

## Advisory To Shipping No. A-40-2023

September 8, 2023

**TO :** All Shipping Agents, Owners, and Operators  
**SUBJECT :** Monthly Canal Operations Summary – August 2023

### 1. Panama Canal Statistical Summary:

a. Transit Pilot Force .....	282
b. Pilots in Training .....	6
c. Tugs .....	46
d. Locomotives .....	100

### 2. Traffic Statistics:

	<u>Daily Average</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>
Arrivals	31.23	42	24
Oceangoing Transits	32.65	35	30
Canal Waters Time (hours)	66.53	104.80	24.36
In-Transit Time (hours)	11.40	13.76	9.58

<b>Oceangoing Transits:</b>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Daily Average</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Vessels of less than 91' beam	176	5.68	17.39
Vessels 91' beam to under 107' beam	534	17.23	52.77
Neopanamax Vessels (107' beam and over)	302	9.74	29.84
Total:	1,012	32.65	100.00

<b>Booking Slots:</b>	<u>Available</u>	<u>Used</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Neopanamax Vessels (107' beam and over)	217*	214* <sup>1</sup>	98.62
Large Vessels (91' beam to under 107' beam)	331*	315* <sup>1</sup>	95.17
Regular Vessels (less than 91' beam)	138*	122* <sup>1</sup>	88.41
Auctioned booking slots	159	155	97.48

\* Does not include additional auctioned booking slots

<sup>1</sup> Includes booked transits only

3. The following page provides the scheduled locks maintenance work and other information of interest to the shipping community.

4. This advisory will be canceled for record purposes on September 30, 2023.

### ORIGINAL SIGNED

Boris Moreno Vásquez  
Vice President for Operations

OP, September 8, 2023  
Subject: Monthly Canal Operations Summary – August 2023

<b>SCHEDULE OF PANAMAX LOCKS MAINTENANCE OUTAGES</b>							
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Miraflores</b>	<b>Pedro Miguel</b>	<b>Gatun</b>	<b>Estimated Capacity<sup>^</sup></b>	<b>Expected Booking Condition</b>	<b>Status</b>
August 8, 2023	4 hours		West*		30-32	1.a	Completed
August 9, 2023	5 hours	East*			29-31	1.a	Completed
August 10, 2023	7 hours			West*	28-30	1.a	Completed
August 14, 15 and 16, 2023	8 hours/day			West*	26-28	1.a	Completed
August 21, 2023	12 hours			West*	24-26	1.a	Completed
August 22 to Sept 5, 2023	14 days			West***	23-25	1.a	Completed
August 23 and 24, 2023	6 hours/day	East*			28-30	1.a	Completed
September 5, 2023	12 hours			West*	24-26	1.a	Completed
September 7, 2023	6 hours			West*	28-30	1.a	In Progress
September 12, 2023	8 hours	West*			26-28	1.a	Tentative
September 18, 2023	7 hours			West*	28-30	1.a	Tentative
September 19, 2023	4 hours		West*		30-32	1.a	Tentative
September 20, 2023	4 hours	East*			30-32	1.a	Tentative
September 21 and 22, 2023	7 hours/day	East*			26-28	1.a	Tentative
September 29, 2023	6 hours	East*			28-30	1.a	Tentative
October 5 and 6, 2023	7 hours/day	East*			26-28	1.a	Tentative
October 20, 2023	7 hours	East*			26-28	1.a	Tentative
October 23 and 25, 2023	5 hours/day	East*			29-31	1.a	Tentative
October 26 and 27, 2023	2 days			West**	20-22	2	Tentative
November 16 and 17, 2023	2 days			East**	20-22	2	Tentative

<b>SCHEDULE OF NEOPANAMAX LOCKS MAINTENANCE OUTAGES</b>						
<b>Dates</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Agua Clara</b>	<b>Cocolí</b>	<b>Estimated Capacity</b>	<b>Expected Booking Condition</b>	<b>Status</b>
October 9, 2023	5 hours	*		9-10	N/A	Tentative
October 10, 2023	5 hours	*		9-10	N/A	Tentative

<sup>^</sup>The normal transit capacity of the Panamax locks is 34-36 vessels per day, and in the neopanamax locks 9-11 vessels per day, depending on vessel mix, transit restrictions, and other factors. The maximum sustainable capacity of the Panama Canal (panamax and neopanamax locks) is approximately 38-40 vessels per day. This capacity is reduced during locks maintenance work, as indicated in the above table. Consequently, vessels may experience delays in transiting. When the Panama Canal's capacity is expected to be reduced, a corresponding reduction in the number of available reserved transit slots may be ordered by the Canal Authority. Whenever a set of locks requires a major outage of one of its two lanes for dry chamber inspection, miter gate repairs, tow track work or other major maintenance/improvement projects, advantage may be taken to perform simultaneous single lane outages at other locks.

- \* In order to perform scheduled maintenance works
- \*\* In order to perform scheduled dry chamber works
- \*\*\* Culvert outage
- <sup>^</sup> May require an adjustment to the number of available booking slots

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## Maritime industry continues to prefer route through Panama.

- Through August, one month before the end of fiscal year 2023, accumulated tonnage for the year is in line with budget.
- Waiting lines back to normal



The Panama Canal announced that the queue of vessels waiting to transit has shown improvement. Standing at 108 at both entrances to the waterway, there are 20% less vessels waiting in total since last week (135), which is normal for this time of year.

An extended dry season and the El Niño phenomenon caused the Panama Canal to implement measures earlier this year to save water, to maintain high reliability levels. While these measures and the season's high vessel demand have had an impact on waiting times for some –mostly for vessels without reservations— such demand underscores the maritime industry's continued preference for the route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

Results to Date (Fiscal Year 2023 October 1st – September 30th)

One month before the end of Fiscal Year 2023, the Panama Canal total transits are 799 above budget and 470 million tons have transited the Canal, on budget.

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	<b>Year-to-Date Aug-2023</b>	<b>VARIANCE</b>
Transits	13,038	+799
Neopanamax	3,327	+48
Panamax	8,340	+94
Small	1,371	+648
Tonnage	470 million	0

The number of vessels on stand-by will depend on market demands. As we approach the peak season at the Panama Canal, and if diminished rainfall patterns remain within projections, a queue of vessels above the usual is expected, but measures taken by the Canal have proven effective. Those measures are:

1. For the Neopanamax locks, 13.4 meters (44 feet) maximum draft levels (down from an average of 15.2 meters (50 feet) last year.
2. For the locks, an average of 32 transits per day (down from 36)  
The Panama Canal urges its customers to make reservations to transit, as this allows them to secure a spot. Vessels without reservations transit on a first-come, first-served basis. The Panama Canal makes sure to provide timely information to all its customers.

#### Lake Levels

The lack of rainfall has impacted Gatun Lake, now at 24.2 meters (79.7 feet), compared to 26.6 meters (87.41 feet) in September of previous years.

Generally, the lake ends a normal rainy season at 27.1 meters (89 feet) in November and ends the dry season at the end of April at 25.9 meters (85 feet). Measures taken will be maintained for the remainder of this year and throughout 2024, unless weather conditions change significantly from current forecasts.

Please refer to the following links for current information on Panama Canal transits, lake levels and conditions:

[Vessels in queue for transit in the Panama Canal](#)

[Lake levels](#)