

TERMINAL GANTRY CRANE SAFETY

Action Items:

- **Prior to a vessel's arrival or departure from a berth, gantry cranes must be positioned close together, near the amidships section of the vessel.**
- **Idle crane booms shall be topped up. If a boom cannot be topped up, pilots should be notified.**
- **Gantry cranes must not be moved when vessels are berthing.**
- **Personnel should not be aloft on a gantry during berthing or unberthing operations.**

Any time a ship is maneuvered near a berth with gantry cranes, a risk of allision exists. If a ship contacts a dock at any attitude other than flat and parallel, portions of the vessel can extend over the dock. Should a gantry crane happen to be in the overshadow area, an allision resulting in significant loss is likely. The best way to minimize this risk is to **leave gantry cranes in identified safe areas on the craneway**. These safe areas will vary from terminal to terminal, but will most often be the craneway areas adjacent to the ship's flatbody between the spring line bollards.

Gantry cranes boomed down over empty berths risk contact with berthing or passing ships. Generally most modern container ships' aircraft is too high to pass safely underneath a lowered gantry boom. Newer gantry booms extend in excess of 200-plus feet beyond the dock face and into the Federal Navigation Channel, which is already narrow due to configuration. If operations require a boom down over an empty berth, the appropriate operations members and pilots should be notified of the likely duration and subsequent notification should be made when the boom is raised.

Gantry crane booms should not be moved while a ship is berthing. First, any crane movement causes a loss of situational awareness regarding the ship's motion relative to the berth. Second, the crane's audible motion alarms interfere with pilot-tugboat communications. Either can cause the pilot to momentarily lose control of the vessel during the critical part of the mooring. If cranes must be moved to clear bollards for the linemen or for any other reason, they should not be moved during vessel approach until after the ship is against the dock fenders.

Lastly, personnel should not go aloft on gantry cranes during mooring operations. Additionally, any time personnel are aloft on gantry cranes that are boomed down over an empty berth, they must appreciate and evaluate the risks posed by passing vessels. Maintenance crews should be aware of scheduled vessel movements in the area before commencing work on gantry cranes.