

GUIDANCE TO BERTH OPERATORS ON THE THAMES

2012
(as amended)



CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	3
1 MARINE OPERATIONS	4
1.1 Notification of Depths on Berths	4
1.2 Clear and Safe Berth	5
1.3 Drying Berths	5
1.4 PLA Requirement to Maintain and Survey Operational Berths	6
1.5 PLA Requirements for Dredging at the Berth	7
1.6 Vessel Abort Procedures	7
1.7 Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames	7
1.8 Code of Practice for Ship Towing Operations on the Thames	8
1.9 Ensure that Vessels meet their Booked Departure Times	8
2 SECURITY / CONTINGENCY PLANNING	9
2.1 Comply with ISPS Code	9
2.2 Safe and Ready Access	9
2.3 Comply with Legislation Regarding Pollution	10
3 SAFETY	11
3.1 Berth Navigation Lights	11
3.2 HSE Recommendations and Legislation Regarding Safe Access to Vessels	11
3.3 River Works Licence Requirements	11
3.4 DSHA Regulations and PLA Inspections	12
4 FLOATING DRY DOCKS – CODE OF CONDUCT	13
4.1 Introduction	13
4.2 Actions Before the Floating Dry Dock is Used	13
4.3 Actions Whilst the Floating Dry Dock is in Use	13
4.4 Actions At All Times	14
4.5 Thames Byelaws 2012	15

5	GUIDANCE ON MOORING MAINTENANCE	16
5.1	Introduction	16
5.2	Moorings Typically Found on the Thames	16
5.3	Mooring Use	17
5.4	Mooring Inspection	18
6	ENFORCEMENT OF CONSERVANCY CHARGES ON CARGO	19
7	GUIDANCE ON WORKING ON THE FORESHORE	20
7.1	Associated Legislation	20
7.2	Vessel Maintenance	20
7.3	Strand on the Green Grid	21
7.4	Additional Authorisations Required	22
7.5	Additional Advice	22
8	LIAISON WITH THE PLA	23
8.1	Guidance to Assist Berth Operators in Planning Development Work	23
8.2	Notification of Contact Names and Numbers	23
8.3	Allowing Access to Officers of the Authority	23
8.4	PLA Operational Contacts	23
ANNEXES		
A	Extract from the Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames 2010	24
B	Thames Byelaw 51 - Requirement to Maintain and Survey and Inspect Operational Berths	28
C	Thames Byelaw 48 - Protection of the Foreshore	29

PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY

GUIDANCE TO BERTH OPERATORS 2012

INTRODUCTION

The Port of London Authority (PLA) offers the following guidance to berth operators, highlighting some of the responsibilities and obligations placed upon them by national legislation, the Port Marine Safety Code, and local and national Codes of Practice. It is also important for berth operators to recognise and oversee those aspects of berth operation, which they have devolved or delegated to ships' agents, boatmen and other sub-contractors since liability remains with the berth operator in cases of non-compliance.

