

M.V. Atlantic Ensenada



**Investigation Report on:
Unsafe Access in Port and Incorrect Rigging Pilot Ladder on
departure from port of New York, USA on 07th January 2020.**

i. SUBJECT

Vessel M.V. Atlantic Ensenada departed from Atlantic Salt Pier on Staten Island, New York, USA on 07th January 2020 early morning under pilotage.
Dock pilot safely disembarked at 0500LT and Sea Pilot disembarked at 0630LT.

On 15th January 2020 vessel's managers received a "Pilot Boarding Deficiency Report" from 'Sandy Hook Pilot's Association' stating the following deficiencies:

- a) General Arrangement (i.e. Insufficient lighting, no officer, unsafe deck access, etc)
- b) Combination Ladder:
Ladder 1 Poor condition, not secured properly, ladder too high.
Ladder 2 - wrong angle, not secured.
- c) Dockside:
No railing / protection from fall between barge and ship.

ii. SHIP'S PARTICULARS

Name of vessel	: Atlantic Ensenada
Flag	: Singapore
Port of registry	: Singapore
IMO No.	: 9324071
Call sign	: S6FM9
Class	: Lloyds Register
Type of vessel	: Geared Bulk Carrier
Owner	: Atlantic Ensenada Pte Ltd.
Managers/operators	: PACC Ship Managers Pte Ltd
LOA/ Breadth/ Depth moulded	: 189.90m / 32.26m/ 18.40m
GRT/ NRT/Deadweight	: 30822 / 18103 / 55814MT
Year Built	: 2006

iii. Members of Committee

Capt. Arindam Sen, Marine Superintendent

Capt. Zhao Jie, Marine Superintendent

iv. STATEMENT OF FACTS RECEIVED

Rank	Name
Master	Capt. Muhammad Rashid
Chief Officer	Mr. Wang Feifei

v. FACTS OF THE CASE / SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

07th January 2020

0030 LT: Completed discharging operations

0200 LT: Cargo documents onboard. Sandy Hook Pilot station informed that pilot will board vessel from shore side.

0230 LT – 0300LT: Four large container vessels passed nearby causing own vessel to surge and as a result own vessel moved slightly ahead.

0312 LT: Sea Pilot on board (Mr. A. Codling).

0315 LT: Master asked Sea Pilot whether crew can secure starboard side midship gangway ladder. Sea Pilot informed that Dock Pilot will also be boarding, and he is not sure from which side.
Thus, the midship gangway ladder on starboard side was not secured.

0318 LT: Dock Pilot arrived on a tugboat at port side (seaside) of the vessel.

0318 LT – 0324LT: Ship's crew preparing the Combination ladder on port side.

0324 LT: Dock pilot came on board via the short Pilot Ladder directly from the tugboat.

0412 LT: Last line casted off.

0414 LT: All Lines onboard.

0417 LT: Aft tug casted off.

0430 LT: Dock Pilot on port side main deck for disembarkation.

0414 LT – 0430LT: Ship's crew were preparing the port Combination ladder.
Pilot decided to disembark by short Pilot ladder already in place.
Aft Tug positioned itself close to the short Pilot ladder for Pilot's disembarkation.

0435 LT: It was noted that short Pilot ladder was not reaching to the tugboat's deck.

0437 LT: Dock Pilot refused to use the short Pilot ladder as he deemed same to be unsafe.

0437 LT – 0450LT: Longer Pilot ladder was rigged.

0450 LT – 0455LT: Combination ladder rigging completed.

0500 LT: Dock Pilot disembarked.

0630 LT: Sea Pilot disembarked.

vi. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE

Vessel was starboard alongside Atlantic Salt Pier on Staten Island, New York, USA discharging her cargo of 'salt in bulk'. Vessel completed cargo operations at 0030LT on 07th January 2020.

Cargo documentation was completed around 0200LT.

Master called Sandy Hook Pilots on VHF Ch 73 and vessel was informed that Pilot will board from shore side. Crewmembers were called on deck around at 0230LT for departure preparation.

