

THE PILOT

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The official organ of The United Kingdom Pilots' Association

AIR CONDITIONED



Shown during trials in the Solent, where she reached a speed of 19.5 knots is one of two 52ft twin screw pilot launches for the Abu Dhabi Petroleum Ports Operating Company. The accommodation comprises facilities for a 'live on board' crew of three and an after cabin to provide seating and equipment for the transport of six pilots. Due to the common 50°C temperatures experienced in the Gulf the launch is fully airconditioned. Designed and built with a GRP hull by Halmatic, it is based on their ARUN type hull developed for the RNLI.

THIRTY DAYS HATH DEFENDER!

Condition 9 in the policy requires every member to report to the Insurance Company in writing within thirty days of the happening of any event out of which a claim may arise under the policy. Since it is not possible to say with any certainty that a particular incident will lead to an enquiry or legal proceedings, members would be well advised to inform the Insurance Company in writing of all incidents, however trivial they may be.





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SAFETY — A QUESTION OF QUESTIONS

Michael Irving

Tees Pilot, vice-Chairman UK Pilots' Technical Committee

- Has your service ever lost a man overside, and been fortunate enough to find and recover him?
- How well equipped is your pilot boat to retrieve successfully someone from the sea day or night — and this doesn't mean what equipment does your pilot boat carry but, equally as important, just how prepared are your crews for such an event?
- How well prepared and safety conscious are your crews when out on deck at all times and in all weathers?
- How safety conscious are the pilots on your service?

Let us take these questions one at a time.

Firstly, has your service lost a man overside? It would seem more than a few pilot services would have to answer in the affirmative — a reply that both pilots and crews alike, dread to think about, and to those who have experienced such an accident, fatal or non-fatal, it leads to enquiries and a determination by those services involved, to ensure they are better equipped, better prepared and better trained to cope with any future similar accidents.

Yet why do they happen in these so called "enlightened times", in an age of so much technical success and so many modern innovations, so many improvements? The advent of the high speed GRP cutter with its quicker, wilder motion, must surely be something of a culprit. The very unpredictability and speed of its movement can sometimes catch off guard the most surefooted pilot or crewman. Thanks to this new generation of cutters, ships are boarded now at a higher speed and the resulting combination of bowwaves and wash make the moment of boarding or disembarking much more vulnerable to a sudden catapulting over the side. In many cases the need for high speed cutters has been brought about by pilot services having to operate further from port attending bigger and deeper ships — ships needing more searoom clear of anchorages and fairway or approach buoys. To this end, cutters previously operating behind the comparative safety of headlands now find themselves much more exposed to bad weather. The height of climb has become something former generations of pilots would never have dreamt possible whilst the brainwaves of the pilot hoist and the pilot or accommodation ladders are far from being foolproof or safe.

Of those pilot services that said 'yes' to the first part of that question, are they all equally able to say 'yes' to the second part — to have successfully recovered the man from the water — and that question means "successfully recovered the man ALIVE from the water?" Sadly in some cases, the answer has now become "no". And yet again, why should this answer be negative in these enlightened times? Times when boating and yachting magazines are full of life saving clothing and equipment. Times when the annual boat shows display all the latest ideas and gadgets imaginable. Could it be that pilots believe all this paraphernalia to be only for the amateurs — the weekend sailors — for the landlubbers trying to play at being seamen? That for pilots — the professionals — it will never happen. Haven't we all seen the pilot climbing up some big tanker's side on a black night wearing a black raincoat and black uniform, oblivious — surely it can't be uncaring — that should he fall he'd be invisible in the water. And mention to some pilots that the cutter is to hold a "man overboard" exercise, and where are they? Yet the neighbouring yacht club with all its 'day sailors' frequently experience being pulled from the water — and they don't sail at night or miles out at sea.

