

Medway Ports Authority

**General Directions for
Navigation 1991**

The Medway Ports Authority in exercise of their powers under the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973, and having carried out the consultations required by section 20 of the said Act, give the following general directions to vessels in the Port and Medway approach area.

CARRIAGE OF VHF/RT EQUIPMENT

1. (1) All vessels having a gross tonnage of more than 50 tons or which are more than 40 metres in length overall shall carry fixed or portable phase modulated VHF radio telephone equipment operating on port operations channels in addition to channel 16 (156.8 MHz) and capable of communicating with the Medway Navigation Service, hereinafter referred to by its call sign 'Medway Radio'.
- (2) All vessels to which paragraph (1) of this direction applies shall maintain a listening watch on the bridge when under way or at anchor within the Port or Medway approach area. The listening watch required by this direction shall be maintained on the frequency of 156.8 MHz (channel 16) whilst at anchor, or on the frequency of 156.725 MHz (channel 74 - the Port Operations frequency) whilst under way, or on such other channel as may be specified by the harbour master. Communication between vessels and tugs is carried out on approved channels, normally 156.675 MHz (channel 73), 156.450 MHz (channel 9) and 156.550 MHz (channel 11). Radar information is passed to vessels on the frequency of 161.7 MHz (channel 22, duplex, ship frequency 157.1 MHz).
- (3) All vessels having a gross tonnage of more than 50 tons or which are more than 40 metres in length overall and not carrying VHF/RT equipment in accordance with paragraph (1) of this direction shall not navigate in the Port or Medway approach area except with a special direction of the harbour master.

TIME OF ARRIVAL OF INWARD BOUND VESSELS

2. This direction applies at all times to every vessel having a gross tonnage of more than 50 tons or is more than 40 metres in length overall which proposes to enter and navigate in the Port or Medway approach area.
- (1) The owner or master of every vessel to which this direction applies:-
- (a) at least 24 hours prior to arrival or on leaving the last port, whichever is later, must give notice to the harbour master of the vessel's estimated time of arrival in the Port or Medway approach area; and the master shall:-
- (b) on coming within VHF range of 'Medway Radio' give the vessel's estimated time of arrival; and
- (c) if bound to the Medway, report to the harbour master when passing or at the following reporting points as appropriate:-
- (i) Medway Buoy
(ii) No.12 Buoy
(iii) Darnett Ness
(iv) No.32 Buoy
(v) Chatham Ness
(vi) When berthed or anchored; or
- (d) If bound to the Swale, report to the harbour master when passing or at the following reporting points as appropriate:-
- (i) Medway Buoy
(ii) Queenborough Spit Buoy
(iii) Long Point
(iv) Kingsferry Bridge
(v) When berthed or anchored
- (2) If the master fails to give the notice required by this direction, he shall give the required information to the harbour master as soon as it is practicable.
- (3) In giving the notice required by this direction, the master shall also advise the harbour master of the vessel's draught and of any circumstances which may affect the seaworthiness or handling capacity of the vessel.

TIME OF DEPARTURE OF OUTWARD OR SHIFTING VESSELS

3. This direction applies at all times to every vessel which has a gross tonnage of more than 50 tons or is more than 40 metres in length overall and is berthed or anchored in the Port or Medway approach area, and proposes to navigate in the Port or Medway approach area for the purpose of leaving or shifting within the said areas.
- (1) The master of every vessel to which this direction applies shall:-
- (a) give to the harbour master notice of not less than one hour of the time at which he proposes to navigate in the Port or Medway approach area, and again advise the harbour master immediately prior to the commencement of such navigation; and
- (b) report to the harbour master when passing or at the reporting points specified in direction 2 (1) as appropriate.
- (2) If the master fails to give the notice required by this direction, the master shall advise the harbour master as soon as it is practicable.
- (3) In giving the notice required by this direction, the master shall also advise the harbour master of the vessel's draught and of any circumstances which may affect the seaworthiness or handling capacity of the vessel.

NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OF OVER 130 METRES OVERALL LENGTH BETWEEN SUNSET AND SUNRISE

4. This direction applies between sunset and sunrise to every vessel of over 130 metres overall length.
- (1) The master of every vessel to which this direction applies shall not navigate the vessel so as to pass or overtake another vessel to which this direction applies in the following area:-
- (a) In the Medway approach Channel between No.4 navigation buoy and due west of Garrison Point.
- (2) To assist vessels in complying with this direction, and navigation generally, the Traffic Warning Lights at Garrison Point, flashing every seven seconds, are exhibited by day and by night as follows:-
- (a) When an inward bound vessel of over 130 metres overall length is

underway in the buoyed navigable channel between the Medway Buoy and Darnett Ness, the lights are exhibited in an upriver direction.

- (b) When an outward bound vessel of over 130 metres overall length or more is underway in the buoyed navigable channel between the Medway Buoy and Darnett Ness, the lights are exhibited in a seaward direction.

