



Ship Type: All Trade Area: Mississippi River

Bulletin 290 - 03/03 - Use of Cellular Telephones During Pilotage - Mississippi River - USA

We have been advised that in the last few months there have been occasions, where, during pilotage duties on the Mississippi river transit, certain pilots have been using personal mobile telephones excessively. In one reported case, during a five hour pilotage, a pilot spent no less than four hours on his cellular phone, in spite of a large sign on the bridge front bulkhead stating that cellular phones might interfere with navigational instruments. During the same pilotage it was also noted that the helm orders were less than clear as the pilot just turned his head and mumbled the orders.

It is felt that the excessive use of cellular telephones may be detrimental to the safe navigation of the vessel and would in any case distract the pilot from his duties and obligation to navigate the vessel in a safe and sure manner.

We advise all Members that if the above situation occurs either to advise the pilot to leave his phone switched off and/or advise the relevant port authority or US Coast Guard office / COTP when berthed.

Source of information: Loss Prevention Department