



PORT OF SHEERNESS LIMITED

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATION IN THE MEDWAY PORTS 2013

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GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATION IN THE MEDWAY PORTS 2013

Introduction

Port of Sheerness Limited as the Statutory and Competent Harbour Authority for Peel Ports Medway and in exercise of its powers under the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973, having carried out the consultations required by Section 20 of the Act, and with the agreement of the Chamber of Shipping, repeals the Medway Ports Authority General Directions for Navigation 1991 and gives the following General Directions to vessels in the Port.

The notice, advice and reporting required to be given to the Harbourmaster by these Directions should normally be given to 'Medway VTS' by VHF (channel 74) or land line telephone (01795 663025) or Fax (01795 666596) or by email (navigation@medwayports.com).

Special Directions

In addition to these General Directions, the Harbourmaster may give a Special Direction to a vessel in the Port or to a vessel entering or leaving the Port. Such Special Directions 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; or
- (d) so far as required for safety of navigation, to require or regulate the use of tugs in relation to a vessel.

A Special Direction may be given in any reasonable manner considered appropriate.

Compliance with General and Special Directions

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 General or Special 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.

Failure by the Master of a vessel to comply with a General or Special Direction constitutes an offence. The Master of a vessel who fails to comply with such a Direction is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding Level 4 on the Standard Scale. However, it shall be a defence for such Master of a vessel to prove that he had reasonable grounds 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 (section 26 of the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973).

Notes to the General Directions

Some of the General Directions are accompanied by Notes, which are written in *italics*. These notes provide additional information to further explain a General Direction and do not form part of that General Direction.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR NAVIGATION IN THE MEDWAY PORTS 2013

1. COMMENCEMENT

These Directions shall come into force on 20th May 2013 on which date the Medway Ports Authority General Directions for Navigation 1991 are revoked and shall cease to be in force.

2. SHORT TITLE

These General Directions may be cited as the Medway Ports General Directions 2013.

3. DEFINITIONS

In these General Directions the following terms shall have the meanings respectively set against them:-

- 3.1 **“Act”** means the Medway Ports Authority Act 1973 (as amended);
- 3.2 **“Automatic Steering”** means any steering mode whereby the heading is being maintained other than by a helmsman;
- 3.3 **“Berth Exclusion Zone”** means an arc measuring 250 metres in any direction from the cargo transfer arms of the LNG Terminal;
- 3.4 **“Collision Regulations”** means the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972, as amended;
- 3.5 **“Dangerous Goods”** means quantities, (including in slop tanks) of harmful, polluting or dangerous substances, including:
 - (a) Dangerous Goods as defined in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code, Classes 1 to 9 inclusive of and including:
 - (i) Marine Pollutants as defined in the Environmentally Hazardous Substances N.O.S. UN 3077 and UN 3082. (MARPOL 73/78 Annex III, Regulations for the Prevention of Pollution by Harmful Substances Carried by Sea in Packaged Forms);
 - (ii) Radioactive Materials referred to in the Code for the Safe Carriage of Irradiated Nuclear Fuel, Plutonium and High Level Radioactive Wastes in Flasks on board Ships (INF Code);
 - (iii) Bulk Materials Possessing Chemical Hazards referred to in the Code of Safe Practice for Solid Bulk Cargoes (BC Code), Appendix B.
 - (b) Harmful Substances in Bulk so defined and listed in:
 - (i) MARPOL 73/78 Annex I, Regulations for the Prevention of Oil Pollution, Appendix I;
 - (ii) MARPOL 73/78 Annex II, Regulations for the Control of Pollution by Noxious Liquid Substances in Bulk, Appendix n;
 - (iii) Chapter 17 of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code);
 - (iv) (Chapter 19 of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code);
 - (v) the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) circulars listing the substances provisionally assessed by IMO or assessed by tripartite agreement;
 - (vi) the IMO Bulk Chemical (BCH) circulars listing the substances for which a hazard profile exists.

