

Marine Leisure Guide

Your guide to safe watercraft operation
in and around the Port of Southampton



Issue 3
June 2022

INDEX

Section 1

- 3 Welcome
- 4 Pre-Departure Checklist
- 5 Safety Checklist
- 6 Leisure Activities
- 7 Southampton Patrol

Section 2

- 8 VHF Channel Operation
- 9 Signals
- 14 Best Practice
- 16 Speed

Section 3

- 12 Chartlet

Section 4

- 20 Environmental Information
- 21 Useful Numbers



PRE-DEPARTURE Checklist

Have a plan:

- Passage plans and contingency plans may become lifesaving information.
- Engine checks and a regular engine/systems maintenance schedule.
- Electronics and light checks (display systems, navigational lights, VHF radio etc).
- Local Notice to Mariners (LNtMs): These provide information that may affect your passage.
- Documentation: Tidal & weather information, navigational charts and publications & local legislation (General Directions and Byelaws).
- Information ashore: Tell someone ashore your intended route and itinerary; if something goes wrong this could make all the difference to search & rescue (SAR) organisations.
- Southampton VTS provide detailed information about movements of commercial vessels along with important safety announcements such as weather warnings. www.southamptonvts.co.uk.



SAFETY Checklist



The sea can be treacherous and unpredictable, and for these reasons good seafarers will prepare their crew and vessel appropriately before departure. This is done by ensuring all crew are well trained, adequately briefed and that all vessels are suitable in every way for any intended voyage.

- Lifejackets/buoyancy aids
- Safety lines/throw lines
- Kill cord and spare if applicable
- Radar reflector (increased likelihood of being seen by large commercial vessels)
- Emergency flares (in date)
- Life raft(s)
- Navigation lights, day shapes and sound signals
- Maritime radio (VHF)
- Charts and almanacs
- Hand bearing compass (useful for position fixing and determining the risk of collision)
- Binoculars
- Echo sounder
- GPS/chart plotter
- Automated Identification System (AIS)
- Radar
- Powerful torch
- First Aid Kit
- Emergency tiller
- Water bailer/bilge pump
- Carbon monoxide and gas detector/alarm
- Fire extinguishers
- Boat knife/rope cutter
- Alternative means of propulsion (auxiliary engine/oars)

LEISURE Activities



When engaging in leisure activities your safety is our priority, so it's important to familiarise yourself with The Port of Southampton guidance to fully understand any restrictions and to know where any designated areas are. This can all be found at www.southamptonvts.co.uk.

Some activities will have restrictions; check [LNtMs](#)/General Directions and Byelaws before you set off.



Credit - Andrew Sassoli-Walker

SOUTHAMPTON Patrol



The Harbour Master operates a Harbour Patrol Launch service within the limits of the Port of Southampton throughout the year. This service is mainly used to escort large commercial vessels safely into or out of the harbour area to ensure that the main navigable channels are kept clear for the safe transit of these ships.

The Harbour Patrol launches maintain a VHF listening watch on channel 12 (call sign Southampton Patrol) and their crews will be happy to offer advice on the Harbour and Approaches upon request.

The Port of Southampton works with Hampshire constabulary/Marine Police Unit to keep leisure users

and our waterways safe.

If you see something, say something.

Operation Kraken: Report suspicious or any unusual behaviour at sea to your local police on 101, or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 quoting “Kraken”.

In an emergency dial 999 and ask for the police.

For stolen boats please visit:
www.stolenboats.org.uk



VHF CHANNEL Operation

- 09 ABP Southampton Pilots
-
- 11 Queen's Harbour Master, Portsmouth
-
- 12 Southampton Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) & Southampton Patrol
-
- 16 Ship to Ship calling & Distress
-
- 65 National Coastwatch Institution (recreational users are able to use this service for radio checks rather than Ch16)
-
- 67 HM Coastguard Working Channels
-
- 68 Harbour Master, Hamble
-
- 69 Harbour Master, Cowes
-
- 71 SHIP/TUG/PILOT WORKING CHANNELS NOT TO BE USED BY RECREATIONAL CRAFT
-
- 77 Ship to Ship (Recommended channel for recreational users to communicate)
-
- 80 Marina Working Channels



Important information

Having a marine radio requires an operator's licence where the operator is mandated to attend a training course.

