

## General Directions for Navigation in the Forth

Forth Ports Limited, in exercise of their powers under section 3 of the Forth Ports Authority Order 1980 and having carried out the consultations required by that section, has given the following general directions to vessels navigating in the port.

1. In these directions, except as provided herein, words and phrases shall bear the same meaning ascribed to them in the Forth Byelaws as the same may be amended from time to time:- **Interpretation.**

**"clearance"** means authorisation by the harbourmaster to navigate as proposed by the vessel.

**"dangerous goods"** means goods classified in the Merchant Shipping (Dangerous Goods & Marine Pollution) Regulations 1997 as the same may be amended from time to time.

**"deadweight"** means the weight in tonnes of cargo, stores, fuel, passengers and crew carried by a vessel when loaded to her maximum summer loadline.

**"deadweight tonnage"** means that tonnage as assigned to a vessel by Lloyd's Register of Shipping.

**"equipment for navigating"** means and includes:-

- (a) VHF radio telephone equipment which is capable of contacting Forth Navigation Service during passage of the port;
- (b) steering gear which functions efficiently;
- (c) astern power available on the main engines;
- (d) anchors cleared and capable of being let go without delay, if necessary;
- (e) radar which will operate efficiently during passage of the port (unless otherwise permitted by the Duty Officer at Forth Navigation Service);
- (f) charts corrected up to date for the passage intended.

**"gross tonnage"** in relation to a vessel, means the tonnage of that vessel as ascertained in accordance with the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships 1969, as amended from time to time, and, for the purposes of these directions, the gross tonnage of a vessel shall be taken to be the larger of those tonnages howsoever ascertained.

**"port"** means the Forth and the port premises.

2. (a) **Carriage of Radios** All vessels having a gross tonnage of 50 tonnes or more intending to navigate in the port shall carry fixed or portable VHF/RT equipment capable of communicating with the Forth Navigation Service. **Carriage of VHF/RT equipment.**
- (b) **Listening Watch** Except in the case of a tug which is attending a vessel or where a vessel is securely made fast alongside a berth, all vessels having a gross tonnage of 50 tonnes or more when navigating or at anchor within the port shall maintain a VHF/RT listening watch on Channel 71 on the bridge.
- (c) **Vessels Without Radio** All vessels having a gross tonnage of 50 tonnes or more not carrying VHF/RT equipment in accordance with paragraph (1) of this direction shall not navigate in the port without the express permission of the harbourmaster.

*(Note: VHF channels for the Forth Navigation Service are as follows:*

*Channel 71 - Reporting  
Channel 20 - Primary Working  
Channel 12 - Secondary Working.)*

3. When a vessel is navigating in the Forth west of the Fairway Buoy and using automatic steering, there shall be on the bridge of such vessel a person who is capable of properly operating such steering. **Automatic steering.**

*(Note: Attention is drawn to Byelaw 21 of the Forth Byelaws which states that the master of every power-driven vessel underway shall either be on the bridge or control position of the vessel himself or ensure that some other competent person is there instead.)*

4. This direction applies to every vessel which is berthed or anchored within the port and which proposes to navigate any part of the port whether for the purpose of departing from or shifting within the said limits. **Clearance of outward or shifting vessels.**
- (a) **Condition of Navigation Equipment** Before navigating in the port, the master of every vessel (other than pleasure craft having an overall length of less than 12 metres and which are not used wholly or mainly for the carriage of passengers for reward) shall ensure that the equipment for navigating is in order. In the case of a vessel carrying Dangerous or Polluting Goods or a tanker with uncleaned tanks which last carried petroleum, gas or chemical products, the master thereof shall confirm to the Harbour Master (Grangemouth) or (Leith) as appropriate, or in the case of departure from any other Forth harbour or terminal, to the Forth Navigation Service that such equipment is in full working order before commencing navigation.
- (b) **Notification of Departure** The master of the vessel shall inform the Forth Navigation Service of his intention to navigate at least sixty minutes prior to the intended departure.
- (c) The master of the vessel which proposes to commence navigating must:-
1. give at least ten minutes notification to the Forth Navigation Service of his intention to do so; and,
  2. obtain a clearance from the Duty Officer of the Forth Navigation

Service before the vessel commences to navigate.

