

HARBOUR AND PORT OF MANCHESTER

PERMANENT NOTICES TO MARINERS – 2026

INTRODUCTION

- I. Permanent Notices to Mariners comprise instructions, guidelines and information that have been published previously in Notices to Mariners or Codes of Practice, etc., but which constitute long-term instructions, guidelines and information that are not covered in The Manchester Ship Canal Company Limited's Byelaws or Pilotage Directions for the Harbour and Port of Manchester.
- II. Permanent Notices to Mariners must be read in conjunction with The Manchester Ship Canal Company Limited's Byelaws, Pilotage Directions and Notices to Mariners.
- III. Berth or terminal operators must be consulted regarding specific requirements relating to their facilities.
- IV. In these Permanent Notices to Mariners, unless the context otherwise requires—
 - “the Harbour Master” means the Harbour Master appointed by MSCC (and includes their authorised deputies and assistants and any person so authorised by MSCC to act in that capacity) and those officers of MSCC authorised to discharge the Harbour Master's duties through Eastham Port Operations Control;
 - “MSCC” means The Manchester Ship Canal Company Limited; and
 - “Port of Manchester” means the Harbour and Port of Manchester.

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1 PORT OPERATIONS VHF COMMUNICATIONS

Radiotelephone communications should be undertaken on the following VHF channels:

Docking instructions for Eastham Locks and QEII Lock for vessels inward-bound in the River Mersey:	Ch. 7 (Call Sign: EASTHAM LOCKS)
Port operations within the Port of Manchester	Ch. 14 (Call Sign: EASTHAM)
Communications with swing and lift bridges	Ch. 72
Towage operations - inward bound	Ch. 8
- outward bound	Ch. 10

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 7/2014

2 DRAUGHT DECLARATIONS

There have been instances where either the inward- or outward-bound draughts for vessels have been mis-declared at the movement booking stage. These mis-declarations have only become known when the Pilot has boarded the vessel and different draughts have been provided by the Master during the Master/Pilot Exchange.

The provision of a vessel's draught for a movement booking serves several functions; not least, it is a key piece of information required (a) for formulating a locking programme, and (b) by a Pilot in preparing a passage plan. In certain circumstances, a mis-declared draught could result in the vessel's transit being delayed or cancelled at short notice.

It is recognised that vessel bookings may be submitted before a vessel completes cargo operations and that the actual arrival or departure draught may not be known. However, in such circumstances, when the actual draught is confirmed, the booking must be amended accordingly.

Masters, owners and their agents are hereby advised that it constitutes an offence to provide false draughts, which may render the Master liable, on conviction, to a fine.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 9/2019

3 DRAUGHT CALCULATIONS IN EASTHAM CHANNEL

Owing to the tidal, estuarial waters that exist outside the locks at Eastham, the salinity of the water cannot be predicted at every stage of the tide. Therefore, when considering the Eastham Channel and the ruling depths, it is prudent to assume the density to be Fresh Water, thereby erring on the side of caution.

Should a maximum-draught vessel be scheduled on a tide, it is recommended that, before arrival, a Liverpool Pilot is consulted. Consultations should be arranged via The Mersey Docks and Harbour Company Limited as the Competent Harbour Authority for the Port of Liverpool.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 10/2014

4 AIRDRAFT RESTRICTIONS

The following airdraft restrictions apply to vessels navigating in the Port of Manchester:

(a) **Eastham Locks (incl. Queen Elizabeth II Dock) to Runcorn Docks**

No restrictions.

(b) **Upstream of Runcorn Docks to downstream of Trafford Road Bridge**

In normal conditions, a vessel with an airdraft not exceeding 21.33m should be able to pass under all fixed high-level bridges, raised lift bridges and associated gauge wires.

A vessel with an airdraft exceeding 21.33m will not be permitted to navigate until the vessel's airdraft is reduced to 21.33m or less. A reduction of airdraft achieved via trim adjustment should be considered carefully; it must not adversely affect the view ahead from the steering position or the vessel's handling characteristics.

However, a vessel may be permitted to navigate with an airdraft exceeding 21.33 m if, for example, the vessel is shifting between berths and the intended transit does not require the vessel to pass under any fixed high-level bridge, raised lift bridge or gauge wire.