For further information on marine radio operation and approved training centres contact the RYA.

Royal Yachting Association
<https://www.rya.org.uk/training/courses/marine-radio-short-range-certificate-course-srcc>

NAVIGATIONAL Safety



Navigational Safety

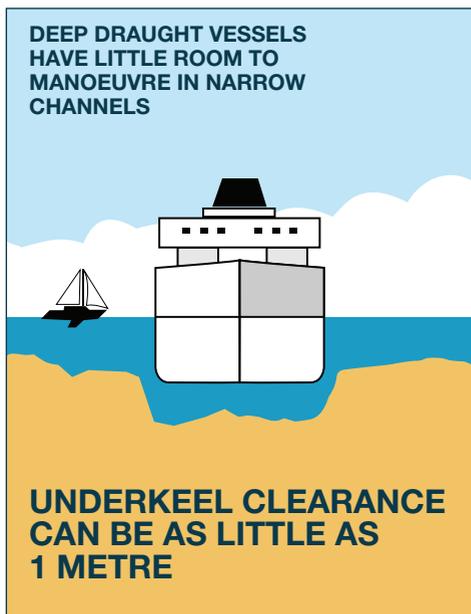
- The Port of Southampton is extremely busy, with many large and deep drafted vessels on passage and manoeuvring within the area.
- As a busy commercial port, we have local Byelaws and General Directions which all vessels, including pleasure vessels, must adhere to.
- Small craft should always avoid anchoring near the main navigation channels, especially where there is potential risk for them to drag anchor into the main navigation channel.
- The main channels are indicated on navigational charts as well as being well marked using marks and buoys. If you see any damage to navigational marks, please let us know.
- Large ships have very deep drafts, meaning they need to navigate in deeper water marked by these channels. They are restricted by the depth and width of these channels and their ability to deviate from their course can be extremely limited.
- Small pleasure vessels should not impede these large vessels. This means that you must allow sufficient sea room for them to safely navigate. Take early and decisive action.
- Always keep a lookout for all vessels, especially large vessels. Use all means to ascertain whether you are getting too close. If in doubt, stay well clear.
- In general, small craft should keep clear of the main channels if they can safely navigate outside them.
- In the Thorn Channel there are extra requirements placed on all sailing vessels and vessels under 20m to keep clear - 1000m ahead of and 100m

Section 02

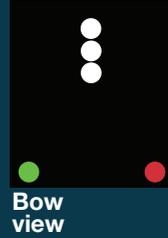
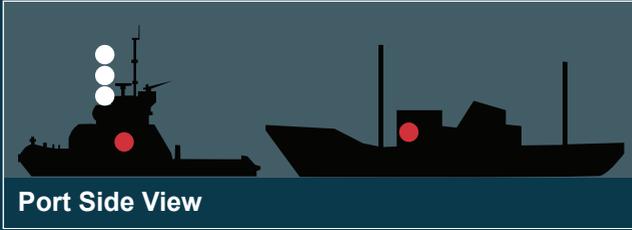
either side of all large vessels over 150m in length. These vessels will display a cylinder by day and three red lights in a vertical line at night.

- When using the main channels, do not manoeuvre in such a way as to impede a large vessel. When crossing the channel, do so quickly and as close to a 90 degree angle as possible whilst maintaining a good lookout for commercial traffic.

- When following a main channel, always keep as close to the starboard side of that channel as is safe and practicable.
- Sudden alterations of course and / or speed around large vessels may be considered as impeding them. Always plan ahead and keep a good lookout.



