

Columbia River Pilots’ Vessel Movement Guidelines

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Columbia River Pilots' Vessel Movement Guidelines

I. Introduction.

These guidelines are offered to vessel owners, operators and agents to assist in planning vessel movements on the Columbia and Willamette River Pilotage Grounds. These are general guidelines, advisory in nature only and are not intended to supersede or limit in any way the authority or judgment of any individual pilot. Every specific situation is unique with regard to the type and class of vessel, its operating condition and crew, the existing weather, river currents and numerous other variable conditions. All final decisions remain within the discretion and authority of the pilot(s) dispatched to the job.

IMPORTANT: READ CAREFULLY

These guidelines are intended for planning purposes only. They have been developed to assist dispatchers and vessel owners, operators and agents in planning vessel movements. These guidelines are not intended, nor should they be construed, as a representation of minimum or maximum requirements or a warranty that, if the recommendations outlined in the guidelines are met, an operation can be successfully performed. **IN ANY EVENT, NO REPRESENTATION OR WARRANTIES OF ANY SORT ARE MADE OR INTENDED BY THE COLUMBIA RIVER PILOTS OR ANY OF IT'S MEMBER PILOTS BY THESE GUIDELINES.** In each instance, the individual pilot who is assigned to the vessel will determine whether the planned operation can be successfully completed with the resources allocated, and in every case the pilot is free to exercise his or her authority to proceed with fewer resources, or request more resources, than indicated in these guidelines.

Please note that actual conditions may preclude the performance of the movement as originally planned. For this reason, it is the vessel agent's responsibility to contact the pilots' office to determine in advance whether, in the assigned pilot's opinion, the resources initially allocated will be satisfactory. Agents should also to be prepared to assist the assigned pilot with additional resources if needed. Each vessel has its own peculiar handling characteristics. Some vessels, because of handling limitations, will need additional tugs or other resources, and in some instances, cannot be moved under all conditions or at certain times. The vessel agent should provide complete details of any known vessel handling characteristics in order to assist both in planning and the performance of actual piloting operations.

II. General Information.

- **Harbor Safety Plan:** The Lower Columbia Region has a Harbor Safety Plan (HSP) in effect. COLRIP encourages all vessels to be familiar with the HSP and to plan all transits consistent with its terms, as applicable. The Lower Columbia Region HSP can be accessed at: www.lcrhsc.org
- **Channel Depth:** Except as limited by localized, temporary shoaling, the Columbia River channel is currently maintained to a depth of 43 feet and a width of 600 feet. The Willamette River channel is 43 feet deep up to approximately river mile 2, from that point the controlling depth is 40 feet. Vessels may be permitted to sail with the maximum fresh water draft of 43 feet, if river level, tide, and conditions permit. Ships with a draft of 43 feet may be subject to substantial delays while awaiting the proper tide and river levels to be present during the transit and arrival at the bar. Although many berths also maintain a 43 foot depth, others do not and may have considerably less water approaching or alongside their docks. Prior to their port call, all vessels must verify via their agent that adequate depth exist at those berths.
- **Deep Draft Transits:** As indicated in US Coast Pilot Volume 7, vessels with a fresh water draft of less than 36 feet are generally able to transit the river at any time. In order to take advantage of tidal conditions, inbound vessels with drafts of 36 feet or greater are required by COLRIP to arrive at Astoria 2 hours before high water, Astoria (Tongue Pt. Station). Depending on river conditions, outbound vessels with drafts greater than 38 feet may have sailing times adjusted by COLRIP to ensure adequate under keel clearance.
- **Under Keel Clearance:** All vessel movements will be planned based on predicted river levels to maintain a static under keel clearance (UKC) that is no less than 2 feet. Actual UKC may vary depending on the accuracy of the river level predictions and channel depth charting. COLRIP cannot and does not guarantee the accuracy of river level predictions or channel depth information provided by outside agencies.
- **Draft Reporting:** COLRIP requires all vessel drafts to be reported in fresh water.
- **Air Drafts:** Limiting air draft on the Columbia River is 198 feet (59.73 meters) at the Longview Bridge. Limiting air draft on the Willamette River is 175 feet (53.33 meters) at the Fremont Bridge in Portland.
- **Beam Limitations:** There are no restrictions limiting the length or beam of vessels transiting the Columbia or Willamette Rivers; however, certain slips, finger piers and face berths may not be able to accommodate some ships. Check with those facilities you intend to visit prior to your port call.

