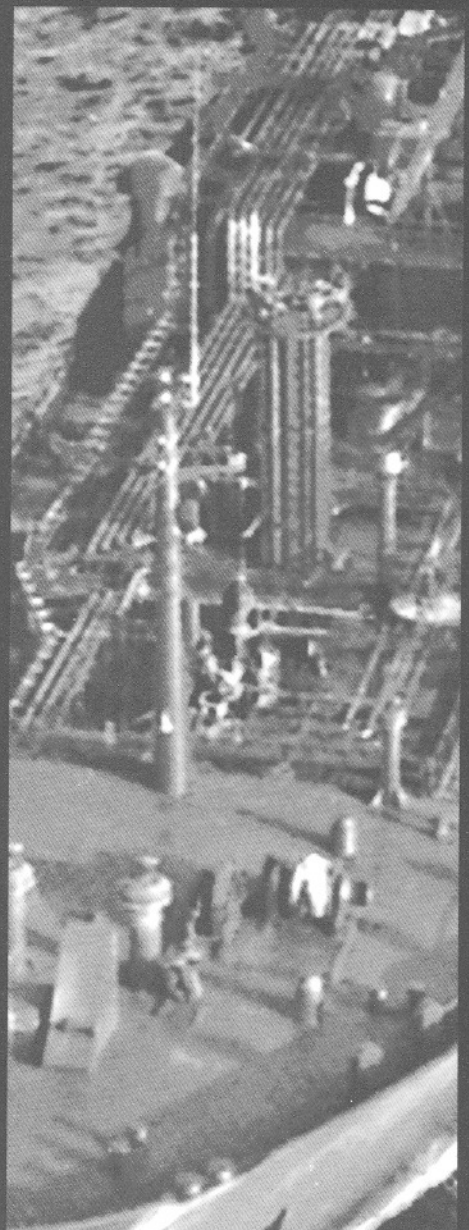


SIGTTO



LNG Operations in Port Areas

Essential best practices
for the Industry



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3.5.3 "Moving" Safety Zone

It is sound practice to establish a cordon sanitaire or exclusion zone around a transiting gas tanker. In this way an area of sea space is established around the tanker into which no other traffic is permitted to enter. Hence the tanker's progress will never be immediately hindered by encounters with other traffic, nor will it encounter traffic having the potential to penetrate its hull.

The dimensions and shape of an exclusion zone should be determined in the context of the specific conditions of a port.

In a port with a narrow access channel it is sound practice to prevent traffic entering the channel in the opposite direction while a gas carrier is in transit i.e. preventing an 'end on' encounter. In exceptionally long access channels it may be acceptable for traffic proceeding in the opposite direction to proceed so far and then stop in a 'passing place' but in all cases the transiting gas carrier must have priority.

Where traffic is proceeding in the same direction as the tanker the zone may extend some 1 to 2 miles ahead of the gas carrier, a distance determined by the distance required to bring the following gas carrier safely to a stop. Traffic following the gas carrier should be excluded for a similar distance, allowing scope for the gas carrier to slow down to manoeuvre without it being impeded by the approach of following ships. In general no gas tanker should be overtaken in a channel, regardless of the width of the channel. In general, traffic should not cross closer than 1.5 miles ahead or 0.5 miles astern of a gas carrier.

In some circumstances it may be prudent to deploy a patrol craft to escort a transiting gas tanker. This may be either a small craft that can patrol well ahead of the gas carrier advising other traffic to keep clear, or a tug that can enforce the zone by deliberately putting itself between an approaching vessel and the gas carrier. In some ports a tug, of sufficient power to assist a gas carrier to turn in the case of emergency, is preferred. A tug need not necessarily be an 'escort tug', capable of assisting the gas carrier at full transit speed, but one of sufficient power enabling it to alter its trajectory at low speeds.