

Why is damage caused by harbour tugs increasing, and what can be done about it?

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Modern tugs have complex propulsion systems 1

Voith



Modern tugs have complex propulsion systems 2

Azimuthing stern drive (ASD)



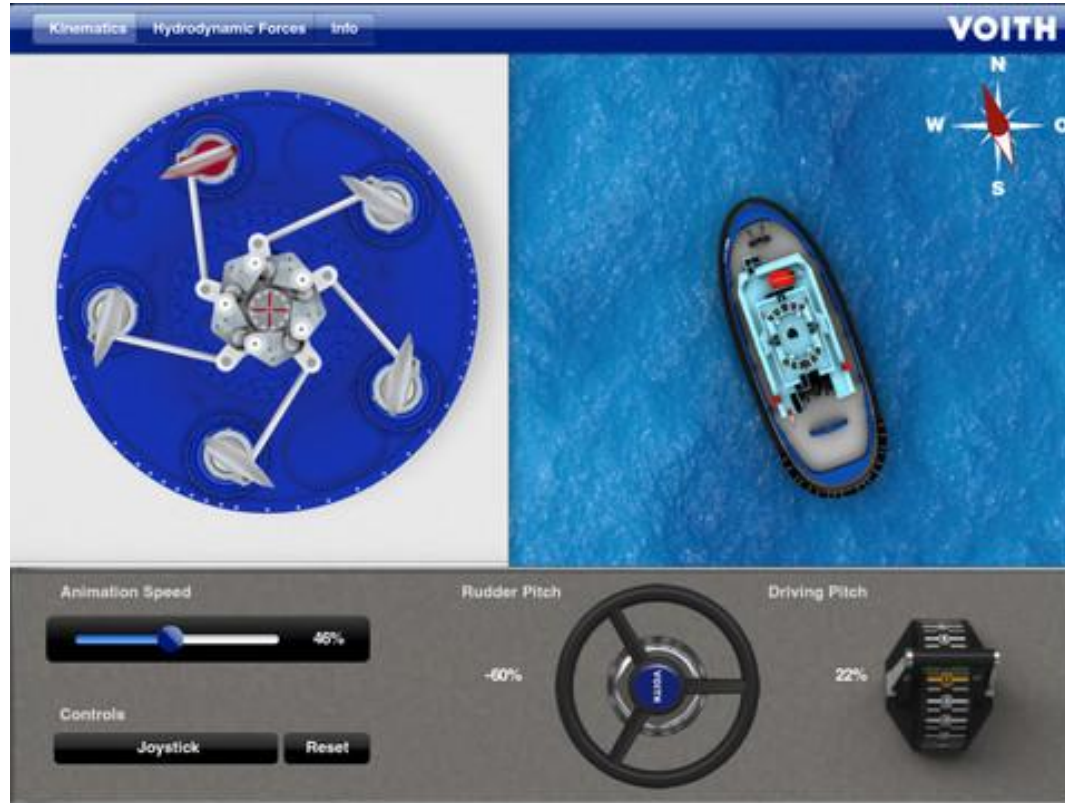
Modern tugs have complex propulsion systems 3

Rotor tugs



Modern tugs have complex controls 1

Voith



Modern tugs have complex controls 2 ASD



Modern tugs have complex controls 3

Rotor tug



There are no specific certificates, and no mandatory training schemes for tugmasters

- Training on-the-job (up to five years)
- Anyone with an appropriate certificate (e.g. Hong Kong local master) can be put in charge
- There are no more Tugmaster certificates.



And tugs come in many shapes and sizes.
There are good ones....



And unsuitable ones.....



