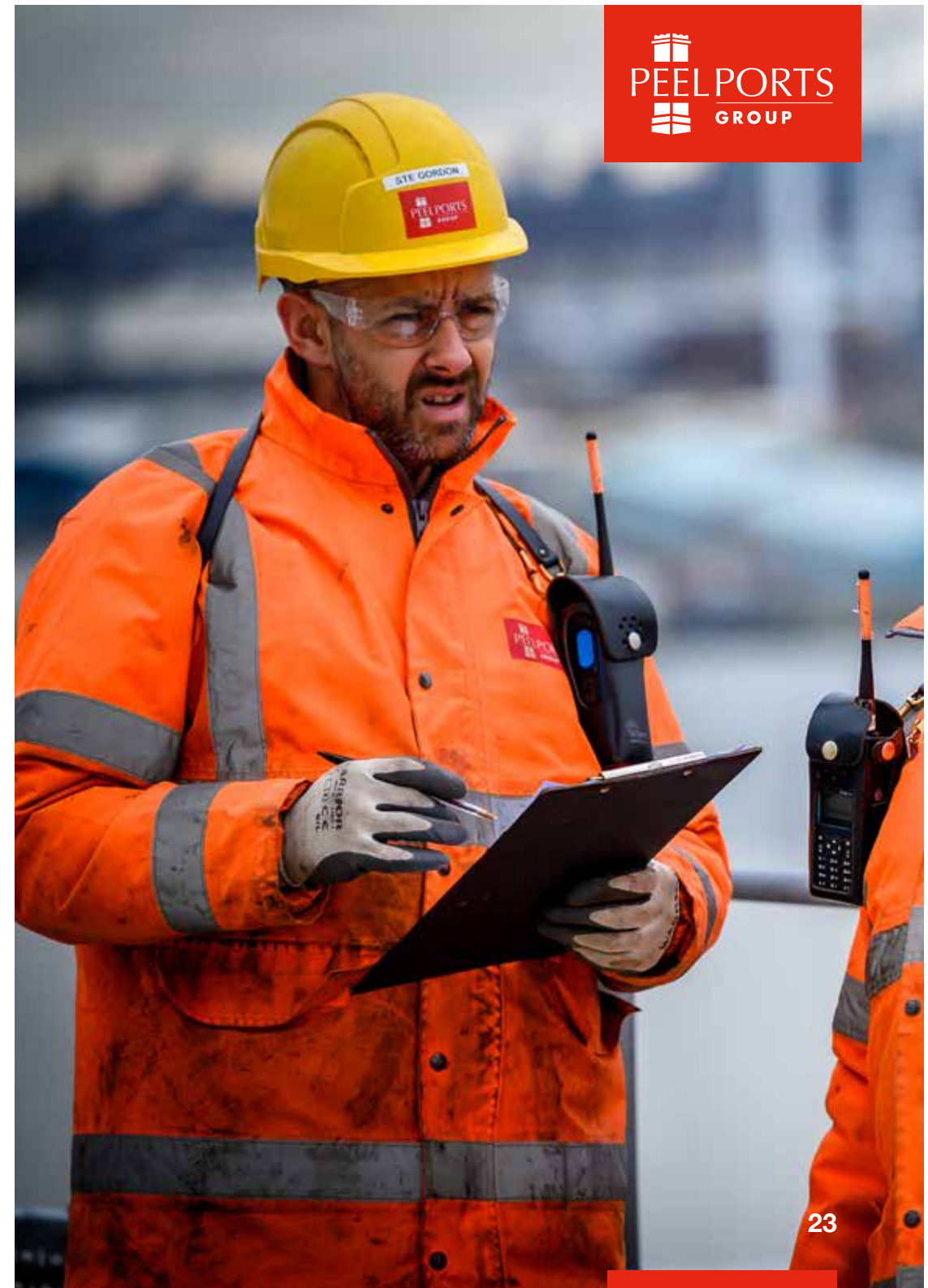
- 6.6 When a retrieval line is considered necessary to ensure the safe rigging of a pilot ladder, the line should be fastened at or above the last spreader step and should lead forward. The retrieval line should not hinder the Pilot nor obstruct the safe approach of the pilot boat.
- 6.7 Where the ladder's height needs adjusting, the coxswain should inform the ship. The Pilot and deckhand should be recalled to the wheelhouse whilst the ladder is being adjusted. The transfer should not be resumed until receiving confirmation the ladder is secure at the correct height.

