A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As another year draws to a close and we enter into what is for many a season of celebration and thanksgiving, I want to extend my sincere best wishes to all IMPA members and their families and friends for a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2013.

My messages in The International Pilot frequently address problems or potential threats confronting pilots and our profession. These are unfortunate realities. My year-ending message, however, is different. As we prepare to greet the New Year, let us not forget that our profession is a great one with a rich history. A pilot’s job is demanding and stressful, it can be difficult and dangerous, and it can be tough on our families. It is not for the timid, the meek, or the indecisive. It carries tremendous responsibilities. But what makes it so hard is also a big part of what makes it so satisfying. Pilots do something that very few individuals in the world can do, and we’re fortunate to be working in such a unique profession. Pilots get to work outdoors, in and around the sea and busy ports, and we get to meet interesting people from all corners of the world. We are empowered by our licensing authorities to use our expertise, experience and independent judgment to provide an invaluable public service.

Let us not forget, however, that each of us has a responsibility to work to enhance and continually improve the piloting profession. We need to control our own destiny. How do we do that? We do that by engaging with the external groups and entities that have the potential to affect our profession. As we go about this engagement, we must speak with a unified voice that reinforces the vital role pilotage plays in safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible movement of maritime commerce. We can also control our destiny by leading pilots within our own groups to be the very best, most professional pilots possible. We can’t afford complacent pilotage operations or pilots and we must always remember that every pilot is a representative of the entire profession. The reality is that pilots have to continually earn the respect and confidence of governmental authorities and the public.

If there are areas that need improvement in our own pilot operations, we need to take the initiative. I’m proud to say that our record of success as a profession is a testament to our desire to improve, to do the hard work, to take the responsibility, to grow in our abilities and the quality of our services. This is the strongest and most valuable tradition of piloting. I’m confident that it will continue to be so for a very long time.

Warm regards,
Captain Michael Watson
President
IMPA

See pages 11 to 13 for a view of the 21st IMPA Congress which took place in London between 24th and 28th September 2012
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Message from the Secretary General...

Dear Colleagues,

London is slowly subsiding from its orgy of 2012 events and I think there was little doubt amongst attendees that the UKMPA made an excellent job of organizing the 2012 conference.

The capricious London weather was not too unkind, the presentations were well received, and we seemed to get through business pretty amicably.

Most delegates saw a fair amount of the Capital. It was a real pleasure for the IMPA team to welcome everyone to London, our home, and we hope you enjoyed our idiosyncratic habits such as the Morris Dancers!

We are here because of the need to represent you at IMO and we were fortunate to have had the SG of IMO, Mr Koji Sekimizu, address us. Whilst some of his comments were perhaps not exactly what we wanted to hear, it was good from my perspective that pilots from around the world were able to hear his thoughts direct. On a very positive note we enjoyed some very good comment in Lloyd’s List, and we raised some £6,000 for the two chosen charities, the Mission to Seafarers and and Save the Children (see page 17). Our “sister organisations” were universally impressed by our event too. It is now only 18 months to Panama and IMPA 2014! Take care on the water and seasonal greetings from the Staff on the “Wellington”.

Nick Cutmore
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Can chart providers handle the truth?

It is better to tackle problems as soon as they arise than to worry about perceptions, writes Mike Robinson, recalling how UKHO handled anomalies in electronic charts.

"You want answers?"
"I think I’m entitled to them."
"You want answers?"
"I want the truth!"
"You can’t handle the truth!"

This famous exchange between Kaffee (Tom Cruise) and Jessup (Jack Nicholson) in the 1992 film *A Few Good Men* may seem a strange way to open an article on electronic navigation, but it encapsulates the point I want to make.

In an article entitled ‘ENC Data and ECDIS Anomalies’ (published in Hydro International, September 2012), Michael Bergman, director for maritime at Jeppesen, contends that the focus and attention being given to these anomalies ‘could not have come at a worse time’ and that certain people were ‘trying to undermine innovation in electronic navigation’ and branded them as ‘complainers’.

Although I have great respect for Michael, I think his logic is mistaken. In my view, highlighting these significant safety issues with ECDIS and ENCs could not have come at a better time.

