

# Seaplane Operations

## CODE OF PRACTICE

### 2016







# Seaplane Operations Code of Practice 2015



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## Section 1

### Introduction

Seaplane operations have been carried out on the waters of the Medway and Swale almost since the invention of powered flight. The Medway was a centre for the construction of commercial seaplanes and until as recently as 1985 a commercial seaplane aerodrome was still in operation within the port.

However, in recent years there has been a drop off in interest in seaplane aviation, to such an extent that there are now only 5 operational seaplanes in the UK and only one of these is operated commercially.

On the waters of the Medway and Swale there has only been one regular visitor, G-WATR, a two seat aircraft which is operated privately from Rochester Airport. This aircraft has operated successfully on the Medway for a number of years.

### Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to regulate the operation of private seaplanes visiting the Medway and Swale in order that-

- Any risk to the safety of either the seaplane or other water users is reduced to a minimum.
- Medway VTS is aware of where and when any such operations are being conducted.
- Other water users are aware of where they may encounter a seaplane.
- There is increased understanding of seaplane operations by other water users.

## **Responsibility**

When a seaplane is operating upon the water it is considered a power driven vessel and It is the responsibility of the aircraft commander to ensure that it is conducted in accordance with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea.

Similarly, when operating upon the water the seaplane commander must ensure that the operation complies with the requirements of both the Port Directions and Byelaws.

When the aircraft is either taking off or landing it is the aircraft commander's responsibility to ensure that it is safe to do so and that the area is clear of other water users.

Peel Ports Medway is responsible for the promulgation and updating of this Code of Practice.

## **Changes to the Code of Practice**

This Code of Practice will be subject to periodic review to ensure that it reflects best practice and responds to changes in industry standards and legislation. Peel Ports Medway welcomes input from interested parties and from the wider range of river users.

## **Availability**

The Port Community and Users will have access to copies of this Code of Practice either by application to Peel Ports Medway or from the Peel Ports' Website.



## **Section 2**

### **Peel Ports Medway’s Seaplane Operations Procedures**

**Seaplane Commanders will comply with the following procedures -**

1. Seaplane operations may only take place in daylight and in good visibility.
2. Seaplane operations may only take place within the designated areas of Half Acre and Stangate Creek as detailed in Section 3 of this code of practice.
3. Seaplane operations are prohibited in all other areas of the Medway, Swale and the connected creeks and inlets.

#### **4. Arrival**

- 4.1. All seaplanes intending to operate in the Port of Sheerness Ltd.’s defined seaplane operations areas are required to contact Medway VTS by telephone prior to departure from their point of origin to obtain permission to proceed.
- 4.2. Subsequently, the seaplane is to make contact with Medway VTS on marine band VHF Ch74, prior to making an approach, to check radio communications.
- 4.3. The VTS Duty Officer will agree where the proposed landing is to take place and the direction of approach. If they are satisfied that there are no exceptional circumstances the Duty Officer will give permission to land ‘When safe to do so’.
- 4.4. The VTS Duty Officer will make a broadcast to inform other river users of the seaplanes approach.

## 5. Departure

- 5.1. Prior to departure the seaplane commander is to make contact with Medway VTS on marine band VHF Ch74.
- 5.2. The VTS Duty Officer will agree where the proposed take off is to take place and the direction the aircraft will be heading. If the VTS Duty Officer is satisfied that there are no exceptional circumstances they will give permission to take off 'When safe to do so'.
- 5.3. The VTS Duty Officer will make a broadcast to inform other river users of the seaplanes departure.
6. If the seaplane requires to leave a seaplane operations area (whilst manoeuvring on the water) the seaplane is to inform Medway VTS of its intentions.
7. Whilst on the water the seaplane is, and will be treated as, a vessel and must comply with the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea, as well as the Medway Ports River Byelaws and General Directions.
8. When landing or taking off it is the responsibility of the aircraft commander to ensure that it is safe to do so and that the area is clear,
9. **This procedure applies only to private leisure seaplanes, the commercial operation of any seaplane in the area is prohibited unless licenced by the Statutory Harbour Authority.**

## Section 3

### Medway and Swale Seaplane Operating Areas

#### Half Acre Creek

Area enclosed by an imaginary line joining the positions –

51° 25.09 N	000° 39.39 E	
51° 25.06 N	000° 39.52 E	
51° 24.20 N	000° 38.86 E	
51° 23.93 N	000° 38.56 E	
51° 23.78 N	000° 38.26 E	– Otterham Fairway Buoy
51° 23.91 N	000° 38.04 E	
51° 24.07 N	000° 38.38 E	
51° 24.30 N	000° 38.70 E	
51° 24.73 N	000° 38.90 E	
51° 25.09 N	000° 39.39 E	

