



DEENDAYAL PORT AUTHORITY

Office of the Deputy Conservator,
1st floor, Administrative Office Bldg.
Deendayal Port Authority, Gandhidham
E mail: dyconservator@deendayalport.gov.in



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TRADE NOTICE

Subj: Safety Instructions for HCL Barge Operators during Inclement Weather / Monsoon Season

Attention of all HCL Barge Operators is drawn to the following safety instructions to be strictly observed during inclement weather conditions including rain, rough seas, swell, and poor visibility, particularly during the monsoon season. All operators are required to ensure that the undermentioned measures are implemented without fail and are brought to the notice of all Masters and crew employed on HCL Barges.

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS — INCLEMENT WEATHER / MONSOON OPERATIONS

- 1. Cessation of Operations in Adverse Weather:** All barge operations shall be immediately stopped during rains, rough seas / swell, and conditions of poor visibility. Operations shall not be conducted when the Significant Wave Height (SWH) exceeds **1.2 metres (SWH > 1.2 m)**. Masters shall exercise utmost caution and shall not proceed to sea or continue operations once this threshold is reached or exceeded.
- 2. Manoeuvring to Prevent Water Ingress:** Barges shall be manoeuvred in such a manner that sea water does not enter the cargo hold at any time. It is recommended that cargo loading be optimised at a reduced quantity appropriate to the prevailing conditions, so that additional reserve buoyancy is maintained for safety when circumstances so demand.
- 3. Covering of Cargo Hold:** The cargo hold shall be covered with tarpaulin at all times while the barge is in transit from the ship to the port when loaded with cargo, to prevent water ingress and protect cargo integrity.
- 4. Hold Bilges to be Pumped Out:** Hold bilges shall be tried out / pumped out at the commencement of each voyage to ensure the cargo hold is free of water and the bilge system is fully operational.
- 5. Life-Saving & Fire-Fighting Appliances (LSA / FFA) in Readiness:** All LSA and FFA equipment shall be kept in a state of readiness at all times. It is strongly recommended that at least one liferaft be kept on board each craft.
 - ▶ **Note:** Operators are advised to ensure that all LSA / FFA equipment is inspected and serviced as per applicable statutory requirements and survey conditions.
- 6. AIS / VHF Communication:** AIS and VHF radio equipment shall be operational at all times. The VHF shall be tested with Port Control every time the vessel departs from port and every time it departs from the offshore terminal / berth (OTB). Any communication failure shall be rectified immediately before sailing.

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7. Company Contingency Plan and Table-Top Exercise: Every operating company shall have a documented contingency plan in place covering the action to be taken upon receipt of a distress message from any of its crafts (barges). The contingency plan shall involve the Master and crew of the vessel (barges). Companies shall periodically conduct table-top exercises to ensure all personnel are familiar with and can effectively implement the contingency plan.

► **Note:** Records of table-top exercises shall be maintained and made available for inspection by this Office on request.

8. Validity of Certificates and Insurance: The Certificate of Survey (COS) and all other statutory certificates / insurance documents of the barge shall be kept current and valid at all times. The COS shall be endorsed by the Certifying / Notified Organisation (CNO) as required. No barge shall be permitted to operate with expired certificates or lapsed insurance.

9. Draft Marks — Loading within Approved Limits: Draft marks shall be clearly visible to the Master and crew at all times to enable loading of cargo only up to the allowable approved draft / capacity. Overloading beyond the approved maximum draft is strictly prohibited.

10. Limitation on Barges Alongside Mother Vessel: It is advised that not more than one (1) barge be kept alongside the mother vessel on her lee side at any given time, so as to prevent dragging of the vessel's anchor and to maintain safe manoeuvring conditions.

11. Mooring Ropes and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): An adequate number of mooring ropes of appropriate strength shall be used when the barge is making fast alongside the vessel. All crew members shall wear safety gear / PPE at all times during mooring and unmooring operations.

12. Safety Precautions, Seamanship, and Crew Briefing: Operators shall ensure that crew of barges are briefed on the proper handling of mooring ropes during the season, including the hazards associated with mooring operations in adverse weather and the safety measures to be strictly adhered to. Good seamanship practices shall be observed at all times, and safety precautions shall not be compromised under any circumstances.

13. Reporting of Incidents: Any incident, accident, near-miss, or emergency — however minor — involving the barge, its crew, or cargo shall be immediately reported to this Office, the Port Authority, and the Company. Operators shall not delay or withhold reporting of any such event. A written report shall follow within 24 hours of the occurrence.

Prompt reporting of minor incidents helps prevent escalation to major casualties and is a statutory obligation. Failure to report may attract penal action.

Non-compliance with any of the above instructions may result in suspension or cancellation of the Harbour Craft Licence (HCL) and imposition of penalty as applicable under the Merchant Shipping Act and Rules made thereunder. Operators are personally responsible for the safety of their craft, cargo, and crew.

All HCL Barge Operators are requested to acknowledge receipt of this Trade Notice and confirm implementation of the above instructions. Any queries may be addressed to this Office.


Deputy Conservator
Deendayal Port Authority

All HCL Barge operators

CC :- Harbour Master / Signal Supdt. / Flotilla Supdt / Traffic Manager