Small craft are expected to navigate under the swing bridges and lift bridges when those bridges are in their closed positions. Mariners intending to navigate under a swing bridge or lift bridge in its closed position must satisfy themselves that there is sufficient clearance for their vessels to pass safely.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 43/2020

5 COMPULSORY PILOTAGE

This notice has been created to highlight the requirements of Section 15 of the Pilotage Act 1987, viz.:

A ship which is being navigated in an area and in circumstances in which pilotage is compulsory for it by virtue of a pilotage direction shall be—

- (a) under the pilotage of an authorised pilot accompanied by such an assistant, if any, as is required by virtue of the direction; or
- (b) under the pilotage of a deck officer possessing a pilotage exemption certificate in respect of that area and ship.

Therefore, whilst the Master of a vessel retains overall command, if that vessel requires such, the Pilot shall have conduct (i.e. control of the navigation and physical movements of the vessel, in whatever form that takes) of the vessel within the Pilotage District.

This notice must be read in conjunction with the Pilotage Directions for the Port of Manchester.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 23/2017

6 MOORINGS AT LOCKS AND BERTHS

Masters and persons in charge of vessels navigating within the Port of Manchester are required to take notice of the following requirements in respect of mooring lines and mooring procedures at locks and berths:

- (a) Heavy ropes, wires and moorings with joining shackles are forbidden.
- (b) All mooring lines must be in good condition and without splices in their working length.
- (c) All heaving lines must be fit for purpose, in good condition, of sufficient length and of no less than 10 mm diameter.
- (d) The monkey's fist on a heaving line must not have a metallic or weighted core.
- (e) Heaving lines must be tied securely to the mooring line.
- (f) Before throwing a heaving line, the vessel's mooring party should alert the shore-side mooring gang and anyone else nearby that a line is about to be thrown.
- (g) UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WHATSOEVER are more than two mooring lines to be run on a single heaving line. This practice is unacceptable in terms of manual handling rules.
- (h) Notwithstanding the above point, the shore-side mooring gang may request that only one mooring line is run on a single heaving line if the mooring line is large and/or requires hauling a distance from the vessel to the bollard or up the Canal bank.
- (i) When paying out mooring lines from the vessel, care should be taken to avoid excessive weight for the shore-side mooring gang by keeping the bight under control. Care should also be taken not to foul the vessel's or assisting tugs' propellers, particularly when too much slack line is deployed.
- (j) Vessels are NOT to tighten up moorings using the vessel's winches until the shore-side mooring gang is clear of the bollard.
- (k) When entering a lock, a single forward spring line should be sent ashore first to check the vessel's progress, followed by the remaining lines one at a time. The general mooring arrangement for vessels transiting a lock is one forward spring and head line and one aft spring & stern line.

Vessels ignoring these requirements will be reported to the owners and charterers, and the necessary steps will be taken to ensure future compliance.

Berth and terminal operators may apply additional regulations where they see fit.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 27/2015

7 MANNING OF VESSELS

When in the Port of Manchester—

- (a) the Master or Chief Officer must be on board when cargo ballasting or tank cleaning operations are being carried out;
- (b) all vessels must at all times be adequately manned for fire-fighting and any other emergency purposes, including handling moorings or shifting the vessel; and
- (c) fire-fighting equipment must be laid out ready for use, and an international coupling must be provided.

The above requirements are in addition to those specified in Navigation Byelaw No. 42.

8 MEANS OF ACCESS

The UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency's Marine Guidance Note MGN 533 (M) Amendment 3 "Means of Access" details the requirements placed on the Masters of vessels to ensure the safety of those leaving or joining the vessel and that a safe means of access is required between the vessel and any quay, pontoon, other structure or another vessel alongside which the vessel is secured.

9 SMOKING AND THE USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONES

Smoking can only take place in designated places on board vessels. In the Port of Manchester, there is a NO SMOKING policy ashore.

The relevant berth or terminal operator must be consulted regarding the use of mobile phones ashore.

10 MATCHES AND LIGHTERS

Under no circumstances are the crews of vessels to carry on their person matches, lighters, inflammable liquid, or any other apparatus for causing ignition whilst ashore at any berth or terminal facility.

11 VESSEL REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Hot work must only be carried out with the permission of the Harbour Master (or other persons appointed by MSCC to grant such permission) and will be subject to such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time. MSCC reserves the right to inspect the location of any hot work before permission is given and at any time thereafter. All other repairs must be confined to cold work only.

