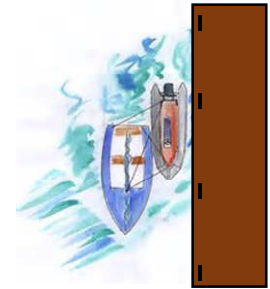


## **AQEC MEMORANDUM 2014-022**

### **TOWING IN CLOSE QUARTERS**

#### **QUESTION:**

*“What is the Crew task to help the Coxswain finalize a towing evolution when towing another vessel in close quarters (close proximity to docks, pilings, other objects, shallow conditions, etc.)?”*



#### **AQEC/SNC RESPONSE:**

*We occasionally encounter some crew that are not proactive when it involves situational awareness and come too close to an object without identifying the object, bearing, and distance. That being said, it is critical during a towing evolution for the crew to constantly monitor and communicate with the helmsman on distance, speed, and need for fenders when approaching a dock.*

*We also find some crew have a lack of depth perception when it involves estimating distance and they use yards, when it should be feet, inches.*

*This is a Flotilla Member Training issue that should be dealt with on an individual basis when it is recognized and before it gets someone injured. For extended distances, teaching the length of a football field (100 yards) is helpful; however in close quarter situations, a ruler or yardstick may be the best training device. The standard type 4 floatation cushion (usually one on every vessel) measuring 15.5 X 18.0 inches may be another teaching method. Have the crew visualize the size of the cushion and indicate 6,” 12,” 18,” 24,” etc. Do whatever it takes to teach correct distances. Is it going to be perfect? Probably not! Can it be relative to the evolution that it will be safe? Yes!*

*The goal is to make certain the vessel or vessels don't collide with an object or determine how close they can get to a dock to get a line on a cleat.*

*Using the elements to assist in docking is a big part of close quarters maneuvering.*

*See page two for Crew expectations:*

Warren D. Edman  
AQEC/SNC  
11/08/2014

*From Quotations with Character by W. David Edman*

*“Teaching mariners about risk assessment is to explain their actions may affect their life expectancy.”*

## **CREW EXPECTATIONS:**

*This does not cover the Coxswain's responsibility for mooring the towed vessel. It mainly addresses Crew responsibilities and expectations once it has been determined the towed vessel is going to be placed on a dock or mooring.*

*“Place a Crew Member in a good position as a lookout either on the towing vessel or aboard a towed vessel on approach. This extends a Coxswain's vision for clearances and obstructions. Rig fenders and mooring lines from the towed vessel if it is going to be placed against a dock or mooring.”*

- ✚ Crew is expected to assist Coxswain with docking procedures. [COX-03-09-AUX](#)*
- ✚ Crew should call out direction of wind & current. Check flags, streamers, wind meters, etc.*
- ✚ Crew should look for available docking space.*
- ✚ Crew should check for vessel traffic.*
- ✚ Crew should deploy fenders when requested. [BCSM: 10:41](#)*
- ✚ Crew should make certain docking lines are on cleats and standing by to handle lines specified by the Coxswain.*
- ✚ It is important for the Crew to determine how close the vessel is in relation to a dock/object by indicating distance and speed.*
  - ✚ Example: (3 feet off the bow and closing, speed too fast, etc.)*
  - ✚ Example: (1 foot off the bow, coming up to a dock cleat, stop forward way, etc.)*
- ✚ Standing by with line # X!*
- ✚ Crew should ensure all mooring lines are adjusted for expected tidal changes and wave/wake action.*

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*From Quotations with Character by W. David Edman*

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*“Teaching mariners about risk assessment is to explain their actions may affect their life expectancy.”*