



Forth Ports Limited

Port of Dundee

Marine Guidelines and Port Information

October 2025

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Marine Guidelines and Port Information (Tay)	Date Revised October 2025	Revised By HMFT	Review Due October 2026

LIST OF AMENDMENTS

DATE	DETAILS OF CHANGES	PAGE NUMBER
23 rd April 2019	NEW EDITION	
21 st August 2019	New layout and addition of survey names and dates of surveys	19
5 th December 2019	Addition of Dundee Passenger Vessel Guidelines to Section 1.3	6
August 2021	Full review, removal of RD & UKC, tug fleet updated	All
February 2022	Full review	All
September 2022	Reference to Self Mooring Notification form added	18
May 2023	Full Review – Towage updated	All
May 2024	Full Review 1.1 Introduction Updated 1.3 Berthing Requirements updated 1.4 Towage Minimum Bollard Pull updated 1.5 Tug Fleet Updated 1.8 Departure Clearances Added	All
October 2025	Full Review Key Updates: 1.5 Tug Fleet 3 Tay Bridges Clearances	All

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APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to all vessels over 40m in length unless otherwise stipulated. Vessels under 40m in length when operating on the Tay should operate and maintain an appropriate safety management system.

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1 DOCKING AND SAILING GUIDELINES

1.1 Introduction

The following guidelines have been drawn up for the Firth of Tay within the Forth Ports area of jurisdiction, including the Port of Dundee.

The guidelines form part of the formal risk assessment process and are continuously under review in the light of operational experience. Extensive consultation between all major stakeholders is imperative when producing these guidelines.

These guidelines should be regarded purely as a starting point for discussions with the Port Authority, Duty Pilot, Master and Agent on tug allocation and scheduling. Actual tug allocation may be increased or reduced as appropriate. The guidelines should not be construed as any form of regulations.

Further discussions on some occasions may be required between the Duty Pilot, Forth and Tay Navigation Service, the Harbour Master and the vessel's Master, taking into account the prevailing weather and tidal conditions and any other special circumstances.

The Port Authority reserves the right to require a vessel to take a tug or comply with any special instruction which may be considered necessary according to the particular circumstances of the case.

The following assumptions have been made in preparing these guidelines:

- Favourable weather conditions.
- Tidal ranges within predicted limits.
- No adverse local activity and/or conditions.

Non-standard vessels will be assessed on an individual basis.

The guidelines are presented in a tabular form; the tables contain an identification letter indicating tidal constraints followed by a numerical indication of the number of tugs recommended.

1.2 Pre-Arrival

Shipping traffic in the Firth of Tay and within the port limits of the Port of Dundee, are managed by the Forth and Tay Navigation Service. Vessels must advise of their arrival by submitting a Proposed Vessel Movement form through their nominated agents.

Vessels must call Dundee Harbour Radio on VHF Channel 12 at least one hour from the Fairway Buoy.

All vessels over 90 metres and all laden tankers irrespective of size board their pilot at the Fairway Buoy. Vessels 90 metres or less, can board their pilot at the Inner Pilot Boarding Station.

Vessels bound for Perth will pass through the port limits and through the Tay Road and Tay Rail Bridges before changing the Dundee Pilot at Balmerino, which is the western limit of the Port of Dundee.

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1.3 Berthing Requirements

General information:

- Tidal range: Spring 4.5m, Neap 2.3m
- Slack Water is HW - 6
- Scheduled times are: Inbound – Fairway buoy, Departure – from berth
- Minimum Under Keel Clearance: 0.5m
- Recommended Bollard Pull stated later in this document

Pilots to send a FTCT (First Time Caller Report) to FTNS on vessel manoeuvrability after first visit. First time caller reports from Forth Pilots may be considered.

Standard Vessel Guidelines

The information detailed below refers to **Standard Vessels**, which are single screw with no bowthruster. Standard meteorological conditions of maximum wind **gusts** not exceeding 25 knots and good visibility also apply.

