NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

NAP Date:	01.05.08	**Owner:**	HM(L)	**NAP Ref:**	27	**NAP Title:**	CORYTON BERTHING INCIDENTS

Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Roy Stanbrook	PLA – Chair	Roger Kenchington	London Gateway Port	Julian Parkes	PLA
Barry Goldman	PLA	Gordon Price	PLA – Pilot/DPC	David Snelson	PLA (Part meeting)
Tom Woolley	Targe Towing Ltd	Nigel Hall	PLA – Berthing Pilot		
Richard Carr	PLA	Gary Durkin	PLA - VTSO		

Detail / Terms of Reference	Observation/Recommendation
Purpose The purpose of this NAP is to determine whether current procedures for managing the safe passage of transiting ships past vessels turning to berth at Coryton are adequate and, if not, to propose alternative management strategies and procedures. **Terms of Reference** In the context of the port's navigational Safety Management System, the Navigational Advisory Panel is asked to: 1. Consider, in the context of recent incidents, the adequacy of the current arrangements to ensure safe passing of a ship swinging for Coryton.	Two reported incidents were reviewed. It was agreed that the root causes of the most serious incident were vested in a loss of situational awareness of the bridge team of the swinging tanker resulting in the ship making sternway across the channel and reducing the space available for passing. Current risk mitigation measures (in addition to pilotage, STCW and bridge team management) were reviewed; these were identified as: 1. Tanker Traffic Warning Lights 2. VTS Procedures, and 3. Communication between ships. It was noted that there is currently no documented VTS procedure for the management of transiting ships passing a ship swinging to berth at Coryton. Also, that by custom and practice there was no restriction placed on other vessels passing a tanker in the process of swinging for the berth, and therefore, once passing has been agreed between respective pilots, VTS has only a limited basis for further intervention over the manoeuvre. TW explained that Petroplus' solution would be to establish an exclusion zone around ships swinging to berth. This was considered as an option but considered to be too blunt a tool for traffic management in this area. It was agreed that these two incidents had demonstrated that existing custom and practice does not provide an adequate margin of safety thus limiting the flexibility of the pilot in the execution of his swing for the berth.

2. Propose alternative or additional risk mitigation measures.
 	
3. Establish whether there are any other, similar berthing scenarios in the port, where it would be prudent to apply some or all of the additional risk mitigation measures identified in 2. above.
 	
4. Submit an appropriate report and associated recommendations to the PLA's Navigational Management Team.
	A range of procedural and hardware mitigation measures were considered including buoyage and berthing aids. Proposed procedural measures included:
	
	➚ blind broadcasting by VTS of swinging vessel movement trends from AIS – this was dismissed on the grounds that it could be a more of a distraction to the pilot than a help.
	➚ Provision of fixed laser marks to indicate movement – this was dismissed due to the difficulty in providing a suitable sites for monitoring North/South movement
	➚ charted warnings of swinging areas – this was dismissed as being of limited value when VTS would, in any case, be issuing a warning .
	
	It was noted that as such interactions inevitably occurred near to high water, it was often viable for large container ships to go out of the channel to the south of the Mid Blyth buoy but that there could be a reluctance to do so due to the lack of any mark to indicate the amount of water available
	
	RECOMMENDATIONS
	A. Dedicated VTS and pilotage procedures should be established, which formalise established custom and practice.
	As part of these procedures, VTS and the pilots involved should identify any potential traffic conflicts at an early stage (i.e. once the vessels have started their passages), and plan ahead; adjusting their respective passage plans as necessary to avoid such conflicts and meet the requirements of A1 below.
	
	The principles of a procedure were agreed to control a passing manoeuvre :
	1. The passing manoeuvre should be planned to take place either
	    a. Before the tanker has commenced its swing, or,
	    b. After the swing has been completed
	unless there is sufficient depth of water for the transiting ship to pass to the south of the Mid Blyth Buoy, and traffic conditions allow.
	
	2. A navigation mark to be established to the south of the Mid Blyth buoy to indicate the 5m depth contour.
	
	3. An additional buoy has already been proposed between the Mid Blyth and West Blyth buoys for the purposes of London Gateway Port, enabling ships to safely regain the channel.
	
	B. The applicability of the proposed procedure was examined in the context of other berths in the port where transiting vessels require to pass vessels swinging to berth. It was agreed that there were marked differences in the manoeuvrability and constraints on vessels at these other berths and, therefore, the mitigation measures and operational procedure should developed specifically for the Coryton operation.

	However, once the Coryton procedures were established, they should be reviewed in the context of other berths such as Tilbury Power Station, Tilbury Lock and NHCT to identify any aspects, which may be relevant and applicable to those operations. **ACTION: VTSM to develop a procedure for wider dissemination through VTS, pilots and PEC holders.** C. It was agreed that a "Lessons Learned" version of the near miss incident report should be circulated to pilots as soon as possible. **ACTION: HML/PilM**

Panel Chairman:	Roy Stanbrook	Signature:		Date:	1st May 2008