Why do I say this? Well, quite simply because, today, the number of vessels sailing ‘paperless’ – and by that I mean using ENCs for primary navigation and either holding no paper or paper only for back-up purposes – is very small. But that number is going to grow rapidly over the next few years and, in my mind, it is far better that these issues are surfaced now rather than in two or three years time when the potential impact could be ever so much greater.

At the UKHO, we received the first indications of the nature of these anomalies about eighteen months or so ago and started to investigate them more closely. When it became apparent that they were not only real, but also potentially widespread, we had to consider what action to take.

At the time I was keenly aware of a perception in the industry that the UKHO, given its strong position in the global paper chart market, was ‘anti-digital’. By highlighting these issues there was a significant risk that we would be accused of deliberately trying to undermine electronic navigation in some way.

However, the beauty of the UKHO is that neither commercial pressures nor the potential threat of a ‘bad press’ will stop it from doing what is right for the safety of the mariner. Therefore, it started to highlight the problems and to work with the IHO, IMO and others, to ensure that they are addressed. In essence, we told the truth, although we were well aware that there were parties that ‘didn’t want to hear the truth’.

I would like to thank both Admiral Moncrieff, and Admiral Lambert, for their counsel at the time. Their views, carried more weight than others I was receiving, as both of them, being Master Mariners, were able to provide a perspective that was truly informed.

Likewise, over the last few months I have heard the view from a number of businesses that supply only electronic navigational data that Admiralty Distributors are deliberately holding back on promoting digital to try to increase the longevity of their paper chart sales. Although for some distributors this may be true, from my experience, for the vast majority, that is simply not the case.

What is clear though, from talking to mariners, is that they don’t particularly like navigating just using ENCs on an ECDIS. Perhaps this explains why today most vessels that are using ENCs still continue to carry full folios of paper charts. This is the truth and, if we are to move forward, a truth we must be prepared to handle!

Whilst it is also true, in my opinion, that although the work IHO, IMO, ICS and CIRM are doing to address the underlying issues that have created these anomalies is not just, as Michael Bergman says, ‘encouraging’ but absolutely essential, it will not, by itself, fundamentally change the negative view that many mariners have of electronic navigation. Although, again, some people may find this hard to handle, this is also very much the truth!

This article first appeared in the Nov/Dec 2012 edition of Maritime IT & Electronics, published by IMarEST, and reproduced with their kind permission. Visit to www.imarest.org/mite to learn more.
Sensible seamanship from a congress of pilots

There were some 270 pilots on the loose in London late last month, attending the 21st Congress of the International Maritime Pilots Association. If you have read this column for any length of time you will realise that I like to support pilots all I can, believing that they are a force for maritime safety, insurance against accident and bring a lot of practical good sense into any operational discussions.

Their association is an important attendee at the International Maritime Organisation, where those representing it bring a unique practical perspective to any debate. There are plenty of ex-mariners in the national delegations and non-governmental organisations, but it is only the chap behind the IMPA card can say things like “on a VLCC I was piloting yesterday.....” and apply this contemporary knowledge to the discussion. This matters.

The fact that they are on and off ships all the time also gives them a wide ranging view on ship operating standards, along with the training and competence of their crews. It’s one thing for a government surveyor to stemly walk around a ship in port with his clipboard. A pilot sees that ship from the sharp end, in motion at what is arguably its most vulnerable time.

Some have suggested that pilots tend to be a bit prickly and defensive, but I would suggest that this is because so many shipowners like to think that they are a sort of optional extra and compulsory pilotage an unfair cost. It is those same shipowners who have run their crews down to an overworked and exhausted minimum, and demand that Pilotage Exemption Certificates enabling practically anyone including the ship’s cat to substitute for a licensed pilot be available on demand.

The latest enthusiasm, now the idea of “remote pilotage” from a VTS tower seems to have been discredited, to inflict competitive pressures on pilots, to drive down the costs in a sort of Hayek-inspired fashion. This seems to spring from a romantic notion of what pilots were like in the days of sail, when swarms of pilot cutters would meet arrived ships in places like the Western approaches to the Channel, all touting for business, with the shipmaster spoilt for choice.

Many professionals would rather think of pilots as a human addition to the safety systems, and generally fail to see how this is in any way improved by the imposition of a “market”, especially where there is not the level of business for such competition. You don’t have competing bollards on the quayside, or competitive locks down to an overworked and exhausted minimum, and demand that Pilotage Exemption Certificates enabling practically anyone including the ship’s cat to substitute for a licensed pilot be available on demand.