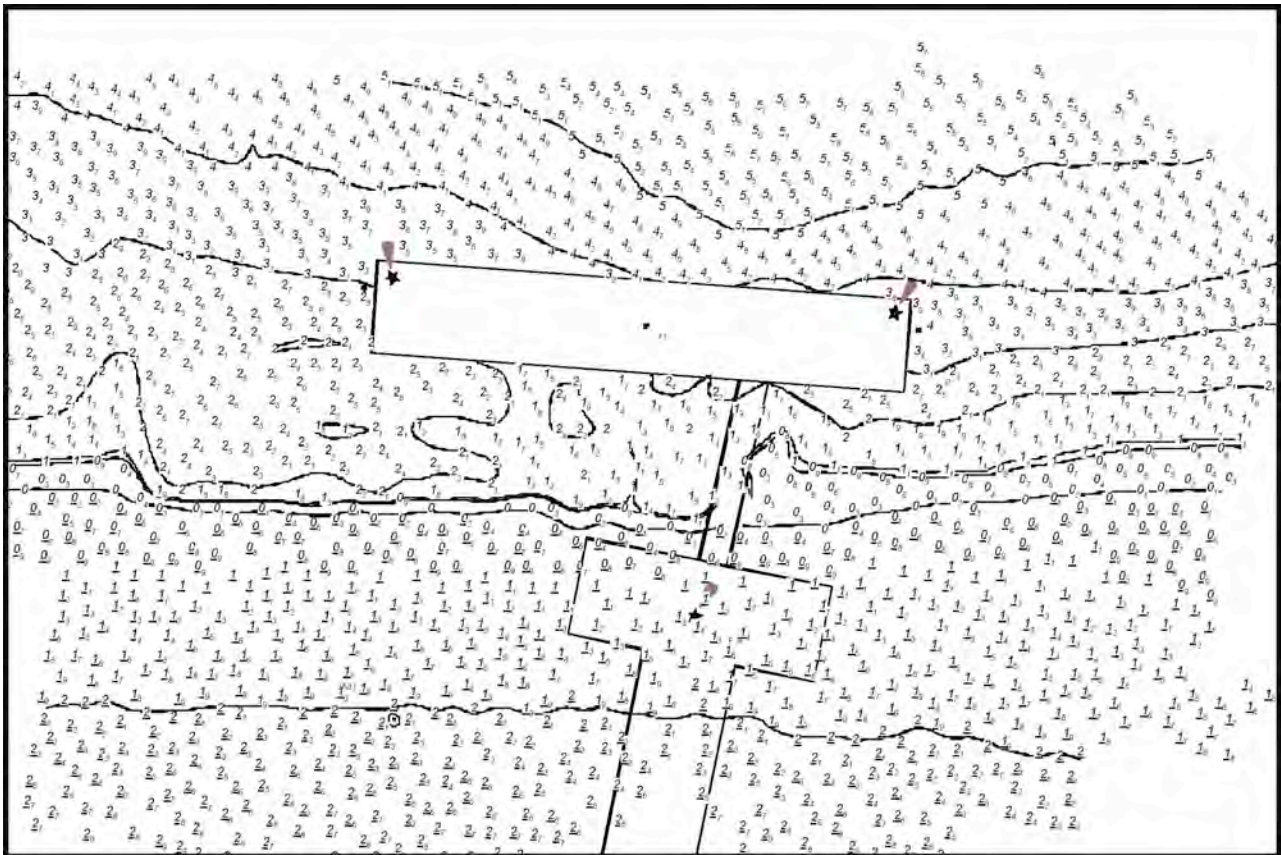
August 2012

1 MARINE OPERATIONS

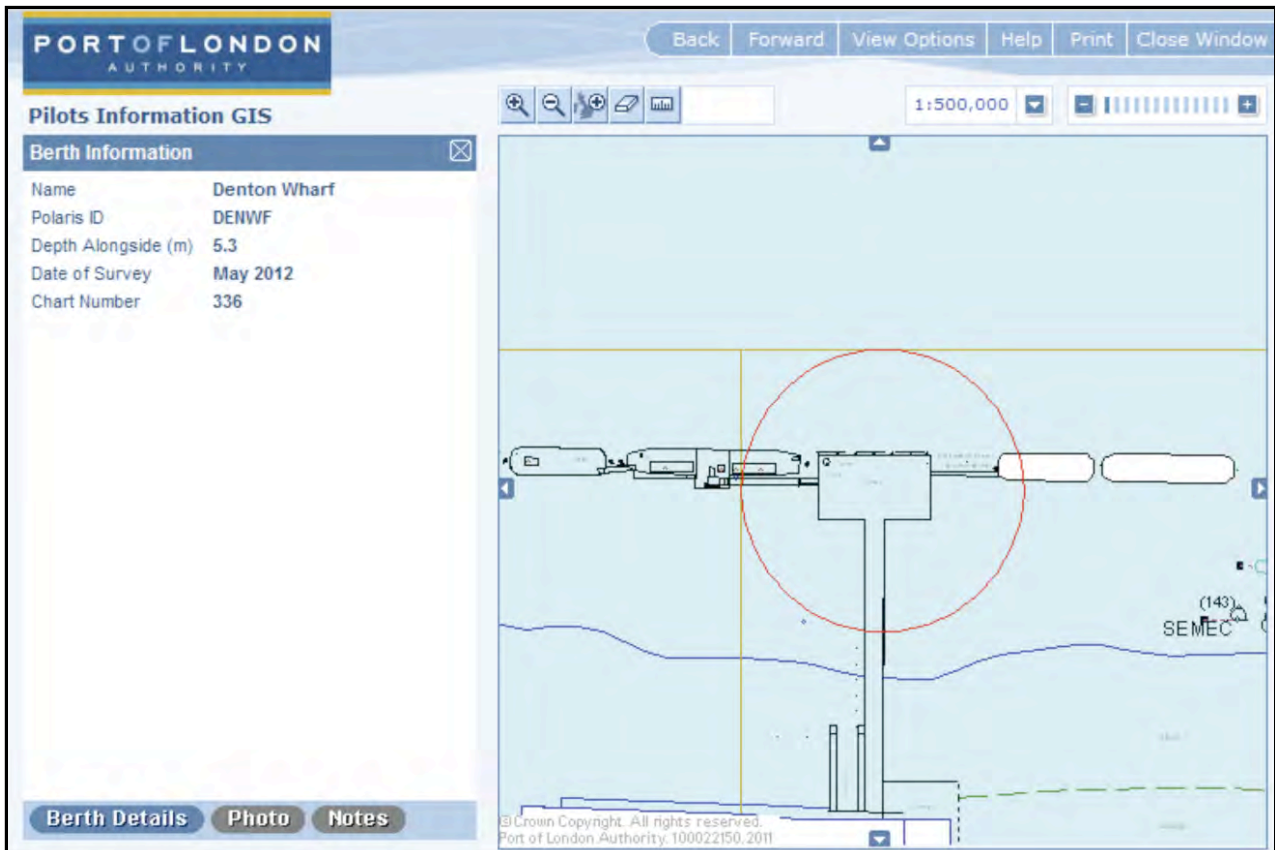
1.1 Notification of Depths on Berths

Whilst the PLA carries out general hydrographic surveys and publishes depths in the channels and fairways, ***depths alongside and the approaches to berths are the responsibility of the berth operator concerned.*** To ensure that up-to-date information is held by the PLA, and that vessels can be programmed safely, berth operators should arrange to have periodic surveys carried out and the results passed directly to the PLA's Port Hydrographer.

Charted depth of a berth



GIS information of a berth



1.2 Clear and Safe Berth

It is important that vessels have a clear and safe berth to go to upon arrival, particularly in respect of vessels carrying polluting or dangerous cargoes; and those which may be unable to abort their inward passage. In certain cases it may be necessary for the berth to be confirmed as not being clear and available some time before the incoming vessel is scheduled to be on the berth in order to ensure that the incoming vessel can be safely diverted to an alternative berth or anchorage. The berth operator must liaise closely with the ship's agents and the PLA to establish the minimum acceptable time for the berth to be confirmed as clear, and if delays are expected.