What about the question of just how well prepared and equipped is your cutter to recover someone, day or night? This again is a two part question meaning both cutter and cutter crew — because success is achieved only if both are prepared and equipped. Has your cutter a well proven davit or davits serving either side or does it carry a reliable alternative means such as an 'A'-frame, or adjustable ladders that can be swung out or handled by only one man? Can the helmsman himself clearly see for himself the davit or A-frame and the area of recovery or does he have to rely on second-hand information? Are these davits fitted with more than adequate lighting and a single-handed winching system? Does the cutter carry not only a good fixed searchlight but also a powerful portable searchlight/Aldis light that can be used through an arc of 360°? Do the cutter's engines need to be stopped on nearing the casualty or, with having a midships recovery position. can the cutter remain operative throughout the rescue? And what if the casualty is unconscious, are your crewmen trained to go overside and help the recovery - or would they just jump overside in their normal clothing? Shouldn't your cutter carry two or three immersion suits, accessible at a moments' notice? If you do carry immersion suits and rescue strops, how quickly can a crewman or a pilot be into such a suit, at night time in bad weather? Would it be one minute or 25? Indeed, have you sufficient crew to be correctly positioning the cutter, operating the searchlights, handling the davits and putting on an immersion suit? Would it be a surprise to learn that with a total crew of three an "unconscious man" can regularly be recovered in less than three minutes — and that in bad weather? But only very regular practice with all crews and equipment makes this

The question of protection and safety for crews must be next! What sort of lifejackets do they wear whenever on deck? Are they the best available, lightweight and unobtrusive? Are they regularly checked by the crew themselves? The answers should be yes. Are the crew safely clipped to the cutters rails at all times, leaving them free to help with pilots' ladders/pilots's luggage, and not worrying about being pitched over the side? Does the helmsman always see that his crew are safely back into the wheelhouse before sheering away from the ships side? Again the answers should be yes.

possible. Does your service involve the local coastguards and encourage joint practising with the nearby

lifeboat, who have so much experience and guidance to offer?

How about ourselves? Are we all safety conscious? Theoretically we might say 'yes' — but practically I'm not so sure. Those of us who are sufficiently enlightened to always wear a well proven lifejacket/anorak, do we carefully follow the maker's instructions? Do we always fasten the girth belt or check the automatic inflation device, or do we straightaway discard the inner lung because they are too bulky or not necessary and as for the safety light cord - well, the local barmaid might keep pulling that! Have we thought about reflective tapes or day glow colouring - or are we going to rely on the searchlight spotting our bald head? A good personal strobe light may be rather expensive, but isn't your life really worth that much? Imagine yourself overside in a rough sea on a dark night and the cutter several hundred yards distant. If you have the best clothing with an automatic inflator and water activated light and personal strobe light — all correctly worn and regularly tested, you'll be afloat and you'll be seen. No two pilot services are the same, I agree, no two pilot cutters are exactly the same, all crews are different. What safety equipment suits one station may not suit another. Conditions vary from pilot service to pilot service, but we are all faced with that same fear that one dark night we may lose someone overside. Only properly equipped cutters with crews and pilots alike — that is, crews and pilots who can harmoniously work together — who practise on a regular basis and can recognise the constant need for possible improvement and sometimes even a complete rethink of ideas, stand a good chance of a successful recovery. None of us should be too old or too wise to learn from mistakes, and as "professionals" we should be at least as keen and enthusiastic as those 'day sailors' — if not more so.

Elected to Executive

William Brown, elected at the November Conference, joined the Clyde pilots in 1970. Following Strathallan School, Perth, he gained pre-sea training on *HMS Conway*, 1952-54, then joined the Blue Funnel line as a cadet. He rose to be Chief Officer with them before becoming a pilot in 1970.

The following appeared in Lloyd's List on Saturday, 20th March, 1982

WIDOW OF MARINE PILOT WINS £50,000

The widow of a marine pilot killed in an accident while trying to board a stricken ferry in a storm has won £50,000 compensation.

The out-of-court settlement marks the end of a campaign which has lasted since 1974 when Mrs Maureen Mitchell's husband Lawrence died after he was crushed between his pilot's cutter and the ferry and fell into the sea.

But it leaves unresolved key questions on the contractual position of marine pilots and those who use their services.

Mr Mitchell was senior pilot for the Falmouth area when he went out to the ferry Eagle to guide her into the port during a storm.

