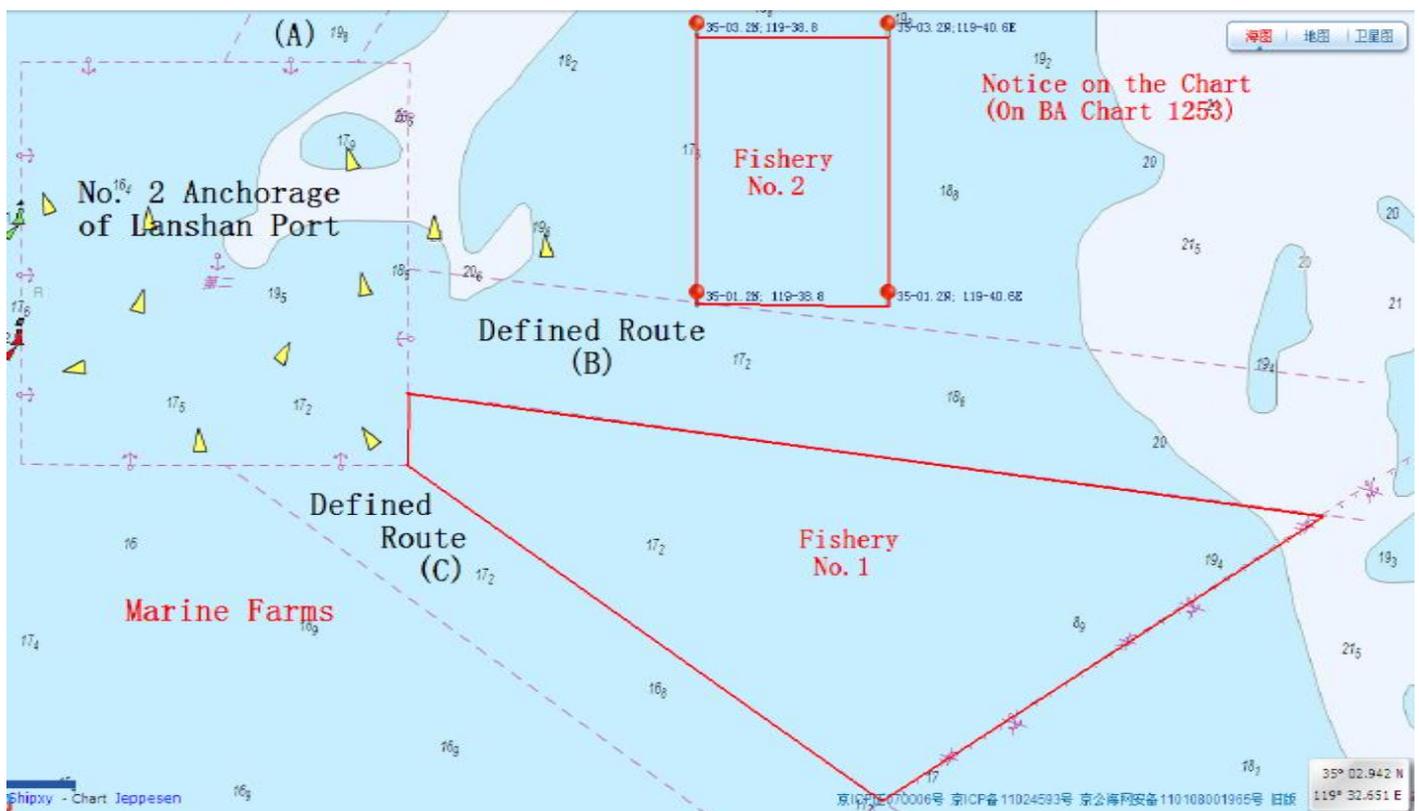


Lanshan Port – Fishery Farm Expansion



Background

Since July 2012 the Club's local correspondent in Qingdao, Huatai Insurance Agency & Consultant Service Ltd., has encountered an increased number of cases of vessels entering fishery farms around Lanshan port in Shandong Province with resultant claims from the fish farm owners.

According to Huatai's investigation, in June 2012 two blocks of fishery farms were newly approved by the ocean and fishery authority, Gan Yu Ocean and Fishery Bureau of Jianhsu Province. The first block covers the area defined by the following three coordinates: A: 35 00.6N 119 35.3E, B:34 59.7N, 119 44.8E, and C: 34 57.5N 119 40.6 E, and is located to the SE of Anchorage No.2 of Lanshan port. The second block covers the area bounded by the following

four coordinates: D: 35 01.2N, 119 38.8E, E: 35 01.2N, 119 40.6 E, F:35 03.2N, 119 40.6E, G:35 03.2N, 119 38.8E and is located to the E of Anchorage No.2.. Fishery block 1 is chartered to about twenty local fishery farm owners, and fishery block 2 to three farm owners.

