

# PACIFIC PILOTAGE AUTHORITY

1000 – 1130 West Pender Street  
Vancouver, B.C  
V6E 4A4



## NOTICE TO INDUSTRY

**Date Issued:** 20 February 2018 (**revised 29 April 2025**) **Notice Number:** 01/2018

**Subject:** Water taxis used for transferring pilots to/from ships

**Geographic Area:** All compulsory pilotage areas on the west coast of Canada

**Details:** Construction & design requirements for water taxis used for pilot transfers

### **Guideline:**

Effective immediately, the following new requirements apply to all water taxis new to the pilot transfer services. All water taxis already approved by PPA's Pilot Transportation Safety Committee (PTSC) and presently in service are not affected by these new requirements.

The specifications established in May 2006 will remain in force and are further clarified in this Notice to Industry.

New applications for vessels to be used in pilot transfers will at a minimum be required to have:

1. A twin propulsion system (two engines with two propellers or two jets)
2. Ample deck space around cabin (for safe access to the bow for boarding)
3. A recovery ramp on stern to recover persons from the water (a lift basket will not be acceptable)
4. Adequate lighting and hand rails to ensure safe transfer operations
5. Steering and propulsion controls on the stern deck

Additional requirements to be considered will depend on the vessel size and design, sea keeping qualities, the training of the crew, the suite of electronics on board, the cabin layout, the deck surface including nonskid material and possible tripping hazards and an additional recovery system as per past practice and the requested area of operation.

Furthermore, the vessel(s) must be enrolled in a Transport Canada approved inspection program (such as the Small Vessel Compliance Program). The vessel is to be operated by duly qualified, competent crew certified for the specified vessel(s) and for the area in which it operates. Moreover, the vessel must have a proper base with adequate safe access to and from the vessel and appropriately lit for night time operations. The operator must have sufficient Protection & Indemnity Risk Liability Insurance and comprehensive general liability and public damage insurance.

Annual safety evaluations of the water taxis/launches, their equipment and crew are to be held at no cost to the Pacific Pilotage Authority.

The intent of the criteria above is to provide a clear understanding of requirements for potential service providers for safe and efficient pilot transfers.

**Notes:**

1. Tug usage for pilot transfers
  - a. Due to the low probability of recovery of a pilot who falls into the water, who may or may not be incapacitated, a tug is not deemed to be an alternate to a pilot boat or an approved water taxi.
  - b. The PTSC will consider tug usage for pilot transfers on a case-by-case basis, especially in emergencies and alongside berths, on the pilot's advice.
  - c. For areas of low traffic volumes where approved water taxis are not available for transportation, tugs could be used to transfer pilots, on a case-by-case basis, and only until an alternate approved water taxi service is available.
2. For out ports where available water taxis are very limited, the PTSC will review each request on a case-by-case basis.

The below constitutes a list of water taxis approved to perform static pilot transfers by the Pilot Transportation Safety Committee:

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Area of Operation</b>	<b>Contact information</b>
Mercury Transport Inc.	Vancouver Howe Sound	65 Rogers Street, Vancouver BC V6A 3N2 Office: (604) 921-7451 ext. 2 Dispatch: (604) 834-0337
Tymac Launch	Vancouver Howe Sound Southern Gulf Islands Nanaimo to Victoria	North foot of Main Street, Vancouver BC V6A 3Y5 Dispatch: (604) 685-0756
Chemainus Water Taxi	Southern Gulf Islands NanOOSE to Victoria	Chemainus Municipal Wharf Oak Street, Chemainus BC V9G 1M9 Dispatch: (250) 701-3832

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Area of Operation</b>	<b>Contact information</b>
Gulf Island Water Taxi	Southern Gulf Islands Constance Bank to Trincomali	Dispatch: (250) 537-2510 (24-hour pager) info@gulfislandwatertaxi.com
Nanaimo Port Authority	Nanaimo Harbour  Locations in immediate vicinity of Nanaimo (on case-by-case basis)	F Dock  10 Wharf St, Nanaimo BC V9R 2X3 Dispatch: (250)-762-3443
Gat Leedm Marine Ltd	Prince Rupert	Dispatch: (250) 600-3206
West Coast Launch	Prince Rupert  Kitimat	PO Box 160, Prince Rupert BC  V8J 3P6 Dispatch: (250) 627 9166
Gateway Shipping	Kitimat	Dispatch: (250) 639-4277

Please contact PPA at [marineops@ppa.gc.ca](mailto:marineops@ppa.gc.ca) for any queries and/or clarifications.