1.3 Drying Berths

The berth operator has a responsibility to ensure that when inviting a vessel to take the ground alongside his berth, that it is safe and fit for the purpose. Drying berths should be inspected on each occasion before a vessel berths to ensure there are no obstructions or changes to the bed level, which could damage the vessel or not allow it to berth correctly or safely.

1.4 PLA Requirement to Maintain, Survey and Inspect Operational Berths

PLA Thames Byelaws place an obligation on a berth operator to ensure that his berth is maintained in a safe condition in all respects, so as not to cause damage to a vessel moored alongside or to prevent a vessel mooring safely or securely alongside.

To support that obligation, the PLA issues the following guidance to berth operators in respect of the provision of appropriate hydrographic surveys and inspections:

Hydrographic Surveys of Berths

Berth operators are reminded of their responsibility to provide a safe berth for any visiting vessels, which should include a knowledge of the depth of water available and of any obstructions.

As part of the PLA's conservancy commitment, the entire riverbed is surveyed on a rolling 8 to 10 year cycle. To this end, the PLA Hydrographic Service conducts some 300 surveys per annum in the 400 sq. miles of its area of responsibility. These surveys not only ensure that the PLA meets its commitment to provide safe access; they also contribute to fulfilling its environmental obligations.

Surveying Berths

Whilst these 'main' surveys include all berths, they are generally insufficiently detailed or frequent enough to constitute a declaration of safe water on the berth. As each berth is privately owned, it is the responsibility of the berth operator/owner to provide sufficient evidence to the Master/Pilot that a vessel will remain safely afloat or, in certain cases, safely aground, whilst alongside the berth.

Where a surveying contractor other than the PLA Hydrographic Service has conducted a hydrographic survey on behalf of a berth operator, the berth operator is responsible for ensuring that the results are passed to the PLA's Port Hydrographer without delay. This will ensure that the Harbour Master, PLA Pilots and Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) Centres are equipped with the latest data and can advise mariners accordingly.

Surveys of berths should be conducted to IHO S44 'Special Order' survey

accuracy. Should any operator be in any doubt as to the type or frequency of survey most appropriate for their berth, the Port Hydrographer would be happy to discuss the matter and provide immediate advice

See Section 8.5 for PLA contact details.

1.5 PLA Requirements for Dredging at the Berth

A berth operator wishing to carry out capital or maintenance dredging at his berth must obtain a licence from the PLA. It is therefore important that periodic bathymetric surveys of the berth are carried out on a regular basis, in order to provide information to support effective maintenance of the facility; and to help to identify the most cost-effective and appropriate form of dredging; and to aid anticipating any depth constraints. There are a number of licensing requirements, which are set out in the PLA publication “Maintenance Dredging in the Port of London” and in the environment pages of the PLA’s website (www.pla.co.uk/environment) including the requirement for pre and post-dredge surveys, sediment sample analysis and, where appropriate, hydrodynamic and environmental assessments.

The PLA requires a minimum period of three months to process applications and to enable the necessary environmental consultations required by the Dredging Framework to be undertaken.

1.6 Vessel Abort Procedures

The berth operator should have in place arrangements to give early warning to the PLA (London VTS) when it is thought that the arrival of an inward bound vessel may need to be aborted due to adverse weather, berth delays or other unforeseen circumstances. (Please also ensure that the PLA is aware of your arrangements for a standby/emergency berth).

1.7 Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames

Section 4.2 of the PLA’s Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames sets out the berth operator’s responsibilities in respect of mooring operations under the Docks Regulations 1988, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Merchant Shipping Act 1995, which berth operators, should comply with. Other useful guidance is

contained in the HSE document 'Managing Health & Safety in Dockwork'. Berth operators must also ensure that there are a sufficient number of mooring bollards, sensibly positioned and of a suitable strength, for the nature of operations and size of vessel using the berth. Part of Section 2 and Section 4 of the PLA's Code of Practice for Safe Mooring on the Thames is reproduced at Annex A for information and convenience.



1.8 Code of Practice for Ship Towing Operations on the Thames

In the interests of safety, berth operators should follow the tug allocation criteria included in the PLA's Code of Practice for Ship Towing Operations on the Thames. The PLA has received assurances from the majority of berth operators where tugs are likely to be employed, that for safety reasons they support the use of the recommended full number of tugs required by the Code.

1.9 Ensure that Vessels meet their Booked Departure Times

It is important, particularly in the case of heavily used berths, that ships' departure times are adhered to. A delay in departure could result in the next inward bound vessel due on the berth and already in transit, also being delayed; and possibly its inward passage being aborted for safety reasons due to lack of water. Similarly, a delayed departure could result in the vessel having to wait alongside until the next tide as the vessel may not be able to leave the berth.

2 PORT SECURITY / CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT

2.1 Compliance with the ISPS Code

A berth (Port Facility) which handles vessels of 500 gross tons or more engaged on international voyages, (and certain vessels on domestic voyages), must comply with the provisions of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS) as set out by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and embodied in EC Regulation 725/2004 and United Kingdom Statutory Instrument 1495 of 2004 Merchant Shipping: Maritime Security Ship and Port Facility (Security) Regulations 2004. The PLA, through its Port Security Officer, can provide assistance and advice to Port Facility Security Officers on the implementation of the ISPS Code and wider maritime security matters within the port.