- **Vessel Trim – Down by the Head:** Because of poor handling characteristics, COLRIP strongly discourages vessels from transiting in a condition where the forward draft exceeds the aft draft (down by the head). At the time an order is placed for a pilot, vessels intending to transit down by the head are required to report this condition to COLRIP so that appropriate preparations can be made.

- **Tug Escorts:** When an escort is required, an escort plan will be created on a case by case basis, with such plans including, at a minimum:

- Number and class of tugs required
- The tugs' usage during operations
- The estimated speed of escort transit
- Whether escort transit is daylight only

Unless directed otherwise by COLRIP, tugboats dispatched for escort duty shall be able to effectively execute “tethered indirect” and/or “tethered direct” operations (i.e. tractor tugs only). Tugboat operators dispatched for escorts are expected to have baseline proficiency in escort duty relevant to the capabilities of the tugboat.

- **Dead Ship Tows:** The USCG Sector Columbia River has a Dead Ship Tow Policy in effect. All vessels over 150 feet LOA (except barges) are required to submit a Dead Ship Tow Plan to the USCG at least 72 hours in advance of scheduled movement.

More information can be found at: www.uscg.mil/d13/sectcolrvr/default.asp

- **Anchorage Use:** Vessels must coordinate their anchorage needs with the Columbia River Pilots dispatcher prior to their arrival.

- **Astoria Anchorage:** Vessels arriving with a draft less than 23 feet (fresh water) may anchor in Astoria. Vessels arriving with a draft exceeding 23 feet are not permitted to anchor in Astoria but may dock at the Astoria Port Docks after contacting the Columbia River Bar Pilot office or proceed to an adequate upriver anchorage. Vessels bound for sea from upriver ports may be allowed to anchor in Astoria if necessary, provided that their draft is less than 23 feet and they arrive in Astoria on a proper tide. Tugboats may be required to assist outbound vessels that are anchoring in Astoria.

- **Longview Anchorage:** Vessels in ballast and less than 650 feet LOA may anchor in Longview if space and conditions permit. Loaded vessels or those over 650 feet LOA will require a standby tug at Longview and if space and river conditions permit.

- **Vancouver Anchorage:** Vessels in ballast or partially loaded and less than 650 feet LOA may anchor in Vancouver if space and conditions permit. Fully loaded vessels or those over 650 feet LOA will require a stern anchor buoy or a standby tug. The lower Vancouver anchorage is limited to vessels in ballast and less than 600 feet LOA.

- **Anchor Buoys:** There are currently two anchor buoys in the upper Vancouver anchorage, one in the lower Vancouver anchorage, one in the Prescott anchorage, and one in the Rainier anchorage. Contact the Columbia River Pilots dispatcher for scheduling of all buoys and anchorage availability.
- **Swinging for Compass:** Swinging for compass will occur during daylight hours only.

III. Assist Tugs.

1. Introduction.

- The term “4% Bow Thruster” shall refer to bow thrusters with documented and 100% available metric horsepower (1.36 HP/KW) greater than or equal to 4% of the vessel’s Summer DWT. A 4% Bow Thruster can substitute for the smallest tug within the Tug Guidelines.
- Tugs within a class are not necessarily the same and, occasionally, specific tugs may be requested due to their particular design, type of propulsion, deck machinery or number of propellers. Bow and stern thrusters should be considered an aid and do not necessarily replace a tug whether it is due to lack of horsepower or other inherent limitations.
- Tugs are listed in classes according to “bollard pull”, as certified by the American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) or other acceptable independent authority. Bollard pull is used rather than horsepower because it is the only meaningful way to rate a tug’s efficiency. Additionally, the tug’s design type, such as a tractor, twin screw or single screw, and the addition of kort nozzles and flanking rudders, has a definite effect on the utility and efficiency of a particular tug. Use of any tug that has not been certified by an acceptable independent authority must be cleared in advance by the assigned pilot or operations pilot.
- The bollard pull capabilities of named tugs stated elsewhere in these guidelines is information that has been provided by third parties. It has not been separately confirmed by the Columbia River Pilots, which cannot and does not guarantee the accuracy of information provided by others. By restating the bollard pull information provided by others the Columbia River Pilots does not accept responsibility for its accuracy. Anyone needing confirmation of bollard pull capabilities for specific tugs must contact the tug owners or operators directly.

2. Tug Class Ratings.

Class	Minimum Bollard Pull (in pounds/short tons)	
	Ahead	Astern
A+	110,000/ 55.0t	100,000/ 50.0t
A	80,000/ 40.0t	70,000/ 35.0t
B or B(+)	60,000/ 30.0t	45,000/ 22.5t
C	35,000/ 17.5t	25,000/ 12.5t
D	20,000/ 10.0t	10,000/ 5.0t

A+, A and B+ Class boats must be tractor tugs.

