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Double pilotage

In March, the *Ever Given* (Evergreen), a ship described as a skyscraper at 400 metres long and 59 metres wide, was wedged in the Suez Canal for almost a week, blocking the movement of cargo ships. Similar to the Suez Canal and the Panama Canal, the St. Lawrence River is considered a bottleneck (*goulot d'étranglement*) in the international supply chain (*chaîne d'approvisionnement*). "Pilots have developed innovative practices for navigation on the Great Lakes and St Lawrence River without lighted buoys or other normal navigation aids in the winter; thereby extending the operating seasons of both the St. Lawrence Seaway and ports on the St. Lawrence River, especially Montreal."¹

In certain areas between Montreal and Quebec City, the St. Lawrence River is a narrow channel with limited under-keel clearance.² St. Lawrence River pilots play an essential role in ensuring safety under the federal *Piloting Act - Loi sur le pilotage*. In certain circumstances, such as when container ships are very long, buoys are removed or, when the ice forms, two pilots must escort ships instead of one, which is called double pilotage in both French and English.³

1. Marine Pilots, p. 3 <http://www.marinepilots.ca/news-docs/Canadian-Marine-Pilotage-Cost-Benefit-Analysis-2017.pdf>

2. Pilotage St-Laurent, p. 1, "*espace libre sous la quille limité*" <https://www.pilotagestlaurent.gc.ca/en/winter-navigation-policy.html>
(<https://www.pilotagestlaurent.gc.ca/fr/politique-navigation-hiver.html>)

3. Pilotage St-Laurent, p. 1, "*double pilotage*" <https://www.pilotagestlaurent.gc.ca/en/winter-navigation-policy.htm> (<https://www.pilotagestlaurent.gc.ca/fr/politique-navigation-hiver.html>)

* The opinions expressed in this article are solely those of the author.