

## Introduction

As required by the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC), the Port of London Authority (PLA) publishes its Marine Safety Plan for the conduct of marine operations in the Port of London every three years; this plan covers the period 2018 – 2020.

This Marine Safety Plan commits the PLA to undertaking the proper management and regulation of marine operations within the scope of its powers and authority, according to Port of London Act 1968 (as amended) and the PMSC. The PLA has the primary responsibility of maintaining safe access to the Port, managing and supporting the safety of vessels, the general public and all users of the tidal River Thames, together with a duty to improve and conserve the river and its environment. In managing the safety of navigation and the provision of services, the PLA always has the safety of life and vessels as its highest priority.

## 1. Navigational Safety Policy

The PLA has a [Navigational Safety Policy](#) in support of the management and regulation of marine operations on the tidal Thames and maintenance of the port's Marine Safety Management System (SMS), which has been approved by the PLA Board as Duty Holder under the PMSC.

This Policy was developed in 2017, following a merging of separate departmental operational policies. The next scheduled review is due in 2020.

This Policy can be found in the PLA's [Marine SMS Manual](#) and is also published separately on the PLA website at: [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk).

The Navigational Safety Policy covers the following areas:

- Safety Management Systems
- Vessel Traffic Service
- Pilotage
- Hydrography
- Vessel Licensing
- Management of River Activities and Works
- Emergency Preparedness and Response
- Enforcement and Prosecution
- Marine Training
- Consultation
- Environment

The PLA also has an Environmental Policy and other non-marine policies such as the Drug and Alcohol, Health and Safety and Security Policies which are applicable to marine staff within the PLA.

### What is the Port Marine Safety Code?

The 'Port Marine Safety Code' sets out a national standard for every aspect of port marine safety. Its aim is to enhance safety for everyone who uses or works in the port marine environment.

It is endorsed by the UK Government, the devolved administrations and representatives from across the maritime sector and, while the Code is not mandatory, these bodies have a strong expectation that all harbour authorities will comply.

It applies to all harbour authorities and other marine facilities, berths and terminals in the UK and is intended to be flexible enough that any size or type of harbour or marine facility will be able to apply its principles in a way that is appropriate and proportionate.

## 2. Safety Management System

A comprehensive overview of the structure, management and maintenance of the port's Marine SMS and the PLA's compliance with the PMSC in support of this Plan, is contained in the [Marine SMS Manual](#).

External audits of the PLA's compliance with the PMSC are undertaken at least every 3 years, through an annual rolling programme, supplemented by regular internal healthchecks.

### 3. Marine Incident Targets for the period of the Plan

The following objectives represent the PLA's commitment to reducing incident numbers, to continuously improve the management of marine safety and toward achieving zero harm.

1. Reduce the number of serious marine incidents by 10% every year, based on the number at the start of the plan.
2. Reduce the number of inland waterway, non-passenger vessel incidents by 10% every year, based on the number at the start of the plan..
3. No serious or very serious incidents resulting from errors made by PLA Pilots.
4. Increase the number of near miss reports by 10% year-on-year.
5. Complete incident investigations within the following targets:
  - Minor Incidents, near misses and deficiencies – close within 4 weeks of being reported.
  - Serious / Very Serious Incidents – produce an investigation report within 6 weeks and close within 10 weeks of being reported.
6. Initiate a safety campaign aimed at improving the Port's safety culture, focussing on reducing the number of incidents caused by breakdowns.

### 4. Objectives to fulfil the PLA's Navigational Safety Policy for the period of the Plan

	<u>Policy Section</u>	<u>Objective</u>
1.	<b>Safety Management Systems</b>	<b>Red Tape Challenge</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete a red tape challenge on the PLA Regulatory Framework, with a target to reduce the volume by approximately 50% and instigate these changes over the period of this plan.</li> <li>2. Produce a Port Information Book which acts as a single reference point for PLA Regulations, easily accessed and searched with modern technology in mind.</li> <li>3. Make improvements to cataloguing and recording changes made to our regulations.</li> <li>4. Carry out a Red Tape review on our internal processes and documentation.</li> </ol>
2.	<b>Pilotage</b>	Provide a pilotage service of well-trained, suitably qualified and authorised pilots that is supported by appropriate recruitment and the authorisation of pilotage exemptions to similar standards, resulting in no serious or very serious incidents caused by errors made by PLA Pilots.
3.	<b>Vessel Traffic Services</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that the PLA VTS operates at 99.9% availability across both Districts.</li> <li>2. Develop a means of recording and reporting positive interventions by VTS staff.</li> </ol>
4.	<b>Hydrography</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To complete the programme of outstanding hydrographic surveys to ensure the riverbed within port limits is surveyed and charted to modern international standards where reasonably practicable.</li> <li>2. To review the authorities long term survey strategy to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose.</li> <li>3. To continue efforts with MCA and UKHO to provide port users with the most appropriate scale electronic chart products for their vessel which comply with national and international requirements.</li> </ol>
5.	<b>Vessel Licensing</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure licensing of commercial Inland Waterways vessels is maintained in accordance with regulations.</li> <li>2. Continue efforts for the MCA to recognise the Thames Freight Standard as a National equivalent standard for Class IX (A)(T) vessel (Tankers) through MGN469.</li> </ol>
6.	<b>Management of River Activities and Works</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. River events are to avoid river closures and any unnecessary restrictions on commercial and leisure vessel movements. All risks associated with river events are to be at ALARP prior to consent being given for an event to take place.</li> <li>2. Over the life of the Thames Tideway Tunnel (TTT) project, maintain an enhanced regime that ensures that marine activities supporting construction of the TTT are managed effectively and adequately risk assessed using site specific risk assessments and a project wide cumulative navigation risk assessment, the latter reviewed monthly. Project tows and marine transport elements will also be risk assessed and planned on a case by case basis.</li> </ol>
7.	<b>Emergency Preparedness and Response</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Establish the Thames Resilience Forum to liaise more effectively with stakeholders along the river with regard to the resilience aspect and other emergency response requirements concerning the river.</li> <li>2. Establish a more detailed and robust schedule of regular training and exercises for implementing emergency plans and oil spill procedures, to improve our response capability. This will introduce more regular table top and live exercises afloat to test all aspects of the Port of London Authority's operations. Exercises will be carried out with external stakeholders such as local authorities and the emergency services.</li> </ol>
8.	<b>Enforcement and Prosecution</b>	Continue to support efforts to bring into force the same drink-drive and drugs legislation for recreational users as applies already to commercial users under the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003.