Panama Canal Authority
Vice Presidency for Operations

Advisory to Shipping No. A-40-2026

October 30, 2026

TO: All Shipping Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Updated NetZero Slot Eligibility Requirements for First-Time Transit Vessels and Modifications to the Transit Reservation (Booking) System

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) continues to support and encourage investments in low-carbon and energy-efficient vessels through an update to the NetZero Slot Program. Under this update, first-transit vessels may participate in the NetZero Slot competition once the ACP has issued the required preliminary admeasurement inspection.

1. Requirements for First-Time Transit Vessels to Participate

To participate in the NetZero Slot competition, first-time vessels must obtain a preliminary admeasurement inspection from the Panama Canal Admeasurement Unit prior to the competition date.

This preliminary determination must include the following information needed to evaluate the vessel for the competition date:

- Toll basis
- Panama Canal Universal Measurement System (PC/UMS) tonnage
- Review of all pertinent information for the vessel database, including the engine type and the vessel's eligibility for the NetZero Program
- Any other vessel information required by the ACP.

2. How Customers May Request a Preliminary Admeasurement Inspection

Vessel owners, operators, or authorized vessel agents interested in participating in the NetZero Slot competition with first-time vessels may request a preliminary admeasurement determination through the Panama Canal Admeasurement Unit, in accordance with ACP-established procedures. Requests shall include the technical documentation and information required by the ACP and are subject to applicable fees and charges.

Submission of a request does not, itself, establish eligibility. Eligibility will be confirmed only after the Panama Canal Admeasurement Unit has completed the required evaluation and issued the corresponding preliminary admeasurement inspection.

3. Admeasurement Review and Vessel Inspection

The ACP may issue the preliminary admeasurement determination supported by the documents submitted and, when necessary, a vessel inspection.

A vessel inspection may be conducted outside the Republic of Panama under Maritime Service Tariff Item 1080, Vessel Inspections Overseas, Subject to Customer Request. The applicable tariff will depend on the inspection location, as shown below:

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Tariff Item	Inspection Location	Service	Applicable Fee (USD)
1080.III1	Americas	Vessel inspection overseas, subject to request	**$14,000.00**
1080.III2	Europe	Vessel inspection overseas, subject to request	**$21,000.00**
1080.III3	Asia, Africa, and Oceania	Vessel inspection overseas, subject to request	**$28,000.00**
1080.III4	Worldwide	Additional day required to complete an overseas inspection	**$3,500.00 per day**

Customer shall be responsible for all applicable fees, charges, and expenses associated with the overseas vessel inspection service and the corresponding admeasurement inspection, including travel-related expenses not included in the published tariff.

The customer shall also be responsible for making all necessary arrangements for the proper inspection of the vessel at the corresponding port, including obtaining the required permits and ensuring appropriate access to the vessel.

For further information on these tariffs, please refer to the following links:
https://pancanal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Maritime-tariffs-80-cancellation-feb26.pdf
https://pancanal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Notes-on-tolls-and-maritime-tariffs-febrero-202675.pdf

4. Important Reminder

A first-time transit vessel that receives the required preliminary admeasurement inspection may participate in the NetZero Slot competition, provided that the vessel also complies with all other eligibility requirements and procedures established for the NetZero Program.

The preliminary admeasurement inspection will be used to establish the vessel information required for participation in the competition. It does not replace the final verification or any inspection that the ACP may require upon the vessel's arrival in Canal waters or prior to transit.

Customers must submit the required information well in advance of their intended competition date to provide the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) sufficient time to complete the applicable procedures, including the Preliminary Admeasurement Inspection outside the Republic of Panama. Timely submission is essential to ensure that all requirements are completed prior to the competition date, thereby maintaining the customer's eligibility to participate in the NetZero competition. Customers who have not completed the required process by the applicable competition date will be ineligible to participate in the NetZero competition.

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For inquiries regarding these measures, please contact: operationservices@pancanal.com

For inquiries regarding preliminary admeasurement inspection and overseas vessel inspections, please contact: OPTT-AS@pancanal.com

The updated requirements will become effective on November 1, 2026.

Modifications to the Transit Reservation (Booking) System

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) announces modifications to the Transit Reservation (Booking) System, including the reversal of a temporary measure introduced in July 2026 in response to changes in global shipping patterns that placed additional pressure on transit demand. As vessel traffic has since normalized, the ACP will return to the previous allocation criteria.

Therefore, effective immediately, during Booking Periods 1A and 2 for the Neopanamax locks, any slot that is cancelled or otherwise becomes available will be allocated through a Special Competition using the following order of priority: Full Container, LNG, LPG, and Car Carrier/RoRo vessels. Within each vessel category, the first tiebreaker will be TTA, when applicable, followed by customer ranking as the second tiebreaker.

While the water deficit in the Canal watershed persists, the Transit Reservation (Booking) System remains the only mechanism to guarantee a transit date. Therefore, vessels without a reservation may experience extremely extensive delays.

The Canal remains committed to closely monitoring water conditions and rainfall levels and will communicate any further adjustments in a timely manner, as circumstances warrant.

For any further inquiries regarding these rules, please contact: operationservices@pancanal.com

ORIGINAL SIGNED

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