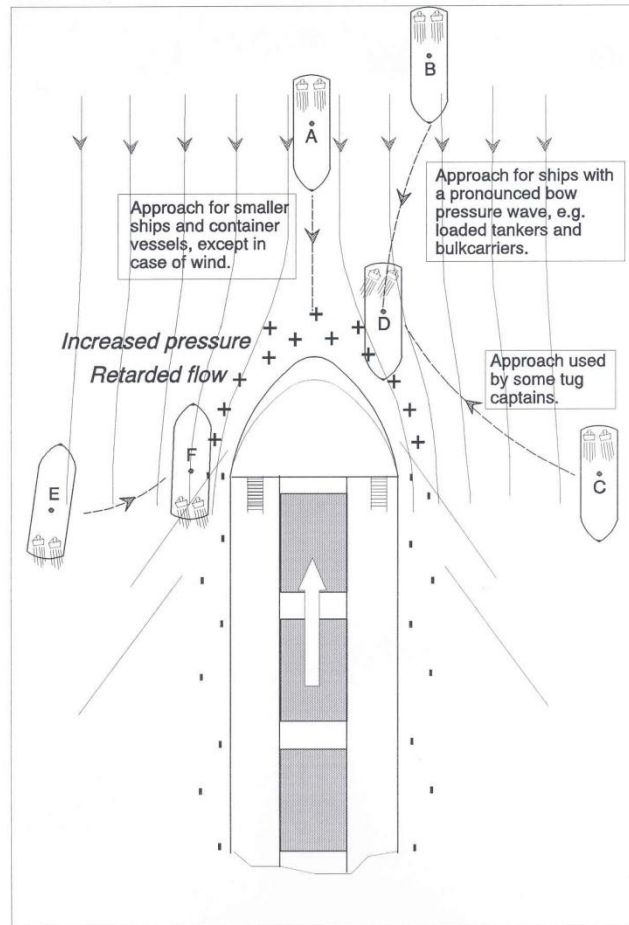
And some very strange ones.....



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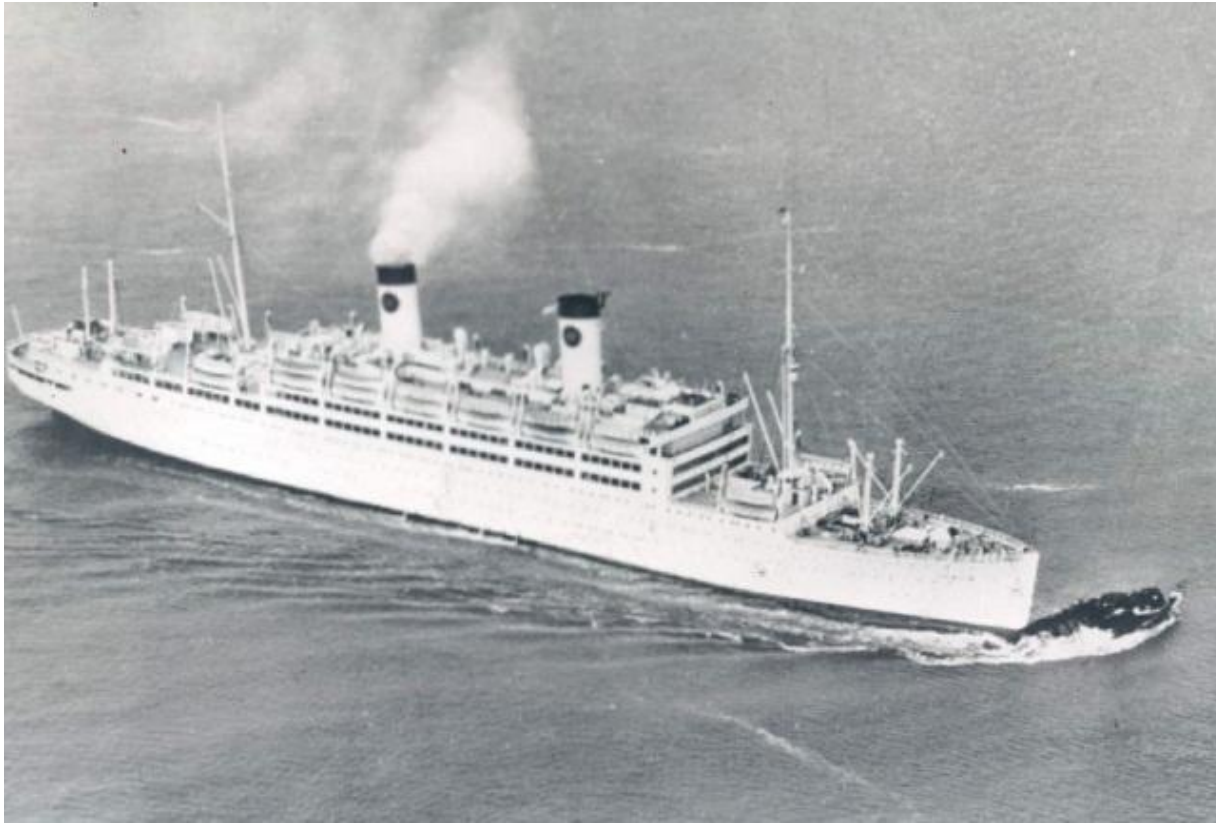


