

CIRCULAR 003/2017

**GROUNDINGS AT MAIN CHANNEL “PASO CORTADA ISLA NUEVA”
BETWEEN KM 335 AND 345 PARANA RIVER**

As from 18th April 2017 the Navigational Authorities established as main channel the “PASO CORTADA ISLA NUEVA” which goes from Km 335 to Km 345 of the Parana River, replacing the previous one which was round the island.

Three groundings took place at a very similar location in a short period of time.

There are many speculations about the cause of the groundings. It appears that the channel has not be updated on the charts yet, that the navigation aids might have not been sufficient to cover the new area plus the strength of the current which it is also significant plus the little experience of the Pilots in relation to this new passage for ocean going vessels.

Although the main reasons for those groundings are still under investigation the aforementioned facts could have mainly contributed to those groundings.

On 24th April 2017 a meeting was held between the main authorities concerned with navigation of the Parana River and the Chamber of Pilots. The official memorandum brief the outcome of the meeting in accordance with the free translation made for your easy reference:

QUOTE

MEETING MEMORANDUM

The meeting was requested by the Sub-secretary of Ports and Waterways, in view of the issues at Paso Cortada Isla Nueva, attended by:

- On behalf of National Office of Waterways: Eng. Juan Martín Canevaro (Director);
- On behalf of National Office of River and Sea Transport: Gustavo Deleersnyder (Director);
- On behalf of National Office of Works Concessions: Eng. Gisela Sivorí (Technical Director of works), Eng. Hugo Collante and Ms. Sofía Kaplan;
- On behalf of Waterways Control Office: Mr. Héctor Gutiérrez and Prof. Enrique Gutiérrez;
- On behalf of Hidrovia S.A.: Lic. Fernando Caviglia, Eng. Mariano Marpegan and Eng. Koen Robijns;
- On behalf of the Pilots: Mr. Ernesto Torre, and Mr. John Ryan

CONSIDERING that:

- since the authorization of the passage Cortada Isla Nueva four groundings took place on a very short lapse of time
- according to the Pilots attending to this meeting, the strength of the current in a section of the aforementioned passage complicates the safe navigation, moving them closer to the left margin;
- the lack of experience in navigating this passage, which was recently created, amounts to a considerable scale which with an increase on the navigational aids (signalization) could be corrected;

that the navigation at the area of the groundings is very similar to that one known as “ingress to Las Palmas from Parana River”, where the use of signals based on pair of buoys (red and green buoys front to front) improve the pilotage service;

THEREAFTER and with the effect of minimizing the risks and enabling a safer navigation it is proposed and agreed to increase the navigational aids (buoys) of Paso Cortada Isla Nueva with:

- Side green buoy Km 343.100
- Side green buoy Km 342.000
- Side green buoy Km 337.800

Same will be anchored at 30 m from channel’s edge and its placement will be informed in due course through the usual channels for these cases.

UNQUOTE

In view of the above, we suggest to Masters navigating through this passage to put special attention when negotiating this area. If the Master considers that the channel is not properly marked or charts no proper updated, or if they have any doubt he should discuss with the Pilot **-with whom they should have previously discussed the navigational plan before proceeding up/down river.** If he still considers that the navigation is unsafe for the vessel under his command, he should seek immediate instructions from CG’s traffic control through VHF prior to passing through.

We shall monitor this matter closely and we will keep you posted.

We remain at your disposal if clarification and/or additional information is needed.

Yours

Sebastian Trigub

Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L.