U Unrestricted **F** Not during ebb Numerical indicates tug numbers

These guidelines should be used to determine tug allocation and scheduling. Actual tug allocation may be amended as appropriate after assessment by Harbour Master in conjunction with pilots.

Standard Vessels				
Vessel Length (metres)	Tugs #			
	Inbound		Outbound	
	Flood	Ebb	Flood	Ebb
<90m	U0	U0	U0	U0
90 – 120m	U0*	U0*	U0*	U0*
120 – 140m	U1**	U1**	U1	U1
140 – 180m	U2	F	U2	F
>180m	U3	F	U2	F
Oil Rigs	Rig Move Guidelines			

* No tug required unless standard vessel 90m –120m, which may require a tug for berthing port side to. This is to be agreed in advance between, Harbour Master and pilots.

** Vessels over 120m berthing port side to may require 2 tugs for berthing.

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Passenger Vessel Guidelines

A passenger vessel is assumed to have a bow thruster, twin screw & rudders or Azipods.

Vessels not meeting these criteria will be categorized according to the Cruise Vessel Information Form which should be completed and returned before submission on a Proposed Vessel Movement (PVM) Form.

The following guidelines are based on Cruise Vessels with **no tugs**, further consideration/discussions can be given to scheduling arrival & departure times should a tug(s) be utilised. They are also subject to meteorological conditions with maximum wind gusts of **20** knots.

First-time caller passenger vessels may be required to take a tug (or tugs) until the vessel has been assessed and a report submitted. FTNR's from the Forth may also be considered as part of this decision making process.

Dundee Times

Arrival: at the Fairway buoy **(POB - Berth - 1.5 hours, Flood tide)**

POB - Berth - 2 hours, Ebb tide)

Departure: Depart berth

Pilots to report (using FTNR) to FTNS on vessel manoeuvrability after first visit for comment entry into IPOS.

Class A - Length < 120m

	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	+1	HW	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Arr'													
Dep'													

Class B - Length 120 - 180m

	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	HW	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Arr'							*	*					
Dep'							*						

Class C - Length > 180m (Arrival: POB HW -2 to -3, departure: sail on flood tide up to HW -1)

	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	HW	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6
Arr'													
Dep'													

*** Amber segments require Pilot consultation**

For vessels/tides which are borderline: consult Harbour Master.

Non-Standard Vessels

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Towage for non-standard vessels, deadship moves, barges and vessels with deficiencies, will be determined by the Harbour Master.

1.4 Towage Minimum Bollard Pull Requirement

When allocating tugs to a job, consideration must be given to the mix of tugs to ensure that there is an appropriate balance with the tugs employed.

1.5 Tug Fleet

The following tugs operate on the Tay:

Company	Tug Name	Bollard Pull	Type	LOA	Beam	Draft
Targe Towing	Fidra	50t	Voith	30.0m	11.0m	5.3m
	Inchcolm	70t	ASD	22.8m	12.0m	5.7m
	Craigleith	70t	ASD	28.2m	13m	5.5m
	Kittiwake	62t	ASD	24m	11.3m	5.1m
	Peterel	70t	ASD	24.4m	11.3m	5.5m
	Camperdown	85t	ASD	29.4m	13.3m	5.75m
	Balmerino	70t	ATD	25.3m	12.0m	6.6m
	Targe Guillemot	74t	ASD	24.7m	12.5m	5.5m
Ineos FPS/Targe Towing – Hound Point	Hopetoun	124t	ASD	43.5m	13.5m	6.7m
	Corringham	68t	ASD	32.0m	11.7m	5.2m
	Queensferry	70t	ASD	24.4m	11.3m	5.5m

Harbour towage on the Tay is provided by Targe Towing Ltd.

As per the Forth Ports' Towage Guidelines, standard North Sea barges (90 x 30m) will take two harbour tugs for berthing / sailing/ shifting. Larger / specialised barges, or barges with large deck cargo may require three harbour tugs. This will be confirmed by the Harbour Master. Towage for non-standard barges will be determined by the Harbour Master.