CLASS	TUG
A+	Sommer S Carolyn Dorothy Kalama
A	Peter J Brix Wynema Spirit Portland Deschutes Willamette Vancouver
B+	Washington PJ Brix
B	Clearwater Columbia
C	Umatilla Lassen
D	Chinook

3. Pre-job Expectations.

COLRIP assumes that the hull plating, bitts, chocks, and all other equipment reasonably expected to withstand pressure during ship assistance by tugs will accommodate the full forces applied by tugs allocated under these guidelines. If the bitts, chocks, plating or any other equipment cannot withstand the maximum predicted forces, the vessel's master and agent are obligated to contact both COLRIP and the assigned tug company **BEFORE THE JOB COMMENCES** with the correct, safe working load (SWL) maximums.

Assist tug operators may sometimes be inclined to deliver less power than called for by a pilot out of concern over the SWL of a ship's bitts, chocks or other equipment. Failure of tug operators to respond fully to orders from the pilot can imperil the safety of a ship being assisted, nearby structures and persons who may be present. Any tug operator who has information regarding the SWL of ship's equipment that would cause the operator to refuse to deliver full tug power when ordered must notify the pilot of this concern **BEFORE THE JOB COMMENCES**.

A communication between the tug provider and the pilot assigned to the job is expected **BEFORE THE JOB COMMENCES**. The communication can be initiated by either party. If for any reason there has been no communication regarding the pilot's preferences for a particular job, these guidelines serve as the default recommendations, and the tug provider should only dispatch tugs that are consistent with these guidelines.

4. Tug Guidelines.

A. General Reference.

These guidelines apply to all docks unless different specific guidelines are provided in section B below.

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
>752' LOA	$\geq 30'$	B+,B+	B+,B+	
	$< 30'$	B+,B	B+,B	
Panamax	$\geq 30'$	B+,B+	B+,B+	
(approx 750' LOA by 106' Beam)	$< 30'$	B+,C	B+,C	
Handymax	$\geq 30'$	B+,B	B+,B	
(approx 623' LOA by 106' Beam)	$< 30'$	B,C	B,C	
Handysize	$\geq 30'$	B+,C	C,C	
(approx 585' LOA by 90' Beam)	$< 30'$	C,C	C,C	

B. Specific Guidelines That Differ From General Reference.

Vessels requiring Class A+ tugs may substitute 1 Class A and 1 Class B for the Class A+ tug.

PORTLAND

LDC (O-Dock)

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	Any	B+,B	B+,B+	No thruster substitute.

Swan Island: Dry Docks (per dock agreement)

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival/Departure	Notes:
≥600' LOA	Any	B+(make up),B,C	No thruster substitute.
<600' LOA	Any	B+(make up),C	No thruster substitute.

Willbridge Terminal

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival/Departure Current Velocity (knots)			
		≤1.0	1.1≤1.5*	1.6≤2.0	2.1≤2.5**
Any	≥30'	A,B+	A+,A	A+,A+,A	A+,A+,A,A
Any	<30'	B+,B	B+,B+	A+,A	A+,A+

No thruster substitute.

A representative of the vessel should contact COLRIP's office at least 24 hours in advance of an arrival/departure for current river conditions:

*THE LOWER SIDE OF THE DOCKS SHOULD BE USED WITH CURRENT GREATER THAN 1.5 KNOTS.

**DOCKING OR UNDOCKING WITH CURRENT GREATER THAN 2.5 KNOTS SHOULD BE UNDERTAKEN ONLY IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

Terminal 4: B-411

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure
Any	Any	See General Reference.	B

No thruster substitute on departure when only a bow thruster available.

Terminal 6

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
≥900' LOA	Any	B+,B+	B+,B+	No thruster substitute on departure.

VANCOUVER

Van B-10 (2 tugs + line boat per dock agreement)

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	Any	B+,B	B+,C	No thruster substitute.

KALAMA

Kalama Chemical (2 tugs per dock agreement)

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	Any	B+,C	C,C	No thruster substitute.

LONGVIEW

WEYCO Cargo (2 tugs on departure per dock agreement)

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	Any	B+,B	B+,B	No thruster substitute on departure.

ASTORIA

Astoria and Rice Island Anchorages

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	≥30'	B	B	Tide dependent.
Any	<30'	C	C	Tide dependent.
Any	≤23'	D	D	Tide dependent.