- 6.8 In adverse weather conditions the risk associated with boarding operations are heightened. Neither the Pilot nor the deckhand should proceed from the cabin until the pilot boat is in the lee of the ship and the decision to proceed with the transfer has been made by the coxswain.
- 6.9 Before the Pilot steps onto the ladder, they should establish that it is properly secured, by communication with the officer at the top of the ladder. If the top of the pilot ladder is unattended, the Pilot should not attempt to embark.
- 6.10 The timing of stepping from the pilot boat to the ladder requires the use of proven techniques, e.g. using the top of the wave to step onto the ladder and the roll of the ship to aid the ascent.

If conditions are such, that in the opinion of the Pilot a safe transfer cannot be made, then the attempt should be abandoned.

The Pilot should listen to advice from the coxswain and deck hand then dynamically assess the ability to safely board the vessel.

- 6.11 The Pilot may prefer the pilot boat to move away from the ship's side in order to avoid serious injury in the event of a fall. Such a decision should be made as a result of consultation between Pilot and coxswain prior to the Pilot leaving the cabin. If, under these circumstances, the pilot boat leaves the ship's side particular care must be made not to foul the ladder.
- 6.12 When the Pilot has a reasonably short climb, it may be appropriate for the pilot boat to remain alongside until the climb is completed, to ensure the pilot boat does not foul the ladder, when leaving the ship's side.
- 6.13 Bags should not be worn over PPE whilst climbing the pilot ladder, *unless the bag has been designed for Pilot use specifically* please refer to Annex 2.5 for details of why this is not recommended. If the Pilot has a bag, a heaving line should **MUST** be used to lift it onto the ship, after the Pilot is clear of the ladder. The ship should be informed in advance.
- 6.14 Use of man ropes to assist the Pilot is the personal choice of the Pilot involved and should be provided or removed as required. This information should be passed to the ship at the earliest opportunity, to allow time for rigging, or removal.



7. Low Freeboard Ships

7.1 When the ship to be served has a freeboard near to, or less than, that of the pilot boat particular caution should be taken as these transfers can be amongst the most hazardous.

In these circumstances, there may be insufficient parallel body for the pilot boat to work against. Such situations can be worsened further if both the ship and the pilot boat are rolling or pitching. The potential for damage to the pilot boat or injury to Pilot and deck crew is increased. There is also an added possibility that the pilot boat may become hung up on the ship's side.

7.2 Before the transfer takes place, the coxswain and Pilot must be satisfied that the pilot boat is sufficiently stable alongside the ship for the transfer operation to be safely completed.

7.3 The Pilot should not stand outside the rail of the ship waiting for an opportunity to transfer.

7.4 Consideration should be given to:

1. The lack of suitable handholds or stanchions at deck level.
2. The time taken to affect the transfer, particularly in adverse weather.
3. The decks may be awash.
4. Vessel fendering.
5. Interaction between the pilot boat and ship.
6. The physical capability of the Pilot.

8. Pilot Disembarkation Operation

As Part of pre- seagoing Master- Pilot Exchange, Pilots may request to see the pilot ladder certificate before the ship leaves the berth in Port.

If time allows Pilot should inspect the ladder prior to departure to mitigate the chance of having a non-compliant ladder presented that he/she cannot disembark and being carried over.