- 3.6 “**General Direction**” means a general direction as defined in the Act, including the general directions contained in this document and such other general directions as may be given by POS in accordance with the Act or any other law.
- 3.7 “**Gross Tonnage**” in relation to a vessel means the tonnage as ascertained in accordance with the International Convention of Tonnage Measurement of Ships 1969, or the Merchant Shipping (Tonnage) Regulations 1982, as amended, and where in accordance with those regulations alternative tonnages are assigned to a vessel, the Gross Tonnage of the vessel shall, for the purposes of these Directions, be taken to be the larger of those tonnages;
- 3.8 “**Harbourmaster**” means a person appointed by POS to be a harbour master and includes the deputies and assistants of a person so appointed and officers in charge at Medway VTS;
- 3.9 “**IMO**” means the International Maritime Organisation;
- 3.10 “**ISM Code**” means the International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention as adopted by the IMO in Resolution A.741 (18);
- 3.11 “**ISPS**” means the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code;
- 3.12 “**law**” means any law, statute, treaty, convention, regulation, instrument or other subordinate legislation or amendment thereto, or other legislative or quasi-legislative rule or measure, or any order or decree of any government, judicial or public or other body or authority, or any directive, code of practice, circular, guidance note or other direction issued by any competent authority or agency, whether or not having the force of law and whether or not in existence at the date of these General Directions.
- 3.13 “**Length Overall**” means the maximum length of a vessel, including overhanging structure, cargo or equipment, and if a tug and tow, the combination of the tug and the object(s) towed but not the length of the towing medium;
- 3.14 “**LNG**” means liquefied natural gas;
- 3.15 “**LNG Terminal**” means the National Grid Grain LNG Terminal on the Isle of Grain, which includes the Isle of Grain Jetties 8 and 10
- 3.16 “**LNG Vessel**” means any vessel carrying LNG in bulk
- 3.17 “**Master**” in relation to a vessel includes every person having command or charge of a vessel for the time being;
- 3.18 “**Medway Ports**” means the Port, as defined in these General Directions and includes the River Medway, from the Medway Buoy to Allington Lock, and the Swale, including adjoining Creeks, and Chatham Dock No. 3 Basin.
- 3.19 “**Medway VTS**” means the Vessel Traffic Service Centre at Garrison Point Sheerness - Call Sign ‘Medway VTS’ - a point through which the Harbourmaster’s instructions and advice are issued to Masters of vessels by VHF Radio and to which vessels report;
- 3.20 “**Notices to Mariners**” means notices to mariners issued by Peel Ports Medway;
- 3.21 “**Passenger Vessel**” means a vessel which is carrying more than 12 passengers;
- 3.22 “**PEC holder**” means a holder of a Pilotage Exemption Certificate granted under Section 8 of the Pilotage Act 1987;

- 3.23 **Pilot**” means a person authorised under section 3 of the Pilotage Act 1987 for the Port and for the vessel in question;
- 3.24 **“Port”** means:
- (a) the port; and
 - (b) the Medway approach area;
- as defined in the Act (as amended);
- 3.25 **“Port Passage Plan”** means a formal, systematic and documented navigational plan for all stages of any voyage into, out of, or within the Port in accordance with the guidelines contained in the appropriate SOLAS regulations, or any similar flag state administration notice issued pursuant to the associated IMO Conventions on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers (STCW);
- 3.26 **“POS”** means Port of Sheerness Limited;
- 3.27 **“Reporting Vessel”** means every vessel which is required by these General Directions to report its position, intentions or movements, specifically:
- (a) vessels having a Gross Tonnage of more than 50 tonnes;
 - (b) vessels whose Length Overall is more than 40 metres;
 - (c) Passenger Vessels;
 - (d) vessels carrying Dangerous Goods; and
 - (e) vessels which are engaged in Towing Operations.
- 3.28 **“Restricted Visibility”** means all circumstances when visibility is restricted by fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms or any other similar causes;
- Note: Within the Port a Harbourmaster or his designated deputy may using all available information, decide that Restricted Visibility pertains in a particular area or at a particular time or is likely to pertain and may inform shipping as appropriate.*
- 3.29 **“SOLAS”** means the International Convention for the Safety of life at Sea;
- 3.30 **“Special Direction”** means a direction authorised by section 21 of the Act;
- Note: Section 21 of the Act empowers a Harbourmaster to give a Special Direction to a vessel anywhere in the Port and to a vessel prior to entering the Port from a dock.*
- 3.31 **“Speed Reduction”** means an instruction from Medway VTS requiring vessels to proceed at ‘reduced speed’ through areas where activities sensitive to the effects of wash or draw-off are taking place;
- Note: At such times, mariners should reduce speed as appropriate, in order to minimise wash and draw-off, commensurate with maintaining manoeuvrability, to ensure the safety of those engaged in such activities.*
- 3.32 **“Speed Restriction”** means any temporary limitation on the speed of vessels in a part of the Port;
- 3.33 **“Towing Operations”** means operations where a vessel is engaged in, or is about to engage in towing or pushing one or more vessels;