Mr Mitchell died after falling from a ladder on the Eagle as he tried to board the ferry. Mrs Mitchell, backed by the UK Pilots' Association, has been fighting ever since for compensation from the ship's owners, General Steam Navigation, and charterers Southern Ferries, who denied liability.

The pilots' association was hoping the case would set legal precedents on the contractual relationship between pilots and shipowners.

Obituary W F DUNN

It is with profound regret that we have to announce the death of Fred Dunn of Par at the age of 78 on January 9th. The tradition of the Dunn family association with pilotage for over a century and a half is well known and we are indebted to W L Dunn (Fowey, retired) who writes —

He was a pilot at Par for 37 years and his name became a household word to men of many nations. Masters held him in great regard and his advice to enter or sail was always accepted. This was because of his amiable temperament, judgment and nerves of steel. At his funeral I addressed a large number, including Master Mariners, sub-Commissioners, Pilots and many serving the China Clay Industry. Mr Dunn had served an apprenticeship under his father at Fowey and then went to sea and became qualified. He was appointed at Par after the death of his father and knew good times and bad.

After the last war, trade began to improve to such an extent that he handled as many as 25 ships on a tide. He saw the end of the sailing ships and the semi-diesels which had a habit of refusing to go astern, also the end of the steam ships with their wonderful masters and crews. I used to watch my father at Fowey and the propeller appeared not to stop from ahead to astern. There may be pilots still alive who served on that famous sailing ship the *Waterwitch* and the last Master was Mr B Carrivick of Par. I was very glad of his help when relieving Mr Dunn in 1960.

We seldom hear of pilots' wives, so I paid a tribute to Mrs Dunn for her years of devoted service, the constant telephone watch, interrupted meals and seldom a complete night's sleep. This would include a continual supply of dry clothing and often waiting long after the tide was finished as Mr Dunn would wait until all the ships had grounded safely. The port of Par is fortunate in being served by Mr R Dunn and Mr D Benyon with similar dedication. Long may they continue.

YARNS AND MATTERS MARITIME

We are indebted to the Editor of Ship & Boat International for permission to reprint from January 1974 another of the inimitable yarns of our late John Bain.

Sunk Cutter

The Sunk Pilot Cutter cruises close by the lightship from which it takes its name. Properly speaking each cutter has her own particular name, Pathfinder, Pendee, Bembridge, or whatever — but when 'on station' the cruising cutter is known to seamen as The Sunk Cutter. Maintained, serviced, manned and supplied with licensed pilots by the Corporation of Trinity House, the 'cruising ground' for the Sunk Cutter is some eight miles off the east coast of England, almost due east of Felixstowe. This station she keeps in fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms, in calm or in gales of wind by day and by night for all the days and nights there are. There is no service, ashore or afloat, that can begin to approach the vigilance of this service. Notwithstanding the bitter easterly gales of winter to which she is most exposed, this cutter supplies pilots nearly continuously to ships inwards for Harwich, Felixstowe, London and the Medway ports and lands pilots outwards from these ports. I say nearly, for she loses, on average, 48 hours a year when she is 'off station' perhaps in North Easterly, force 10 but even then she will work a restricted service cunningly lying in the lee of a sheltering sandbank. There is no port on the Atlantic littoral of Europe which offers such a service as this — not Rotterdam, Antwerp, Dunkirk, Le Havre, Cherbourg — in fact no port in my experience and I have been at sea for 32 years.

I have told you all this because it has to do with the Sunk Cutter and a boy of just sixteen.

Lost At Sea

On the night in question I have brought a ship down from London, ordinary sort of a ship, ordinary act of pilotage, down by the Lower Hope, then by Sea Reach, through the Mouse Channel between the West Barrow and the Oaze Sand into the Barrow Deep and to the 'Sunk Cutter' by the lightship. I have worked over the rising tide to find the water, for this is one of the shallowest routes from the Thames, eighteen feet at low water, and I am on the young flood, with seventeen foot draught. Through the Mouse she has about four feet under her. After that, no problems, or so I thought.