Towing Lights & Signals



Visual & Sound Signals in Fog

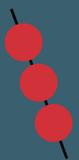
Constraint by Draught

By Day



Black Cylinder

By Night



COLREGS Rule 28
3 Red Lights (Vertical)

Vessels Not Under Command

By Day



Two Black Balls

By Night



COLREGS Rule 27 (a)
2 Red Lights (Vertical)

Sound Signal



COLREGS Rule 35(c)

Vessels at Anchor

By Day



One Black Ball

By Night



COLREGS Rule 30 (a)
All round white light

Sound Signal



COLREGS Rule 35(g)

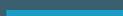
COLREGS:

International Regulation for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972- As amended

Power Driven Vessels

Sound Signal

Making Way



Stopped



COLREGS Rule 35(a) or(b)

Sailing Vessels

Sound Signal



COLREGS Rule 35(c)

Vessels Restricted in Their Ability to Manoeuvre

By Day

Ball
Diamond
Ball

By Night

COLREGS Rule 27 (b)

Red
White
Red

Lights (Vertical)

Sound Signal

COLREGS Rule 35(c)

Vessels Engaged in Dredging/Underwater Ops

By Day

Foul Side | Side vessels may pass

Black

By Night

Foul Side | Side vessels may pass

Red
White
Red

Red
Green
Green

Lights

Sound Signal

COLREGS Rule 35(c)

Vessels Engaged in Diving Ops

By Day

Code Flag A

COLREGS Rule 27(e)

Diving Operations

Diver Down Keep Clear!

Flag A-Alpha is displayed when diving operations are taking place. This may be on a vessel or quayside. Vessels should maintain a safe distance and reduce their speed when passing.

Common Flag Signals

 R	Pass me at slow speed	 I	Engaged in survey work
 Y		 R	

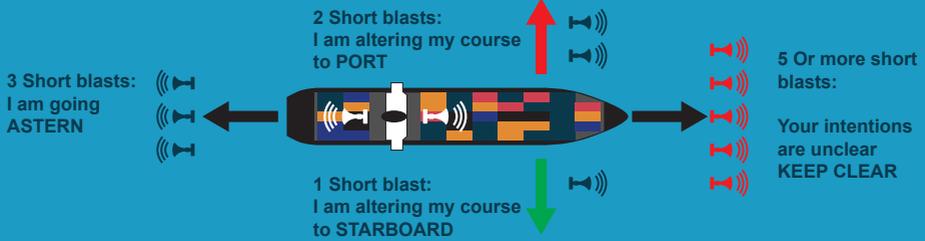
Caution 1 (Precautionary Area)

- All Vessels over 150m will have a Moving Prohibition Zone.
- A Moving Prohibition Zone (MPZ) Is an area extending 1000m ahead and 100m either side of the vessel.
- For the purposes of indicating a MPZ the master shall display a black cylinder by day and three vertical all round red lights in by night.
- Vessels under 20m in length and Sailing vessels are required to keep well clear.
- When operationally possible the Southampton Harbour Master's Patrol Launch will escort vessels over 150m in length overall, The Patrol Launch can be identified with its blue hull and diagonal yellow stripes, or at night an all-round blue light in addition to navigation lights. The absence of a patrol launch does not invalidate the implementation of a vessel's MPZ (See LNM: No.8).

By Day

By Night

Sound Signals Vessel Maneuver



Marina Entry Signals

Lights	Meaning	Lights	Meaning
● Fixed	Vessels shall not proceed	● Fixed	Vessels may proceed with caution
● Fixed	Vessels may proceed with caution	● Fixed	One way traffic
● Fixed	Two way traffic	● Flashing	Serious Emergency
● Fixed		● Flashing	all vessels to stop or divert according to instructions

Only ONE GROUP of lights to be shown



Credit - Andrew Sassoli-Walker



BEST PRACTICE



Check Weather and Tides

- Consider how these elements will affect your time on the water. Prepare the vessel and crew accordingly.
- Ensure you have a passage plan prepared which takes into account a safe route and contingencies in case of bad weather. The MCA have provided advice on this in MGN 489.



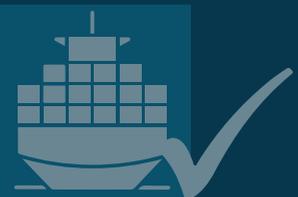
Safety Equipment

- From lifejackets to VHF radios, ensure you have all the correct lifesaving equipment and keep it maintained.