- 8.1 As with embarkation, communication should be established between the ship and the pilot boat and the transfer arrangements confirmed in advance. The decision as to whether to disembark from a ship to the pilot boat rests entirely with the Pilot involved.
- 8.2 Before leaving the bridge, the Pilot should inform the master of:
 1. Anticipated movements of any surrounding ships.
 2. VHF channels to monitor and reporting points.
 3. Heading and speed requirement for the Pilot transfer.
 4. The presence of navigational dangers, tidal height and flow.
 5. Any advice on the passage plan to be used post Pilot transfer.
 6. The anticipated helm or engine movements required to facilitate transfer.
 7. VHF channels for communication with pilot boat.
 8. Any adjustments to the pilot ladder required by pilot launch.
- 8.3 On arrival at the pilot ladder area the Pilot should check the condition and security of the pilot ladder both visually and from the officer on station. Any non-compliance should be reported to the CHA/MCA immediately and the ladder not used until the non-compliance is rectified. The Pilot should check their PPE is correctly donned. Any bag should be lowered to the Pilot boat by heaving line, once the Pilot is clear of the ladder, on the deck of the pilot boat.

See 6.13.

Defects should be reported via The UKMPA Pilot App (which can be downloaded and use on the Google Play Store for Android and on the App Store for Apple.) and also reported to Ports' Marine managers.

- 8.4 The pilot boat deck hand should be at the bottom of the ladder to ensure that the ladder is rigged at the correct height and clear.
- 8.5 Before stepping onto the ladder, the Pilot should check that the pilot boat is lying alongside and has not fouled the pilot ladder.
- 8.6 During the descent the deckhand should advise the Pilot how many steps to go to the deck of the pilot boat. As the Pilot is stepping from the ladder the deck hand is to be on hand to provide a timely warning of danger and to give physical assistance to the Pilot if required.

In adverse weather the stepping off point may not be the lowest step, therefore communication between the deck hand and Pilot will be necessary.

The deckhand should count the pilot down the last steps of the ladder in accordance with the local risk assessment and procedure, being clear and concise with his/her instructions and avoiding using any words that could be misinterpreted when in a noisy environment.

At the point of the pilot stepping back onto the vessel, the deckhand should, with one hand, grab the back of the Pilots lifejacket/Sea Safe to support the transition and until the pilot has a firm hold on the hand rail.

Deck hands must give clear instructions to the Pilot whilst descending the ladder if the vessels become unstable and the roll between the two becomes hazardous. If the pitch and roll become unsettled the deckhand must tell the pilot to either stop or go back up the ladder to a safe height above the launch until the Launch becomes stable again.

- 8.7 ~~It is strongly recommended that~~ Whilst on deck, the deck hand **must be** secured to the pilot boat by an approved method which does not restrict his freedom of movement.
- 8.8 It is recommended that the Pilot make his way to the cabin followed by the deck hand. The deck hand may be required to receive the Pilot's bag or equipment. The return to the cabin, should be made by the safest route, taking into consideration the points made in section 6.5.
- 8.9 Once clear of the ladder, the deck hand should check the decks are clear and safe before proceeding back to the cabin. The coxswain should not leave the lee of the ship until all personnel are safely in the cabin. Once clear of the ship,

9. Leaving the Ship's Side

9.1 Should the pilot boat have difficulty leaving the side of a ship, the coxswain should communicate the problem to the master of the ship and request appropriate action be taken by way of helm and/or engine movements.

10. Heavy Weather Operations

10.1 In heavy weather, pilot boats should proceed at a speed compatible with sea conditions and pilot boat design.

10.2 In fast pilot boats use should be made of the seating provided in an appropriate manner, together with seatbelts where fitted.

10.3 To avoid injury on passage, the stowage of ancillary equipment should be designed to be clear of seating areas, with particular emphasis on the space around head and shin.

Vessels should have adequate storage space for Pilots and Crew PPE to be stored securely.

10.4 Loose equipment or stores should not be carried unless properly stowed.

10.5 In such weather conditions the risk associated with boarding operations are heightened. Neither the Pilot nor the deck hand should proceed from the cabin until the pilot boat is in the lee of the ship and decision to proceed with transfer has been made by the coxswain *and in accordance with local risk assessments.*



11. Restricted Visibility

- 11.1 The pilot boat must be allowed extra time on task in order to proceed at all times at a safe speed in restricted visibility. The coxswain will be the judge of what constitutes a safe speed.
- 11.2 In all cases of restricted visibility, when approaching the ship, the deck hand should provide lookout and assistance until the coxswain has a fully developed situational awareness. When leaving a ship the coxswain will, as far as practicable, remain alongside the ship until the deck hand can keep a lookout.
- 11.3 Pilot boat radar should be operational and used where fitted.
- 11.4 Pilot boat AIS should be operational and used where fitted.
- 11.5 Pilot boat fog signal shall be operational and sounded in accordance with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collision at Sea (ColRegs).
- 11.6 In restricted visibility it is imperative that VHF contact is established with the ship to be served. The ship's position, course, speed and position relative to other ships or navigational marks should be confirmed.