When I reach the cutter it is a fine cold night with bright moonlight. Frost glitters on the decks and weather hood of the boarding launch as it curves alongside my pilot ladder to 'take me out.' It is very beautiful, slight sea and swell, nearby the great double flash of the Sunk lightship and the lights of cutter and shipping enliven the scene. Westward I can just make out the coastwise light of England, Felixstowe that will be.

Safely transferred to pilot cutter, I report my name and that of my outward ship to the officer of the watch, who logs this information, as he logs everything. Then I slip below to find a bunk in the pilots' quarters. It has gone two in the morning and I am tired. It is bliss to slip between clean sheets into a warm bunk and drift off into sleep lulled by the slap-slat-slap of the sea on the cutter's hull. Only pilot cutters make this noise, for they drift on wind and tide, and on such a night as this it is a peaceful sound.

I sleep for an hour and the alarm goes off. In an instant all hands are awake instinctively struggling into warm gear and boots. Overhead the crew can be heard crashing about. They seem to be turning

LEGAL EXPENSES INSURANCE — special facilities for UKPA

In view of the uncertainty and expense which surround any matter involving legal action, members are reminded of the special facilities available to them to purchase the Family Legal Expenses Policy underwritten by DAS Legal Expenses Insurance Co Ltd. The Motor Protection Section of the policy relates to problems arising from the use and ownership of motor vehicles such as actions for personal injury and recovery of uninsured losses, disputes with manufacturers and garages and defence against motoring prosecutions — a particularly useful feature of the cover is that it applies throughout Western Europe, as this type of protection is even more necessary when an accident occurs whilst abroad. The policy also contains a General and Consumer Protection Section which deals with personal injury arising in other situations, legal rights relating to the ownership of the home, pursuance of claims against suppliers of household goods and the like. Several UKPA members have already had claims under this type of insurance and their experience confirms the value of having access to appropriate professional advice in such circumstances, as well as the greater likelihood of any claim being taken seriously by the other party in the knowledge that it is being expertly handled on behalf of the member.

Each Section can be bought separately — the Motor Protection Section costs £15 per annum and the General and Consumer Protection Section costs £25 per annum, but the total cost of £40 per year is reduced to £30 for UKPA members when cover is effected under both Sections. Prospectuses containing more detailed information and suitable application forms can be obtained from Robinson, Clemmit, Chisem & Marshall Ltd, Woodlands House, Borough Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland, TS1 3AY.

(continued from previous page)

out both boarding launches, for we hear the whine of the davit gear, but the cutter does not list as she normally does when they turn out only one boat, which they are doing most of the time. We wonder what is up. Soon we learn that a man is overboard from an inward ship, a white-hulled Norwegian freighter of perhaps seven thousand tons. Then we hear it is not a man, but a boy, of just sixteen.

We all know the search and rescue drill, so quietly and efficiently some thirty pilots join the cutter's crew and line the rails. Both boarding boats are afloat and lie one on each quarter of the cutter to widen the area of search. We begin a slow box search to and fro across the swiftly moving tide, eyes and ears alert for the slightest sight or sound with the cutter's best lights probing the dark face of the water. On the bridge the cutter's captain, assisted by the senior pilot, cunningly calculate the area to be searched. They bring great combined experience to this task and so we go, quietly over the water, with the cutter's engine beating beneath our fect turning slow, beating like an untroubled heart.

We know that after the first hour the boy in the water has little chance, and we know that after the second hour he has no chance, for it is the cold that kills. But we search all through the night until the dawning. It was no good and we did not find him. Our hearts were heavy for sixteen is too young to die like that, alone in the cold sea. We were haunted by the thought that we might have passed within a few hundred feet or so and had not seen or heard him.

So it was that death laid his hand on each and every one of us that fine quiet moonlit night on the 'Sunk Cutter,' for we know that this was something which can happen to any pilot — to be lost, to be sought, and not to be found.

CENTENARY COLOURS!