2.2 Safe and Ready Access

Notwithstanding the obligations placed on berth operators to ensure appropriate security measures are in place at their facility (from both the landward and water side), it is clearly important to recognise that those arrangements should be flexible enough to facilitate the safe, and in some cases immediate, access for various agencies and individuals, including the emergency services, marine pilots, ships' crews, ships' agents, seafarer welfare organisations, port authority officers, ship company representatives etc.

2.3 Comply with Legislation Regarding Pollution

No berth operator shall allow solid or liquid substances to enter the Thames without lawful cause. If it does, an offence is committed under section 200 of the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) and relevant environmental legislation. This is of particular significance to aggregate berths whose operators should ensure that there is no build-up of spilt material in the river under discharge hoppers and conveyor systems. Oil/fuel tanks should be properly constructed and bunded, and operated in line with published guidance.

Following an oil (or other pollutant) spill, the operator must make all efforts to immediately stop/minimise the escape. The berth operator is responsible for ensuring appropriate and **immediate notification to the PLA** following all spill incidents attributable to the operator's facility, including a vessel alongside. The operator's contingency plan should also be brought into operation to run in conjunction with the PLA Oil Spill Contingency Plan. The operator deals with attributable claims, such as damage to property, caused by the spill. The relevant PLA Vessel Traffic Service Centre must be advised immediately of any spillage whatsoever into the Thames.

The PLA is happy to support and advise any berth operator in respect of the integration of the berth's emergency plan (regarding any incident likely to impact upon the river or safety of navigation) and the PLA's emergency plans. Please contact the PLA's Contingencies Manager.



3 SAFETY

3.1 Berth Navigation Lights

Jetties and piers often extend a significant distance into the River, and as such are clearly obstructions and dangers to navigation. Accordingly, most jetties, piers and wharves are lit at their lateral extremities by pairs of either red or green lights to alert mariners, during the hours of darkness or reduced visibility, to the presence of these structures in the River.

Berth navigation lights are an important aid to navigation. Berth operators have a clear duty, not only to ensure that their facility is correctly marked with appropriate lights positioned as the regulations require, but also to ensure that the lights are properly maintained and remain lit and functioning.

The PLA inspects berth lights on a weekly basis, and Trinity House, the General Lighthouse Authority, inspects berth navigation lights in the port on an annual basis.

3.2 HSE Recommendations and Legislation Regarding Safe Access to Vessels

Section 4.1 of the Code of Practice for the Safe Mooring of Vessels on the Thames describes the duties of the berth operator under Health and Safety at Work legislation in respect of working areas, adequacy of berth lighting and fittings, and the provision and maintenance of appropriate life saving equipment. A berth operator is also responsible for the maintenance in a safe condition and the safe operation of any link spans and gangways used to access a vessel instead of the vessel's gangway; together with the provision of any necessary edge protection to the berth. If access is by link span, the berth operator should ensure that a suitably qualified engineer is involved in the preparation and implementation of the maintenance regime. Responsibility for safe access points also includes those for marine personnel (pilots and mooring gangs) at appropriate locations. Guard dogs must be kept under control whenever the berth is manned.

3.3 River Works Licences Requirement

A berth operator is obliged under the terms of his PLA River Works Licence issued under section 66 of the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) to maintain the condition of his works to the PLA's reasonable satisfaction. River Works Licences for moorings require regular inspections of the moorings and written confirmation of such inspections.

Please see Section 5 'Guidance on Mooring Maintenance' for more information.

It is an offence to undertake river works without a River Works Licence.

3.4 DSHA Regulations and PLA Inspections

Berth operators must comply with the provisions of the Dangerous Substances in Harbour Areas Regulations, particularly in respect of safety precautions, emergency arrangements and storage of dangerous goods (Parts V, VII and VIII). Petroleum jetties should assist with the joint jetty inspections carried out annually by the PLA and the local Fire Authority and take prompt action on any recommendations made. Berths handling explosives must, in addition to any provisions of the DSHA Regulations, ensure that the quantity of explosives handled at that berth does not exceed that stated on its explosives licence.

4 FLOATING DRY DOCKS – CODE OF CONDUCT

4.1 Introduction

The PLA, as a statutory harbour authority, has a number of duties and responsibilities under UK and European environmental legislation. A summary of the key pieces of environmental legislation that are relevant to the PLA and Thames Estuary can be found in the Environment section of the PLA's website (www.pla.co.uk/environment).

The PLA is also responsible for the licensing of inland waterways vessels operating commercially on the tidal Thames. This includes workboats and line handling boats employed by Berth Operators. As vessels, floating dry docks must be licensed by the PLA in respect of their core use as a floating dry dock. More information about the PLA's Vessel Licensing regime is available in the Navigational Safety section of the PLA's website.

The PLA cannot permit any port operations to be undertaken, which may damage the environment. The operation of a floating dry dock has the potential to cause significant pollution of the marine environment. By observing this Code of Conduct, operators of floating dry docks can avoid polluting the marine environment and committing an offence under the relevant legislation.

4.2 Actions before the Floating Dry Dock is Used

- The floating dry dock should be thoroughly inspected and all debris, waste material and injurious or offensive liquids should be collected and stored for appropriate disposal.
- Bilge residues and other liquid waste present in vessels and the dock should be removed and either stored in safe containers, or disposed of in accordance with current legislation.

4.3 Actions whilst the Floating Dry Dock is in Use

- Operations such as jet washing, gritting, blasting and spray painting should be undertaken in a manner which prevents losses of paint and debris into the marine environment, by the appropriate use of save-alls, screening and other collecting methods.

