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Vessel owners, terminals, and agents,

This correspondence formally informs you that the Sabine Bank Channel Pilotage Association will conclude its three-month helicopter trial on April 11, 2024.

The trial was to determine whether an airborne pilot delivery method is a financially and logistically feasible alternative for our customers and the Sabine Bank Channel Pilots. While we are still organizing our data, it has become apparent that helicopter use is safer and more efficient than pilot boats alone, and the additional service cost has not hindered its use.

Our helicopter trial officially commenced in week two of January. For the first two months, we serviced vessels at the SB-buoy pilot boarding area by helicopter during daylight hours. For the last 30 days, we have expanded the service to 24 hours daily, with two helicopter crews working 12-hour shifts. Our helicopter service provider (Brim Aviation) has maintained 100% aircraft availability to support marine pilot transfers during this period. By the trial's end, we will have boarded 600 ships and conducted over 700 pilot hoists.

We look forward to sharing more insight into the lessons learned in the coming weeks.

The funding for this helicopter trial was scheduled to run until May 01. We included these additional days to protect against any loss of business that may have occurred if there were changes in shipping patterns or if there had been a long period of channel closure due to events like long-duration fog. We are happy to report that the number of vessels taking pilots at this remote boarding station has remained the same percentage as in 2023, keeping us ahead of our financial obligation to our service provider.

We will cease collecting the additional transportation fee on April 7, 2024, and the cost will return to its pre-January level of \$1025.00 per vessel.

We have solicited vessels for any comments they wish to share about the helicopter operation. If you would like to share your thoughts about this program, please provide comments to feedback@sabinepilots.com

Once the data review is completed, the benefits of balancing pilot transfer operations between traditional pilot launch and helicopter methods will become evident. In the coming weeks, we hope to provide actionable documentation to the Sabine-Neches community to demonstrate the efficiency gains and additional opportunities this service offers vessels and terminals.

Wesley Moore
President, Sabine Pilots