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1.6 Abort Practice

The criteria set out within this document has been agreed following risk assessment and consultation with the appropriate parties. There may however be occasions when Masters or Pilots have concerns over the prevailing conditions. They may therefore consider that it would be prudent to abort the operation before the limits in these guidelines are reached.

These decisions can only be made at the time by the Master and Pilot after assessing the situation and the circumstances of any particular case. Masters and Pilots are reminded that discussion and agreement of an appropriate abort position is an integral part of every passage plan. The intentions should then be communicated to Dundee Harbour.

1.7 Vessel Operator Restrictions

Vessels are scheduled into and out of ports on the Tay in accordance with the underkeel clearance and scheduling criteria specified in the “[Ruling Depths and Underkeel Clearances – Tay](#)” document.

Vessel operators who require additional restrictions, such as increased underkeel clearance margins beyond those required by the port, must ensure these requirements are specified to FTNS at the time of booking the vessel’s arrival, departure, or shift. This is to ensure that vessels are scheduled at the correct times and to avoid unnecessary delays or impacts to the overall shipping schedule.

1.8 **Departure Clearances**

Vessels of **50 GRT or more**, berthed or anchored within the Port of Dundee Statutory Harbour Area, are required to request clearance prior to sailing from Dundee Harbour, as set out in **Port of Dundee General Direction 4(c)2**:

4(c)2 – The master of a vessel proposing to commence navigation must obtain clearance from the Duty Officer of the Forth Navigation Service before the vessel commences to navigate.

Procedures:

- For vessels under pilotage, the pilot is responsible for requesting clearance to depart.
- Once clearance is granted, it is valid for a period of 15 minutes. If the vessel does not leave the berth or anchorage within that time, clearance must be requested again.
- If, for any reason, a vessel is not granted clearance, it must remain alongside and will be instructed to call back after a specified period.

Please note that **the granting of clearance does not relieve any vessel of its responsibilities under the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (1972).**

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2 WEATHER PARAMETERS

2.1 Minimum Visibility Criteria

Vessel Size (meters)	Berthing (Distance miles)	Sailing (Distance)
<90m	0.5	0.25*
90m – 150m	0.5	0.25*
> 150m	0.5	0.5
Oil Rigs	2.0	2.0

* Vessels transiting bridges minimum 0.5 miles

2.2 Wind Parameters

Wind speed is for a steady wind, measured from Dundee anemometer.

Vessel Size (meters)	Wind Parameters (knots)	
	Berthing	Sailing
<90m	At discretion of duty Pilot (transit vessels \leq 40kts)	
90m – 150m	At discretion of duty Pilot	
150m +	\leq 25kts	\leq 25kts
Oil Rigs	\leq 15kts	\leq 15kts

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3 Tay Bridges

3.1 Tay Road Bridge

Scheduling should be carried out using the Port of Dundee tidal data.

Maintenance gantry must be clear of the channel when vessels transit the bridge.

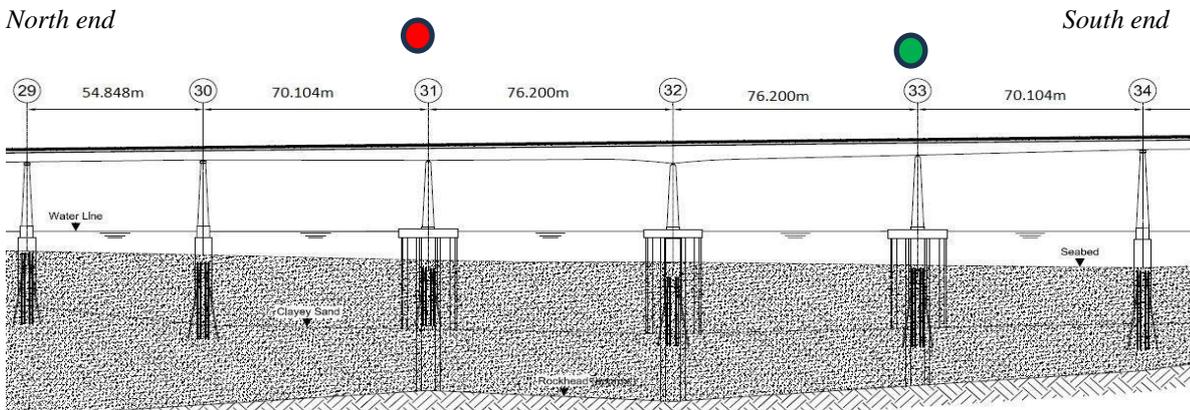
Height of the bridge is based on the lowest point of the bridge within the navigational channel.

