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Argentina Parana River Groundings



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Though not uncommon, Club correspondents Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L, Buenos Aires, have recently observed an unusual number of grounding occurrences in the Parana River, Argentina. The increase in groundings has not been confined to the main navigational channel of the river but is evident at the terminals located along the river, especially in the Rosario / San Nicolas area.

The grounding risk to vessels within this locality has been amplified by low water levels being experienced within the Parana river system. Not seen in the last half century, these reduced river levels have prompted the issuance of [Hydrological Alert No. 2020-24345065-APN-PZBP#PNA](#) by the Hydrographic Office of Argentina (Prefectura Naval Argentina).

Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L Circular can be found here [Parana River Exceptional Low Water Level](#).

During Inbound/Outbound Transits:

- Obtain the latest information on the navigational situation from local port authorities and local agents prior to arrival / departure.
- Comply with the maximum permissible sailing draft for the berth of destination / departure, as published daily by the Argentinian Coast Guard and available from local agents. Note that the maximum sailing draft includes an under-keel clearance of at least 0.60 m for all stages of the river passage.
- Prepare a detailed passage plan for the entire river passage in advance and ensure that this is reviewed by the bridge team.
- Discuss and agree the execution of the pilotage with the pilot and the bridge team at the beginning of the passage.
- Keep the speed of the vessel below the maximum permitted for the section of the river being transited and consider the effect of the vessel's speed on hull squat and the subsequent reduction in the vessel's under keel clearance. In position critical sections of the river, the vessel's speed should be reduced.
- Check the echo sounder on a regular basis, making sure that the minimum depth is set to parameters that would allow for sufficient time to react, should the alarm sound.
- Ensure the position of the vessel is closely monitored and always remains within the dredged channel – taking into account the effects of the river's current, the shallow water, and the riverbanks on the vessel's manoeuvrability.
- Closely monitor the instructions of the pilot, always keeping in mind that the Officer of the Watch is responsible for the safe navigation of the vessel even with a pilot on the bridge. Any instructions that are considered contrary to the safety of the vessel should be challenged and, if necessary, immediate action must be taken to ensure the safe passage of the vessel.

Alongside the berth:

- Obtain the latest information about the depth of the berth, bearing in mind when this was last established and when dredging had last been undertaken.
- Acquire the tidal information for the entire duration of the vessel's stay, verified against the Admiralty Tide Tables, and have this information readily available/displayed.
- Confirm on arrival and then routinely assess the water depth and bottom composition of the berth using a lead line.
- Monitor the vessel's draught, list and trim regularly, especially during low water tidal periods.
- Regulate/control the list and trim of the vessel to maintain as close to an even keel profile as possible.
- Check that the loading quantity and cargo distribution arrangements amongst the cargo holds will permit full compliance with the maximum sailing draft and under-keel clearance requirements for all stages of the river passage.

Members requiring further guidance are advised to contact the Loss Prevention department.