

BRUCE FENDIG
TESTIMONY FOR USCG HEARING

LICENSING OF PILOTS IN BRUNSWICK:

- Licensing in Brunswick begins with need – and when an opening is forecast either by retirement or growth, our primary oversight body, the Brunswick Pilot Commission will announce and advertise an opening for a new apprentice pilot.
- Apprentice selection is done upon a matrix based system of factors set forth in State Regulations:
 - The perfect candidate will have 100 points;
 - Points are gained in (4) equal categories, Education, Previous Maritime Experience, Commissioner Interview, and assessment by the Pilots’ Association for Pilot Potential.
 - A candidate must have a minimum of (30) points in order to qualify for interviews.
- Minimum Apprenticeship duration after selection is (3) years in accordance with State Law and Regulation as well as the USCG Approved Training Program.¹
- Since Brunswick pilots must be intimately familiar with local waters, navigational peculiarities, and local regulations, as well as know how to handle different types/sizes of ships and be able to conduct themselves on ships with bridge teams coming from all over the world, an intensive “on-the-job” training program is a vital. In Brunswick, around the U.S. and internationally, time has shown that the skills required of a pilot are best developed, and then mastered, through locality-specific, “hands-on” apprentice training.
- We operate a training program jointly approved by the USCG & the Commissioners of Pilotage² in Brunswick.

¹ AGREES WITH JT INTERVIEW, PG. 6, LINES 24-25.

² See Certificate.

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- This training program consists of “Learning Tasks” that are both academic based and field based tasks under the tutelage of existing State Licensed Pilots. It is a thorough and detailed program designed to take an Apprentice all the way thru to licensure and develop an optimally trained State Licensed pilot.
- The last thing on the agenda is Federal First Class Pilots license after completion of the training program.
- It should be noted that a pilot trained under this system has learned the profession by not less than (3) methods: Observation, Coached & Cued, and Finally “Observed Solo”³.
- After completion of the Apprenticeship, Commissioners of Pilotage for the Port of Brunswick would only authorize a “short branch” license and the newly licensed pilot would handle limited tonnage (coasters) restricted by draft, beam and L.O.A. for a number of years as they work their way up to “Full Branch” or unlimited Licensure with no restrictions.
- At every level of licensure there is both verbal and written testing by the State.
- Pilot Tennant is a product of this system.
- ***NOTE – the schedule of State Licensure has been amended several times to reflect the current fleet calling upon this Port.

UNIQUE NAV FEATURES OF BRUNSWICK:

- The Port of Brunswick is largely a natural harbor. The Army Corps of Engineers has made some improvements to the Federal Project over the years. Specific to the area

³ APPRENTICE TRAINING COURSE, c1989, CAPT. R.F. BENNET, (USCG RET'D), PPG. 3-6.

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of the incident lies between the barrier islands of Saint Simons and Jekyll Island. This area is formed by the confluence of rivers that meet in this area and scour out a very large natural channel or gorge that greatly exceeds the Federally Authorized Project Dimensions of the harbor. Vessel traffic has used this natural deep water area for navigation since Colonial days. (Like a water hose in the backyard and leaving it running for quite a time.)

- This area is naturally deep and has a sandy bottom in this area and there is navigation room for around 1000 FT wide in some areas adjacent to the wreck site.

ATON VERIFICATION:

- ATON verification is primarily done post storm (or other catastrophic) events pursuant to the requirements of the COTP – SAV prior to resumption of vessel traffic movements. Sometimes a State Licensed pilot will ride on the USCG RBM from Station Brunswick and sometimes take our own boat. On this occasion, because the re-opening process was much slower than previous events we took our own boat.
- Every pilot is always checking the ATON on every passage during normal operations and reports discrepancies to the USCG. This specific reporting duty is generally assigned to an Apprentice Pilot.
- If an unsafe condition such as a buoy were to drift into the channel and endanger vessel traffic, we would use the pilot boat to tow an off station buoy out of the way and call the USCG MSU-SAV immediately thereafter.

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TIDAL INFLUENCES:

- We have a tidal lift in this port of around 7' average and we frequently use this lift to move a vessel.
- Most RO/RO vessels do not use much tidal lift on account of shallower drafts due to the nature of the cargo.
- We try to maintain a minimum of 1m U.K.C. or around 10%~. This can vary a little by each pilot.
- Tidal sailing windows at that time in the maintenance cycle were 8.9m (30'~) [as best I recall) at any time. Of course, every pilot can require more or delay a sailing if in his judgement it would be safer to do so. With the large tidal range, it is not unusual to have an extra foot – or lose a foot on low water. This foot would be more or less from the prediction.

PPU:

- Is a tool that most pilots in Brunswick use today and for that matter most of our colleagues across the Nation use a Portable Pilot Unit (PPU). This device is really just another tool in the harbor pilots' arsenal to safely handle vessels, like traditional tools such as: RADAR, fathometer, or Gyro Compass. The software that we use in our Association is Sea IQ – it's quite handy and extremely intuitive. The hardware in our Association is Trelleborg that can act as a standalone unit in an emergency. I find it very accurate and helpful.

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- It should be noted that I believe this “tool” works optimally when the pilot has broad experience and training without the PPU, and then adds the PPU to the other more traditional piloting skills. Fortunately, Pilot Tennant and all Brunswick Pilots have both sets of skills.
- It is clearly a tool that will continue to be a large part of the future for pilots.