Height of Bridge above Chart Datum	27.06m
Safety Clearance Margin	2.0m
Allowable Height above Chart datum	<u>25.06m</u>

The minimum visibility for vessels transiting the bridge is 0.5 nautical miles. When the Tay Road Bridge is not visible from Camperdown Dock entrance visibility is less than 0.5 miles

The Road Bridge has additional fendering on the piers, which act as the main navigation channel numbered as below. The fendering is comprised of sacrificial concrete structures, which have low-level blue lighting to indicate their outline along with the charted navigation lights.

Width between the bridge fendering is 59.5m.



It should be noted that the transit between the bridges should not be attempted without local knowledge.

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3.2 Tay Rail Bridge

Scheduling should be carried out using the Port of Dundee tidal data.

Height of the bridge is based on the lowest point of the bridge within the navigational channel.

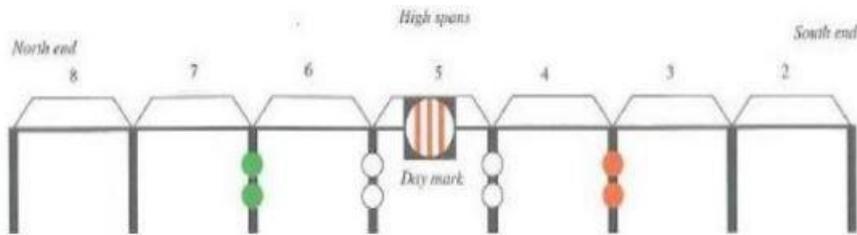
Height of Bridge above Chart Datum	27.0m
Safety Clearance Margin	2.0m
Allowable Height above Chart datum	<u>25.0m</u>

The minimum visibility for vessels transiting the bridges is 0.5 nautical miles

The main navigation channel through the bridge is through the fifth raised span from the South end of the bridge. This span is marked with 2 fixed white lights and a day signal of a circle with red and white vertical stripes.

The width between each leg of the bridge is:

- Span 6- 70m
- Span 5- 70m
- Span 4- 65m



Obstructions exist in the vicinity of the 4th span and this span should only be used with caution. It should be noted that the transit between the bridges should not be attempted without local knowledge.

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4 PRECAUTIONARY AREA, PIPELINES and CABLES

A military exercise area exists at Buddon Ness. Ranges fire west south west and south across Monifieth Bay and east across Carnoustie Bay. Firing is only undertaken when the area is clear of shipping.

A natural gas pipeline runs from the north bank at Monifieth (56°28.83'N 002°47.92'W) to Tentsmuir Point (56°26.61'N 002°49.62'W) on the south and is marked by yellow beacons at either side.

There are two submarine cable areas bounded within the following points:

<u>Cable Area</u>		<u>North Side</u>	<u>Mid-Channel</u>	<u>South Side</u>
West of the Road	West Boundary	56°26.22'N 002°56.79'W	56°26.78'N 002°58.81'W	56°27.14'N 002°58.88'
	East Boundary	56°26.56'N 002°56.46'W		56°27.30'N 002°58.26'
East of the Road	West Boundary	56°27.17'N 002°54.33'W		56°28.09'N 002°54.60'
	East Boundary	56°27.17'N 002°53.96'W		56°28.02'N 002°54.07'

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5 PILOT VESSEL OPERATIONS IN RESTRICTED VISIBILITY

Forth Ports and terminal operators have parameters in place which require ports, docks or terminals to be closed to shipping movements during periods of restricted visibility.