During above mentioned half hour period, four large container vessels passed nearby causing own vessel to surge and as a result vessel moved slightly ahead from previous moored position.

At 0312LT, Sea Pilot boarded from the barge on dock side via the starboard midship gangway ladder which was also used as main access to come onboard for last couple of days since vessel was berthed.

With reference to the picture below attached to the 'Pilot boarding deficiency report' – it is readily noticeable from the picture that the "wooden pallet - step arrangement" not in proper position due to slight ahead movement of the vessel, reason as stated above.



Crewmember overlooked the misalignment of the step-up arrangement as they failed to notice that own vessel had moved ahead and “wooden palette – steps arrangement” need to be readjusted for midship gangway to be readily accessible.

On receipt of the Sea Pilot’s complaint regarding the misalignment of the step-up arrangement, Master apologized to the Pilot for this serious mistake.

Combination ladder was not ready on port side when Dock pilot arrived on a tugboat as same required some time to prepare. Crewmembers hurriedly lowered the short Pilot ladder situated nearby on portside main deck and tried to rig the portside midship gangway to prepare the Combination ladder.

The tugboat approached perpendicularly to own vessel (which was moored during tugs approach) and the short Pilot ladder was found to be of sufficient length to reach tugboat's raised bow, Pilot ordered to made fast the short Pilot ladder. Once crew made fast the short Pilot ladder, Dock Pilot boarded the vessel at 0324LT.

After vessel unberthed at 0414LT, crewmembers came on portside of main deck to prepare the Combination ladder for Dock pilot’s disembarkation.

At about 0430LT, Dock pilot came down on port side main deck for disembarkation.

Aft tug that was sailing alongside own vessel after same was casted off, positioned itself parallelly to own vessel next to the port pilot ladder for Dock pilot’s disembarkation.

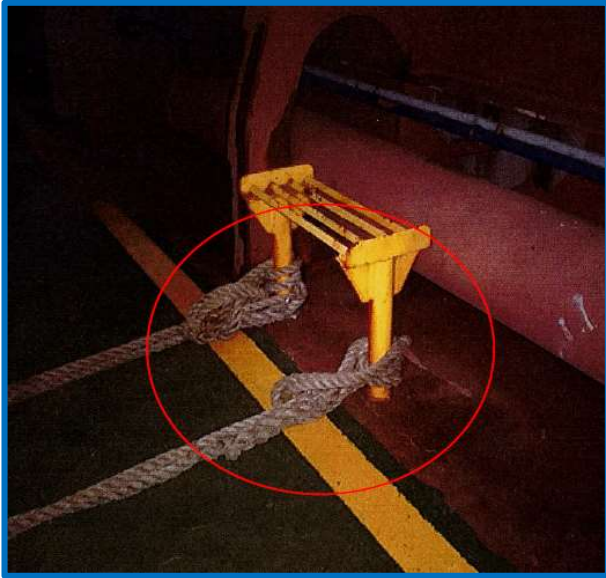
Due to the sideway positioning of the tugboat on portside of own vessel, the short Pilot ladder was not reaching to the tugboat’s deck which was lower than the raised bow of tugboat used earlier by Dock pilot to embark on board.

Pilot asked to lower few more steps of the short Pilot ladder to reach the tugboat’s deck.

Ship’s crew lowered last two steps of the short Pilot ladder in order to reach tugboat’s deck and as a result there were no more steps left to make fast the short Pilot ladder with shackles on deck D-rings.

Ship’s crew made fast the short Pilot ladder’s end ropes to deck fittings / fixed rails as shown in the pictures below.

Dock Pilot refused to use the short Pilot ladder secured in manner as per picture below as he deemed same to be unsafe.



Ship's crew quickly change the short Pilot ladder with a longer Pilot ladder which was kept on the starboard side of main deck and took about 15 minutes to rig same.

Then Port side midship gangway angle was adjusted as required, the Combination ladder rigging was completed to the satisfaction of the pilot.