- No debris, refuse or any other waste material should be allowed to enter the River Thames or placed on the foreshore. If any waste material does fall into the River, or be in a position where it is likely to be carried away by the tide, it should be removed immediately and disposed of at a licensed land-based site.
- Waste water from vessel maintenance operations (including jet washing, gritting, blasting or other abrasive operations) should be filtered before it enters the River. All debris collected in the filter system should be collected and disposed of at a licensed land-based site.



4.4. Action At All Times:

- All oils, chemicals and other industrial liquids and materials should be stored in designated storage tanks (suitably bunded) and/or appropriate storage containers, in accordance with PLA vessel licensing requirements.
- The floating dry dock should be operated in accordance with the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidance Notes, a copy of which can be found on the NetRegs website (www.netregs.gov.uk).
- Waste water should not be stored in holding tanks that form part of the ballast used for loading and unloading the floating dry dock.

- Vessels in the floating dry dock must not be used for residential purposes without the prior written permission of the PLA.
- The riverbed or foreshore beneath the floating dry dock must not be dredged or levelled without a valid licence under Section 73 of the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended).

4.5 Thames Byelaws 2012

The operators of floating dry docks should also note Section 7 - Guidance on Working on the Foreshore; and the requirements of Thames Byelaw 51 – Requirement to Maintain and Survey and Inspect Operational Berths which is included at Annex B for information and convenience.

5 GUIDANCE ON MOORING MAINTENANCE

5.1 Introduction

The general procedures for the inspection and maintenance of moorings will vary depending on a number of factors including the type of mooring, its location on the Thames and the frequency of usage. This section is intended to provide guidance to berth operators on the maintenance of midstream buoy moorings and “holding in” moorings attached to anchors embedded in the River.

5.2. Moorings typically found on the Thames:

These include:

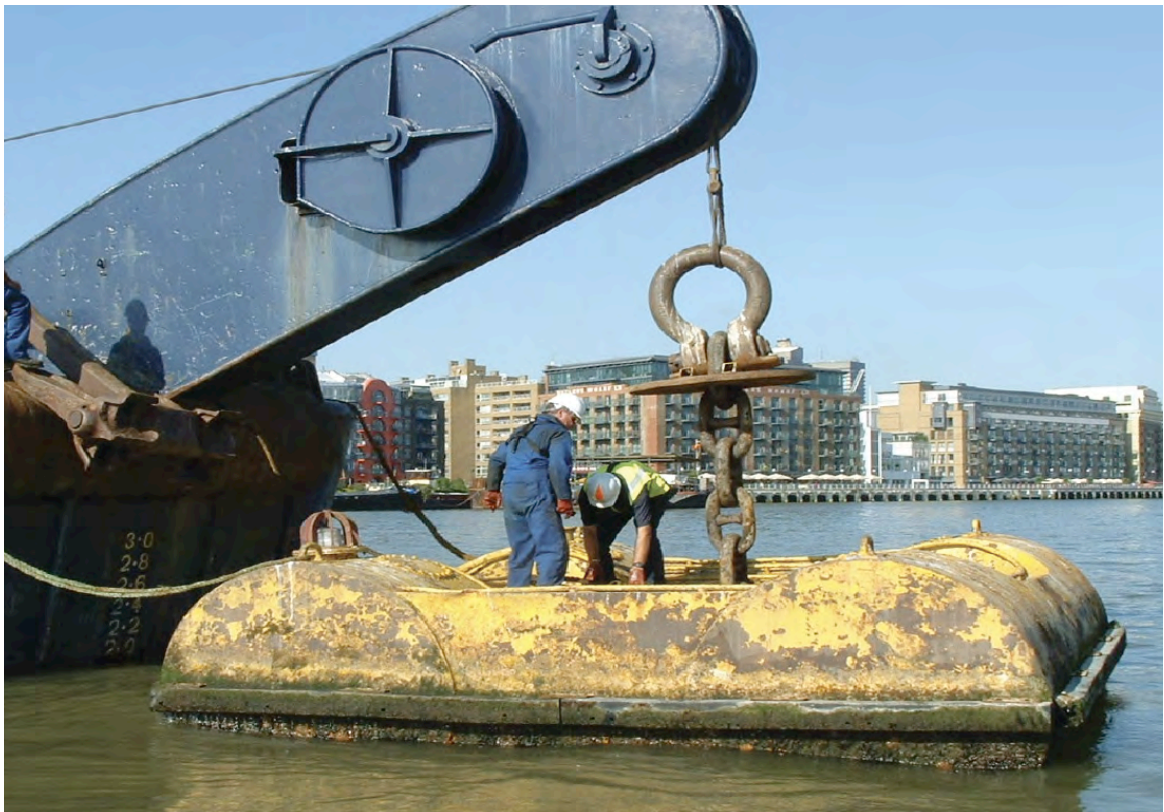
- “Spread moorings” consisting of one or more anchor points connected by steel chain to a mooring buoy. When a single mooring point is provided, the mooring will be fitted with a swivel, which allows the moored vessel to move with the tide. These moorings are known as “swing moorings”. When a buoy is provided at each end of the vessel, these moorings are referred to as “Tiers”. Sometimes a barge known as a collar barge is moored between the two sets of moorings to make it easier for vessels to tie up.
- “Holding in” moorings consisting of one or more anchor points connected by chain to a buoy or pick up wire.
- Small vessel moorings such as trot moorings consisting of a ground chain with risers and buoys.



5.3 Mooring Use

Moorings in the River are constantly being picked up and placed back on the river bed by the action of the tide and waves and or by the action of the vessel moored to them. The part of the mooring which suffers most from this action is the part that rises and falls onto the bed of the River. It is generally referred to as the “trash zone”. The chain links immediately under the buoy are also likely to suffer accelerated wear. In addition, the components of the mooring are prone to wastage due to the corrosive nature of seawater as well as to mechanical damage from collision with vessels or overloading and misuse. None of this wear is easily visible to the casual observer.