Port Docks: Face

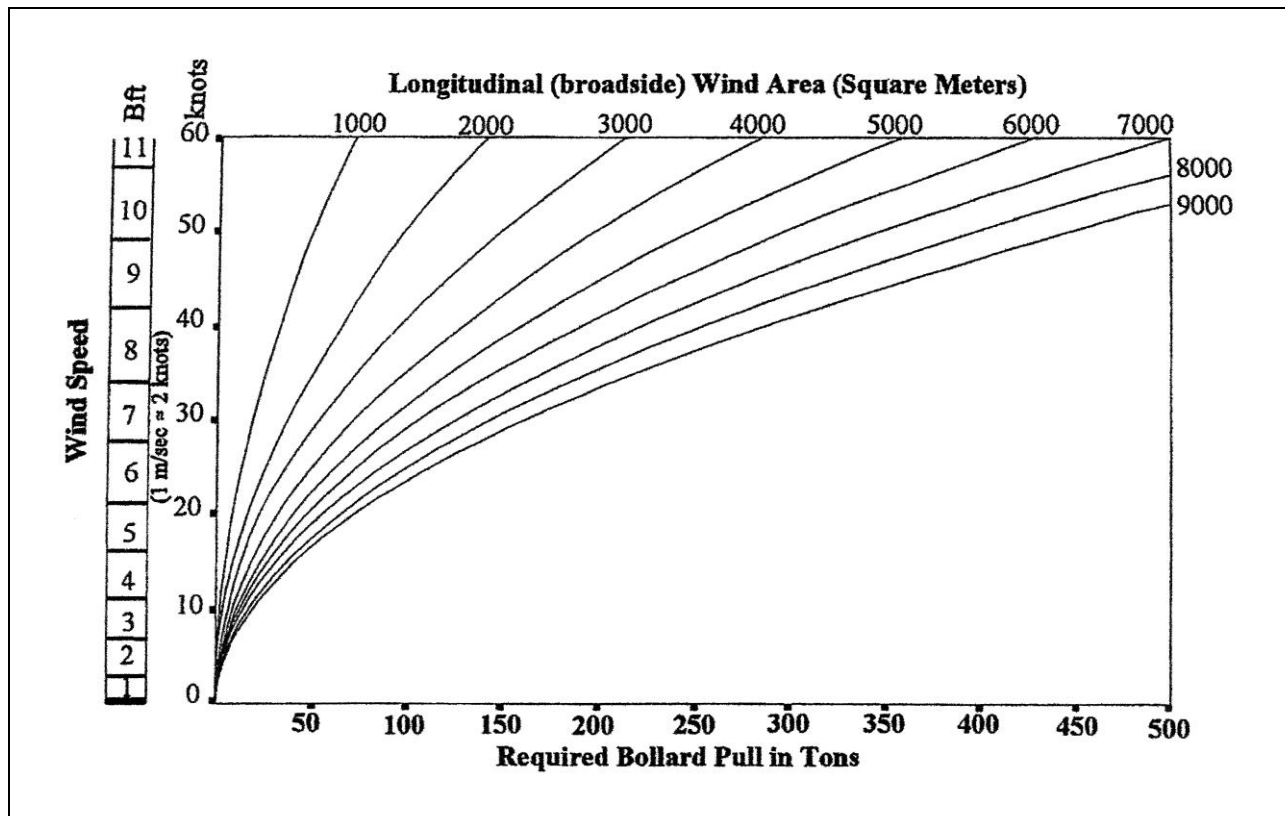
Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure
Any	Any	See General Reference.	See General Reference.

Port Docks: Slip

Vessel size	Draft	Arrival	Departure	Notes:
Any	Any	B+,B+	B+,B+	Tide dependent, no thruster substitute.

C. Wind Forces.

Wind speed and direction can have a dramatic effect on assist tug forces needed for vessel maneuvering. The tug guidelines in previous sections assume light winds. The following graph illustrates forces on the beam for any vessel's exposed side area with increasing wind speed and the bollard pull required to compensate for the wind forces.



(Captain Henk Hensen, *Tug Use in Port*, p, 75 (Nautical Institute, 1997).

The following chart illustrates wind forces on the beam for a car carrier of specific dimensions. The bollard pull required to compensate for increasing wind speeds in this example may be used as a quick reference guide for other car carriers.

Car Carrier: LOA 653', Beam 105', Draft 27'.

	Wind Speed (knots)										
	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Bollard Pull in Tons	8	19	33	52	75	102	134	169	209	253	301