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AUTORIDAD DEL CANAL DE PANAMÁ VICE PRESIDENCY FOR TRANSIT BUSINESS

ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-31-2020

August 31, 2020

TO : All Shipping Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Reminder on the Use of Accommodation Ladders Fitted with Trapdoors

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) considers proper boarding facilities to be an absolute necessity to ensure the safety of ACP personnel and others using these facilities while in Canal waters. Poorly constructed, installed, maintained, or operated boarding facilities are not acceptable in Canal waters.

We remind all Panama Canal users that Section 10 of Notice to Shipping N-1-2020 "Vessel Requirements" lists the acceptable specifications for boarding facilities in Panama Canal waters.

Due to several recent non-compliance reports of trapdoors installed on the lower platform of some accommodation ladders, be advised that the use of trapdoors is permitted only when in full compliance with the requirements contained in paragraph f.(2)(f) of the same Section 10 of Notice to Shipping N-1-2020.

"If a trap door is fitted in the lower platform of a combination ladder arrangement to allow access from and to the pilot ladder, the aperture should not be less than 750 mm x 750 mm (30 inches x 30 inches) and of a design approved by the Authority. In this case the after part of the lower platform should also be fenced as specified in Paragraph 10.f (2) (c), and the pilot ladder should extend above the lower platform at least 2 meters (6 feet 8 inches). The aperture on the lower platform must be open to the side of the vessel's hull to allow the pilot ladder to lay flat against the hull."

Vessels that arrive at Panama Canal waters with boarding facilities not in compliance with the above-mentioned requirements will be considered deficient, which may result in transit delays until an acceptable boarding facility is provided, or corrective measures are implemented to these facilities. Additional costs incurred as a result of non-compliance with ACP transit requirements are the responsibility of the vessel and are chargeable to the vessel's account.

Canal users are urged to arrive at Panama Canal waters with acceptable boarding facilities, which allow for safe boarding of all personnel.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

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Acting Vice President for Transit Business