- (d) **Clearance to Navigate** A clearance for a vessel to navigate shall cease to have effect 15 minutes after the time for which it was given. Accordingly, where a vessel has obtained a clearance but has not yet started to navigate the port in time before the clearance has ceased to have effect, the master must obtain a further clearance before the vessel starts to navigate.

5. This direction applies to every vessel which proposes to enter and navigate in the Forth.

**Clearance of inward vessels and requirements for vessels carrying Dangerous or Polluting Goods.**

- (a) **Estimated Time of Arrival** The master of the vessel shall advise the Forth Navigation Service (Fax 0131 553 5428) not less than 24 hours in advance of the estimated time of arrival at the Authority's Eastern limit or anchorage; or as soon as possible after departure from the last port if less than 24 hours passage. Any adjustment to the ETA of two or more hours shall be reported in a like manner. (See also Mariner's Guide to the Forth, Section 14).

- (b) **Vessels Carrying Dangerous or Polluting Goods** Whilst also complying with Statutory Instruments 2498 The Merchant Shipping (Reporting Requirements for Ships Carrying Dangerous or Polluting Goods) Regulations 1995, masters of vessels carrying such cargoes (as defined by the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code) including all tankers with uncleaned tanks which last carried petroleum, gas or chemical products shall also provide the following information in their pre-arrival report to Forth Navigation Service (see sub-section (a) above).

1. Name of vessel.
2. Summer Deadweight Tonnage.
3. Country of Registry.
4. Maximum Draught.
5. Cargo type and UN Number.
6. Last port.
7. Destination port.
8. ETA at Authority's Eastern limit or anchorage.
9. Any defects which may affect the safe navigation or manoeuvrability of the vessel.
10. Confirmation that both anchors will be cleared and available for immediate use at all times when in the Firth of Forth.
11. Confirmation that a pilotage passage plan has been prepared which will be discussed and agreed with the pilot upon boarding.

- (c) **Clearance to Navigate** The master of a vessel shall:

1. On reaching the Authority's Eastern limit contact Forth Navigation Service on VHF Channel 71, advising of vessel's estimated time of arrival at the Pilot boarding position, or anchorage.
2. Supply further information as may be required by Forth Navigation Service. Masters are reminded that Forth Navigation Service may seek verbal (tape recorded) confirmation of any of the information previously given under Sub-section (b) (1) - (10) of this direction.
3. Obtain clearance from Forth Navigation Service to proceed inwards towards Pilot boarding position, designated anchor

area, or other destination as agreed with Forth Navigation Service.

6. This direction applies to every vessel having a gross tonnage of 50 tonnes or more. **Reporting points.**

(a) **Passing of Positions** Whenever such a vessel is navigating in the Forth, the master shall report to the Forth Navigation Service the time of passing the following positions, and any special circumstances and specifically, when less than ½ mile, visibility in cables.

**West Bound Vessels:**

1. Eastern or seaward limit of the Authority lying to the west of the Isle of May.
2. Fairway Buoy at 56° 03'.50 North, 03° 00'.00 West.
3. Due north of Inchkeith Lighthouse.
4. Oxcars Lighthouse.
5. No. 19 Buoy.
6. Crombie Pier.

**East Bound Vessels:**

1. Crombie Pier.
2. Dhu Craig buoy.
3. Naval vessels shall report when passing Nos. 5/6 Rosyth Channel Buoys & South Arm and may advise estimated time of arrival at Forth Railway Bridge.
4. Oxcars Lighthouse.
5. Due north of Inchkeith Lighthouse.
6. Fairway Buoy at 56° 03'.50 north, 03° 00'.00 West.
7. Eastern or seaward limit of the Authority lying to the west of the Isle of May.

