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CIRCULAR

Pilot Transfer Arrangements

C26009 | 20 January 2026

Notice to: Ship Owners / Managers / Operators

The Port of London Authority (PLA) has issued a Notice – [NABSO12-25](#), which advises that vessels arriving at the Port of London with deficient pilot boarding arrangements may have their movement cancelled. Pilots have the right to refuse boarding a vessel that has rigged a non-compliant pilot transfer arrangement, and retain the right to report the defect to the Port State Control authorities. This can lead to serious delays and may result in the vessel being required to anchor until such deficiencies have been remedied.

Points to Note:

The notice lists some common areas of deficiencies, together with descriptions of why they are not acceptable, which include:

- Pilot ladder secured by deck tongue;
- Platform placed over the securing area of the ladder;
- Embarkation platform – trapdoor system;
- Pilot ladder secured with shackles;
- Safe rigging of retrieval lines;
- Stanchions (missing or not to the required standard).

Upcoming changes to Regulations

In June 2025, the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) approved changes to SOLAS Chapter V/23. The changes are detailed in [Resolution MSC.572\(110\)](#).

The updated regulations will apply to:

- **New installations** from January 1, 2028.
- **Existing installations** on SOLAS ships during their first survey after January 1, 2029.
- **Non-SOLAS ships** starting January 1, 2030.

A revised poster depicting the required pilot transfer arrangements can be found as an Annex to [MSC.1-Circ.1428-Rev.1](#)

Act now

Ship Owners/Managers/Operators should take note of the contents of the PLA notice, IMO Resolution MSC.572(110), and Circular MSC.1-Circ.1428-Rev.1 and be guided accordingly. Compliance ahead of the implementation dates is encouraged.