The PLA recommends that owners and or operators of moorings should check the condition of moorings on a regular basis. The PLA uses periods of one year, eighteen months, two years or three years depending on the type and location of moorings. Further guidance can be obtained from the British Standard BS 6349 Part 6 1989.



5.4 Mooring Inspection

A typical inspection requires the removal of the buoy and breaking down of the mooring into its component parts. The chain is then hove to the surface where it can be inspected for damage and measured for wastage. Divers will be needed to inspect the parts of the mooring that cannot be brought to the surface for inspection. These inspections are carried out every other year on small moorings, and annually on every of the larger moorings. Divers also check that the anchors are still properly embedded and that the underwater parts of the mooring are not fouled or disconnected.

A Top End inspection includes the upper mooring elements only down to three way or four way plates and main thrash area of the mooring.

Mooring buoys are inspected for damage at each overhaul and replaced if required. Damaged buoys or those requiring repairs or repainting should be removed and landed ashore for full inspection.

The Authority's own moorings are inspected and serviced at the following intervals:

Type of Mooring	Frequency of Inspection (months)
Navigation buoys	12
Large Ship Tiers and Passenger Vessel moorings (Top End)	12
Medium Ship Tier or holding in mooring (Top End)	12
Small Ship Swing Mooring and Small Ship Tier	18
Barge moorings below Erith	18
Barge mooring above Erith	24
Barge moorings above Tower Bridge	36
Yacht and launch moorings	36

6 ENFORCEMENT OF CONSERVANCY CHARGES ON CARGO

In order to safeguard its revenue, the PLA is obliged to remind Port users that the PLA has extensive powers for the recovery and enforcement of unpaid charges, including Conservancy Charges on Cargo. These include powers to seize, detain and sell goods in respect of which the charges are payable, and (if the goods liable have been removed) to seize, detain and sell other goods belonging to the owner of the removed goods. Any person eluding or evading or attempting to elude or invade payment of, or refusing to pay a charge due from him to the PLA, or being party to the evasion of any payment due, renders himself liable to penalties.

To enable the PLA to assess, collect and recover Conservancy Charges on Cargo, wharfingers and those operating cargo handling facilities within the Port of London are to provide the PLA with details of the cargo passing through their wharf or facility sufficient to enable the PLA to collect the charges due whenever such charges are not collected on behalf of the PLA by the wharfinger/berth operator. Cargo is not to be released from the wharf or facility until the PLA has confirmed that it is satisfied that the charges have been/will be paid: this requirement may be waived where the wharfinger/berth operator has agreed to collect Conservancy Charges on behalf of the PLA.

If a wharfinger or carrier who is not himself liable for the payment of the Conservancy Charges on Cargo pays, or by agreement with the PLA gives security for, the Conservancy Charges on Cargo in his custody, he has a like lien on the goods for the amount of the Conservancy Charges on Cargo as he would have in respect of his charges for safe custody of the goods (as the case may be).

7 GUIDANCE ON WORKING ON THE FORESHORE

The PLA is the regulator of river works and dredging and a significant landowner, including large marine and terrestrial sites of high value for nature conservation and biodiversity. In addition to its general environmental responsibilities, the PLA has duties to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the Port of London under several pieces of legislation.

The relationship between safety of navigation, port development and nature conservation must be managed with care to allow the delivery of potentially conflicting objectives and to ensure compliance with the PLA's statutory obligations and environmental responsibilities.

7.1 Associated Legislation

This guidance specifically supports the requirements for vessel maintenance work at moorings or on the foreshore laid down in the Port of London Thames Byelaws 2012, Byelaw 48.

All works on the River must also comply with Section 200 of the Port of London Act 1968 (as amended); and while also considering Section 85 of the Water Resources Act 1991, both of which regulate any polluting matter entering controlled waters. Vessel owners should note that in addition the waste and debris produced during vessel maintenance may be classified as hazardous and will need to be disposed of correctly under the relevant waste regulations. All works should also conform with the PLA's Environmental Policy and Thames Byelaw 48.

Thames Byelaw 48 is reproduced at Annex C for information and convenience.

7.2 Vessel Maintenance

Minor maintenance work on vessels is permitted on the foreshore as long as the following pollution prevention measures are taken by vessel owners and those undertaking the work:

- When cleaning the topsides and decks of vessels, detergents and bleaches should be used sparingly. An alternative environmentally-friendly product should be used where possible.

- Try to reduce the amount of water used when cleaning a boat by using a spray gun attachment to a hose, which will automatically stop when not in use.
- Removal of weed and paint may be carried out as long as plastic sheeting is placed under the area to be worked on and is large enough to collect all the debris.
- Re-painting can be carried out by roller or brush. Sheeting must be placed under the area of work to protect the foreshore. This sheeting must be removed before every rising tide and once the work has been completed. The debris and paints must be disposed of appropriately ashore.
- All maintenance materials and waste must be removed from the foreshore before every rising tide and once work has been completed.
- Noxious, polluting or offensive matter is not permitted to enter the water.
- All major maintenance works should be carried out in a dry-dock or wash-down area ashore with the appropriate permits in place. The associated residue may be toxic and needs to be stored and disposed of correctly as hazardous waste.
- Vessel maintenance can be carried out within a vessel whilst at anchor or at moorings or alongside on the foreshore, but no noxious or offensive matter may be permitted to enter the water.
- Generators and/or compressors, other machinery and equipment can not be placed and used on the foreshore.
- If unsure about any of these requirements and guidance, please contact the PLA Environment Team for advice. See details below.