However, there will be times when despite ports, docks or terminals being closed to vessel movements, Pilot Vessel operations will still be conducted in the river.

Restricted visibility is all circumstances where visibility is, or is expected to, reduce to a distance where the Pilot Vessels' normal ability to perform may be impaired. Such restrictions in visibility could be due to fog, mist, snow, rain, sleet or any other conditions that impair visibility. In circumstances where restricted visibility exists, or is likely to exist, the Pilot Vessel Coxswain shall, as part of the passage plan and risk assessment process, decide how the operation will be conducted, what dangers are associated with operating the Pilot Vessel in restricted visibility and what risk reduction measures should be applied.

When completing this assessment the following points should be considered, along with others as deemed necessary in the circumstances:

- Allocation of extra time for the Pilot Vessel operation:
- Conduct of the Pilot Vessel at a safe and appropriate speed.
- Posting of additional lookout(s) onboard the Pilot Vessel.
- Ensuring appropriate setup of navigational equipment on the Pilot Vessel.
- Alteration of passage plan to incorporate increased passing distances.
- Heightened risk when coming alongside a vessel.
- Heightened communication with both VTS and the attended vessel.

The Pilot Vessel Coxswain should inform the Pilot/Master of any concerns that he may have as to the safety of his vessel and the boarding/disembarking operation. If necessary, the Pilot Vessel Coxswain should, in consultation with the Duty Pilot or at night the next pilot on turn, abort the operation in conjunction with the "Suspension of Operations" procedure in the Pilotage Code of Practice. As per this procedure, the situation should be reviewed every hour to assess whether conditions are static, deteriorating or improving.

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6 TOWAGE AND BARGE OPERATIONS

When booking operations involving barges or vessels without propulsion and/or crew, the agent or barge operator must provide a method statement.

The Port of Dundee requires a [Barge Proforma](#) to be completed. This form can be found on the Forth Ports website or obtained on request from FTNS. The Barge Proforma should be completed in line with the Towage Guidelines.

The [Towage Guidelines](#) for operations on the Forth and Tay are available on the Forth Ports website.

7 VESSELS WITHOUT APPROPRIATE NAVIGATIONAL CHARTS

Vessels are **not permitted to enter the Port of Dundee CHA limits** without being in possession of an up-to-date edition of:

- Admiralty Chart 1481 or International Chart 1543 (for Dundee), and
- Admiralty Chart 1479 for vessels bound for Perth.

Vessels under Pilotage:

- Inbound vessels without the appropriate charts should be directed by the pilot to proceed to the nearest and most appropriate anchorage.
- Outbound vessels without the required charts must not depart from the berth.

ECDIS Requirements:

ECDIS systems on board must be type-approved and supported by an independent backup — either a second approved system or an appropriate folio of paper charts.

Foreign Charts:

Foreign charts are acceptable provided they conform to the International Chart Numbering System (INT series).

8 USE OF LINESMEN

The procedure for the Port of Dundee requires that all vessels making fast or letting go at any berth within the port must use the services of linesmen.

Small vessels may, in certain circumstances, be exempt from this requirement if the conditions outlined in Section 10 are met.

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9 TESTING ENGINES BEFORE ARRIVAL OR DEPARTURE

All vessels should test their engines astern before berthing at port, harbour, dock or terminal. Any defects or failure of the engine to go astern should be reported to FTNS and the berthing or docking aborted.

Mariners are advised of the following precautions to be exercised prior to and when testing engines prior to departure.