The **immobilisation of main engines** must only be carried out with the permission of the Harbour Master (or other persons appointed by MSCC to grant such permission) and will be subject to such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time.

Diving must only be carried out with the permission of the Harbour Master (or other persons appointed by MSCC to grant such permission) and will be subject to such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time.

Painting or chipping over the side of vessels is not permitted in the Port of Manchester.

12 LOWERING OF VESSEL'S BOATS

Before lowering a boat to the water, permission must first be obtained from Eastham Port Operations Control via VHF Ch. 14, and any consent given may be subject to conditions.

13 SECURITY

Whilst in the Port of Manchester, vessel crews must be extra diligent with security, and the following precautions should be taken:

- (a) Always maintain a gangway watch.
- (b) Lock all cash and valuables in the vessel's safe and keep the keys for the safe secure.
- (c) Be aware that thieves may visit vessels pretending to be harbour staff, water supply traders, etc. Ask all visitors for identification and, if in doubt, do not allow visitors access to the vessel.
- (d) Never leave visitors or strangers alone on board the vessel; ensure they are escorted ashore at the end of a visit.
- (e) Crew should be prepared to challenge anyone attempting to board or found on board a vessel.

Questions regarding security should be directed to the Port Police on +44 (0) 151 949 6333.

14 DANGEROUS SPACES ON BOARD

If a cargo hold has been fumigated, then that cargo hold is likely to be described as a dangerous space. An official definition of a dangerous space is any enclosed or confined space in which it is foreseeable that the atmosphere may at some stage contain toxic or flammable gases or vapours or be deficient in oxygen to the extent that it may endanger the life or health of any person entering that space.

All dangerous spaces on board a vessel must be reported to the port agent and the berth or terminal operator as appropriate.

15 CREW ON THE QUAYSIDE

In the interests of safety, crew must not walk across any operational areas. When berthed adjacent to an operational area, contact must be established with the berth or terminal operator before crew make their way to or from the vessel.

When on a quayside, it is recommended that crew wear high-viz clothing as a minimum standard of PPE, or such other PPE as may be required by the berth or terminal operator, and follow any designated pedestrian walkways.

All persons within two metres of any quay edge should wear a suitable buoyancy aid unless embarking or disembarking directly via the gangway or accommodation ladder.

16 PORT WASTE RECEPTION FACILITIES

Each berth or terminal operator provides reception facilities for non-hazardous dry waste, which must always be used. The master of any vessel found disposing of waste into the water, onto a quayside or into non-compliant receptacles will be liable to prosecution. Please note that recordable CCTV cameras exist at various locations throughout the Port of Manchester.

17 SPILLAGES

In the event of a vessel spilling or leaking any material or liquid product into the Port of Manchester, whether during cargo operations or otherwise, the Master must inform Eastham Port Operations Control immediately via VHF Ch. 14 (or telephone +44 (0) 151 327 4638).

Immediate action must be taken by the Master or berth or terminal operator to contain any spillage and prevent any further spillage. The operations must be stopped if any such spillage occurs during cargo handling operations.

18 FIRE OR EXPLOSION ON BOARD

In the event of a fire or explosion on board, the Master of the vessel, or other responsible individual, must—

- (a) immediately stop all cargo, ballasting, or bunkering operations and be prepared to disconnect all shore cargo and bunker lines from the vessel's manifold;
- (b) inform the Eastham Port Operations Control via VHF Ch. 14 (or telephone +44 (0) 151 327 4368) of the nature and extent of the emergency and the kind of shore assistance required;
- (c) ensure that one of the crew actuates any manually-operated fire alarm which may be situated on the berth;
- (d) sound a prolonged succession of short blasts on the vessel's whistle or siren; and
- (e) activate firefighting parties on board.

19 FIRE OR EXPLOSION ASHORE

In the event of an alarm being sounded in connection with any emergency involving another vessel or for any other emergency at a berth or terminal facility, Masters of vessels or the deck officer supervising operations must immediately stop all cargo, ballasting or bunkering operations and be prepared to disconnect any cargo hoses.

Eastham Port Operations Control must be notified immediately via VHF Ch. 14 (or telephone +44 (0) 151 327 4368) if a fire or an explosion is observed on board another vessel or ashore at any berth or terminal facility.