7. This direction applies to commercial and naval vessels having a gross tonnage of 50 tonnes or more and includes such vessels navigating between Leith and Granton to ports eastwards in the Forth and vice versa. It does not apply to such vessels bound from Leith or Granton to Burntisland and/or ports westwards in the Forth and vice versa; nor does it apply to tugs, pilot vessels, lighthouse vessels, fishery protection and research vessels, dredgers and other small craft navigating in the Forth in the course of their normal duties. **Use of South Channel.**

When a vessel to which this direction applies is navigating in the Forth and is bound to or from the ports of Leith or Granton, it is recommended that the vessel should, when conditions are suitable, use the fairway which passes south of Inchkeith Island as shown on Admiralty Charts and designated South Channel.

8. This direction applies to vessels intending to pass under the Forth Railway Bridge. **Passage under the Forth Railway Bridge.**

(a) **Passing** No vessel may pass or run parallel to another vessel under the Forth Railway Bridge whether in conditions of good visibility

or not. In the event of vessels approaching the Bridge from opposite directions, the outward bound vessel shall have priority of passage under the Bridge and the inbound vessel shall keep clear.

- (b) **Reduced Visibility** In conditions where visibility is less than half a nautical mile, an inward bound vessel shall not, under any circumstances, pass number 19 Buoy unless she has obtained clearance to do so from Forth Navigation Service.

9. When a tanker having a deadweight tonnage to 50,000 tonnes or more is navigating the fairway between the Fairway Buoy and the vicinity of Hound Point, the following directions will apply:- **Movement of tankers of 50,000 dead-weight tonnes and over.**

- (a) **Priority** The outward bound tanker from Hound Point shall have the right of way over any inbound tanker for Hound Point.

(b) **Passing:**

1. No two tankers each having a deadweight tonnage of 50,000 tonnes or more shall pass each other in the fairway west of No. 7 Buoy
2. If either of the above tankers has a deadweight tonnage of 120,000 tonnes or more, then neither shall pass the other in the fairway west of Inchkeith.

(c) **Tug Escort:**

1. A tanker having a deadweight tonnage of 50,000 tonnes or more when sailing from Hound Point shall continue to be escorted by a tug until such tanker has reached No. 5 Buoy
2. A tanker which is inward bound for Hound Point shall be escorted by a tug on reaching No. 7 Buoy.

- (d) **Approach** Every tanker destined for Hound Point shall regulate its approach thereto so as not to arrive off the terminal before the agreed berthing time.

**(Note:** *Movement of very large crude carriers ("VLCCs").*

*When an inward or outward bound VLCC is navigating the fairway between the Fairway Buoy and the vicinity of Hound Point, it may be necessary to hold or slow down other vessels. Such regulation of movements shall usually be after liaison with the Masters, Commanding Officers, or pilots concerned but, in the event of disputes, the duty officer at the Forth Navigation Service will make the final decision.)*

10. (a) Movements of Liquefied Gas Carriers, Natural Gasoline Tankers, Bunker Fuel Vessels and other Tankers in the Forth which are bound to or from Braefoot Marine Terminal. **Movements of all tankers destined for Braefoot Marine Terminal.**

1. Every tanker destined for Braefoot Marine Terminal shall regulate its approach thereto so as not to arrive off its berth before the agreed berthing time.
2. When a tanker is arriving or departing via the Western approach to Mortimer's Deep, it shall have an exclusion zone of 1.0 nautical mile in diameter while in that section of the river lying between imaginary lines drawn on the Admiralty Chart joining Hound Point to Hopeward Point and Car Craig to Inchmickery. No other vessels with the exception of escort tugs assigned to the tanker shall enter the exclusion zone.

