

Panama Canal increases vessel draft ahead of schedule

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Panama Canal Authority

The Panama Canal has issued an advisory to shipping lines stating that, effective yesterday, it has increased the maximum authorised draft to 13.7 m.

This adjustment, originally scheduled to take effect on June 15, is being implemented earlier due to the expected onset of the rainy season in the Panama Canal watershed and the current and projected levels of Gatun Lake over the coming weeks.

As of May 16, the number of daily transits in the panamax locks increased from 17 to 24, and starting tomorrow, the number of daily transits in the neopanamax locks will increase from seven to eight. This adjustment will raise the total number of vessel transits per day to 32.

Since May 26, the water levels of Gatun and Alhajuela Lakes have, for the first time in 2024, risen above those recorded on the same date in 2023, due to the onset of the rainy season.