

On Thursday, 21 May 2026, I had the privilege of observing firsthand the extraordinary professionalism and precision of the Columbia River Bar Pilots during an unforgettable operational experience. The day began with a helicopter flight offshore and a live hoist evolution onto a 750-foot grain ship inbound across the Columbia River Bar. From there, I observed the pilotage transit over the Bar and up the Columbia River to Astoria — all facets of the operational day were a remarkable demonstration of seamanship, communication, risk management, and teamwork in one of the most demanding maritime environments in the World. Watching these highly skilled pilots safely guide a deep-draft vessel through challenging waters reinforced the critical importance of Oregon's pilotage system and the outstanding professionals who protect lives, commerce, and the marine environment every single day. What a day!