- 3.34 **“Traffic Warning Lights”** means a white light flashing every seven seconds exhibited from Garrison Point Signal Station in position 51° 26.80N, 00° 44'.64E
- 3.35 **“VHF Radio Equipment”** means fixed or portable phase modulated VHF radio telephone equipment operating on port operations channels in addition to channel 16 (156.8MHz) and capable of communicating with Medway VTS.

4. INTERPRETATION

- 4.1 In these Directions, unless the context otherwise requires:
- 4.2 Words and expressions defined in the Act shall have the same meaning when used in these General Directions.
- 4.3 All General Directions, if not otherwise stated, shall be deemed to apply to all vessels, to the whole of the Port, at all times. A General Direction addressed to a Master shall be deemed to apply to the vessel of which he is the Master.
- 4.4 Unless the context otherwise requires, words denoting the singular shall include the plural and vice versa, and words importing one gender shall include the other gender.
- 4.5 A reference to any law shall include any additions, amendments or corrections to, or replacements of that law.

5. CARRIAGE OF VHF RADIO EQUIPMENT

- 5.1 All Reporting Vessels shall carry VHF Radio Equipment;
- 5.2 All Reporting Vessels shall maintain a listening watch on the bridge when underway or at anchor within the Port. The listening watch required by this direction shall be maintained on the frequencies of 156.800 MHz (channel 16) and 156.725 MHz (channel 74 – the port operations frequency), or on any other such channel as may be specified by the Harbourmaster. Communication between vessels and tugs is carried out on approved channels, normally 156.675 MHz (channel 73), 156.400 MHz (channel 8) and 156.550 MHz (channel 11). Radar information is passed to vessels on the frequency of 157.7 MHz (channel 22 duplex, ship frequency 157.1 MHz);
- 5.3 All Reporting Vessels not carrying VHF Radio Equipment in accordance with paragraph (1) of this General Direction shall not navigate in the Port except with a Special Direction of the Harbourmaster.

6. NOTICE OF ARRIVAL OF INWARD BOUND VESSELS

- 6.1 All Reporting Vessels shall:-
- (a) Give notice to the Harbourmaster of the Reporting Vessel's estimated time of arrival in the Port at least 24 hours prior to arrival or on leaving the last port, whichever is the later;
 - (b) If the vessel is carrying Dangerous Goods, give such notice to the Harbourmaster at least 24 hours prior to arrival or on leaving the last port, whichever is the later, including the nature and quantity of any Class 7 and/or 1;
 - (c) On coming within VHF range of Medway VTS give the vessel's estimated time of arrival at Garrison Point;

- (d) Prior to entering the port, provide the following information to the Harbourmaster;
 - (i) Draught;
 - (ii) Number of persons on board;
 - (iii) Confirmation that a Port Passage Plan has been prepared;
 - (iv) Confirmation that the vessel has the appropriate charts and publications, which are corrected and up to date;
 - (v) The vessel's ISPS security level;
 - (vi) Last port of call;
 - (vii) Confirmation that the vessel has no defects or deficiencies, as required by General Direction 20.2.

7. NOTICE OF DEPARTURE OF OUTWARD OR SHIFTING VESSELS

7.1 All Reporting Vessels shall:-

- (a) give to the Harbourmaster notice of not less than one hour of the time at which the vessel proposes to navigate in the Port;
- (b) If the vessel is carrying Dangerous Goods, give notice of such to the Harbourmaster prior to departure, including the nature and quantity of any Class 7 and/or 1;
- (c) request clearance to proceed prior to commencement of any navigation within the Port and provide the following information to the Harbourmaster;
 - (i) Draught;
 - (ii) Number of persons on board;
 - (iii) Confirmation that an appropriate Port Passage Plan has been prepared;
 - (iv) Confirmation that the vessel has the appropriate charts and publications, which are corrected and up to date
 - (v) The vessel's ISPS security level;
 - (vi) Next port of call;
 - (vii) Confirmation that the vessel has no defects or deficiencies, as required by General Direction 20.2.

