

ADVISORY

Date: March 1, 2026
To: Shipping Lines/ Vessel Principals
Subject: **Implementation of Mandatory Standards for Tugboat Services at Manila Multipurpose Terminals**

Dear Valued Partners,

Following improvement audits and concerns involving vessel handling and harbor berthing and unberthing operations, a review has been conducted which, among others, highlighted the critical need for enhanced safety, reliability, and scaling up of performance standards for tugboat operations to prevent adverse occurrences and ensure the highest levels of operational integrity for all stakeholders.

As a result, thereof, effective **April 1, 2026**, all tugboats utilized for berthing, unberthing, or any related assistance at MMT must meet the following minimum standards. These requirements are based on best international practices in the industry and are designed to safeguard vessels, crew, and terminal infrastructure. Shipping lines will not be permitted to engage tugboat services in MMT that fail to comply with these criteria. Non-compliant tugboats will not be accommodated, and alternative compliant services must be arranged to avoid delays.

Kindly take note that under MMT's Standard Trading Conditions (STC), the terminal reserves the right on the means and procedure to be employed in the provision of its services and that all safety rules, including advisories, must be adhered to at all times.

The mandatory MMT standards are outlined below across key categories:

Section A: Tug Fleet and Technical Capability

- A minimum of four (4) tugboats must be stationed within or near the terminal for immediate availability and redundancy. Near the terminal or immediate availability means that the tugboats will be able to respond not later than 15 minutes from notification
- Tug types must include modern Z-Peller (ASD) units with 360° maneuvering capability.
- Average Bollard pull of 45–50 tons per tug, verified by third-party surveyors with supporting test certificates to be made available to the terminal for further validation
- Escort-capable units with valid class notations from recognized societies (e.g., BV or DNV).



- Fleet must be equipped with FiFi-1 firefighting systems, with all units capable of mutual support
- Must have standby/response time to MMT berth within 15 minutes
 - Availability of additional tugs (e.g., at least seven in total from nearby locations) for surge support during simultaneous vessel calls or typhoon season
 - Tug units must have energy-efficient designs, FiFi-1 on high-bollard-pull units (e.g., 70T) Sustainability elements like solar panels are encouraged.

Section B: Safety, Health, and Environmental Management

- Must have certifications including ISO 45001 (Occupational Health and Safety), ISO 14001 (Environmental), ISO 9001 (Quality), ISM Code DOC, and ISPS Code compliance.
- Must have Integrated Safety Management System (SMS) covering audits, risk assessments, and emergency responses.
- Must be able to establish that quarterly internal safety audits encompassing vessel inspections, crew audits, and drills have been conducted.
- Must be able to establish that there are health and wellbeing programs for crew, including regular medical checks, fatigue management, and mental wellness initiatives.
- Must be able to show that there are environmental protection measures, including Oil Spill Response (OSR) capabilities with trained personnel and equipment available
- Must be able to prove that there are carbon emissions monitoring and reduction programs through fleet modernization and maintenance.
- Must have a drug and alcohol policy that is being continuously implemented to its crew

Section C: Crew Qualifications and Training

- Must be compliant with Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) requirements, typically 6–8 personnel per tug.
- • Show that all crew must holding valid STCW certificates and endorsements.
- Must have training and assessments aligned with MARINA guidelines.
- Must be able to establish that it has initial onboarding and annual refresher training programs for its crew.
- Annual medical and psychological fitness checks in compliance with Department of Labor (DOLE) and MARINA standards.
- Must have employee engagement initiatives promoting team cohesiveness, work-life balance, and mental health.



Section D: Documentation and Performance Track Record

- Must have demonstrated safety performance, such as achieving significant LTI-free with tracking of incidents and near misses over the last three years.
- Proven on-time response and operational reliability.
- Has references from major port operations (e.g., MICT, ATI).
- Must have class certificates (e.g., DNV/BV), independent bollard pulls test reports, detailed maintenance records via a computerized Planned Maintenance System (PMS), and comprehensive emergency/contingency plans.

Section E: Commercial and Legal Compliance

- Valid MARINA Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) for towing operations (or exemption where applicable).
- Must have a certificate of good standing from MARINA issued 90 days prior to submission.
- Must have a P&I coverage of at least USD 500 million per vessel with Comprehensive Hull and Machinery (H&M) insurance, with full repair and replacement protection.
- Must have a third-party liability and crew personal accident coverage, including pollution liability.
- Full compliance with DOLE labor standards, Data Privacy Act, and SEC sustainability reporting.
- PPA-accredited waste-management services and IMO Levels 1–3 Oil Spill Response (OSR) training.

We strongly recommend that shipping lines review their current tugboat service providers against these standards and make the necessary adjustments. Authentic or certified copies of the above requirements, or any documents establishing the above must be furnished to MMT accordingly for review and consideration.

MMT is committed to assisting in this transition and can provide guidance on compliant providers upon request. As such, these measures are essential to maintaining a safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible terminal environment for all users.

We appreciate your cooperation in upholding these standards and look forward to continued successful partnerships.

Sincerely,

MMT Management