12. Man Overboard Procedures

LPS/VTS services must have a plan in place for the event of a person overboard from the ladder or launch.

Plans may include special directions (where appropriate) to be given to the ship in event of Pilot being absent from the ship after a fall from the ladder, immediate reporting to emergency services and SAR, and responsibilities of Launch and VTS/ LPS personnel.

Please Refer to Local Work Instructions and Standard Operating Procedures for Port specific elements.

Plans to include specific landing areas with grid references for transfer to shoreside emergency services.

All Launches should have "grab cards"/Checklists specific to the launch to use in the event of a MOB. Drills should be practiced using these cards so that the correct procedure is followed and practiced.

- 12.1 In the event of a man-overboard incident it is essential to locate the casualty and maintain them in sight, a task to which all crew and Pilots on board must devote their whole attention.
- 12.2 Coastguard, Port Authorities and shipping should be informed immediately, and lengthy communications should be avoided. Speed of sighting and recovery remain the priority.

- 12.3 Once the casualty is located, and as the pilot boat is being positioned, retrieval

If the rescue is to be carried out single handed, the retrieval equipment shall be prepared before getting into the retrieval location.

- 12.4 The method of recovery will depend on the equipment carried and the prevailing weather conditions.

Recovery should be made as per well practiced drills. The method of recovery will depend on the equipment carried onboard and the weather conditions.

- 12.5 A full report of the man-overboard incident is to be submitted in accordance with the CHA procedures and national legislation

13. Training for Pilot Boat Operations and Retrieval Of Casualties

13.1 Prior to using a pilot boat, all pilots and pilot boat crews should receive appropriate training in pilot boat operations. This should include familiarisation of the Boarding and Landing Code and for each pilot boat class, include:

Position, stowage and correct use of pilot boat safety equipment, including immersion suits and medical stores.

Operation and use of all man overboard equipment.

Training in the correct use of PPE.

A risk assessment should be conducted to determine whether *when* a hard hat should be worn.

If launch crews switch between vessel types, they should Drill on all vessels at least once every 6 months.

13.2 Coxswains and pilot boat crew should be appropriately trained in the operation of the boat, its systems, pilot transfer operations and whole-body vibration issues. Competence should be demonstrated, recorded and maintained through a CPD process.

Deckhands must be able to demonstrate the ability to helm the vessel and carry out man overboard procedures in the event the coxswain falls ill.

13.3 Success or failure of a rescue is related directly to the competence of the pilot boat crew, Pilots and their familiarity with the recovery equipment, training in the treatment of cold water shock, artificial resuscitation and hypothermia.

13.4 A retrieval drill for pilot boat crew and check listing of recovery equipment should be carried out on a regular basis to ensure a satisfactory level of competence. All drills and checks should be recorded with an appropriate logbook entry.

Drills are essential for building a second nature response to incidents and must be practiced by the launch crews at least once every 6 months, and with pilot interaction annually as a minimum.

Drills should be carried out with a Man overboard Manikin.

Drills should also include man overboard where only two persons are on board the launch. So for example where the deckhand falls overboard and the coxswain has to recover the deckhand single handed.

Pilots should learn from both perspectives being the rescuer and being the casualty. Seeing the equipment and how it is used by the launch will educate the Pilot in how he/she will be rescued. A smart casualty knows what to expect.

Drill Reports should be completed after each MOB drill. These reports are to include date, time, weather, description of rescue and photos and sent to the appropriate managers.

13.5 Pilots should all be familiar with the recovery equipment on their pilot boats and during their initial training, prior to authorisation, should receive man-overboard recovery training and at intervals not exceeding 5 years. Annually.

13.6 All sea going pilotage staff should receive training in resuscitation and the treatment of cold-water shock, to the standards in MGN 50 (M) and hold a Personal Survival Techniques Certificate.