7.2 Reporting Vessels shall not commence such navigation within the Port until they have been given clearance to proceed by the Harbourmaster.

7.3 The following vessels shall, on passing the wreck of the Richard Montgomery, report to London VTS on VHF Channel 69, and declare which channels, beyond Sea Reach No. 1 Buoy, they intend to use for navigation:

- (a) Vessels of more than 40 metres Length Overall;
- (b) Vessels of Gross Tonnage of more than 50 tonnes; and
- (c) Vessels engaged in Towing Operations.

8. REPORTING POINTS

8.1 All Reporting Vessels shall:

- (a) when navigating in the River Medway, report to the Harbourmaster when passing or at the following reporting points as appropriate:-

- (i) Medway Buoy, Spile or Mid Swatch;
 - (ii) No.12 Buoy;
 - (iii) Darnett Ness;
 - (iv) No.32 Buoy;
 - (v) Chatham Ness;
 - (vi) When berthed or anchored; or
- (b) when navigating in the West Swale, report to the Harbourmaster when passing or at the following reporting points as appropriate;
- (i) Queenborough Spit Buoy;
 - (ii) Long Point;
 - (iii) Kingsferry Bridge;
 - (iv) When berthed or anchored; or
- (c) when navigating in the East Swale, report to the Harbourmaster when passing or at Shellness and when berthed or anchored.

9. USE OF VHF RADIO IN COLLISION AVOIDANCE

- 9.1 When special passing agreements are made between vessels in order to reduce the risk of collision, communication must be conducted on the frequency of VHF Channel 74 to ensure that the Medway VTS and other river users are aware of the vessels' intentions.
- 9.2 Although the use of VHF radio may be justified on occasion as a collision avoidance aid, the provisions of the Collision Regulations should remain uppermost.

Note: The Maritime & Coastguard Agency has issued advice on this topic in the form of Marine Guidance Note 324 (M+F).

10. NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OF MORE THAN 130 METRES LENGTH OVERALL BETWEEN SUNSET AND SUNRISE AND IN RESTRICTED VISIBILITY

- 10.1 Between sunset and sunrise and in conditions of Restricted Visibility, vessels of over 130 metres Length Overall are not permitted to pass or overtake each other in the Medway Approach Channel between No.4 Buoy and a drawn line 270° (True) from the 2FR (vert) lights adjacent to No 11 Berth Pontoon, Garrison Point.
- 10.2 To assist vessels in complying with this General Direction, and with 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 more than 130 metres Length Overall is underway in the buoyed channel between the Medway Buoy and Darnett Ness the lights are exhibited in an upriver direction;
 - (b) When an outward bound vessel of more than 130 metres Length Overall is underway in the buoyed channel between Darnett Ness and the Medway Buoy the lights are exhibited in a seaward direction.

11. NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OF MORE THAN 130 METRES LENGTH OVERALL UPSTREAM OF OAKHAMNESS JETTY

Vessels of more than 130 metres Length Overall are not permitted to pass or overtake each other in any navigable channel that lies upstream of Oakhamness Jetty.

12. NAVIGATION OF VESSELS OF MORE THAN 40 METRES LENGTH OVERALL UPSTREAM OF FOLLY POINT

12.1 Vessels of more than 40 metres Length Overall which have their wheelhouse situated aft, when navigating upstream of Folly Point, must at all times have a look-out stationed forward who:-

- (a) is in telephone or radio communication with the wheelhouse; and
- (b) is instructed to report every sighting of a vessel underway and every other matter which could affect the safe navigation of the vessel.