With the arrival of electronic charts, ship’s officers have become themselves very vulnerable to the march of technology and a new type of navigation. They might be on a new ship, and having to get attuned to new equipment every year or so. A pilot has to face one of at least thirty different ECDIS units every time he or she boards a ship. How can he tell that the equipment has been properly set up by some second mate who himself is unfamiliar with the equipment? One pilot made the salient point that half the ECDIS units he sees are not properly set up, and many are using pirated or out of date software. Maybe we should worry more about this revolution now taking place, especially when one third of 500 respondents asked about ECDIS revealed that they had encountered serious problems. “It’s still embryonic” was one remark. Sure, but it is also mandatory!

Pilots really earn their crust when they board a ship and find that the pilot station to berth passage plan on the ECDIS takes the ship right over several shoals, because the wrong draught had been entered. Or clambering up a ladder on a stormy night off a New Zealand port to find the ship on its “electronic leads”, heading straight for a cliff, with the bridge team following their electronics assiduously, without any adequate check.

Many pilots themselves use the Personal Pilot Unit, now laptop size but quickly becoming smaller and there was fascinating discussion about how this can be integrated into the training of new pilots. “Brilliant kit, but it should not lead me to a place my brain had not arrived first” was some very sensible, pilot advice.

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Captain Gilles Carriere (British Columbia Coast Pilot) had a close call at 02:00 on the 27th June while boarding the YM Kaushung at Brotchie, the pilot launch’s deck hand gave the ladder a good pull to test it, parting one of the ladder’s side ropes. Fortunately neither Captain Carriere or the pilot boat launch crew were injured. The ladder was replaced and he was able to board half an hour later. The incident was reported to the PPA and Transport Canada this picture was sent to the PPA and Transport Canada to illustrate the severity of the incident.

The lighter side of pilotage...

Watercolour cartoon by Capt Pierre Pigeat, retired Marseille pilot

“FULL AHEAD!!!!”
New Station Vessel named by Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands

The ‘POLARIS’ is the first in a series of three pilot boats which are being built to replace the current vessels in the Netherlands. These by now are 35 years old and have reached the end of their technical lifespan. The new vessels bear the names of stars used for navigation; Polaris, Pollux and Procyon. These Pilot Station Vessels will wait in the roadsteads, for piloting ships into and out of the Rotterdam ports and in the Dutch seaports and the Flemish ports on the Scheldt. The pilot vessels are permanently stationed out at sea and are the lynchpin in the logistics process of transporting registered pilots to and from ships.

The new ship has been specifically designed for the capricious wave patterns of the North Sea. The ship design – a longer, sharp and narrow hull shape – ensures that the pilot vessel can remain at sea in severe weather for longer periods of time. The pilot vessel can stay offshore in wave heights of up to 4 metres significant and/or wind force 8 to 9. Because the ship can stay at sea in such conditions until pilotage can be resumed again, the start-up phase of the pilotage process is significantly shortened. In the past, the old pilotage vessels would return to port to wait out the storm there. With the previous generation of ships, sea-going vessels could be piloted in wave heights of more than 2.8 metres. The new pilot station vessels make it technically possible to offer pilotage in average wave heights of 3.5 metres.

On board, there is extra accommodation for the tender crew and/or the SWATH crew, allowing for the exchange of crews at sea. Six double cabins are available for the pilots. The ability to continue working for longer periods and the optimum exchange of all pilotage modalities (tender, SWATH and helicopter) guarantee an optimal pilotage process in the roadstead areas and optimum port accessibility.

The ship can stay out at sea for four weeks thanks to increased bunker and stores capacities. The large bunker capacity also makes it possible to pump across the fuel to tenders or SWATHS at sea.

A lot of attention has been paid to ergonomics to benefit the ship’s handling and controls in very heavy shipping traffic and bad weather.
Human factors and ergonomics were also carefully considered in the design of the galley and the refrigerated stores. Comfort on board has been vastly improved thanks to additional sound insulation of the crew quarters and extra engine foundation requirements.

