

November 13, 2003

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-47-2003

TO: ALL STEAMSHIP AGENTS, OWNERS, AND OPERATORS

SUBJECT: MAJOR LOCKS OUTAGES – TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

1. The maintenance of the locks of the Panama Canal is essential for the long-term viability of the waterway. Jobs requiring locks outages affect the Canal daily average transit capacity and, as such, are a concern for our customers and Canal officials. In order to minimize their impact and to assist Canal customers in their planning efforts, a tentative schedule of outages for 2004 is hereby provided. Except when defined as “CONFIRMED,” dates are tentative and will be updated on a quarterly basis, or when deemed necessary.

<i>Tentative Schedule of Locks Outages for 2003 - 2004</i>						
Dates	No. of Days	Miraflores	Pedro Miguel	Gatun	Transit Capacity	Status
Dec 4 – 5, 2003	2			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Confirmed
Jan 14 – 16, 2004	3	Lane Outage			30 - 32	Tentative
Feb 4 – 6, 2004	3	Lane Outage			30 - 32	Tentative
May 31 – Jun 10, 2004	11			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative
Jul 5 – 15, 2004	11		Lane Outage	Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative
Aug 9 – 19, 2004	11			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative
Sept 13 – 23, 2004	11			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative
Oct 18 – 28, 2004	11			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative
Dec 2004	3			Lane Outage	26 - 28	Tentative

2. The normal transit capacity of the Panama Canal is 38 vessel transits per day; however, this capacity is reduced during locks outages. Depending on the mix of ships, the approximate capacity for each lock lane is shown in the table above. Consequently, vessels may experience delays in transiting during locks outages. The physical Canal daily transit capacity is defined by the most constraining condition that exists during a particular locks outage combination. Normally, during these periods, the Panama Canal Vessel Transit Reservation System slots are fully utilized.

3. Two-day lane outages have no significant impact on Canal capacity and vessel backlog and are not normally published in this chart since the effects are negligible and not distinguishable from the daily variations attributable to arrival surges, ship mix, weather conditions, vessel discrepancies or Canal schedule deterioration. However, the Dec. 4-5 two-day lane outage was included in this chart for your convenience since it was originally published as a three-day lane outage to take place on Nov. 25-27.



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Subject: Major Locks Outages – Tentative Schedule

4. Two new three-day lane outages have been added in January and February 2004, to conduct the installation of enhanced sealing capability to miter gates at the lakeside of Miraflores Locks as an experimental modification to improve the locks water conservation capacity.

5. Locks outages are normally scheduled from June to October, which historically are periods of low traffic levels. The specific dates for these outages are subject to adjustments depending on prevailing transit demands, urgency of repairs and other circumstances. Tentative outages will be confirmed, as dates become firm. Resource augmentation will be provided when deemed necessary. Similarly, rules governing the Transit Booking System will be applied as required. Updated schedules will be submitted periodically to the industry.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
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