PASSENGER FERRY OPERATIONS - GARRISON POINT

- 5. This direction applies to every vessel of 130 metres in overall length or more.
 - (1) The Master of every vessel to which this direction applies shall navigate so as not to pass a passenger ferry berthing/unberthing at Garrison Point ferry terminal berths.
 - (2) The Master of a passenger carrying ferry shall not unberth from these berths whilst a vessel to which this direction applies is underway between No. 10 lightbuoy and the Kent lightbuoys.
 - (3) Garrison Point ferry berths are defined as No. 10 and 11 berths, Sheerness Docks.

NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OVER 130 METRES OVERALL LENGTH ABOVE OAKHAM NESS JETTY

- 6. This direction shall apply to every vessel of 130 metres overall length or more which is navigating above Oakham Ness Jetty.

The master of every vessel to which this direction applies shall not navigate the vessel so as to pass or overtake another to which this direction applies in any navigable channel that lies upstream of Oakham Ness Jetty.

NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OVER 40 METRES OVERALL LENGTH ABOVE FOLLY POINT

- 7. This direction shall apply to every vessel of 40 metres overall length or more which is navigating above Folly Point.

If the wheelhouse of a vessel to which this direction applies is situated aft, the vessel must at all times have a look-out stationed forward who:-

- (a) must be in telephone or radio communication with the wheelhouse, and
- (b) must be instructed to report every sighting of a vessel underway and every other matter which could affect the safe navigation of the vessel, to which this direction applies.

ANCHORING IN THE PORT OR MEDWAY APPROACH AREA

- 8. This direction applies at all times to every vessel having a gross tonnage of more than 50 tons or is more than 40 metres in overall length which proposes to anchor in the Port or Medway approach area.
 - (1) The master of every vessel to which this direction applies shall notify the harbour master of the proposed position in which it is intended to anchor the vessel. This notice shall be given in sufficient time to enable the harbour master to give a special direction to the master to place the vessel in an alternative anchorage if required.
 - (2) If in an emergency a vessel is obliged to anchor otherwise than in accordance with this direction, the master shall advise the harbour master as soon as practicable.

AUTOMATIC STEERING

- 9. (1) The master of every vessel underway in the port or Medway approach area shall ensure that the vessel is not navigated using automatic steering.
 - (2) For the purpose of this direction a vessel is using automatic steering when the heading required is being maintained other than by a helmsman.

DUTY OF OWNER

- 10. The owner of a vessel to which a general direction applies shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the master of the vessel is informed of the direction and understands its significance.

INTERPRETATION AND COMMENCEMENT

11. (1) The following words and expressions have the same meaning as in the Medway Ports River Byelaws 1991:-
- 'the harbour master'
 - 'the Medway approach area'
 - 'the owner'
 - 'the port'
 - 'the vessel'
 - 'the master'
- (2) The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply to the interpretation of these directions as it applies to the interpretation of an Act of Parliament.
- (3) These directions shall come into operation on 1st May 1991, and the general directions given in 1981 are hereby revoked from that date.

GENERAL NOTES

- (1) The notice, advice and reporting required to be given to the harbour master by these directions should normally be given by VHF to 'Medway Radio' or land line Telephone (01795 - 663025), Telex (96435) or Fax (01795 - 666596) to the Medway Navigation Service at Garrison Point, Sheerness.
- (2) The harbour master may give a special direction to a vessel in the Port or Medway approach area and to a vessel prior to entering these areas. Such a direction may be given for any of the following purposes:-
- (a) requiring a vessel to comply with a requirement made in or under a general direction;
 - (b) regulating or requiring for the ease, convenience or safety of navigation the movement, mooring or unmooring of a vessel;
 - (c) regulating for the safety of navigation the manner in which a vessel takes in or discharges cargo, fuel, water, or ship's stores.
 - (d) a direction under this section may also be given, so far as required for safety of navigation, to require or regulating the use of tugs in relation to a vessel.

A special direction may be given in any reasonable manner considered appropriate.

- (3) It is the duty of the master of a vessel to which a general or special direction is given to comply with the direction. The giving of a direction does not diminish or in any other way affect the responsibility of the master in relation to his vessel, persons on board, its cargo or any other person or property.
- (4) The master of a vessel who fails to comply with a general or special direction is liable to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale.

It is a defence for the master to prove that he had reasonable ground for supposing that compliance with the direction in question would be likely to imperil his vessel or any person for whom he is responsible or that in the circumstances compliance was impracticable.

- (5) Portable VHF equipment may be hired from the Authority if necessary, and arrangements can be made to put the equipment aboard a vessel.

- (6) Owners and masters of vessels are reminded of their duty under S.71 of the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973 and under Regulation 6 of the Dangerous Substances in Harbour Area Regulations 1987, to give notice to the harbour master of not less than 24 hours, when practicable, of the nature and quantity of dangerous goods carried in a vessel entering the Port or intended to be placed on board the vessel in the Port.

Notes