13. NAVIGATION OF VESSELS IN RELATION TO THE LNG TERMINAL

13.1 When there is no LNG Vessel berthed at the LNG Terminal no vessel shall navigate within that part of the River Medway which is within an arc measuring 150 metres in any direction from the cargo transfer arms at the LNG Terminal,

13.2 Whilst an LNG Vessel is moored at the LNG Terminal no vessel of more than 50 metres Length Overall, other than service craft attending the LNG Vessel and which are authorised to be there by the Harbourmaster, shall enter any part of the River Medway which is within the Berth Exclusion Zone or pass the Berth Exclusion Zone at a speed greater than 7.5 knots through the water.

13.3 Vessels of 50 metres Length Overall or less may, if considered necessary by the Master or Pilot of such vessel for reasons of safety of navigation, and on permission of the Harbourmaster, pass within the Berth Exclusion Zone; but not less than 100 metres from any LNG Vessel berthed at the LNG Terminal. Whilst within the Berth Exclusion Zone the speed of such vessels shall not exceed 7.5 knots through the water.

14. NAVIGATION OF VESSELS IN RELATION TO LNG VESSELS

14.1 When an LNG Vessel is proceeding in any direction between the Medway Buoy and the LNG Terminal no vessel shall proceed in the main Medway Approach Channel, between No. 2 Light Buoy and a drawn line 270° (True) from the 2FR (vert) lights adjacent to No 11 Berth Pontoon, Garrison Point, or in the Medway Secondary Channel, in an opposite direction to the LNG Vessel, except where section 14(3) of these General Directions otherwise allows.

14.2 Vessels navigating in the same direction as an LNG Vessel which is proceeding in any direction between the Medway Buoy and the LNG Terminal shall maintain a safe distance of at least one mile ahead or half a mile astern of the LNG Vessel.

14.3 Subject to the specific agreement of both the LNG Vessel and Medway VTS, vessels of 130 metres Length Overall or less, provided that they safely navigate outside the main navigational channel may navigate in the same or opposite direction as an LNG Vessel. Such vessels should navigate with caution and slow speed (*see Note*).

- 14.4 When an LNG Vessel is underway in any direction between the Medway Buoy and the LNG Terminal, no vessel shall cross less than one mile ahead or half a mile astern of such LNG Vessel.
- 14.5 When an inbound LNG Vessel is manoeuvring in Saltpan Reach to the west of the Kent Buoys no inward bound vessel of more than 50 metres Length Overall shall pass the Kent Buoys and no outward bound vessel of more than 50 metres Length Overall shall pass No.12 Buoy until Medway VTS advises that it is safe to do so.

NOTE: LNG Vessels will normally pass to the South of the Medway Buoy both inbound and outbound. Where interactions are likely to occur in the vicinity of the Medway Buoy between vessels of 130 metres Length Overall or less and LNG Vessels, the intention to navigate outside the channel and details of the planned track should be passed by such vessels to Medway VTS, London VTS and the LNG Vessel involved.

15. USE OF THE MEDWAY SECONDARY CHANNEL

- 15.1 Except where General Direction 14 otherwise prevents, vessels of less than 160 metres Length Overall may use the Medway Secondary Channel.
- 15.2 Reporting Vessels shall only navigate in the Medway Secondary Channel with the prior agreement of Medway VTS.

16. ANCHORING IN THE PORT OR MEDWAY APPROACH AREA

- 16.1 Any Reporting Vessel intending to anchor within the Port shall first notify the Harbourmaster of the proposed position in which it is intended to anchor the vessel. This notice shall be given in sufficient time to enable the Harbourmaster to give a Special Direction to the Master to place the vessel in an alternative anchorage if required.
- 16.2 If in an emergency a vessel is obliged to anchor otherwise than in accordance with this General Direction, the Master shall advise the Harbourmaster as soon as practicable.

17. PERSONS ON THE BRIDGE

- 17.3 There shall be, on the bridge of a power-driven vessel underway in the Port, either the Master of the vessel or a member of the crew who is capable of taking charge of the vessel and, when a Pilot is on board, is capable of understanding the Pilot's directions in the English language.
- 17.2 In addition to the requirements of General Direction 17.1, Reporting Vessels, except vessels engaged in Towing Operations of less than 40 metres Length Overall, shall ensure that there is on the bridge a responsible person who is capable of obtaining assistance.
- 17.3 When a PEC holder has conduct of a vessel within the Port, a second person, who is competent to take charge of the vessel shall be immediately available in an emergency.