7.3 Strand on the Green Grid

- No vessel greater than 25 metres in length overall or 9 metres beam or displacing more than 500 tonnes will be permitted to use the Grid.
- The hours between 0800 – 1800 are the only time external work on the craft or use of power tools is permitted (tides allowing).
- Insurance/Indemnity: the user/operator must make their own arrangements regarding insurance and must indemnify the PLA against any cost, claim or dispute.
- No one vessel owner is to use the Strand on the Green facilities for more than two consecutive days at a time, without the prior, written consent of the PLA.

- A charge of £10 is required for a 24 hour period. Please contact the PLA Harbour Service to arrange payment.
- The PLA maintains these facilities and offers them to river users. In return, users are expected to respect the sensitivity of both the River environment and the surrounding residential areas in line with the PLA's Environmental Policy.

7.4 Additional Authorisations Required

The Environment Agency (EA) will provide additional information and guidance on carrying out work in or near water and additional advice on the potential need for the appropriate authorisation. For further information please contact the EA:

- Pollution Prevention Guidance – PPG 5 – Works and maintenance in or near water is available from the EA's website www.environment-agency.gov.uk/ppg; or
- If an accident has occurred that has caused material or liquids to enter the water please call the emergency line on 0800 80 70 60.

7.5 Additional Advice

If you require any further advice or guidance please contact the PLA's Environment Team:

- Email – environment@pla.co.uk
- Telephone – Tanya Ferry on 01474 562223.

The Green Blue

The Green Blue is a joint environment programme created by the British Marine Federation and the Royal Yachting Association for anyone who enjoys getting out on the water or whose livelihood depends on it. Guidance has been created to help boat users, boating businesses, sailing clubs and training centres to reduce their impact of their activities on coastal and inland waters.

The Green Blue's "Green Directory" provides a list of products which can be used as safe and environmentally friendly alternative for cleaning boats. Please see the website www.thegreenblue.org.uk for more details.

PLA Operational Contacts

Harbour Master – Lower District (Dagenham to Outer Limits)	01474 562212
Harbour Master – Upper District (Teddington to Dagenham)	020 7743 7906
Harbour Master (SMS & VTS) Port Security Officer	01474 562211
Emergency Planning	01474 562247
Marine Surveyor	01474 562503
Port Hydrographer	01474 562210
Director of Marine Operations	01474 562300
Marine Services Manager	01474 562402
Pilotage Operations Manager	01474 562326
Navigational Safety System Coordinator	01474 562269
Licensing Officer (River Works)	01474 562588
Deputy Director of Planning and Environment	01474 562384
Environment Manager	01474 562223
Civil Engineer	01474 562236
Head of Property	01474 562358
Valuation Surveyor	01474 562388

ANNEX A

EXTRACT FROM THE CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SAFE MOORING OF VESSELS ON THE THAMES 2010

SECTION TWO - GUIDANCE TO BOATMEN AND LINESMEN

2.3 VHF Communications

VHF communications are a vital component of safe mooring operations. It is essential that those onboard a vessel, in the mooring boats and on the berth (both fore and aft) are able to communicate promptly should the need arise. Once VHF communications have been established and tested, mooring personnel should keep transmissions to a minimum and should normally only call when in doubt, or in an emergency.

Where tugs are being used, mooring personnel should consider monitoring the tug - ship VHF channel in order to have an appreciation of progress in the berthing/unberthing operation.

2.4 Mooring Boats - Fitness for Purpose

All workboats used within the Port of London are required to be inspected and licensed by the PLA as being 'fit for purpose'. As such, they should be sufficiently powerful to handle the size and weight of large mooring lines. The life saving equipment required by the PLA should be available for immediate use. They should be equipped with effective VHF radios.

Engines and other equipment should be maintained to the manufacturer's specifications and be properly serviced. Equipment such as heaving lines and messengers used to haul the ship's lines up the face of the berth or dolphin should be of appropriate length and strength. All equipment should be checked before the start of each operation.

Boats should be crewed such that they are capable of handling safely all the wires and ropes needed to complete the operation. It is strongly recommended that safe manning in mooring boats should include a Coxswain and at least one Linehandler. The person in charge of the boat should meet the minimum competency standards as specified.

SECTION FOUR - GUIDANCE TO BERTH OPERATORS

4.1 Safety

It is the duty of a Berth Operator (under Health & Safety at Work legislation) to maintain a safe work area, clear of potential hazards. To this end, a risk assessment should be conducted in respect of mooring and cargo handling operations at the berths.

It is also the responsibility of a Berth Operator to ensure that the berth dimensions and mooring arrangements are adequate to accommodate safely any ship intending to secure or work alongside. In particular, the Berth Operator should routinely establish the water depth available at the berth by conducting hydrographic surveys. The results of these surveys should be forwarded to the PLA Port Hydrographer.

Other precautions that should be taken include:

- Safe access to and from the berth should be provided.
- Ladders on jetties and dolphins should be properly maintained and checked regularly.
- Mooring dolphins should be provided with appropriate safety rails and personnel protection arrangements.
- At night and during poor visibility, the work area should be adequately lit. Mooring bollards not available for use should be boxed over or painted red.
- All persons engaged in the mooring operation should wear appropriate PPE.
- A means of de-icing jetties and dolphins should be available when weather conditions warrant such action.
- Lifesaving equipment, capable of being used at all states of the tide, should be positioned at appropriate intervals on a jetty.
- Disposition of bollards should be such that not more than 2 moorings have to be placed on a bollard at any one time.
- Bollards which become unuseable for whatever reason should be reinstated to full serviceable condition as soon as possible and should be identified as out of service.



