



LATEST NEO-PANAMAX REQUIREMENTS

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Background

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) recently issued the latest Notice to Shipping N-1-2021, which includes all applicable requirements to vessels transiting the new Panama Canal locks (Neo-Panamax requirements). Based on experience gained over the last few years of operation, ACP has introduced additional requirements which affect vessels with already approved arrangements.

In an effort to keep our Clients up-to-date with latest developments, we would like to draw attention to the 2 most significant additional requirements that came into effect over the past couple of years:



Bow Tug Chocks (introduced in January 2020):

Bow tug chocks have to be located between 3-14 m off centerline; however, they also need to be located **inboard or just above the anchors** in order to be used for safe tug assist operations.

Vessels with Breadth > 37.1 m (introduced in January 2021):

Neo-Panamax vessels with maximum breadth greater than 37.1 m are required to use a total of 8 mooring lines (4 forward and 4 aft), distributed as 2 head lines, 2 forward spring lines, 2 stern lines, and 2 aft spring lines. This means that **double sets of chocks will be needed at Sets 1 & 4**, whilst two chocks of SWL 64T shall be fitted not more than 3 m off centerline fore and aft; alternatively a single centerline chock of SWL 128 tons may be fitted fore and aft. All sets of chocks should work with winch drums and only one double bollard per side will be required for Sets 1 & 4.

Recommendations

Neo-Panamax vessels with Mooring Arrangement Plans approved by ACP prior to 1 January 2021 fall under two categories:

1. Those that have already carried out modifications but do not comply with either or both aforementioned requirements. In such cases, **transit will not be denied**; however, their non-compliance will be considered a deficiency. Vessels with deficiencies may be required to sign an Undertaking to Release and Indemnify form. If such vessels have any additional modification deemed necessary, then a proposal for the additional modifications must be submitted for review and approval to ACP and the implementation date must be **no later than the next scheduled dry-dock**. In the meantime, such vessels will be allowed to transit by signing a release for the deficiency.
2. Vessels with approved modifications that have not yet been carried out. In such cases, it is recommended to revise the drawings to comply fully and submit them for review rather sooner than later, in order to ensure smooth transits and to avoid signing release forms.

Having prepared the necessary technical documentation (strength calculations, structural drawings, plan updates, etc.) for compliance with Neo-Panamax requirements for over 800 vessels since 2014, AMC may assist with upgrading a vessel's arrangement to comply with the latest ACP requirements.

Our aim is to minimize costs involved by reducing necessary under-deck reinforcements and simplifying structural works. Our scope of work includes undertaking all necessary strength calculations, structural drawings for under-deck reinforcements, General / Mooring Arrangement Plan updates, Emergency Towing Booklet (ETB) updates, etc.

For further information please contact:

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