18. USE OF AUTOMATIC STEERING

- 18.1 Vessels shall not be navigated using Automatic Steering in the following areas:
 - (a) upstream of Darnett Ness in the Medway;
 - (b) in The Swale.

- 18.2 When use is being made of an Automatic Steering device, a qualified helmsman, other than the Pilot, is to be present on the bridge to steer the vessel manually should circumstances demand.
- 18.3 Any duplicate, secondary or backup steering gear and steering gear power systems are to be fully operational and ready for immediate use whilst vessels are navigating within the Port. Emergency steering gear systems should have been recently tested.

19. PORT PASSAGE PLANS

- 19.1 All Reporting Vessels, which normally operate outside the Port, shall, prior to entering the Port, prepare a Port Passage Plan for use during the vessel's passage within the Port.
- 19.2 Where a Reporting Vessel is provided with a Pilot, the embarking Pilot, upon arrival on board and following any action to establish the navigational safety of the ship, will advise the vessel's Master of the details of the Pilot's Port Passage Plan. He will also advise the Master of any changes made necessary to the vessel's Port Passage Plan by local circumstances. Before proceeding with the passage the Master and the Pilot shall agree the Port Passage Plan for the voyage within the Port.
- 19.3 Reporting Vessels which normally operate within the Port shall prepare and maintain a generic Port Passage Plan appropriate for use during the vessel's routine passage and operations in the Port.
- 19.4 All Port Passage Plans may be inspected by the Harbourmaster.

20. VESSELS WITH MECHANICAL, EQUIPMENT OR STRUCTURAL DEFECTS, OILY WATER SEPARATORS AND BILGE SYSTEMS

- 20.1 Vessels shall not navigate within the Port except with the permission of the Harbourmaster, and according to his directions, if the vessel or its tow has any one or more of the following defects:
- (a) is unseaworthy in any respect;
 - (b) defects to main engines, steering gear or other auxiliary machinery which may affect the manoeuvring of the vessel;
 - (c) inoperable equipment such as compass, whistle/siren, or rudder indicator;
 - (d) inoperable capstans, windlass, mooring winches, or anchors that are not cleared and ready for use;
 - (e) a list of over 5 degrees or is excessively out of trim;
 - (f) is leaking oil, chemical or gas cargoes, or any hull or machinery damage which may affect the safety of the vessel or the containment or safety of the cargo or bunkers;
 - (g) any other structural, mechanical or equipment defect which may affect the navigation of the vessel.
- 20.2 Any vessel becoming aware of such a defect when in the Port or upon entering the Port shall notify Medway VTS immediately.

- 20.3 Reporting Vessels shall confirm to the Harbourmaster at Medway VTS that the vessel does not have any of the defects specified in General Direction 20.1 (a) to (g) inclusive. This confirmation shall be given at the same time as the vessel advises or is required by these General Directions to advise the Harbourmaster of the vessel's intention to navigate within the Port.
- 20.4 Whilst vessels are in the Port, all oily water separators are to be isolated and bilge overboard discharge valves secured closed, to prevent accidental discharge.
- 20.5 The Master of any vessel under pilotage shall ensure that no ballasting, de-ballasting or internal transfer of cargo, which significantly alters the draught, trim or handling characteristics of the vessel, shall take place without the prior knowledge and agreement of the Pilot.

21. RESTRICTIONS ON CERTAIN VESSELS

- 21.1 Any vessel outside the Port, which has sustained damage which has affected, or is likely to affect its seaworthiness and / or from which Dangerous Goods or any other harmful, polluting or dangerous substance is escaping or is likely to escape shall not enter the Port except with the permission of the Harbourmaster and in accordance with his directions.
- 21.2 Any vessel in the Port, which has sustained damage which has affected, or is likely to affect its seaworthiness and / or from which a harmful, polluting or dangerous substance is escaping or is likely to escape shall give immediate notice to the Harbourmaster of the position of the vessel, known damage, and any other information required by the Harbourmaster and shall not navigate the vessel other than for the immediate safety of the vessel, except with the permission of the Harbourmaster and in accordance with his directions.