The aforesaid blocks of fishery farms are very close to the navigation channels, as can be seen from the chart extract reproduced in this document. A vessel deviating from the channels may easily stray into the fishery farms and cause damages. Anchorage No.2 is the main anchorage for Lanshan port. The two channels affected by the fishery farms are designated as Routes B and C on the chart extract.

Chart Notices and Sailing Directions

As per the relevant chart (BA1253) notices are published warning of the presence of local fishery farms as follows:

1. Marine Farms and Fish Traps: numerous marine farms and fish traps exist in the approaches to Lanshan Gang (35 05N, 119 30E)
2. DEFINED ROUTES: vessels must follow the defined route when entering and leaving Qingdao port (35 57N, 120 44E) and Lanshan port (35 01N, 119 39E).

The first notice is marked to the north of Route B, covering the previously approved fishery farms, but NOT the aforesaid two new fishery farms approved this June. The second point in this notice advises that the defined routes shall be strictly followed for both Qingdao and Lanshan.

In addition, at the top of the chart, the Sailing Directions give the very clear warning:

“CAUTION. There are a large number of marine farms and fish traps within Lanshan port limits and it is extremely inadvisable to deviate from the defined route.”

Temporary Notice Issued by Local MSA

Although the newly approved fishery farms were NOT marked on the chart, with regard to fishery block No. 2, Rizhao MSA, which is the superior of Lanshan MSA, issued a temporary notice to mariners on 27th July 2012 under reference No. Lu Hang Jin 0247, in which it is advised that there are many fishery farms in the area defined by the following four coordinates: 35 01.2N 119 38.8E, 35 01.2 N 119 40.6E, 35 03.2 N 119 40.6E, 35 03.2N 119 38.8E to the east of Anchorage No. 2 of Lanshan port, which constitute danger to navigation for vessels, and suggested that a proper watch should be maintained to avoid straying into the farms.

It is understood that fishery block No. 1 falls within the jurisdiction of Lianyungang MSA although it actually affects Lanshan port. Following contact with Lianyungang MSA by Huatai it is understood that Gan Yu Ocean and Fishery Administration has been asked to issue a notice to mariners in view of the fact that the fishery farms pose a threat to navigational safety. However no such application has yet been received so no temporary notice has yet been issued in respect of fishery block No. 1.

Cause of the Situation

In China, the local Ocean and Fishery Administration is authorised to approve use of the sea area, while the safety of navigation is governed by the local Maritime Safety Administration (MSA). As a result some of the approved fishery farms are located so close to shipping channels as to endanger navigation.

In addition, the laws for fishery culture activities and for navigational safety are in conflict and it is unclear which body has the obligation to shipping channels as to endanger navigation.

Cause of Accidents

Although the fishery farms are very near to the channel, there is no formal notice yet regarding fishery block No.1 so it may be somewhat difficult for vessels to avoid accidents whilst entering or sailing from the port, especially at night or in conditions of restricted visibility.

In addition, judging from recent cases handled by our correspondents, all of the vessels involved deviated from the defined channel and strayed into the fish farms. Had the vessels sailed strictly within the defined routes, these accidents could have been avoided.

Possible Developments

It has been said that Gan Yu Ocean and Fishery Administration have approved some other fishery farms around fishery block No.2, but formal certificates have not yet been issued. Consequently the area covered by fishery farms may well be broadened.

Meanwhile it is said that for the safety of the port, Lanshan MSA, Lanshan Government, and the Lanshan port authority intend to clear the aforesaid fishery farms away from the channel. It is understood that they are now coordinating with Gan Yu Ocean and Fishery Administration who approved this fishery block. Nevertheless, the negotiation is expected to take some time and it is hard to say when the fishery farms might be cleared.

It is also understood that the Lanshan authorities will design a new channel to the north of and parallel to channel B and the entry of the new channel will be near fishery block No.2.

In summary, the situation is subject to changes. Huatai will continue to monitor developments and notify us of any changes in due course.

Recommendations

At this stage the following recommendations are made:

1. The area of the fishery farms is changeable. When a vessel is scheduled to call at Lanshan port it is suggested that the Master maintains close contact with the local agent to ascertain the situation of the channel. If the local agent is not able to provide suitable advice, the Master may seek assistance from the local MSA and the instructions to the vessel from VTS should be strictly followed to avoid possible accident.
2. Huatai's claim files reveal that all vessels that have caused damage to the fish farms deviated from the defined channel, so, once the channel has been identified, the Master shall sail strictly within the channel since any deviation will bring the vessel into the fish farms,
3. A vigilant watch should be maintained and the vessel should proceed at a safe speed. It is sensible to post a lookout on the fo'c's'le head when navigating in this area in restricted visibility.
4. In the unfortunate event of an accident, the Master is recommended to contact Huatai in Qingdao immediately via the following contact details so that timely assistance can be rendered:

Huatai Insurance Agency & Consultant Service Ltd., Qingdao Branch.

Tel: 86 532 8502 1883

Fax: 86 532 8502 3828

Duty mobile: 86 186 5328 9883

Email: Qingdao@huatai-serv.com.

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