



Ship Type: All Trade Area: Venezuela

Bulletin 525 - 05/07 - Draught Restrictions - Maracaibo Channel, Venezuela

The Association's local correspondent in Maracaibo advises that new draught restrictions are in place, as ordered by the Port Captaincy. The new maximum draught is set at 35' for Aframax and Suezmax ships, and 35'06" for ships up to and including Panamax size.

The restrictions have reportedly been set for safety reasons due to local seasonal meteorological conditions, drought and the "fluff" phenomenon typical of this time of year. The new restrictions will remain in force until new depth and channel surveys are carried out in the critical area between buoys 18 and 22 in the outer bar.

Additional requirements as advised in the official notice are as follows:

- Aframax and Suezmax ships may navigate by day and in one direction only, until further notice. Navigation is permitted at all times for smaller ships, although always dependent on the condition of lights of buoys in the Channel.
- Aframax ships arriving at Guaranao Pilot Station between 1200 hrs and 2100 hrs are advised to take a pilot around 2200 hrs or adjust speed in order to arrive at EM buoys around 0600 hrs (in daylight). Ships arriving at EM buoys to enter the Channel do not have priority over any outbound ships when transiting between EM buoys and San Carlos Station (buoy 30).
- When a pilot embarks at Guaranao pilot station, the master must provide a suitable cabin (not a hospital cabin) and meals during the trip between Guaranao pilot station and EM buoys.
- When it is necessary to turn the ship at the anchorage, one tug boat is required for ships with an overall length of less than 139 metres, and two tug boats are required for ships with an overall length of 139 metres or more. This requirement is mandatory regardless of whether the ship is laden or in ballast.
- All ships transiting Venezuelan water/ports shall have on board Venezuelan charts.

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