22. REQUIREMENT FOR OPERATIONAL AIS

- 22.1 Where a vessel is required by international law to fit and operate AIS, the system shall be switched on at all times when the vessel is underway.
- 22.2 Vessels required to carry AIS under SOLAS V are to operate AIS when alongside in the Port, except for security reasons, or for safety reasons when the berth requires the AIS unit to be switched off or to be operated on low power in the vicinity of that particular berth. Such vessels are to inform Medway VTS when they intend to switch off AIS.
- 22.3 Vessels constrained by their draught shall transmit an appropriate AIS status.

NOTE: AIS installations are to be kept updated with the correct settings and particular care is to be taken to ensure that the correct vessel "status" is set and that vessel "heading" is accurately aligned.

NOTE: The Maritime & Coastguard Agency has issued advice on this topic in the form of Marine Guidance Note 324 (M+F).

23. SAFE SPEED

A vessel shall not be navigated or manoeuvred in any part of the Port at speeds which or are likely to:-

- (a) Endanger life;
- (b) Force open gates or caissons or damage any of the works or property;

- (c) Cause damage to any gates or caissons, or to any walls, revetments, training banks, or any works or property (including vessels);
- (d) Cause damage to the banks of the Port;
- (e) Cause damage to vessels lying alongside any quay, jetty or stage or to the moorings of such vessels.

24. SPEED RESTRICTIONS AND REDUCTIONS

All vessels shall comply with the requirements of any Speed Restriction or Speed Reduction imposed by the Harbourmaster, subject to the requirements of navigational safety, the good practice of seamen and any constraints imposed by the vessel's size, draught, position and/or safe manoeuvring speed.

NOTE: Speed Restrictions will normally be promulgated by Medway VTS on VHF Channel 74 and/or by Notice to Mariners.

25. RESTRICTIONS ON TOWING AND PUSHING

- 25.1 This General Direction shall not apply in respect of a Towing Operation carried out over a distance of 0.5 nautical miles or less.
- 25.2 No vessel shall:
 - (a) be engaged in towing a vessel when pushing another vessel ahead;
 - (b) be engaged in pushing a vessel when towing another vessel alongside;
 - (c) be engaged in pushing ahead more than one vessel at a time, except where:-
 - (i) the vessels being pushed are secured together as a composite unit, which is made fast to the pushing vessel and;
 - (ii) the total width of the vessels being pushed does not exceed 24 metres, unless prior permission of the Harbourmaster has otherwise been given.
 - (d) be engaged in towing alongside more than one vessel at a time, except where the towing vessel and the vessels being towed do not together exceed 24 metres in width, unless prior permission of the Harbourmaster has otherwise been given;
 - (e) tow any vessel alongside upstream of the Paper Mill at Snodland.
- 25.3 No vessel shall be engaged in towing astern more than six vessels, and when towing two or more vessels astern:
 - (a) the distance between the stern of the towing vessel and the stern of the aftermost vessel in the tow shall not exceed 140 metres;
 - (b) the number of vessels towed abreast of one another shall not exceed three;
 - (c) the total of the widths of any vessels towed abreast of one another shall not exceed 24 metres, unless prior permission of the Harbourmaster has otherwise been given.

26. CONDUCT IN RESTRICTED VISIBILITY

- 26.1 The following vessels, which are not equipped with an operational radar installation shall not enter the Port and shall not be navigated in the Port in conditions of Restricted Visibility, except to proceed to the nearest safe anchorage or berth:
- (a) Vessels with a Gross Tonnage of more than 50 tonnes;
 - (b) Vessels over 40 metres Length Overall;
 - (c) Passenger Vessels;
 - (d) Vessels carrying Dangerous Goods;
 - (e) Vessels engaged in Towing Operations over 40 metres in Length Overall.
- 26.2 No vessel shall tow another vessel ahead in visibility of less than 2 cables.
- 26.3 Any vessel navigating or moored in Restricted Visibility observing that the visibility at its location is not the distance broadcast by Medway VTS, or that Medway VTS is not aware of Restricted Visibility at the vessel's location, should advise Medway VTS of the current level of visibility at the vessel's location.

PORT OF SHEERNESS LIMITED

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