The ‘POLARIS’ is equipped with two propellers and special rudders which can achieve a maximum deflection of 70%. This allows the ‘POLARIS’ to achieve a maximum turning speed when it needs to quickly divert for another ship. Here, the future increase in shipping traffic ensuing from Maasvlakte 2 has been taken into account.

The ship is almost 82 metres long. As a result, it is able to achieve its maximum speed of 16.5 knots (30.5 km/hour) on the North Sea with its relatively short and high waves.

With the engines stalled, the ‘POLARIS’ automatically provides a lee. Thanks to the design of the superstructure and the underwater hull, the ship positions itself athwart the waves. In order for tenders, SWATHS and yawls to safely come alongside, the pilot vessel must turn in the wind and offer lee on one side.

The propulsion lines, the engine rooms, the propulsion areas, the steering gear rooms, the main switch rooms and the bow thrusters are all present in duplicate on the ‘POLARIS’. Everything has also been duplicated on the navigation bridge.

The new pilot vessels are powered diesel-electrically by two main electric engines and six engines. As a result, capacity can be greatly reduced during standard pilot station operations. Through the diesel-electric propulsion and a new electronic propulsion of the engines, a reduction in fuel consumption is achieved of some 30 to 40 percent, which also means lower emissions.

The ‘POLARIS’ can reach a speed against the waves of 14 knots (in an average wave height of 2.8 metres) as opposed to the 4 knots achieved by the old pilot boats. This substantially improves port accessibility and allows for optimum usage of the fairways; highly important in terms of Maasvlakte 2, which will lead to a 30 percent increase in shipping traffic.

The ship has a sort of ‘kick-down’ which allows for the maximum propulsion power to be achieved within 24 seconds. Six generators run at full capacity to perform emergency and evasive manoeuvres. The ship must be able to operate in worse weather conditions and busier traffic situations. To achieve this, the propellers have been fitted with jets and the shape of the stern has been adjusted. The ‘POLARIS’ accelerates from zero to six knots (11km/h) in one minute.

Yaws can now be launched at sailing speed of six knots; previously, this was possible up to a maximum sailing speed of four knots. This also means that ULCCs (Ultra Large Container Carriers) can be piloted at minimal sailing speed. Helicopter operations on the ‘POLARIS’ can be performed up to an average wave height of 3.2 metres. This optimizes the logistical pilotage process in the roadstead area.

The ‘POLARIS’ can also serve as a command centre during major calamities, such as ship collisions and ship fires in the roadstead area. In those situations, the port authorities can make use of special consoles on the navigation bridge and conference/communications facilities below the bridge. The consoles on the navigating bridge can also be used as a VTS radar console (traffic management). In cooperation with the port authorities, this serves as an additional backup for the approach area of Rotterdam.

A ‘rescue zone’ is located on both the starboard side and the port side. Together with the yaws, these can be used for rescue operations. In a short time, large groups of people can be taken on board and then transported again by helicopter and tender. A medical treatment facility is also on board. The above is performed in close collaboration with the Port Authorities, Coast Guard and Rescue Institutions.

The waterjet-propelled yaws which take the pilots to and from the sea-going ships are ‘self-righting’ thanks to a rubber bag which is inflated as soon as the boat capsizes. This makes it safer to transport pilots to sea-going vessels. The fast yaws (30 knots, 54km/h) are highly seaworthy, aluminium vessels and are operationally deployed with cranes from the new pilot boats.

The vessel was built in the Barkmeijer shipyard in Stroobos (Friesland) with a hundred employees, a large employer in the region. The spin-off generated by the yard however is many times greater. The order for the three pilot boats was valued at 81 million euros. The total order for the tenders and the pilot vessels amounts to 100 million euros.
It’s December and like most ports in the Northern Latitudes it can be bitter cold but that comes with the job...

A mariner can be away from home for months and hence the allure of a harbor tug job; home every day (at some point) but still able to go out and do a job many would envy.

For a tug captain it is gratifying to work in one of the great river ports of the world, it’s a tough assignment in a narrow winding river but this port has seen ships move up and down its banks for centuries. It’s just another day and another ship assist and the captain will be home in time for a late dinner and maybe a movie.

But it isn’t just another day; another ship to assist upriver; and he won’t be home for dinner or the movie. No, today is different; today will end with little warning; in the murky, up-side down world of a river bottom.

