



March 6, 2006

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-06-2006

TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Monthly Canal Operations Summary – FEBRUARY 2006

1. Panama Canal Statistical Summary:

a. Transit Pilot Force	275
b. Pilots in Training	0
c. Tugs	24
d. Locomotives	100

2. Traffic Statistics:

	<u>Average Daily</u>	<u>High Daily</u>	<u>Low Daily</u>
Arrivals	37.89	53	23
Oceangoing Transits	37.14	42	32
Canal Waters Time (hours)	27.13	46.41	17.12
In-Transit Time (hours)	10.20	14.87	8.06

Distribution of Oceangoing Transits:	<u>Total</u>	<u>Average Daily</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Vessels of less than 80' Beam	361	12.89	34.71
Vessels 80' Beam and Over	<u>679</u>	<u>24.25</u>	65.29
Total of Oceangoing Transits:	1040	37.14	
Vessels 100' Beam and Over	477	17.04	45.87
Vessels 900' Length and Over	113	4.04	10.87

Note: For the purpose of this report, the term "oceangoing transits" is equivalent to the number of locomotive transits.

Booking Slots:	<u>Available</u>	<u>Used</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Large Vessels (beam 91' and over)	420	401	95.5
Regular vessels (beam < 91')	252	242	96.0

3. See next page for scheduled locks maintenance work and items of interest to the shipping community.

4. This advisory will be canceled for record purposes on March 31, 2006.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
Maritime Operations Director

Scheduled Locks Maintenance Work:

SCHEDULED LOCKS MAINTENANCE WORK – FISCAL YEAR 2006					
Dates	Miraflores	Pedro Miguel	Gatun	Transit Capacity	Status
May 10-12/06			Lane Outage (3d)	26-28 (3d)	Tentative
Jun. 6-15/06	Lane w-restrictions (10d)			36 (10d)	Tentative
July 11-20/06			Lane w-restrictions (10d)	36 (10d)	Tentative
July 17-22/06	Culvert Outage (6d)			33 (6 d)	Tentative
Aug. 12-14/06			Lane w-restrictions (3d)	36 (3d)	Tentative
Aug. 15-19/06			Lane Outage (5d)	26-28 (5d)	Tentative
Aug. 20-24/06			Lane w-restrictions (5d)	36 (5d)	Tentative
Sept. 12-19/06			Lane Outage (8d)	26-28 (8d)	Tentative

Transit Capacity: The normal capacity of the Panama Canal is 38 transits per day. This capacity is reduced during locks outages, as indicated in the above table. Consequently, vessels may experience delays in transiting. Normally, during these periods, the Panama Canal Transit Reservation System slots are fully utilized. Whenever a set of locks requires a major outage of one of its two lanes for dry chamber inspection, miter gate repairs, tow track work or other major maintenance/improvement projects, advantage may be taken of this requirement to perform simultaneous single lane outages for additional maintenance at other locks. Two-day lane outages have no significant impact on Canal vessel backlog, therefore are not normally included in this chart.

PANAMA CANAL CHRISTENS NEW DRILL BARGE BARU

EQUIVALENT SIZE OF TWO BASKETBALL COURTS, MADE BY WORLD-CLASS PANAMANIAN ENGINEERS AND WORKERS;

PROJECT CREATED NEW JOBS

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) christened new drill barge "Barú," named after Panama's only volcano. Manufactured by Panamanians, the Barú is 51 meters long and 15 meters wide, nearly the size of two basketball courts. The new, state-of-the-art barge will play an instrumental role in the Canal's dredging projects.

Deepening and widening navigation channels and other areas by extracting mud, rock and sand is fundamental to maintain and improve the Panama Canal.

The Barú is equipped with four drilling rigs that can bore holes up to 30 meters in a single pass. The drilled holes are loaded with explosives and detonated to fracture the rock. The blasted material is then removed by floating equipment; such as the dipper dredge Rialto M. Christensen.

"The ACP's Industrial Shipyard Division, together with local Panamanian workers, accomplished an enormous task and overcame several challenges building such a large craft. The Barú is one of our best industrial achievements. This is a momentous event as we christen this barge during the dredging conference organized by the Western Dredging Association (WEDA) - in the presence of the world's dredging industry representatives," said ACP Director of Engineering Agustin Arias.

One hundred craftsmen from Panama were specially commissioned to construct the Barú, which was designed by De Donge Shipbuilding. These workers constructed the barge with the ACP's Industrial Shipyard Division, allowing for an exchange of information and a transfer of technology.

The Barú boasts sophisticated apparatus for controlling and monitoring drilling operations. It also has many amenities that will provide for added comfort to the crew, such as air conditioning and ventilation, hydraulics, potable water and sanitation.

The construction of the new barge is part of the Canal's permanent modernization program that includes investments in technology, capital improvements and operational measures to increase capacity. More than a \$1.5 billion investment has allowed the ACP to improve and enhance the waterway's current infrastructure and services, thereby guaranteeing reliable schedules and safe transits.