

Local Notice to Mariners

Number 12 of 2025

01/01/2025

Navigation and Pilotage Requirements for the Operation of Hydrofoil, Hovercraft and other High Speed Catamaran or Monohull Passenger Vessels

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that all Hydrofoils, Hovercraft and other High Speed Catamaran or Monohull Passenger Vessels operating within the jurisdiction of the Port of Southampton, shall comply with the following requirements, in addition to the Port of Southampton Harbour Bye Laws 2003.

1. GENERAL NAVIGATION

- a. The Master of a Hydrofoil, Hovercraft or other high speed Catamaran or Monohull passenger vessel when underway, shall make use only of such channels as are authorised by the Harbour Master (Southampton Harbour Bye Law No 12 refers), except under the following conditions:
 - i. Action required to avoid risk of collision, including an alteration of course and/or speed, which may take the vessel outside of such channels.
 - ii. These vessels will be required to leave the channel where safe to do so when a 'clear channel vessel' is underway in The Precautionary Area as directed by Southampton VTS. However, these vessels will not be permitted to pass inshore to the west of Black Jack, Castle Point, Calshot Spit Light Float and Bourne Gap light buoys.
- b. The minimum passing distance off Dock Head in the Eastern Docks shall be not less than 30 metres from the face of the quay.
- c. When two or more such vessels are operating in the same direction within a speed restricted area, no overtaking will be permitted and they should maintain a minimum separation of 100 metres.

2. SPEED

- a. Rivers Test and Itchen - The maximum speed permitted above Dock Head is 6 knots, consistent with safe navigation. Dispensation may be given by Southampton VTS to exceed this limit, providing that it is requested on each and every occasion by the subject vessel before entering the restricted speed area and does not result in excessive wash.
- b. Dock Head to Hythe Pier/Weston Shelf Buoy - Dispensation to operate at full speed may be given by Southampton VTS providing the main navigable channel is clear of conflicting traffic and no excessive wash is generated. If traffic is present in this area, speed is to be reduced consistent with safe navigation.
- c. If visibility falls below 5 cables, speed at (a) and (b) above is to be reduced to a maximum of 6 knots consistent with safe navigation.

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- d. When proceeding to and from the Passenger Terminal on the East side of the Town Quay all high speed passenger vessels are required to reduce speed to below 6 knots. The application of this rule applies eastward of a line joining Pier Head Buoy and the most Westerly point at Dock Head. Dispensation will not be granted to any vessel to exceed the speed limit within this area.
- e. Remainder of the Harbour - During periods of low visibility (below 5 cables) or congested traffic, including recreational craft, speed is to be consistent with safe navigation.

2. IDENTIFICATION LIGHTS TO BE SHOWN WITHIN RESTRICTED SPEED LIMIT AREAS

- a. When underway within any restricted speed limit area in the Port of Southampton all high-speed passenger vessels must display the following identification light, in addition to the navigation lights specified by Rule 23 (a) of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972, as amended, (IRPCS) and at the times specified by Rule 20 (b) and (c):

At a distance of 1.82 metres (6 feet) above or below the white light required by Rule 23(a)(i), a flashing yellow light visible all round the horizon at a range of at least 2 miles. The flashing light shall have the same flashing rate as defined in Rule 21(f) namely, flashing at regular intervals at a frequency of 120 flashes or more per minute, and the colour and intensity as described in Annex 1 paragraphs 7 and 8 of the Regulations.

- b. In all circumstances the yellow flashing light shall be so placed as to be above and clear of all other lights and obstructions, except the white light described in a. above.
- c. The flashing light will be displayed only when the vessel is underway within a speed restricted area, i.e. northwards of a line drawn from the seaward end of Hythe Pier to Weston shore, passing through the charted position of Weston Shelf Buoy. The flashing light will also be displayed in other areas when the Harbour Master has imposed a speed limit. Outside these restricted areas, these vessels will display the normal lights and signals for vessels of their class.
- d. The identification flashing yellow light shown in the manner described in this Notice DOES NOT relieve these vessels of taking any action required by IRPCS.
- e. These directions, applicable within the Port of Southampton, are authorised pursuant to Section 52 of the Harbours, Docks and Piers Clauses Act 1847, Southampton Harbour Act 1939, Section 12, and Southampton Harbour Bye Laws 2003.

**Steven Masters,
Harbour Master**