

Harbour Master Instruction

Number: 03/2022 **Date:** 31 May 2022
Date of Effect: 10 June 2022

DETAILS	Vessel draft checks at Berth 3 at the Port of Geraldton
FORMER NOTICE	N/A

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Harbour Master Instruction (HMI) is to advise Shippers / Ship Operators on the measures Mid West Ports Authority (MWPA) will implement to prevent vessels exceeding the approved Dynamic Under Keel Clearance (DUKC) drafts given for grain loading operations at Berth 3 at the Port of Geraldton.

2 BACKGROUND

The loading of vessels at Berth 3 is undertaken by Stevedores in accordance with the ship's cargo loading plan. The ship's Crew are responsible for monitoring vessel drafts during loading operations as there isn't a practice of Shippers appointing Draft Surveyors.

At the Port of Geraldton, the DUKC system is used to manage safe vessel transits of deep drafted vessels. It is therefore critical that vessels load precisely to the approved drafts issued by MWPA.

Between March 2021 and April 2022, there have been four (4) incidents at Berth 3 where vessels completed loading with drafts greater than the approved DUKC departure drafts provided by MWPA. This is partly due to the over-reliance on vessel's Crew to monitor drafts during loading/ cargo trimming stages and the expectation that the calculated drafts and actual drafts will align.

Overloading incidents can have significant consequences not only for the vessels, but also for the port. Vessel departures can be delayed, and this could have a cascading effect on the rest of the planned shipping movements in the port. Subject to DUKC system and unavailability of deep waters, an overloaded vessel's departure could be delayed by 24 hours or longer. In a worst case scenario, an overloaded vessel can be grounded in a berth pocket, eventuating in a serious incident.

3 MANAGEMENT PLAN

Commencing 10 June 2022, MWPA will request information on the appointment of Draft Surveyors at the time of lodging the vessels grain berth application.

The following management actions will be taken depending on the appointment status:

Draft Surveyor Appointment	MWPA Management Actions
YES	Maximum DUKC draft will be offered to a vessel.
NO	<p>MWPA will withhold maximum DUKC draft by up to 20 centimetres. This is to allow a buffer in the event of an overloading incident.</p> <p>Vessels will be advised in advance of this and it is expected that the ship's officers will adjust loading plan to ensure that the vessel is in a 'Grain Stable Sea-Going' condition prior to departure.</p>

4 CONCLUSION

MWPA will continue to monitor grain loading operations at Berth 3 and may revise the requirements of this HMI if the situation warrants.

For further information or clarification, please contact MWPA Ship Schedulers on 08 99640505