3. When a tanker is arriving or departing via the Eastern approach to Mortimer's Deep, it shall have an exclusion zone of 1.0 nautical mile in diameter while in that section of the river lying between No. 7 and No. 11 fairway buoys. No other vessels with the exception of escort tugs assigned to the tanker shall enter the exclusion zone.
- (b) Movements of Liquefied Gas Carriers in excess of 145 metres in length (approximately 12,000 cubic metres capacity) when arriving or departing in loaded or partly loaded condition to or from Braefoot Marine Terminal.
1. When such a tanker is arriving or departing through the Western approach to Mortimer's Deep, it shall have an exclusion zone of 1.0 nautical mile in diameter while in that section of the river lying between imaginary lines drawn on the Admiralty Chart joining Hound Point to Hopeward Point and No. 3 fairway buoy. No other vessels with the exception of escort tugs assigned to the tanker shall enter the exclusion zone.
  2. When such a tanker is arriving or departing via the Eastern approach to Mortimer's Deep, it shall have an exclusion zone of 1.0 nautical mile in diameter while in that section of the river lying between No. 11 and No. 3 fairway buoys. No other vessels with the exception of escort tugs assigned to the tanker shall enter the exclusion zone.
- (c) Movement of other Vessels in the Estuary.
1. When tankers, either bound to or from Braefoot Marine Terminal, are navigating within or outwith the fairway between an imaginary line drawn on the Admiralty Chart and joining Hound Point to Hopeward Point and No. 3 Fairway Buoy, it may be necessary to hold or slow down other vessels. In the event of inbound traffic being delayed, Forth Navigation Service may, at their discretion, direct vessels to a holding position not less than one mile North of No. 3 fairway buoy until the outbound tanker is past and clear. Such regulation of movements shall usually be after liaison with the Masters, Commanding Officers, or pilots concerned but, in the event of disputes, the Duty Officer at the Forth Navigation Service will make the final decision.
  2. Pleasure craft not exceeding 12 metres in length overall shall be exempt from directions 10 (b) and 10 (c) (1) of this Direction. Pleasure craft not exceeding 22 metres in length and carrying passengers for reward may, subject to the express approval of the Duty Officer at the Forth Navigation Service, be exempt from direction 10 (b) of this Direction provided such craft are equipped with VHF radio capable of making contact with Forth Navigation Service and provided that they shall only enter, depart or navigate within Mortimer's Deep after obtaining prior clearance from Forth Navigation Service.

- 11. Hen & Chickens Buoys** Vessels shall not navigate within the fairway west of the Hen & Chickens Buoy, Longitude 03° 38'.00 West without the express permission of the harbourmaster and when such a vessel is underway in the fairway no other vessel shall proceed in the opposite direction to the said vessel within that section of the fairway. **Movements of Selected Vessels bound to or from Grangemouth Docks.**

*(Note: For the purposes of this Direction, a selected vessel is a vessel of more than 80 metres LOA which carries, in bulk, goods classified in the IMDG Code as being of Classes 2, 3.1 or 3.2. A vessel of more than 80 metres LOA which has residues in empty tanks or cargo holds which have been used for the carriage of such Classes (as above) and have not been cleaned, purged, gas freed or ventilated as appropriate, is also a selected vessel.)*

- (a) Vessels are prohibited, except in the case of emergencies from anchoring in the fairway west of the Hen & Chickens Buoy.
  - (b) **Docking** Vessels will normally be locked in to and out of the docks singly unless expressly permitted otherwise by the harbourmaster.
  - (c) When a vessel is manoeuvring in the docks, no other vessel shall proceed underway within the docks without the express permission of the harbourmaster.
- 12. Radio transmission** on a frequency of between 300 KHz and 32 MHz is prohibited within a distance of 400 metres of Braefoot Marine Terminal, the Common User Oil Berth at Imperial Dock Entrance, Leith, and the Old Entrance Lock and Eastern Channel at Grangemouth. In addition, it is prohibited to operate ship-borne radar having a peak pulse in excess of 60KW within the following distances of Braefoot Marine Terminal, the Common User Oil Berth at Imperial Dock Entrance, Leith, and the Old Entrance Lock and Eastern Channel at Grangemouth:- **Emission of radio and radar signals.**
- (a) Radar operating below 2 GHz - 400 metres.
  - (b) Radar operating above 2 GHz - 200 metres.

