

PILOT TRANSFER SYSTEMS

On the St. Lawrence River

The transfer of the pilot may be denied or delayed if transfer arrangements are not in compliance with regulations.



All ships must have the necessary pilot transfer equipment and arrangements in place in accordance with Canadian and international regulations. Pilot transfer is the responsibility of the vessel requesting the service of a pilot.

Pilots ask that ships deploy their accommodation ladder in addition to a pilot ladder, regardless of the distance between the surface of the water and the point of access of the ship. However, this method will be considered only if the necessary equipment is available on board.

Wherever possible, the point of transition between the pilot ladder and accommodation ladder will be positioned in a way that minimizes the vertical distance to climb on the pilot ladder (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1:
LOWERING THE POINT OF TRANSITION BETWEEN THE PILOT LADDER AND THE ACCOMMODATION LADDER

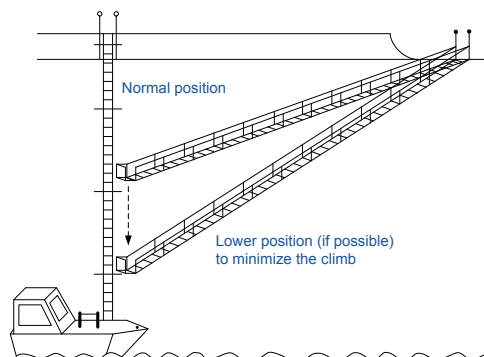
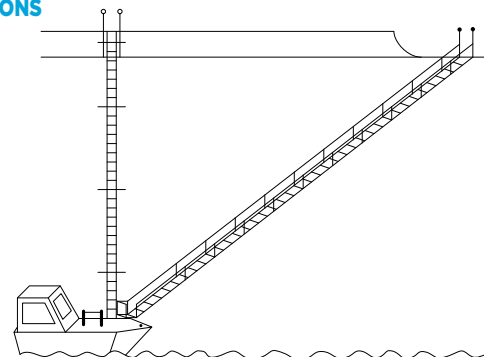


FIGURE 2:
ACCOMMODATION LADDER LOWERED TO ALLOW DIRECT BOARDING FROM THE PILOT VESSEL UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS

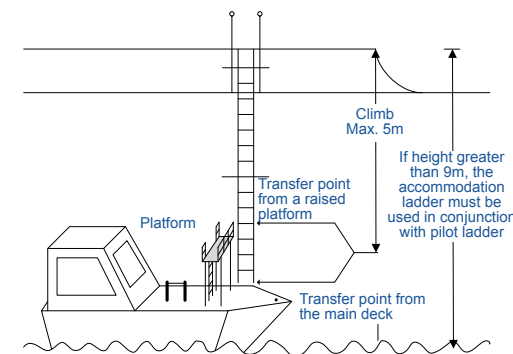


In response to requests made by pilots, it was determined that a safe alternative under certain conditions would be to lower the accommodation ladder to allow pilots to move directly onto or off the pilot boat, as long as the ship has the requisite equipment (Figure 2). Transport Canada recognizes this as an "equally safe and convenient" approach, as

set out in Section 74 of the Navigation Safety Regulations (CSA 2001), provided that the following conditions are met:

1. Embarkation from the pilot ladder must be possible at all times.
2. When the pilot boat approaches the ship, the accommodation ladder must be raised so that there is no risk or obstructions for the personnel on deck or for the superstructures of the pilot boat.
3. Once the pilot boat is in position, and under the supervision of the deck crew of the pilot boat and the ship's officer in charge of the transfer, the accommodation ladder can be adjusted to its final position:
 - a) at the point of transfer with the pilot ladder, depending on sea and swell conditions; or
 - b) if there are no waves or swell, at a minimum height of about 350 mm from the deck or from the platform of the pilot boat, so that the pilot can embark directly.
4. Pilots must remain inside the pilot boat or on the deck of the ship until all equipment is in final position and the pilot boat is resting against the side of the ship.

FIGURE 3:
CLIMB ON THE PILOT LADDER MUST NOT EXCEED 5 METRES



Applying especially to Canadian ships, subsection 74(4) of the Navigation Safety Regulations stipulates that the maximum climb on a pilot ladder does not exceed 5 metres (Figure 3). The vertical distance between the point of access of the ship and the height of the deck of the pilot boat above the water or the height of the platform or structure of the tugboat specifically designed to allow pilots to embark more easily must be taken into consideration. If the distance between this transfer point and the point of access to or egress from the ship does not exceed 5 metres, the deployment of an accommodation ladder is not compulsory.

Lowering the transfer point between the accommodation ladder and the pilot ladder is thought to be an effective way of reducing the risks involved when transferring pilots in winter. Direct transfer from the accommodation ladder can also be considered when a transfer platform is being used instead of direct embarkation from the deck of a pilot boat on transfers in the winter.



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