Navigation

- Check your intended passage. Ensure you have considered tides and are clear from navigational hazards.



Section 02

Crew

- It's essential that the crew have experience and in addition are well equipped for the passage ahead. Consider food & water supplies and even seasickness tablets.

Vessel

- Ensure your vessel is seaworthy and ready for the passage ahead, with enough fuel, stores and safety equipment.

LNtMs

- Local Notices to Mariners give information about any local events or operations planned to take place that may affect navigation in addition to navigational dangers & temporary changes.

Byelaws & General Directions

- The local Byelaws & General Directions contain local legislation tailored for the safety of all vessels in Southampton Statutory Harbour Area. It is essential these documents are read and understood.



SPEED



Navigational Safety

Mariners are reminded of the requirement to proceed at a safe speed at all times as defined in the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at sea (IRPCS) 1972 (as amended), Rule 6 of which states that:

“Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that they can take proper and effective action to avoid a collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions.”

Port Speed Limits

A speed limit of 6 knots (over the ground) applies to all craft proceeding north of the imaginary line drawn from Hythe Pier through the Weston Shelf Buoy to the Weston Shore unless granted an exemption by the Harbour Master. A safe speed should be maintained at all times relevant to the local conditions.

- A maximum speed of 40 knots applies to the remainder of Southampton Water.
- Keep a minimum distance of 130 meters off when approaching Hamble and Fawley oil terminals.
- Reduce speed and keep well clear when approaching and passing diving operations & dredging.
- Reduce speed & wash when passing marinas or jetties.
- Particular care should be given when navigating close to shorelines; recreational users such as swimmers, paddle-boarders and those taking part in other water-based activities can be difficult to spot.

Personal Watercrafts (PWC)/ Jet-Skis

- PWC are permitted in the port, however only if they navigate with due care and attention and observe the local Byelaws/ General Directions and speed limits.

Section 02

Associated British Ports, in its capacity as the Statutory Harbour Authority for the Port of Southampton, is responsible for the effective enforcement of relevant legislation, Byelaws & General Directions relating to the safety of navigation within the port. In this policy, enforcement comprises of the promulgation of regulation and guidance, effective monitoring, incident investigation and, where appropriate, formal warning and prosecution.

Where deemed appropriate, Associated British Ports will prosecute offenders for committing criminal offences as set out in relevant legislation and will seek appropriate sanctions for breaches of Associated British Ports Southampton Harbour Byelaws & General Directions.



Credit – Andrew Sassoli-Walker

CHARTLET



This information has been produced by Associated British Ports specifically for people who enjoy recreational activities afloat.

Some facts you should keep in mind: The number of large commercial ships serving the Port of Southampton and the number of recreational craft afloat in local waters is increasing. It is essential that close quarters situations are minimised.

Most of the commercial vessels you meet will have a UK Pilot on board regardless of the ship's flag. They will be monitoring VHF Channel 12.

Most ships travel at manoeuvring speeds of between 10 and 15 knots whilst in the Solent and Southampton Water. This will vary from ship to ship and is "as safe as navigation and conditions permit".

Light, partially loaded or unevenly trimmed ships may require to maintain a higher "as safe as navigation permits" speed to remain under full control.

It may take less than 10 minutes for a ship to reach you from your visible horizon. In hazy conditions it will take a lot less. At 10 knots a ship travels one nautical mile in six minutes. At 15 knots it takes only four minutes.

Ships cannot easily avoid small craft in narrow channels; it is better for you to stay clear.

A large ship that is slowing down may not steer very well; it needs propeller action on the rudder to respond. When the ship's engine is put astern its manoeuvrability will be affected. Remember that it takes time and a considerable distance for a ship to stop.

There are numerous other small vessels operating within the Solent and Port of Southampton. Watch out for ferries, fast catamarans, fishing boats and tugs towing barges (especially at night when barges may not be clearly visible). Note that a towing cable may be partially submerged.

