

11 July 2023

Trapdoor Pilot Boarding Arrangements Notice for Vessels Calling at Lyttelton Port

ATTENTION: Port Agents and Vessel Operators

Over the past three years Lyttelton Port Company has worked through numerous situations with agents, ships and ship operators relating to non-compliant combination trapdoor Pilot boarding arrangements of ships visiting Lyttelton Port. In each situation the arrangement was found to be non-compliant with Maritime Rule 53 and was assessed by the LPC Pilot as unsafe to use. This unfortunately resulted in delays to arrival or cancellation of visits.

Examples of common deficiencies and unsafe conditions with trapdoor boarding arrangements are shown on page 2 of this document.

Please also refer to the followings to key documents relating to Pilot Boarding requirements

Maritime Rule Part 53

- <https://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/content/rules/part-53/Part53-maritime-rule.pdf>
- Refer to section 53.10(6) for information relating to trapdoor arrangements.

Securing Pilot Ladders

- <https://www.maritimenz.govt.nz/commercial/safety/safety-updates/navigation-stability/pilot-ladders.asp>
- This update was issued to raise awareness of the potential risk of using improperly secured pilot ladders. It looks at the safety of boarding arrangements and the methods used to secure pilot ladders.

Collectively the New Zealand Port Industry has provided sufficient notice to the industry regarding the requirements for trapdoor boarding arrangements, and consequently, vessels with **non-compliant trapdoor arrangements (examples shown on page 2 of this notice) arriving at Lyttelton will no longer be boarded by a pilot, with immediate effect.**

Please request your chartering teams to ensure vessels with compliant trapdoor arrangements are selected for trading in our region.



If you have any questions, please contact me via email: andrew.vanderbent@lpc.co.nz

Andrew Van der Bent



Head of Marine Operations
Lyttelton Port Company

Following are examples of a compliant and non-compliant combination ladders.

 	<p>Example A. This is an ideal example.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The trapdoor opens outboard.• The pilot ladder extends 2m above the platform.• The pilot ladder remains flat on the ship's hull throughout its suspended length.• The trapdoor in the platform is framed only on three sides. The inboard side does not include a frame section and thus does not offer any foot tripping or weight distribution obstruction when the pilot is transitioning between the ladder and the platform.• During the transition from the rope ladder to the platform the pilot is uninterrupted and does not lean backwards or change hand grips from the ladder ropes.
 	<p>Example B. This example is non-compliant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The pilot ladder does not extend 2m above the platform.• There is a steel fence with horizontal round bars, offered as hand holds above the platform. This is non-compliant.• The Pilot ladder is attached to the underside of the platform and not to strong points on the deck.
 	<p>Example C. This example is non-compliant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The pilot ladder does not extend 2m above the platform.• There is a steel fence with horizontal round bars, offered as hand holds above the platform. This is non-compliant.
 	<p>Example D: This example is non-compliant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A structural horizontal cross-member on the inboard side of the platform where the ladder passes. In this instance, the pilot must lean back from the ladder to climb past the cross-member while passing through the trapdoor.• Steel or aluminium handholds that, in cold and/or wet conditions, may become slippery.• The ladder is not resting firmly against the side of the ship.• The ladder and manropes do not extend above the platform to at least the height of the handrail.• Platform and ladder are not properly secured to the side of the ship.• Platform does not have adequate handrails on all sides.• Trapdoors are often not secured in the open position.