The topic of this article is Girting/Tripping and the very real danger it poses to the towing professional. It isn’t however, just a topic or data point for discussion; it’s a life and/or lives lost with family and friends left to pick up the pieces.

And so it must have been for the family and friends of the crew of the **Flying Phantom**. On the 19th of December, 2007, during twilight, the *Flying Phantom* was girted and sank while acting as a bow tug assisting the bulk carrier *Red Jasmine* up the River Clyde in thick fog. Three of the four crewmen were lost, only the mate escaped, and our hearts go out to all involved. Most accidents, as we know, can be prevented and unfortunately this case is no different, thus the need to tell the story. As those of us who have spent our lives at sea know, it is the individual that pulls our consciences, motivating us to learn, that we may eventually come to a place where no such accidents occur.

The official conclusion by MAIB found, based on eye witness reports and the last know AIS position, the *Flying Phantom* was Girted/ tripped and consequently sunk as a result of the *Red Jasmine* passing the tug in the fog and the emergency release on the tow winch not activating fast enough.

Based on their own experience, the authors would add that it is interesting that there was no mention of the possibility that, in fact, the tug’s deployed thruster could have been first to ground in the shallower water of the river’s edge. This would have immediately destabilized the vessel making her very vulnerable to capsizing by even the smallest applied outside force: it would also explain any delay in the emergency release system dependent on some kind of bollard pull force to operate properly. Charted bottom and actual bottom on a river like the Clyde can be two very different numbers. AIS data is also not accurate enough to base findings on at less than 5 meters. As for eye witness reports, “The tug suddenly lurched and heeled to port” could have just as easily been grounding as a tripping; followed closely by the initiation of tripping as the *Red Jasmine* slid by.

It is a testament to the character and grit of the towing professionals that they put themselves and their vessels in harm’s way in order to see the job through; no vessel master, however, would deliberately stand the towing vessel into a tripping situation. From eye witness testimony, the master of Flying Phantom was concerned about an order to further bring the bow to starboard. There is no indication, however, that the master was aware of a tripping and/or grounding situation developing.

**Tripping is a technical and human problem with a technical and human solution.**

a) Technically it may be defined as follows: The towing vessel (no matter the towing situation) losing control and becoming trapped and dragged along by that which it is towing; which frequently leads to capsizing and casualties.

b) The human element in tripping incidents is the almost automatic/instant reaction of the master of the towing vessel to attempt to get back in front of the tow and, of course, panic.

Knowing the technical details of Girting/tripping and experiencing it real time, are two very different things. Panic is a real issue in accidents and should be considered the professional’s greatest foe. In any situation where critical thinking skills and techniques are required to save life and limb, panic must be contained. “Once entertained, it is likened to a floodgate, taking with it reason, intelligence and most chance for avoiding catastrophe. It brings the best of us down to the lowest possible denominator at the worst possible moment.” The authors believe the subject of tripping should be addressed through emergency training; it is well suited for BRM (Bridge Resource Management) simulator training and should be incorporated industry wide.

**Preparedness, Prevention & Training**

Masters must understand when a towing operation becomes dangerous. They must be taught to recognize a tripping event and train (through) simulation on emergency release and controlled bailout maneuvers. The use of full motion computer simulators is key to safely practicing these emergency maneuvers. In a simulated tripping event the master is allowed to *feel*, *process* and *practice* implementing varied maneuvers that may avert capsizing thus making any towing situation safer.

-Thoughts and prayers to the families and colleagues of all those who were lost in the *Flying Phantom* accident-

*1* **Tug Use Offshore**, pg 121.

An extended version of this article was first presented as a paper ‘Girting/Tripping’ at the 2012 International Tug and Salvage Convention in Barcelona Capts George Livingstone and Grant Livingstone.
The UKMPA’s 21st International Maritime Pilots’ Association Congress

The Congress took place between the 24th and 28th September 2012 at the splendid 5 Star Grange Hotel located in the heart of London, adjacent to St Paul’s Cathedral...It was a great event for everyone involved.
The UKMPA’s 21st International Maritime Pilots’ Association Congress

...continued
Two New Executives appointed in London

Captain Hans-Hermann Lückert
President, German Maritime Pilots’ Association


Captain Alvaro Moreno Constantino
Secretary of Labour Relations, Panama Canal Pilots’ Association

A graduate from the Chilean Naval Academy in 1984, Capt. Moreno became a pilot in 1995. He was elected President of the Panama Canal Pilots’ Association in 2006, and member of the Executive Board in 2010 and 2012.