- Ensure that the gangway is tended and access is prohibited during test or the gangway is removed.
- Cease cargo operations. Tanker manifolds must be disconnected. Shore cranes are boomed clear of the vessel
- No bunkering operations are underway and any hoses are disconnected.
- If necessary inform stevedores
- Test pitch at each console before engaging engines
- Ensure mooring lines are out and fast before engines are tested under load
- Tend mooring lines throughout.
- The proximity of other vessels and in particularly small craft is considered prior to the test.
- Ensure full understanding of the Emergency Stop procedure and be prepared to activate it should any fault be discovered whilst testing.

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10 SAFE ACCESS AND SELF-MOORING

The Master of any vessel should ensure there is safe access before allowing anyone to step ashore. This is applicable irrespective of the form of mooring operation conducted.

Safe Access

No Forth Ports owned port has an area specifically designed to ensure safe access to and from small vessels.

Vessel operators should ensure they give notice of arrival to allow a berth to be allocated and the most suitable means of access to be identified and risk assessed. The industry's recommended hierarchy of access arrangements for small craft, starting with the safest first, is as follows:

- Gangway between small craft and the quay, quay steps, quay wall, pier or other vessel/small craft. Stepping directly (short step, level access) between the small craft and the quay, quay steps, quay wall, pier, other vessel/small craft or pontoon.

- Fixed ladder from the quay, quay wall, pier or jetty.

- *Portable ladder between the small craft and the quay, quay wall, pier or jetty.

*Only permitted where no other safe means of access is reasonably practicable.

Self-Mooring

Vessels should where possible utilise the services of trained linesmen. However, it is recognised that self-mooring is a common occurrence in the small vessel sector. It is recognised that this may be a reasonably practicable operation provided that the hazards have been mitigated.

All vessels calling at a Forth Ports owned port should have a safe system of work (SSOW) and submit a completed self-mooring Notification form to FTNS if they plan to self-moor.

The SSOW should consider the following:

- Access - some quays/berths have additional risk; for example, working at height with unguarded edges and vertical ladders.
- The size and type of vessel including its manoeuvrability, ability to hold position alongside in the prevailing circumstances and the conditions for the transit of personnel to conduct the mooring operation.
- Potential dangers posed to personnel from the prevailing environmental conditions, communication between those involved and appropriate supervision by a competent person.
- As none of our berths have been designed for the conduct of self-mooring, a risk assessments should be carried out by the vessel wishing to use the berth to address the risks.
- Where crew numbers allow consideration should be given to posting a member of the crew, with good communication with the helmsman, to monitor that those leaving and returning to the vessel do so safely.
- Where the vessel side is guarded, personnel should not climb over bulwarks or transit along a rubbing band.
- The mooring arrangement is effective in restricting movement of the vessel for the foreseeable weather and tidal conditions.

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The Master of a vessel remains responsible for the safety of their crew during self-mooring operations.

Self-Mooring Hierarchy

The following self-mooring operations may be permissible, in order of hierarchy:

1	A means of self-mooring that can be conducted safely within the confines of the vessel using pre-rigged lines or lassoing bollards from the vessel. The vessel should be fully secured before opening the bulwark gate and/or transiting to the quay/berth
2	A safe and effective means of partially self-mooring within the confines of the vessel using not less than two lines before opening the bulwark gate and/or transiting to or from the quay/berth to complete the operation. In such circumstances, additional control measures may be necessary to address hazards regarding unrestrained movement of the vessel.
3	Only if it is not possible to achieve full or partial mooring of the vessel prior to embarkation or disembarkation, in the manner detailed above , should crew transit to or from the quay or berth while the vessel is unsecured. The risk assessment should account for the manoeuvrability of the vessel, its handling characteristics, the stability of the platform, the vessel's ability to hold position alongside in the prevailing circumstances and the conditions for the transit of personnel to conduct the mooring operation.

Where additional hazards have been identified or existing control measures have been assessed as impractical or ineffective given a change of condition or defect. The use of licensed linesmen should be used.

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