If only we could afford full colour printing of this issue you could see how handsome the UKPA tie really looks. The red, white and gold embroidered badge lies between two thin red and white stripes on a dark blue background. In response to widespread requests the tie has been made available and can be purchased from Peel Street (by Members only) for £3.50 each plus postage and packing 70p.

Also available in like manner from Peel Street is a colourful shield to celebrate the centenary in 1984. This is available, cast in resin, on either a light or a dark wood base and costs £7.80 plus postage and packing £1.





Letter to Editor

2nd April 1982

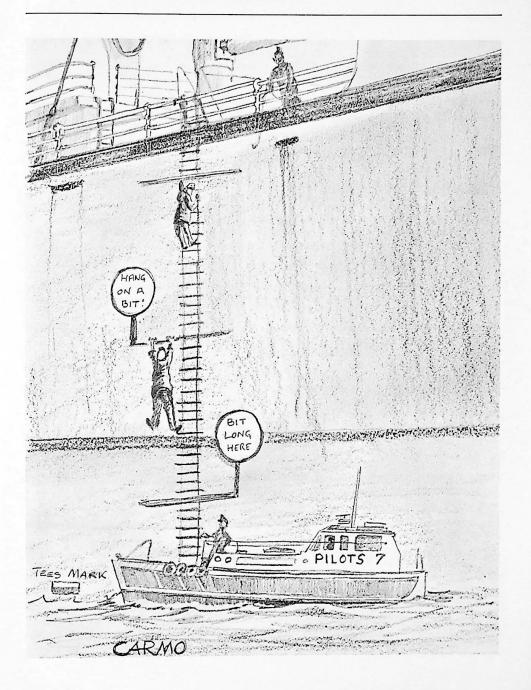
Dear Sir,

I have recently been appraised of an extract from an essay on pilot ladders written by a student at a Nautical College.

He says "long bits" (I assume spreaders) "are attached to provide passing places for pilots". The Technical Committee nationally and internationally should perhaps take heart from this. At least the student knew that there should be "long bits" attached — a breakthrough perhaps.

Yours faithfully,

T P YATES Humber Pilot



Coastlines

At the "Tech"

Industrial students, answering examination questions, gave these amongst their answers -

Coal or oil fuel is used in power instalments to generate HP steam.

A reciprocating pump revolves backwards and forwards, a centrifugal pump just revolves.

A grinding mill runs better with a wet liquid than with a dry one.

"Deep Sea" Pilot Retires

Our best wishes go to Gerald Rowe May, well-known and respected Chairman and Secretary of the Association of Deep Sea Pilots (which became Europilots on joining UKPA) who retired in December to an inland port with berthing for just one 24ft vessel. This is a mooring at the bottom of his garden in Shepperton where he intends to develop his prowess in sail after piloting VLCCs.

Now a lively 70, he started his 54 years of a maritime career apprenticed to the Prince Line in 1928. With them he became an RNR officer in 1932 so, when war broke out, he was among the first to be mobilised and was put in charge of the Algerine Fleet of minesweepers. He later became 2nd Senior Officer of the Mine Sweeper Flotilla and recalls that his ship was the first into Normandy, clearing "Juno" Beach approaches for the D-Day landings.

1946 drew him into salvage work with W R Metcalfe, recovering may wartime wrecks, and he picked up all PLUTO, not only from Boulogne to Portsmouth and from Swansea to Ilfracombe but the trial section from Ardrossan to Holy Island. This trial section had, it seems, long since been forgotten but at 50 tons of steel to the mile the salvage boys were delighted. Then he became Chief Officer and Master in the General Steam Navigation Company, mostly occupied in and around the Mediterranean. George Hammond Shipping Company of Dover invited him in 1955 to join them as a deep sea pilot. In 1965 he became a Freeman of the City of London through the Honourable Company of Master Mariners and in 1971 he was one of the founder members of the Association of Deep Sea Pilots. With an eye to the theme of his retirement, Hammonds presented him with a ship's bell when he came ashore.

News from Clyde

The Clyde Pilots had a get-together at the Royal Gourock Yacht Club to mark the retirement of two of their colleagues.

