



STATE OF WASHINGTON
BOARD OF PILOTAGE COMMISSIONERS

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December 4, 2023

To All Pilots

Re: Unsafe Pilot Transfer Arrangements

Dear Pilots and Pilot Trainees,

As you know, the Board of Pilotage Commissioners' mission and priority is safety on the water. This includes the safety of our pilots and pilot trainees when engaged in transfers. The Board's Pilot Safety Committee, thanks to the help and support of both pilots and industry, are collecting, analyzing and reporting dangerous transfer arrangements and comparing them to standards.

We want to be sure you know that if you are faced with an unsafe pilot transfer arrangement, the BPC will support your decision to refuse boarding until a safe transfer arrangement can be made. You might wish to keep a copy of this letter to present to a ship's captain should the transfer arrangement not be satisfactory.

Here is a link to the International Chamber of Shipping's (ICS) "Shipping Industry Guidance on Pilot Transfer Arrangements: Ensuring Compliance with SOLAS" <https://www.ics-shipping.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Shipping-Industry-Guidance-on-Pilot-Transfer-Arrangements-v3.pdf>. Page 3 contains an explicit statement from the shipping industry that "pilots have the right to decline to board a vessel offering defective boarding arrangements...".

Please report any unsafe arrangements using the Puget Sound Pilots & Port of Grays Harbor Pilotage Pilot's Report of Non-Compliant Transfer Arrangement. The BPC Pilot Safety Committee reviews and compiles all these reports into a comprehensive document each quarter. These are available from BPC staff.

Remember, the BPC supports your decision to require compliant and safe transfers during your assignments.

Sincerely,

Sheri J. Tonn, Chair