Adjustment pilot transfer arrangement Multratug-19

Harbor tugs are generally unable to install a correct pilot transfer arrangement (PTA) due to their design in relation to the nature of their operations, leading to dangerous situations and refusals from the pilots. Due to this situation, several tow transports have been delayed and there has also been an accident with injuries during an attempt to put a pilot onboard a tow transport with a non-compliant pilot transfer arrangement.

The harbor tugs are not yet equipped with handhold stanchions, with the result that the operating pilot has no support point to which he can grab. The door in the bulwark is opened (height above water 50-60cm), creating an opening to get on board. The golden rule of '3 points of support' that we propagate during the safety days for student pilots in the national part of the training program, cannot be implemented here. harbor tugs are equipped with a large fendering that they need for their work which cannot be removed. The consequence of this is that the small pilot launch almost always ends up under this fendering when trying to put a pilot on board, with great risks as a result.

I recently started talking to Multraship, because they are experiencing a lot of inconvenience due to a large number of transports at sea. Hildebrand Kamerling (salvage master/senior training captain) and the undersigned sat down around the table and recognized the problems from both our backgrounds and worked towards possible solutions.

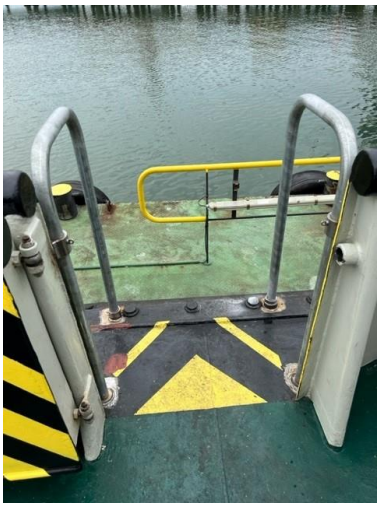
A condition from Multraship was that any handhold stanchions (prescribed in SOLAS chV reg 23 rule 4.1) would not be executed as a fixed setup, but would be easy to install and remove. This design also had to be placed from the inside of the bulwark, to minimize mob risk.

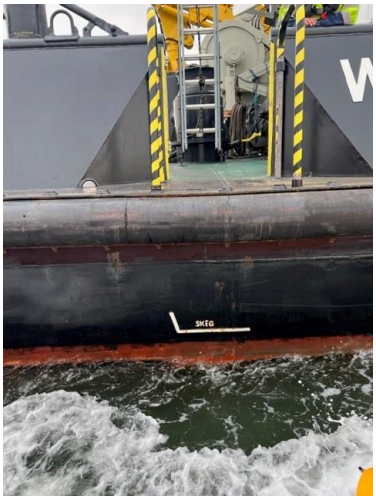
I indicated what the prescribed sizes of this design should be:

- Diameter 32-36mm
- Height 120cm
- Spacing 70-80cm
- Placement against the deck edge .

As far as preventing the launch getting stuck under the fendering another requirement from Multraship is, that installation of a system to prevent this should also be easy and without risk to the crew to be removed.

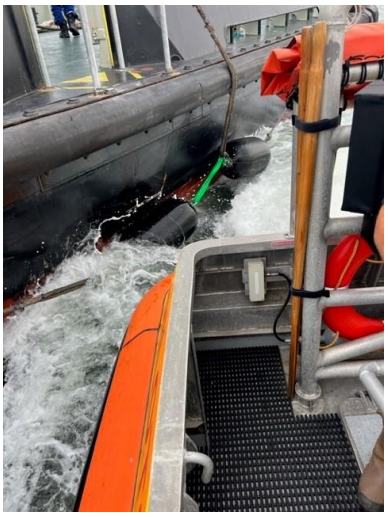
One of my demands was that the system should be afloat at all times, so that the launch could lean against it and can never get stuck under it with capsizing as a possible result, which happened a few years ago at pilot station Wandelaar during an attempt to man a ship with a dangerous pilot transfer arrangement.





The photos above show the design on port and starboard. Extra fendering is fitted on the port side , but not on the starboard side. We have carried out this in such a way that we can also test the difference with and without extra fendering.

Removable fendering on the tug's side



Fendering in the water

Without fending...

With fendering

During testing, we quickly concluded that the removable handhold stanchions are of great added value and increase safety.

The fendering as applied sufficed. In the photos above you can clearly see that the launch gets under the starboard side (without removable fendering) fixed fendering of the MT19. On the port side, however, it can be seen that the launch continues to lean against the floating extra fendering and does not end up under the fixed fendering of the MT-19.

You can clearly see here how the fendering is attached to the MT-19. The launch leans against it and pushes the floating fendering firmly under the side of the vessel.

We initially expected that it would be difficult to bring this fendering back on board because of the weight, but during the test it showed that this could be carried out very easily and safely.

Damen shipyards has now indicated that it can apply this idea to already existing tugs and with the construction of new boats, can apply as standard. They'll inform the customer that it is possible to equip new-build vessels with removable stanchions as well as attachment points.

During the test it turned out that the 'make-shift' system of fendering is sufficient, but that there is room for improvement. It has been agreed to order a fender that is as thick as the space under the tug's fixed fendering. Dimensions: 150cm with a diameter of 70cm.

kind regards,

Arie Palmers, maritime pilot

Drone images: Gijs Groenier, www.gnaut.nl