ST KITTS & NEVIS INTERNATIONAL SHIP REGISTRY

MARITIME CIRCULAR – MC 138 25

CONCENTRATED INSPECTION CAMPAIGN
ON PILOT LADDER TRANSFER/BOARDING ARRANGEMENTS

1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this Maritime Circular is to inform Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Maritime Registrars, Recognised Organisations and Flag State Inspectors about an intention of this Administration to launch a Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) on pilot ladder transfer and boarding arrangements.

2. Application

2.1. The concentrated inspection campaign on pilot ladder transfer and boarding arrangements will be held for three months, and **will come into effect on 1st April 2025 until 30th June 2025**.

2.2. The purpose of this campaign is to ensure that vessels comply with relevant international regulations regarding pilot transfer and boarding arrangements, particularly those outlined in the SOLAS Convention.

2.3. During the campaign **all** St. Kitts and Nevis flagged vessels attending Flag State Inspections will undergo a thorough inspection of a ships' pilot ladder transfer and boarding arrangements, to assess their condition, rigging procedures, and compliance with safety regulations to ensure proper pilot transfer arrangements are in place as per the above.

2.4. Attending Flag State Inspectors will look to assess the crew's knowledge and competency in correctly rigging the pilot ladder arrangement for safe transfer.

2.5. The Flag State Inspectors will pay particular attention to the integrity of the ropes used to hoist and secure the ladder, checking for damage, wear and tear, proper functioning of steps and spreader.

2.6. Inspectors will verify that the vessel maintains proper documentation related to pilot ladder inspections and maintenance, and that original equipment manufacturer (OEM) plates match those listed on the certificate and possess a MED (Marine Equipment Directive) marking such as a wheel mark and an accompanying ISO standard reference.

3. Recommendations

3.1. As regards to CIC on pilot ladder transfer and boarding arrangements, this Administration invites the following to be noted for compliance:

3.1.1. A pilot ladder placed on a vessel with keel laid after 1 July 2012 or equipment in its entirety or for individual components of the system delivered after 1 July 2012, is to be certified by the manufacturer as complying with the requirements of SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 23 and IMO *Resolution A.1045 (27)*, as amended.

3.1.2. A record is maintained on board providing the date the pilot ladder is placed into service and any repairs carried out, and the pilot ladder is regularly inspected, and record of inspections is maintained to ensure that the pilot ladder is safe to use.

3.1.3. Shipside doors used for pilot transfer must open inwards in accordance with SOLAS Regulation V/23, paragraph 5, and the use of mechanical pilot hoists is prohibited on all ships in accordance with the requirements of SOLAS Regulation V/23, paragraph 6.

3.1.4. The side ropes of the pilot ladder should be made of manila or other material of equivalent strength, durability, elongation characteristics and grip and should consist of two uncovered ropes not less than 18 mm in diameter on each side and should be continuous, with no joints and have a breaking strength of at least 24 KN per side rope.

3.1.5. Permanent marking is provided at regular intervals (e.g. 1m) throughout the length of the ladder in order to facilitate the rigging of the ladder to the required height.

3.1.6. The retrieval line should be fastened at or above the last spreader step and should lead forward.

3.1.7. The steps of the ladders should be made of hardwood, in one piece and non-slippery. The steps should not be less than 115 mm wide, 25 mm in depth and should be not less than 400 mm between the side ropes. The steps should be equally spaced not less than 310 mm or more than 350 mm apart and they should be secured in such a manner that each will remain horizontal.

3.1.8. No pilot ladder should have more than two replacement steps which are secured in position by a method different from that used in the original construction of the ladder.

3.1.9. Safe, convenient and unobstructed passage is provided for any person embarking on, or disembarking from, the ship between the head of the pilot ladder, or of any accommodation ladder, and the ship's deck. Where such passage is by means of:

a. A gateway in the rails or bulwark, adequate handholds shall be provided.
b. A bulwark ladder, two handhold stanchions rigidly secured to the ship's structure at or near their bases and at higher points shall be fitted. The bulwark ladder shall be securely attached to the ship to prevent overturning.
c. The securing strong points, shackles and securing ropes are in good shape.

3.1.10. Where Accommodation ladders are used in conjunction with pilot ladders (ships with freeboard of more than 9 metres). The length of the accommodation ladder should be sufficient to ensure that its angle of slope does not exceed 45 degrees, and the accommodation ladder should be at least 600 mm in width.

3.1.11. The lower platform of the accommodation ladder should be in a horizontal position and secured to the ship's side when in use. The lower platform should be a minimum of 5 m above sea level. The pilot ladder should be rigged immediately adjacent to the lower platform of the accommodation ladder and the upper end should extend at least 2 m above the lower platform. The horizontal distance between the pilot ladder and the lower platform should be between 0.1 and 0.2 m.

3.1.12. Embarkation/disembarkation area is illuminated for transfer arrangement over side and on the deck.

3.1.13. The rigging of the pilot transfer arrangements and embarkation of a pilot is supervised by a responsible officer and associated safety equipment such as life jackets, harness, lifelines and life buoys are in place to assure the safety of personnel.

3.2. This Administration also would like to refer to its *MC 112 22* on *Required Boarding Arrangements For Pilot* issued to remind all parties concerned about recommendations of the International Maritime Organization on pilot ladder transfer and boarding arrangements.

This Administration invites Ship Owners, Managers, Maritime Registrars and Recognised Organisations to be guided by the above instruction, and ensure that all vessels under their ownership, stewardship and responsibility, meet the criteria as set out in this Maritime Circular.

If you have any questions on this matter, please contact this office at mail@skanregistry.com

Yours truly,

Graeme Morkel
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Date: 2025.02.14 14:52:03 Z

Mr. Graeme Morkel
Deputy International Registrar of Shipping & Seamen