The preceding prohibitions and restrictions do not preclude the testing of a vessel's normal communication transmitter operating on a frequency between 415 KHz and 26 MHz or ship-borne radar with a peak pulse power exceeding 60 KW in the area of Braefoot Marine Terminal, the Common User Oil Berth at Imperial Dock Entrance, Leith, and the Old Entrance Lock and Eastern Channel at Grangemouth providing the vessel's associated electrical equipment does not present a source of ignition, and that the express permission of the harbourmaster has been obtained prior to testing.

- 13. The master of any vessel intending to anchor within the port shall inform the Forth Navigation Service of his intention to anchor and shall, if required by the Duty Officer, anchor his vessel in one of the anchorages detailed in the Appendix hereto and shall not move from such anchorage unless clearance to do so has been given by the Duty Officer.** **Anchorage.**

**14.** Vessels are prohibited from anchoring within the following areas:- **Prohibited anchorages.**

- (a) Within one mile on either side of the 1.07 metres diameter high pressure gas pipeline crossing the Forth between Ruddons Ness on the north and Eyebroughy on the south as is shown on Admiralty Charts.
- (b) Within two cables on either side of the BP Forties Field pipeline crossing the Forth between Low Torry on the north and Borrowstounness on the south as shown on Admiralty Charts.
- (c) Within two cables on the west side of the two pipelines (separated by approximately one and a half cables distance from each other) crossing the Forth between Charlestown on the north and Blackness on the south and, to the east by a line joining Charlestown west pier to Blackness Buoy and extending to the south shore, east of Blackness.

**15.** Forth Ports Limited, in exercise of their powers under Section 3 of the Forth Ports Authority Order Confirmation Act 1980 and having carried out the consultations required by that section, has given the following general direction to vessels navigating without a pilot on board outwith the compulsory pilotage areas detailed in Pilotage Direction No. 3 dated 1st May 2000. **Bridge Manning.**

- (a) Forth Ports Authority: Forth Byelaws & General Directions for Navigation (re-issued 1997): Part III - Byelaw 21 states:-

The Master of every power driven vessel underway shall either be on the bridge or control position of the vessel himself or ensure that there is on the bridge or control position a member of the crew who is capable of taking command of the vessel and, when a pilot is on board, is capable of understanding the pilot's directions.

This Byelaw ensures that whenever a vessel is navigating within the Forth with a pilot on board there are at least two people on the bridge, namely:-

- The Master or a member of the crew who is capable of taking command of the vessel
- The Pilot

- (b) It is equally important that a similar level of bridge manning is maintained when vessels are navigating in the approaches to and within the enclosed Docks which lie outwith the compulsory pilotage area when the Master has decided not to engage a pilot.
- (c) Masters of ships of 40m LOA or greater navigating in the approaches to and within the enclosed Docks which lie outwith the compulsory pilotage areas which do not have a pilot on board are directed to have bridge manning comprising at least two persons, of whom one shall be the Master and the other, a responsible person capable of obtaining assistance.

Forth Navigation Service will request information regarding bridge manning of vessels covered by this Direction and failure to comply with the requirements of this Direction could result in the withdrawal of permission for vessels to approach and enter the relevant Ports and Docks.

- 16.** On a vessel served with an authorised pilot, the embarked pilot upon arrival on board and following any action to establish the navigational safety of the ship, will advise the vessel's master of his Pilotage 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 pilot shall agree the Pilotage Passage Plan for the voyage into the port and such agreement shall be reported to Forth Navigation Service ("FNS"). **Passage Plan.**

On a vessel not embarking an authorised pilot, but navigating or intending to navigate within the Port (including these vessels having a valid PEC holder navigating the vessel for the passage in the port) the master and/or the PEC holder shall prepare a Port Passage Plan in respect of the vessel's voyage and before proceeding with the voyage shall:

- (a) confirm to FNS that a Port Passage Plan has been prepared and is in use;
- (b) provide the relevant details of the Port Passage Plan to FNS.