The results can be interesting.....



....Or fatal.

At least five tugs and crews lost since the 1950s.



But there is a simple solution – push/pull on the parallel mid-body.



According to Henk Hensen FNI, author of *Tug Use In Port*, no tug in Hong Kong ever suffered a serious accident under the bows of an ocean-going vessel.



Some tug companies couldn't give a toss because:

You have no choice in a one-horse town

They are protected by the UK Standard Conditions
for Towage and Other Services

There is no industry voice to criticise them



So what can you do about it?

- Not a lot, really!



Or, if you fancy a challenge try getting together,
sharing information and putting pressure on:

Port Authorities
Tug companies
Administrations



Port Authorities 1

The non-regulatory UK Port Marine Safety Code (2010) says:

All persons involved in the management and execution of marine services should be qualified and trained to the appropriate national standard.

Harbour authorities must assess the fitness and competence of all persons appointed to positions with responsibility for safe navigation.

Achieving marine port safety is a team operation and people in these roles must be competent and adequately trained.

Have regard to the efficiency, economy and safety of operation as respects the services and facilities provided.

Maintaining strategic oversight and direction of all aspects of the harbour operation, including marine safety;

Take responsibility for the development of policies, plans, systems and procedures for safe navigation;

Ensure that assessments and reviews are undertaken as required, to maintain and improve marine safety



Port Authorities 2

- Whilst the PMSC is not regulatory, it is effectively compulsory in the UK
- It probably points the way international regulation will go
- It is best practice, so ports which ignore it may be considered negligent
- It covers routes, pilot boarding areas, use and type of tugs, safe speeds etc.
- With a united voice, owners and managers can exert considerable influence
- ITA supports the introduction of PMSC globally



Tug companies 1

- The UK Standard Conditions (1986) place owners at a disadvantage
- Australia uses the 1974 version, which is even more one-sided, but has been ruled completely offside in a court case
- Despite the towage conditions, tug companies do not like or want bad publicity, so owners and managers have some bargaining power
- Urge them to introduce modern, competence-based tugmaster training



Tug companies 2

- Seaways competence-based training is the best I have seen
- It was devised from military training techniques
- It involves teaching people a series of simple manoeuvres which build into a 'circuit'
- When a candidate can do three complete circuits within a prescribed time limit, he is ready to handle harbour towage
- It takes about three weeks, unless the tug owner is employing.....



Administrations

- The UK recently introduced an NVQ course for tugmasters
- It is fairly pathetic, but makes one wonder why they did away with Tugmaster certificates in the first place
- Probably better than nothing, so owners should push for similar schemes elsewhere
- Hong Kong is better than most places, because they take so long over their training
- AND the recent tragic accident may lead to an improvement in the standard of local certificates



And finally.....



BE CAREFUL OUT THERE!!!!



Thank you



