



MUSAFFAH HARBOUR MASTER

Masters/Mates of Pilot exempt vessels navigating in New Musaffah Channel

To: All Users

Following a review of incidents and accidents which have occurred in the Musaffah Channel and taking account of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 and the Manila Amendments to the STCW Convention which specify minimum hours of rest for seafarers, Abu Dhabi Ports have revised the directions in respect of the pilotage exemptions for vessels of less than 80 metres Length Over All (LOA) by permitting 1st mates as well as masters to take charge of a watch in the Musaffah Channel. Other changes have also been included with the intention of improving the safety of navigation in the Channel.

Vessels of less than 80 metres LOA (except tankers and passenger carrying vessels, which are restricted to 40 metres LOA) are permitted to navigate in the Musaffah Channel without a pilot provided that the Master has undertaken the one day Musaffah Channel Local Knowledge course (Musaffah Channel Familiarisation) at the Abu Dhabi Ports training centre. This requirement has now been amended as follows;

1. STANDARDS OF NAVIGATORS AND REMOVAL OF THE 24 METRES EXEMPTION

- a) From the date of this notice, senior watch keeping officers, holding Certificates of Competency for the class of vessel intended to be navigated either as 1st Mate or Master (STCW II/2) can apply to attend the course referred to above and to be issued a Musaffah Channel (MC) certificate number (subject to completing the course to the required standard)
- b) All attendees MUST bring their **original** Certificate of Competency for inspection by the instructor before the commencement of the

course. Copies will not be acceptable and duplicate certificates will only be accepted at the discretion of the harbour master. With effect from 01 June 2015 the exemption from the above requirement for commercial vessels of less than 24 metres LOA is removed. Masters of ALL vessels must undertake the course referred to above and obtain a MC certificate number before being permitted to navigate.

Masters and Mates of the smaller vessels not holding Certificates of Competency as specified in a) above should clarify, with the Harbour Master, what alternative certificates of competency will be acceptable.

2. CONTINUING COMPETENCE

In order to ensure the ongoing competency of masters and mates navigating in the Musaffah Channel the following rules will be applied with effect from 01 January 2016;

- a) M C Certificates will have to be revalidated every two years.
- b) Certificates of competency will be inspected at the time of renewal to ensure continued validity.
- c) M C Certificate holders must keep a log of each time they take charge of a watch when in the Musaffah Channel.
- d) M C Certificate holders must undertake at least 4 trips (2 in and 2 out) in each year with at least one trip undertaken within the previous 6 months before the anniversary date.
- e) Failure to make use of the M C certificate for 12 months or failure to comply with the requirement in c) above will result in automatic cancellation of the certificate.

3. PILOTAGE EXEMPTION CERTIFICATES

Masters of vessels more than 80 metres LOA or tankers and passenger vessels over 40m LOA who wish to navigate in the Musaffah Channel without a pilot must hold a Pilotage Exemption Certificate. The requirements in the Musaffah Pilotage Directions are not affected by the above notice and the changes to the Musaffah Channel certificates.


Captain John Clayton

Musaffah Harbour Master

