

# OBMP's EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S (CAPT Len Tumbarello) SHIP RIDE WITH THE **COOS BAY (CB)** PILOTS ON 23 FEBRUARY 2026

On my ship ride with the Coos Bay Pilots on 23 Feb 26, I had the opportunity to observe pilotage operations aboard the 650-foot wood chip carrier PRINCESS LILY. The evolution highlighted, in very tangible terms, the skill, coordination, and professionalism required to safely move large commercial vessels in challenging Pacific Northwest conditions.

The vessel was met approximately four miles offshore, where pilot transfer operations were conducted in adverse weather—reduced visibility, steady heavy rain, and strong winds. The North Bend boat crew executed the transfer of the pilot (Capt. George Wales) and I with precision and composure, demonstrating disciplined seamanship and clear communication despite the environmental challenges.

Once aboard, Pilot Capt. George Wales assumed conduct of the vessel. From the outset, his situational awareness and command presence were evident. Transiting Coos Bay in those conditions required constant adjustment and anticipation. The approach to and passage through the railroad bridge represented a particularly tight evolution, demanding exacting ship handling and a clear understanding of wind set, current, and vessel response. Capt. Wales managed the transit seamlessly—making the complex appear routine.

As the vessel approached berth for discharge, three tugs were employed to assist with final positioning. The coordination between the pilot, tug masters, and ship's bridge team was efficient and professional. Commands were concise. Responses were immediate. Despite the wind and limited visibility, the vessel was brought safely alongside and secured without incident.

## Key Observations

**Proficiency:** Shiphandling of a 650-foot vessel in reduced visibility and high winds was executed with precision.

**Teamwork:** Seamless coordination between pilot boat crew, pilot, tug operators, and ship's crew.

Professionalism: Calm, deliberate decision-making throughout the evolution.

Safety Culture: No shortcuts taken despite weather pressures; deliberate pace maintained.

This evolution reinforced the expertise within the Coos Bay Pilot Association. In difficult weather and constrained waterways, every participant performed flawlessly—making a highly technical and demanding operation look easy. Please see pics attached for context.