What can you do?

Whenever possible, avoid commercial shipping channels, especially in poor visibility. If it is absolutely necessary to use these channels, observe Rule 9 of the COLREGS by keeping to the starboard side of the channel and crossing, at right angles, only when this does not impede the passage of a vessel that can safely navigate only within that channel.

- Do not underestimate the speed of ships. If your vessel is slow, allow sufficient time to take any necessary action.
- Be visible. At night, make sure your navigation lights can be seen.
- Be alert. Keep a good lookout at all times, especially astern!
- Precautionary Area. See 'Caution One' on the accompanying chartlet. Be aware that ships make large alterations of course at the West Bramble and Calshot turns. Ensure that you comply with the MOVING PROHIBITED ZONE.

- Recognise whistle signals. Five or more short blasts means your intentions are not understood and you are causing concern to the ship. One short blast means the ship is altering course to starboard. Two short blasts, altering course to port. Three short blasts, the ship is putting engines astern.
- Know ship signals. A ship displaying a black cylinder in daylight or three red lights in a vertical line at night indicates that she is constrained by her draught. Give her a wide berth.
- VHF Channels. Keep your radio on Channel 12, which is the port working frequency used by Southampton Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and shipping.

Personal Watercraft (PWCs)

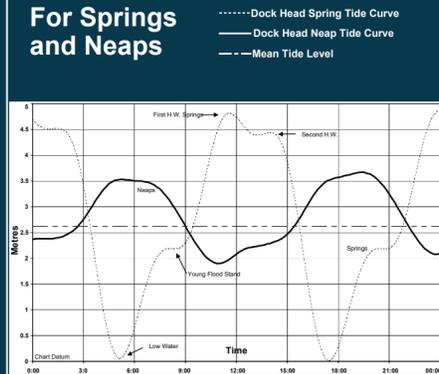
PWCs, otherwise known as jet-skis and waterbikes, are required to exercise caution with due regard to other water users when in the Port of Southampton and approaches. When close to the shoreline, in particular keep a good lookout for swimmers. Be aware of your speed and keep clear of ships and other craft. Always wear the Kill Cord. The 6 knot limit in the Docks applies to all powered craft. Monitor General Directions for watersports areas. General Directions - Southampton VTS - ABP Southampton.

Collision Avoidance Checklist

Avoid ship channels when possible. Cross them quickly and at right angles:

- Be alert, watch for ship traffic.
- Be seen, especially at night.
- Know whistle signals- five or more short blasts, your intentions are not understood!
- Listen to VHF channel 12 - if you have to transmit keep your message brief.
- Use up-to-date navigation charts - read Local Notice to Mariners & General Directions at www.southamptonvts.co.uk.
- When in doubt, keep clear. Always be prepared for the unexpected.
- Be safe, always wear your lifejacket

Typical Southampton Tidal Curves For Springs and Neaps



What Does it mean to Impede a Vessel?

- To approach so as to involve a risk of collision or close quarter situation.
- To give cause for concern to the master and pilot of the ship.
- To not take early action to avoid either of the above.
- In the Thorn Channel, to pass within 1000m ahead or 100m either side of a vessel over 150m.
- To move out of sight of the bridge team, giving cause for concern. Remember, if you can't see the bridge then they can't see you!



NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION



- The area bounded by the Calshot Spit and the Fawley Power Station channel and as marked by yellow special marks (see Figure 1), is designated as a water sports area ("Calshot Watersports Area").
- The Calshot Watersports Area provides a safe area for dinghy and dayboat sailing, windsurfing, kitesurfing and paddle sports, only. Kitesurfing is not permitted in the Watersports area between 1st April to 31st October.
- Authorised support and rescue craft involved in support of these activities can also operate within the Calshot Water sports Area.
- Within the Calshot Watersports Area, all other powered craft not providing safety cover must adhere to a 6 knot speed limit.
- The Calshot Watersports Area must not be used for activities involving the towing of persons.