20 TRANSFER OF BULK LIQUIDS, CHEMICALS OR GASES

Responsibility for the safe conduct of operations on board a vessel while alongside rests with the Master, who must immediately stop any transfer of bulk liquids, chemicals or gas if they or a member of their crew observes any situation that poses or could pose a threat to the safety of the vessel, berth, or terminal facility.

MSCC requires that before transferring bulk liquids, chemicals, or gases, a Ship/Shore Safety Checklist per the International Safety Guide for Oil Tankers and Terminals (ISGOTT) is completed by the Master and berth or terminal operator.

The Harbour Master, or any person appointed to do so by the Harbour Master, may board a vessel at any time to view the Ship/Shore Safety Checklist and the operation being undertaken. If an infringement of any safety requirements is observed on board a vessel or ashore at the berth or terminal facility, the Harbour Master may direct operations be stopped and, if necessary, direct the vessel to leave the berth until the infringement is rectified to the Harbour Master's satisfaction.

21 GAS-FREEING AND TANK CLEANING

Except for vessels berthed at facilities operated by Stanlow Terminals Limited, gas-freeing is not permitted whilst vessels are within the Port of Manchester.

In respect of tank cleaning operations, the following guidelines, based upon the International Safety Guide for Oil Tankers and Terminals (ISGOTT), must be observed:

- (a) The permission of the Harbour Master (via Eastham Port Operations Control) and the berth or terminal operator must be obtained before the commencement of tank cleaning within the limits of the Port of Manchester.
- (b) The Master of the vessel concerned and, where appropriate, the Berth Operator must ensure that a responsible officer supervises all tank cleaning operations.
- (c) Vessels must comply with Manchester Ship Canal Byelaws and any instruction issued by the Harbour Master or any other responsible person MSCC, the berth or terminal operator.
- (d) Tank lids and openings must not be opened before the commencement of tank cleaning.

- (e) Before and during the tank cleaning operation, the appropriate ISGOTT recommendations must be observed.
- (f) When operations have been completed, tank lids and openings must be closed and secured.

Additionally, certain other precautions are required for the chemical products as defined in the IMO International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code).

22 DOCKING IN QUEEN ELIZABETH II LOCK

The following rules apply to any vessel docking second-ship into the QEII Lock:

- (a) If the vessel cannot safely fit into the 80' Lock at Eastham, the vessel should not enter the Eastham Channel until Eastham Port Operations Control has verified that the QEII lock is at River level with the outer gate open and ready to receive the vessel.
- (b) If the vessel will fit into the 80' Lock at Eastham, upon prior arrangement with Eastham Port Operations Control, the vessel may proceed up the Eastham Channel and await the lock in the channel itself or on the QEII Lock leading wall.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 9/2014

23 VESSELS MANOEUVRING IN QUEEN ELIZABETH II DOCK

When a vessel is manoeuvring in Queen Elizabeth II Dock, all other vessels (except for tugs assisting the manoeuvring vessel) must remain alongside at a berth or within the QEII Lock until—

- (a) the manoeuvring vessel is within the Lock or alongside a berth; and
- (b) permission from the Harbour Master at Eastham Port Operations Control (VHF Ch. 14) has been given for the other vessel to leave its berth or the Lock [Navigation Bye-Law (1982) No.44].

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 25/2016

24 VESSEL-GENERATED NOISE IN QUEEN ELIZABETH II DOCK

The attention of Masters of vessels entering, exiting, manoeuvring within or berthed within the Queen Elizabeth II Dock is drawn to the fact that vessels are near residential properties.

Therefore, Masters of vessels entering, exiting, manoeuvring within or berthed within the Queen Elizabeth II Dock are requested to take all reasonably practicable measures to minimize noise generated by their vessels.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 29/2017

25 FIRE ALARM AT QUEEN ELIZABETH II DOCK

The fire alarm at Queen Elizabeth II Dock is sounded at 08.45 on each Monday.

26 INCE OUTFALL – DEAD SLOW

When passing the Ince Outfall (situated between Ince Oil Berth and the downstream end of Ince High Cutting), all vessels must proceed with caution and at a dead slow speed through the water.

A floating boom protects the Ince Outfall, and there have been instances of this boom sustaining damage caused by the wash from passing vessels.

This information was published originally as Notice to Mariners No. 16/2018