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The Lord Caithness  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State  
Department of Transport  
2 Marsham Street  
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10 February 1986

NBPN

Dear Malcolm

#### LEGISLATION ON MARINE PILOTAGE

I have now considered the comments put forward by colleagues on the proposals for legislation on pilotage which were set out in your letter of 18 December to me.

I am grateful for these comments, and for the general welcome that our proposals have received.

A number of departmental points have been raised. John Stanley and Hamish Gray have both pressed for the retention of the present exemption from compulsory pilotage for HM vessels. In principle, it seems to me that there is a strong case for requiring such vessels to be subjected to the same navigational regime as vessels in other ownership, but I understand that RN vessels customarily take local pilots voluntarily, and I accept that there may be occasions when operational requirements mean that a pilot cannot reasonably be taken. In view of these arguments, I am prepared to accept that HM vessels should continue to be exempt.

I find more difficulty with the suggestion from colleagues with fisheries responsibilities that the existing exemption from compulsory pilotage for fishing vessels below a certain length should be retained. I shall write separately to those concerned.

I think that the only other outstanding point concerns the suggestion of a reserve power for the Secretary of State to impose compulsory pilotage on foreign vessels for security reasons, or on vessels carrying dangerous or noxious cargoes. I have asked my officials to pursue this suggestion.



It is clear that, subject to the resolution of the points mentioned in this letter, we now have approval for the policy set out in your letter, and I know that you will be carrying forward the preparation of new legislation.

/ I am copying this letter to other members of MISC 19, to the Lord President, the Lord Advocate, Nicholas Edwards, Tom King, Kenneth Baker and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours ever*

*Nicholas Ridley*

NICHOLAS RIDLEY



