

NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

NAP Date:	16/08/2006	Owner:	Harbour Master (Lower)	NAP Ref:	15	NAP Title:	Transit of LNG vessels through Princes Channel and Fisherman's Gat
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Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
G Dickins	PLA	B Goldman	PLA	S Gobbi	Medway Ports
J Gorton	Medway Ports	P Monks	B.P.		

Detail / Terms of Reference	Observation/Recommendation
<p>To assess any additional risks which may be involved in LNG vessels transiting the Thames via either the Fisherman's Gat or Princes channel, as an alternative to the Black Deep.</p> <p>To make recommendations to the Chief Harbour Master and the Navigational Management Team on any changes to specified vessel and/or LNG vessel procedures and PLA legislation which may be required to mitigate any additional risks identified.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Before the Medway LNG trade commenced, the Knock John – Black Deep route only, had been assessed for transit by LNG vessels. Since then LNG vessels have occasionally used both the Princes Channel and Fisherman's on their outward passage without these routes being assessed. 2 Due to the requirement for LNG vessels always to berth port side-to at the Isle of Grain Terminal it was determined that neither Fisherman's Gat nor the Princes Channel would be suitable for inward LNG vessels as depth limitations in the channels would not allow time for the vessel to swing off the berth before the ebb. Medway Ports is to advise its pilots accordingly. 3 It was agreed that due to the width of the channel in Fisherman's Gat it would not be necessary to impose an exclusion zone in excess of the normal specified vessel requirements however the PLA will develop VTS procedures to ensure that an outward LNG vessel will not pass another vessel on the bend between Fisherman No 1 and Fisherman No 3 buoys. 4 It was acknowledged that the use of Princes Channel by outward LNG vessels could relieve potential congestion in the Knock John Channel. It was agreed that the Princes Channel could therefore be used at the pilot's discretion, under normal specified vessel requirements, but subject to approval by London VTS having regard to traffic levels at the time. 5 It was noted that the Princes Channel is currently being dredged to 8 metres and that a risk assessment is being undertaken by consultants on its future use. Dependent on the outcome conditions of its use by LNG vessels may need to be revisited.

6 Recommendations of the NAP are to be presented to NMT and approved.

Panel Chairman:

G Dickins

Signature:

Date:

17/08/2006