A speed limit of 6 knots (over the ground) applies to all craft proceeding north of an imaginary line drawn from Hythe pier through the Weston shelf buoy to the Weston shore.

130m Exclusion zone

BEWARE LARGE VESSELS TURNING

Typical track of commercial vessels at Ebbtide (Floodtide)

Precautionary Area See Caution One

Southampton Water and its Approaches

For centuries, the Port of Southampton has played a vital role in British sea trade and is situated on one of the finest natural harbours in the world. Southampton Water and its approaches offer leisure users excellent sailing waters and numerous locations from the Isle of Wight to the rivers Test and Itchen.

This Leisure Guide is designed to provide mariners with information which will contribute to the safe navigation and enjoyment of the area.

Caution One: Precautionary Area
All vessels over 150m in length, whilst navigating this area, will have a MOVING PROHIBITED ZONE 1000m ahead and 100m to either side. These vessels will display a black cylinder by day and three all-round red lights in a vertical line at night.

Vessels under 20m are prohibited from entering the Moving Prohibited Zone.

Whenever possible, vessels over 150m will be escorted by a patrol launch showing a blue flashing light. The absence of the launch will not invalidate the Moving Prohibited Zone (see current LNTM & General Directions).

Caution Two: Waterskiing
Waterskiing is not permitted in the port except in the designated area at Redbridge. It is an offence under Harbour Byelaws to waterski outside this area, and offenders may be prosecuted.

The Redbridge area is usable from approximately 1 hour before until 2 hours after the 1st High Water. There are some obstructions in the area and large-scale Admiralty Charts should be consulted before use.

Caution Three: Osborne Bay
This area is not recommended as a small craft anchorage due to the possibility of wash from passing vessels.



OSBORNE BAY See Caution Three

ENVIRONMENTAL Information



Southampton Water, the Solent and the surrounding harbours are of international importance for nature conservation. The mudflats and other habitats support a wide variety of birds throughout the year. In recognition of this, Southampton Water is designated as part of the Solent European Marine Site, with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats and other species.

ABP, in its role as the Statutory Harbour Authority for the Port of Southampton, has a strong commitment to protecting the local environment and we play an active role in the management scheme for

the marine environment.

Recreational sailors are well known for enjoying and taking care of the environment in which they spend their leisure time. In order to maintain the Port of Southampton as a pleasant place to sail, remember that the UK has strict rules on dumping litter at sea, with substantial penalties for offenders. Please retain all rubbish on board and dispose of it safely in proper facilities once you return to shore. For more information on sustainable boating you may wish to visit this website: [The Green Blue – Making the environment second nature.](#)

USEFUL Contacts



Associated British Ports (ABP)
Ocean Gate, Atlantic Way,
Southampton
Hampshire. SO14 3QN
Tel:.....02380 488800

Vessel Traffic Services Centre (VTS)
Tel:.....02380 608208 (24hrs)
www.southamptonvts.co.uk

Visitors can access regularly updated shipping movements, cruise schedules, Local Notices to Mariners and tidal forecasts.

Harbour Masters of the Solent:
Beaulieu River.....01590 616200
Cowes.....01983 293952
Hamble.....01489 576387
Portsmouth..... 02392 723694
(Harbour Control, QHM)

Border Force South (Immigration)
N.O.H.....0300 056 8120
O.O.H - Until 22.30.....02380 627 107
www.gov.uk/border-force

HM Coastguard:
Lee on Solent.....02392 552100

Port Health:
Southampton.....02380 226631
Portsmouth.....02392 688653

HM Revenue and Customs:
Yachtline.....0845 723 1110
Customs Helpline.....0300 200 3700
Customs Hotline.....0800 595 5000
www.hmrc.gov.uk

The Leisure Guide is produced by ABP as a reference and safety guide only and must not be used as a navigation chart. All numbers and information contained within were correct at time of publication. If your organisation needs additional copies of this publication, please forward your requests to ABP.

Tel: 02380 608206 / 02380 608211

Images courtesy of Andrew Sassoli-Walker.

Designed and Produced by: Jackbumper.com

Tel:.....07852 582822