At 0500LT, Dock pilot and at 0630 LT the Sea pilot disembarked safely from the vessel.

vii. ANALYSIS AND COMMENTS

a) Lack of supervision and failure to follow the required Rules and Regulations:

- Ship's departure free board was 13.12 metres based on the midship draft of 5.08 metres.
- Vessel crew failed to prepare the Combination Pilot ladders in compliance with the:

(1) SOLAS requirements as stated in Chapter V Regulation 23: *"All arrangements used for pilot transfer shall efficiently fulfil their purpose of enabling pilots to embark and disembark safely. The appliances shall be kept clean, properly maintained and stowed and shall be regularly inspected to ensure that they are safe to use."*

(2) IMO Resolution A.1045(27) Pilot Transfer Arrangements, Section 5 states: *"Access to Deck states that "Means should be provided to ensure safe, convenient and unobstructed passage for any person embarking on, or disembarking from, the ship between the head of the pilot ladder, or of any accommodation ladder, and the ship's deck; such access should be gained directly by a platform securely guarded by handrails."*

- Non-compliance with company's Marine circular: MAR/2019/70, dated 12-November-2019 which clearly states the *"Actions to Ensure Pilot Ladders are in Satisfactory Condition"* which ship's crew failed to comply as evident from the 'Pilot Boarding Deficiency Report'
- The OOW in charge of this operation failed to determine the non-compliance and take corrective measures accordingly.

b) Inadequate monitoring of the safe access to the vessel:

- Ship's crew failed to monitor the safe access to the vessel. The "wooden pallet - step arrangement" located on the barge was misaligned due to surging of the vessel, crewmembers failed to notice same and hence did not inform the barge personnel to correct the misaligned step-up arrangement. Thus, when Sea Pilot boarded the vessel – the midship gangway was not readily accessible via "wooden pallet - step arrangement".
- Ship's crew busy with departure preparation failed to notice the boarding of Sea pilot via misaligned "wooden pallet - step arrangement", thus unable to rectify the error prior pilot's boarding and failed to provide safe access.

- c) Insufficient information exchange:
 - When Pilot station informed that Pilot will board from shore side, no further information exchanged regarding number of pilots will be boarding and any further arrangements required for safe boarding of the pilot was carried out.
 - As a consequence, ship's crew had insufficient time to rig the combination ladder when Dock Pilot arrived via tugboat on port side thus resulting in the related deficiencies as stated in the 'deficiency report'.
- d) Lack of planning and preparation with relation to available manpower considering the time constraints and operational demand:
 - In this particular case, to move / shift the Pilot ladder 'quickly' from one side main deck to other side, rigging of Combination ladder under time constraints and associated jobs, especially on geared vessel prior departure or during pilotage required considerable manpower. Vessel failed in proper planning and preparation considering limited manpower and operational demand – thus leading to the deficiencies.

viii. RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) Lesson learnt for the investigation to be circulated as a fleet circular to avoid future recurrence.
- b) An NCR to be raised in WinSDS as per requirement of company's Safety Management System for root cause analysis, determination and implementation of corrective and preventive actions.
- c) A new Pilot ladder will be supplied onboard at Port Allen, USA on around 22nd January 2020 to replace the short pilot ladder which is already removed from service.
- d) Master conducted Safety Training of all crewmembers relating to providing safe access and correct rigging of Combination pilot ladder to prevent recurrence.
- e) Importance of providing safe access, correct rigging of pilot ladder / combination ladder and maintaining the ladders in good condition as well as compliance to all regulatory requirements – will be discussed during joining briefing of the senior officers.

ATTACHED:

- a) Pilot Boarding Deficiency Report.
- b) Master's Statement of fact.
- c) Bridge movement book relevant pages scan copy.
- d) Crew training attendance record.
- e) Marine Circular 2020/07- Unsafe Access and Improper Rigging Pilot Ladder

At the end we would like to sincerely apologize to 'Sandy Hook Pilot's Association' for unsafe access and unsatisfactory boarding arrangements which was present onboard MV Atlantic Ensenada.

Information sharing and further training will be conducted to prevent future recurrences.

- - - - - End Report - - - - -