4.2 Mooring Operations

Shore-based mooring operations are subject to legislation enforced by the Health & Safety Executive. In particular, the Docks Regulations 1988 require that all mooring operations are properly planned and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require that written risk assessments of planned mooring operations are carried out.

In addition, Merchant Shipping legislation, enforced by the Maritime & Coastguard Agency includes similar requirements relating to ships' crews.

Effective communications should be established between the Berth Operator and the Boatmen/Linesmen. The Berth Operator should be aware of the latest ETA of the vessel, and of the number of Boatmen/Linesmen required to do the job. He should also ensure that sufficient numbers of Boatmen/Linesmen attend to ensure safety.

At a Jetty

- Berth Operators should normally provide a Responsible Person on the jetty to facilitate and oversee the mooring operation.
- Any specific requirement in respect of vessel position should be made known to the Linesmen Supervisor, who will relay the information to the vessel Master or Pilot.

- All equipment at the berth required for mooring should be checked before the operation commences. Any defects should be reported to the Linesmen and, if appropriate, to the vessel Master or Pilot.
- Jetty fendering should be checked prior to berthing. Where an obstruction exists on the jetty face, its existence and location should be reported to the vessel Master, Pilot (if carried) and the Harbourmaster.
- The details and location of any damaged fendering or fendering/berth face under repair should be reported to the Master and Pilot before the vessel berths.
- The Berth Operator should ensure that shore cranes are in the correct position, and that booms do not protrude beyond the jetty during berthing operations. Cranes not required for loading/discharging, and other potential obstructions, should be moved well clear of bridge wings and bow flare.
- Shore cranes should not be moved during the mooring operation, nor as the vessel approaches the berth.
- Bridge positioning signs or manifold connection flags (prominent and illuminated at night) should be used on the jetty to assist in positioning a vessel before landing.
- Consideration should be given to reducing the risk of chaffed lines by providing rope guides or running bars where small ships are expected to lie alongside over low water.

At a Buoy

- Where mooring buoys are fitted with rings, the shackle required for securing the mooring line should be readily accessible.
- The buoy and its equipment should be well maintained. Suitable hand holds are to be provided if mooring requires personnel to board the buoy.

4.3 Damage

Any damage caused to the vessel, mooring boat or berth during berthing should be reported to the Master, Pilot and the Harbourmaster immediately on completion of the operation.

ANNEX B

THAMES BYELAW 51

REQUIREMENT TO MAINTAIN AND SURVEY AND INSPECT OPERATIONAL BERTHS

51.1 The operator of an operational berth must take such measures as may be necessary in order to maintain the berth in a safe condition in all respects, so as not to cause damage to a vessel moored alongside or to prevent a vessel mooring safely or securely alongside.

51.2 The operator of an operational berth, for the purpose of ensuring that the berth is safe for use, must:

- a) prepare a regular programme of hydrographic surveys and inspections of the river bed at and alongside the operational berth, and
- b) carry out the programmed surveys and inspections and undertake such further surveys and inspections and such further actions as may be required for that purpose.

Note: *The PLA will provide the operator with guidance on the scope and technical standards of the required hydrographic survey and inspection.*

51.3 The operator of an operational berth must provide to the PLA, in a form prescribed by it, a report detailing the results of each hydrographic survey and inspection carried out under the provisions of byelaw 51.2.

51.4 Without prejudice to byelaws 51.2 and 51.3 the operator of an operational berth where vessels can reasonably be expected to ground whilst berthed, must have in place and operate such programme of inspections of the river bed at the operational berth as is required in order to ensure that the river water does not hide any danger, obstruction or changes to the river bed level at and alongside the operational berth capable of damaging a vessel using the operational berth.

51.5 Nothing in this byelaw is to be taken as imposing an obligation on the PLA to ensure that operational berths are safe and free from hazard.

Note: *The PLA has published guidance to operators in respect of the scope and technical standards of the berth inspections required in byelaw 51.44.*

ANNEX C

THAMES BYELAW 48

PROTECTION OF THE FORESHORE

48 PROTECTION OF THE FORESHORE

- 48.1 A person must not rake, dig or excavate the bed or foreshore of the Thames without the prior permission of the PLA, given in writing and other than in accordance with such conditions as the PLA may attach to any such permission.
- 48.2 Except in an emergency, a person must not without lawful excuse, move a vessel, vehicle, equipment or other object across the bed or foreshore of the Thames in such a way that the bed or foreshore is damaged.
- 48.3 A person must not carry out vessel maintenance or any commercial activity onboard a vessel or on or adjacent to the bed or foreshore of the Thames, where that work or activity involves either:
- a) jet washing, cleaning, grit blasting, scraping, chipping, scouring or painting or other such activity; or
 - b) engine and machinery replacement, repair or maintenance or similar activity; where any spillages, residues or product of that work will pollute the Thames, its bed or foreshore without the prior permission of the PLA, given in writing, and in accordance with such conditions as the PLA may attach to any such permission.
- 48.4 This byelaw does not prevent work being undertaken on a vessel on the foreshore, provided that appropriate pollution prevention measures are taken.

Note: *The PLA publishes guidance on working on vessels on the foreshore, which is available in hard copy or on the PLA website: www.pla.co.uk*

NOTES



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