#### Stangate Creek

Area enclosed by an imaginary line joining –

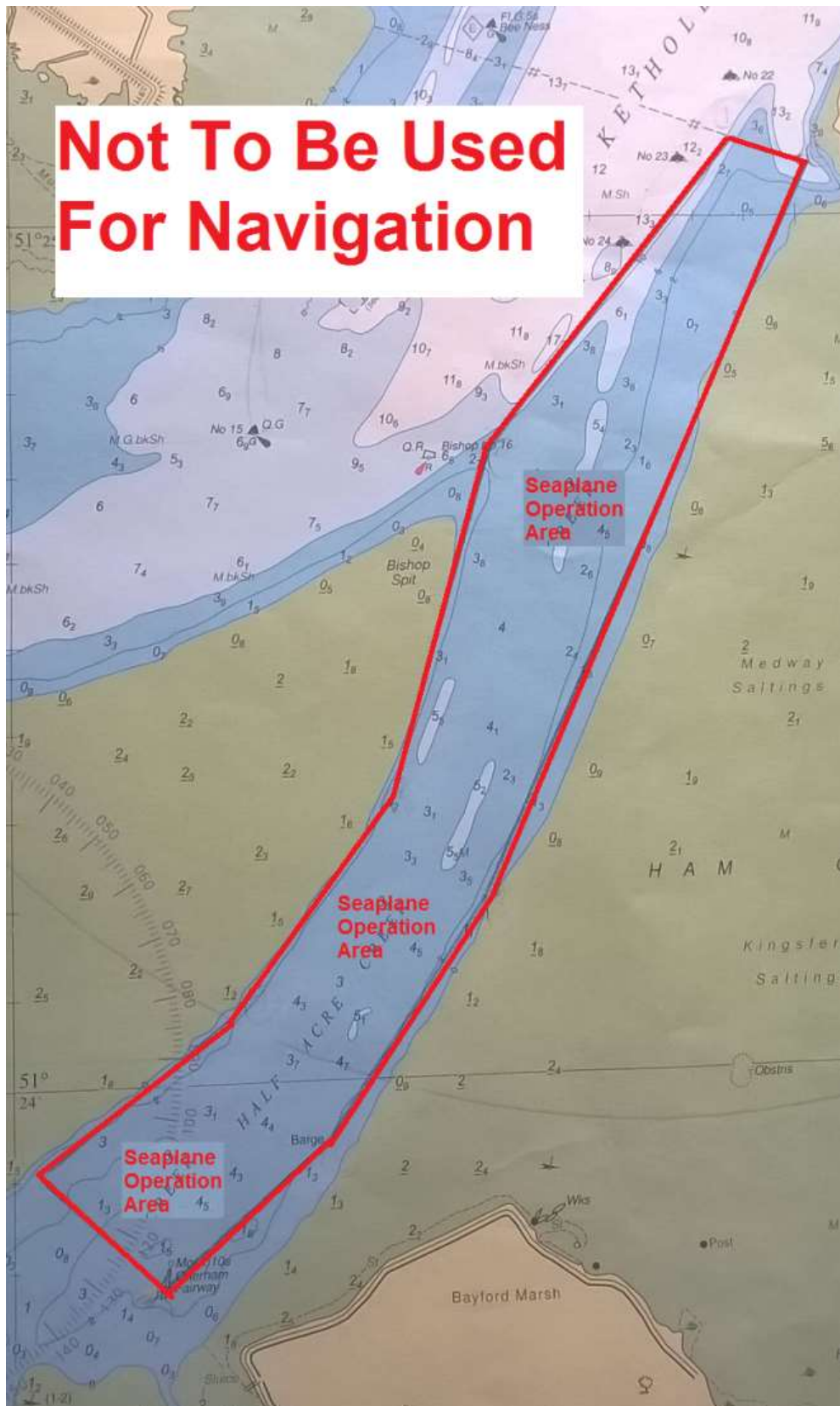
51° 25.42 N	000° 41.55 E	– Stangate Spit Buoy
51° 25.31 N	000° 41.82 E	
51° 24.65 N	000° 41.69 E	
51° 23.82 N	000° 41.91 E	
51° 23.68 N	000° 41.77 E	
51° 23.62 N	000° 41.50 E	
51° 23.64 N	000° 41.34 E	
51° 23.72 N	000° 41.34 E	
51° 23.73 N	000° 41.54 E	
51° 23.81 N	000° 41.75 E	
51° 24.91 N	000° 41.43 E	
51° 25.42 N	000° 41.55 E	– Stangate Spit Buoy



## Annex

### Chartlets

#### 1 Half Acre Creek





## 2 Stangate Creek







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