Peel Ports Group Marine will provide contact details of the chosen first aid supplier. The IEC course must be taken by all sea going staff.

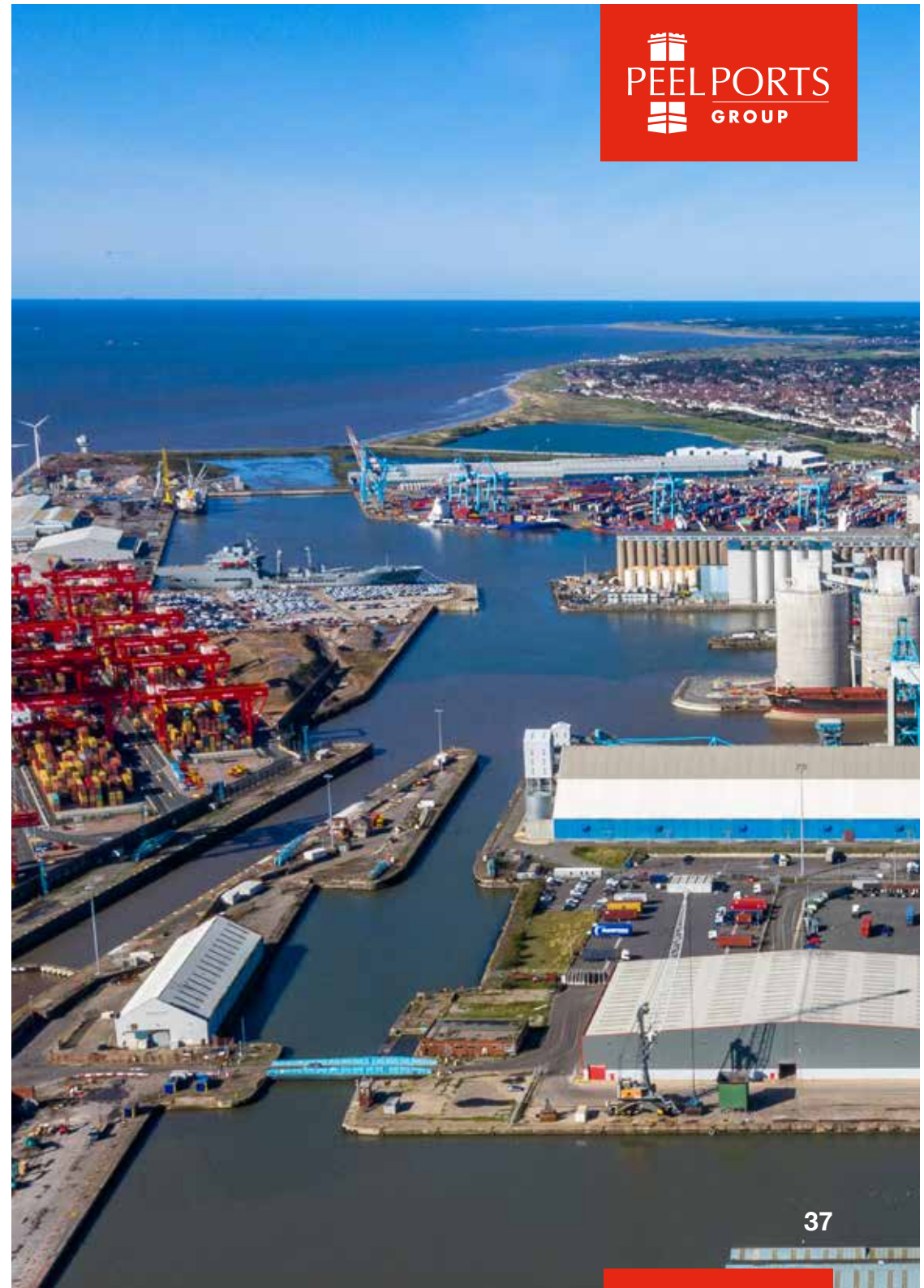
Sea going staff should renew their Personal Survival techniques certificate every 5 years in line with the STCW 2010 Manila amendments.