Captain Moreno also holds a Bachelors Degree with a major in Labor Studies from the National Labor College (Silver Springs, Maryland) and has been a member of the Panama Canal pilots bargaining committee since 2000.

Save the Date

Her Excellency Ana Irene Delgado, Ambassador of the Republic of Panama, handed the Ceremonial IMPA flag to Captain Rainiero Salas, President of the Panama Canal Pilots’ Association, as host of the next IMPA Conference to be held in Panama, 7-11 April 2014.

Information can be found on the conference website

www.impa2014.com
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Uruguayan Pilots’ Special Conference 2012

On 16th August, the Uruguayan Pilots organised a conference in their Parliament Building in Montevideo to inform Uruguayan Senators and Representatives about Pilotage. This was done in response to perceived threats to the well regulated and successful pilotage system in Uruguay. The Pilots asked Mike Watson to fly down at very short notice to address their Parliament which he did. His Address to them is on the IMPA website (in Spanish and English).

Cheque Presentation to ‘Save the Children’ and ‘The Mission to Seafarers’

Generous donations by the Conference Exhibitors to the charity raffle at the IMPA Conference Gala Dinner raised the grand sum of £6000 which was equally divided between the two chosen charities.

Victoria Lyon Dean of Save the Children and Laura Hayes of The Mission to Seafarers received cheques from Captain Don Cockrill, Chairman of UKMPA and Captain John Pearn, Chairman of the XX1st Conference Organising Committee on 15 November. Also present were Nick Cutmore, Jeremy Dale of Seafare Systems and John Clandillon-Baker.
Translations of the Pilot Boarding Poster into French, Spanish and simplified Chinese text can be found in the ‘Downloads’ section of the IMPA website.
Let the waves rock your boat - not your GPS

ADX XR
EXTREME RELIABILITY - SAFE, ACCURATE, EFFICIENT

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For more information on the ADX XR system and our product range, visit www.adnav.com
Views from the Bridge

This is the 302 meter MOL Magnificence about 5 cables from First Narrows (Lions Gate) bridge out bound. The containers are stacked seven high. The Captain advised that his letters of complaint were not acknowledged by his office. The blind sector was over 2.4 miles on each bow when the ship listed in a turn.

*Photograph taken by Ed Lien, Vancouver*

Bulker making it’s way along the Saguenay River in the Lower St Lawrence Pilotage District.

*Photograph taken by Capt Louis Rhéaume of Corporation des Pilotes du Bas Saint-Laurent*
They say that pilotage is the second oldest profession...

One of the earliest reports of Maritime Pilotage is mentioned in a letter by Synesius of Cyrene (c.370-c.413) who was a Neo-Platonic philosopher and bishop of Ptolemais. He left behind a small corpus of texts that offer much information about daily life in Late Antiquity. The following is extracted from an account of a voyage after having survived a storm and heading for disaster on a sharp reef....

Now when day appeared, a man in rustic garb signaled and pointed out which were the places of danger, and those that we might approach in safety. Finally, he came out to us in a boat with two oars, and this he made fast to our vessel. Then he took over the helm, and our gladly relinquished to him the conduct of the ship. So after proceeding not more than fifty stadia, he brought her to anchor in a delightful little harbor, which I believe is called Azarium and there disembarked us on the beach. We acclaimed him as our savior and good angel.

A little while later, he brought in another ship, and then again another, and before evening had fallen, we were in all five vessels saved by this godsent old man, the very reverse of Nauplius in his actions, for the latter received the shipwrecked in a vastly different manner. On the following day, other ships arrived, some of which had put out from Alexandria the day before we set sail. So now we are quite a great fleet in a small harbor.

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They say that pilotage is the second oldest profession...

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7/ Atlantica Azul, Sines, Portugal
8/ Rodwell, Portland UK
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11/ Pathfinder, Southampton, UK
12/ Cabo Mondego, Figueria, Portugal
13/ Espinheiro, Averio, Portugal
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