



Bulletin 22 - 10/97 - Seaweed Farms (Dubious claims) - Peoples Republic of China

It has been brought to our attention that there has been several recent highly dubious claims in the Peoples Republic of China in respect of damage to seaweed farms.

It would appear that vessels are being requested by port authorities to proceed to points substantially closer to the port than the designated pilot station, to pick up a pilot, even though weather conditions have been good.

It is then alleged that the vessel has crossed unmarked seaweed nets and damaged them. Generally no propellor fouling has been noted, nor any debris seen in the water.

On presentation of claims owners are recommended to settle the claims at a reduced amount to prevent protracted legal involvement, which they are assured will only lead to further costs.

Members should be aware of these problems and Masters advised to seek specific instructions from the authorities, (which should be logged) if they are forced to proceed in areas where a pilot should be on board.

Masters should avoid proceeding past the official pilot station if at all possible.

Source of information - Anonymous through Sid Lock (Hong Kong)