13.7 It is recommended that all CHA's engaged in pilot boat operations develop and have in place, emergency action plans relating to pilot transfer operations.

13.8 Additional specialist training in emergency response and immediate emergency care should also be considered for both pilot boat crews and Pilots.

14. Transfer Operations Involving Non-Regular Ships

- 14.1 The CHA should, in consultation with Pilots, identify non-regular and unusual ships. The CHA, in conjunction with the Pilot, should risk assess in advance, any Pilot transfer operations involving non-regular or unusual ships.
- 14.2 High-speed craft and some Ro-Ro's, which do not have parallel sides that allow the ladder to lie flat, may request the Pilot to travel to and from the ship, from its port of origin.
- 14.3 Other non-regular vessels may pose additional issues that need to be addressed. Ladders should be sighted midships not forward, away from fixed fenders and overhanging obstructions, suitable lighting directed so as not to affect pilot boat crew vision.
- 14.4 Tug and tows. When a Pilot transfer is to a tug the approach may have to be from forward of the beam to avoid the towing equipment. Transfer should be through a gate in bulwark and if no gate is available provision should be made for a suitable stanchions/handhold placed between 70cm and 80cm apart together with a means of climbing over the bulwark. When transferring to an unmanned barge, the transfer arrangements should be closely inspected prior to use.
- 14.5 Boarding an unmanned tow cannot be conducted in accordance with this Code and therefore a special procedure following a risk assessment should be developed.



Annex 2

PPE

It is recommended compulsory that all Pilots and pilot boat crew wear appropriate PPE. Pilot coats or lifejackets should meet the appropriate international standards, and include the following equipment:

I. SOLAS water switched light

II. Water switched or manual strobe light

III. Facial splash guard

IV. Crotch straps or beaver tail

V. Rear crew assist becket

VI. Locator beacon (PLB, AIS, EPIRB)

VII. Whistle, to attract attention

VIII. High visibility reflective tape to meet Class 2 Regulations

In addition, it is recommended that the following points should be considered when selecting PPE

- I. Lifejacket covers should be Hi-Viz with vertical retro reflective tape (this is to ensure that the lifejacket does not compromise the high visibility of a class 2 or class 3 coat when walking through the quayside areas).
- II. If utilized, a safety helmet should must meet the appropriate international Standard
- III. Safety footwear should be non-slip and anti-static and steel toecaps should be considered as part of a risk-based policy.

A2.2 Pilots and pilot boat crew should receive training when new PPE is issued, and regular checks should be undertaken in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. In addition, refresher training is recommended at intervals not exceeding 5 years.

PPE should be tested as a complete unit in the water in a safe & controlled environment – this is currently being developed by Peel Ports.

A2.3 Recommended daily checks before donning lifejacket, pilot coat and helmet include:

- Check service history and next service date
- Check the Co2 cylinder is screwed in and hand tight
- Check the firing mechanism is ready
- Check the oral tube cover is in the correct position
- Check lights and beacon are operational
- Check lifejacket or pilot coat for any signs of damage
- Check helmet for any signs of damage

A2.4 After donning lifejacket or pilot coat

- Ensure all buckles, zips and clips are correctly fastened
- Ensure crotch straps are correctly fitted and tightened
- Ensure helmet chin strap is securely fastened
- Ensure that beacons are in the armed position

The “**Brother’s Keeper**” approach should be implemented, and all embarked personnel should check each other’s PPE is donned correctly before leaving the wheelhouse.

Note the wearing of crotch straps with lifejackets is essential, to prevent the lifejacket rising up above the head.

A2.5 Wearing of rucksacks and bags whilst climbing a ladder is not recommended for the following reasons:

- I. Wearing a bag will impair the ability to climb
- II. A bag with the straps over the shoulder or across the chest can impair the inflating of a lifejacket or pilot coat
- III. When falling from a ladder the shape and size of the bag will affect the stresses on the body when hitting the water
- IV. The angle of float created by a lifejacket or pilot coat could be compromised by pockets of air within the contents of the bag



Peel Ports Group
Maritime Centre
Port of Liverpool
L21 1LA

0151 949 6000
www.peelports.com



YouTube