



Jacobsen's pilot boat "Vega" is used to ferry the company's pilots to and from vessels outside the breakwater.

Bringing Ships To Shore Safely

Yo Ho, A Pilot's Life For Me

“ Jacobsen's methods are taught throughout the industry and its technical advancements are credited with making the whole industry safer, more reliable, and more efficient. ”

Parallel parking a 1,000-foot-long cargo vessel might tax the nerves of the most levelheaded person, but for the marine pilots of Jacobsen Pilot Service it is all in a day's work. For 80 years, the Jacobsen pilots have been using their intimate knowledge of San Pedro Bay to guide vessels in and out of the Port of Long Beach. Jacobsen and its pilots are almost legends in the shipping industry.

Industry Standard

"Jacobsen is considered the consummate professional pilot organization throughout the world," said Capt. Dick McKenna, deputy executive director of the Marine Exchange of Southern California. The Marine Exchange's crews, the air traffic controllers for ships in the harbor area, have more than 30 years of experience working with Jacobsen's pilots. "The Jacobsen pilots are the crème de la crème of the industry," McKenna said.

Like his grandfather and his father, company President Thomas A. Jacobsen emphasizes the highest standards of

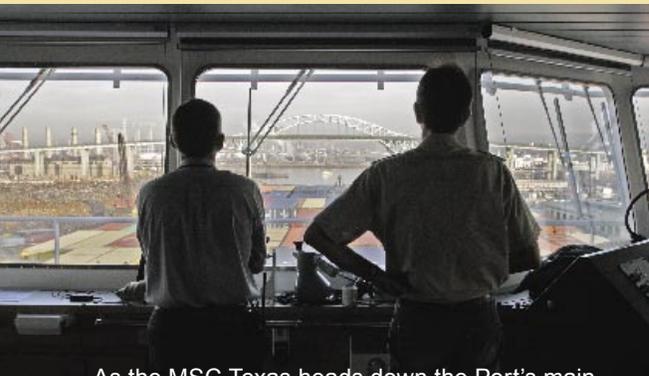
safety, customer service and leading edge technology. The company's methods are taught throughout the industry and its technical advancements are credited with making the whole industry safer, more reliable, and more efficient.

What They Do

Each year, more than 5,000 cargo vessels arrive at San Pedro Bay to unload their cargo. While the crews of these ships know their own vessels and the routes they ply, they do not have detailed knowledge of the day-to-day changes at San Pedro Bay. The Jacobsen pilots board each of these ships outside the breakwater and guide them in, using their encyclopedic knowledge of the bay to avoid any problems. When the vessels are ready to leave, the pilots repeat the process in reverse, guiding the ships outside the breakwater.

Keys To Success

Experience is a mainstay of Jacobsen's success. In an average year the firm's pilots move ships in and out of the port more than



As the MSC Texas heads down the Port's main channel, Jacobsen pilot Capt. Alan Reid, left, and the captain of the vessel keep watch.



The view from the MSC Texas as the vessel approaches the Gerald Desmond Bridge.

7,000 times. A single Jacobsen pilot might move more ships in a year than some smaller ports might see all year long.

And since the Port of Long Beach routinely sees the latest, most powerful, and largest cargo vessels, Jacobsen's team is familiar with vessels that pilots elsewhere might never see. Ships the length of three football fields, rarely seen at small ports, are a common sight in Long Beach. Ships nearly four football fields long are not unheard of.

When the 1,000-foot-long MSC Texas, one of the largest container vessels in the world calls at Long Beach, 34-year Jacobsen veteran Capt. Vic Schisler is often at the bridge,

guiding the ship to berth at the Port's Pier A terminal. This requires a trip under the 155-foot-high Gerald Desmond Bridge, which the ship clears by about six feet. Even with his professional nerves of steel, Schisler still respects what one of these ships can do.

"Ships like the MSC Texas can weigh in at over 90,000 tons," said Schisler. "Even at the very low speeds we maintain in the Port, it could take three, four, or even five ship lengths to fully stop."

Prior Planning

To avoid any problems, Schisler plans well ahead. He notes the weather, the tides, the wind, even

something like the location of the sun can play into the equation and must be considered. All this is done before Schisler or one of his fellow pilots steps on board.

But safety is just one important part of the philosophy that Jacobsen preaches. Another key element is teamwork. Schisler uses a sports parallel to describe how he and the other pilots work with the various vessel crews.

"I am not aboard to run a vessel," said Schisler.

"That is the captain's job. I am more of a manager and a coach. I guide the crew the way a coach guides a team. Teamwork is a philosophy that serves everyone's interest."

The seamen from overseas, some of which are the best trained mariners their respective

countries have to offer, hold the Jacobsen pilots in high regard, a testament to Jacobsen's methods and experience.

"We have the local knowledge," said Schisler, "and the experience moving their vessels. We know the tugboats; we know the water depths. They are the captains, but they defer to us."

Another mark of their success is that in 1971, company founder Jacob Jacobsen was presented with the Port's highest honor – the Port Pilot Award – for his achievements. Three years ago, the Port honored his son and current CEO Richard Jacobsen with the same award.



Capt. Reid scans the water ahead from the MSC Texas bridge.



Jacobsen pilot Mark Coyne watches from the deck. The auxiliary controls behind him mirrors most of the important vessel controls.

Jacobsen pilot Capt. Vic Schisler climbs aboard an arriving vessel, ready to guide the ship to berth.