Ian S McColl joined the Clyde Pilots in 1951 after seventeen years with Paddy Hendersons. During his time on the Inward Staff Ian was 'choice' pilot for Shaw Savill and Lithgows, and then for Moss Hutchison when on the Outward Bound Staff.

Gordon Hoggan also retired at the same time and he, too, was with Paddy Hendersons reaching the rank of Second Mate. After the war Gordon was transferred to Counties Ship Management where he obtained his command. He joined United Baltic Corporation before starting to train as a Cinque Ports Pilot. In 1951 he was licensed for the Clyde where he was 'choice' pilot for T & GG Harrison and Harland & Wolff. To Ian and Gordon we all wish a long and happy retirement.

Also on this occasion a presentation was made to **Roddy Bews** who, after piloting on the Clyde for fifteen years, left us in July to take up pilotage duties on the Forth, Roddy being a well known Clan Line man. We were fortunate enough to have a big turn out for his farewell, including three of our 'secondment' pilots who were home on leave.

The Simple Pilots' Guide to a Watch System

Keen to learn from the experience of other countries, John Godden was intrigued to receive this detailed explanation of how one foreign watch system operates(?).

We each have a letter. I am H. It is a sixteen week cycle for 16 pilots. We are A to Q in order of seniority of years of service. We only change letters when there is a retirement. There are 5 pilots who relieve A to Q for holidays. Z is not really a position, it is only occupied when a relief pilot is spare.

I to 4 are senior pilots. They are all senior in service to A and are relieved for holidays by A. They pilot ships at their discretion, allocate jobs and answer questions.

The senior pilots work 42 hours per week. The pm shift is 1200 to 2400 and the am shift 0000 to 1200. They are not expected to pilot ships between 1800 and 0600 unless they want to.

Consider week 1. I am H and on turn ahead of O. At 0600 I, that is H, come on turn unless the night shift have not yet done jobs in which case they stay on turn until 2 hours before the end of the shift. I would do the 1st job after 0600 or after 0800 as the case may be and O would do the 2nd job. If a 3rd job comes up before 1000 I would do that also but if H and O have both done jobs by 1000 then the day pilots must each do jobs before H and O do another one. The day pilots do not come on turn until the 6 to 16 pilots have done jobs or until 2 hours before the end of the 6 to 16 shift, that is 1400.

" 'It was the best butter', the March Hare meekly replied . . . 'Lets all move one place on.' "

XV CENTURY PILOTAGE

From H M Hignett

The perils of pilots nearly 600 years ago were not merely boarding or meeting a ship with the Plague as the following item shows:—

AD 1417 Henry V

Inquest held near to the water or banks of the water of Thames, namely before the Lymehostes (Limehouse), within the liberty and franchise of the City of London, on Tuesday, the 17th day of August, in the 5th year etc. . . . of our Lord the King; there to enquire how and in what way one Thomas Franke, of Herewich (Harwich), lately lodysman, of a certain ship called the Mary Knyght of Dansk in Pruce, lately drowned by misadventure in the water aforesaid, as .it was said, came by his death.

That on Thursday, the 5th day of August last past, between the 2nd and 3rd hour of the afternoon in that day, the ship aforesaid, by the negligence and undue steering of the steersman and mariners therein, was sent and lodged upon a certain shelp, called 'Rantesbourne Shelpe' near to West Grenewich (Deptford), within the liberty and franchise of the City of London; and that they had to let go one of their anchors, the more speedily to get the ship off such shelp at the next flow of the tide, when then and there the said Thomas Franke went outside of the ship, and stood upon another anchor that was hanging from the bow of the ship, and, taking in his hands a certain staff commonly called a 'spek', he thrust the staff into the knot of the rope by which the other anchor, which had before been let down, was fastened; and while with such staff he was exerting himself with all his might to loosen and let out the rope aforesaid, the anchor, upon which he was standing, swayed so greatly to and fro, that it turned over; upon which the said Thomas fell into the water, striking his head, in so falling, against the iron peak and sharp end of that anchor, which penetrated through his forehead to the brain; the ship in the meantime and for long both before and after standing fast and without any motion or change of position upon such shelp.

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