The master of a vessel which is navigating or intending to navigate in the Forth, in preparing his Port Passage Plan, shall use appropriate and properly corrected navigational charts and consider and take full account of correct regulations, information and advice promulgated by Forth Ports Limited including:

- (a) Forth Byelaws
- (b) Forth General Directions
- (c) Tide Tables
- (d) Notices to Mariners  
Any information provided by VTS of current circumstances in the port

- 17.** Forth Ports Limited, in exercise of their powers under Section 3 of the Forth Ports Order 1980 and having carried out the consultations required by that section, has given the following general direction to vessels navigating in the port. **Speed Restrictions.**

Without prejudice to any other obligation to navigate with due care and at a moderate speed, merchant or other private power-driven vessels when navigating the waters of the port shall (except for such purpose and subject to such conditions as may be specified in a licence in writing given by the Chief Harbour

Master) observe the following speed restrictions when West of meridian 3° 16' west:

(a) When East of the Forth Railway Bridge:

1. Vessels of 100 metres or more in length overall – 12 knots over the ground
2. Vessels less than 100 metres in length overall – 15 knots over the ground

(b) When West of the Forth Railway Bridge:

All vessels – 12 knots over the ground

The imposition of a strict speed limit of 10 knots over the ground when passing within 5 cables of a ship lying alongside Crombie Jetty or Hound Point Terminal, or when passing within 5 cables of a vessel at anchor or moored to a buoy.

- 18.** Forth Ports Limited, in exercise of their powers under Section 3 of the Forth Ports Order 1980 and having carried out the consultations required by that section, has given the following general direction to vessels navigating in the port.

**Vessels engaged in fishing.**

(a) Any person fishing in the Port may be required to comply with directions given to him by the Chief Harbour Master.

(b) No fishing may take place in a fairway, as defined in Part I – Interpretation of the Forth Byelaws except when the fairway in which it is proposed to fish is clear of shipping.

- 19.** The Port Marine Safety Code requires Port Authorities to ensure that commercial craft are properly maintained, equipped and manned and used only for purposes which they are capable.

**Registration of Commercial Craft**

All commercial operators with craft, boats or small vessels working on the Forth are therefore required to register their craft with Forth Ports on an annual basis providing the following information:

- (a) Name and address of owner/operator
- (b) Craft specifications:
  - Name
  - Length
  - Number of crew
  - Area of operation
  - Commercial activity engaged in
  - Details of any certification if applicable

Forth Ports will, where deemed appropriate, conduct inspections of such craft, such inspections being based on national standards, laws, agreed code of practice, manufacturer's handbooks and other similar information.

The results of the inspections, and any restrictions on the vessels use, will be recorded and discussed with the vessels owner and operator.

Harbour tugs in possession of a towage licence issued by Forth Ports are exempt from this General Direction.

.....  
Group Company Secretary

.....  
Date

## General Notes

1. The owners or agents of a vessel to which a general direction applies should take all reasonable steps to ensure that the master of the vessel is informed of the direction and understands its significance.

**Responsibility of shipowner or agent.**
2. The following is an extract from the Forth Ports Authority Order 1980:-

**Master's Responsibility in Relation to Directions.**

s.9 “The giving of a general direction or a special direction shall not diminish or in any other way affect the responsibility of the master of the vessel to which the direction is given in relation to his vessel, to persons on board the vessel, to the cargo or to any other person or property.”
3. The following is an extract from the Forth Ports Authority Order 1980:-

**Failure to comply With General Directions**

s.7 (1) “The master of a vessel who fails to comply with a general direction shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding £500.”

(2) “It shall be a defence for the master of a vessel charged with an offence under subsection (1) above that he had reasonable ground for supposing that compliance with the direction in question would be likely to imperil his vessel or that in the circumstances compliance was impracticable.”