

## The PLA's Safe Boarding Week

### NOTICE TO MARINERS

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The Port of London Authority (PLA), which oversees operations in the UK's largest port, will be conducting its third 'Safe Boarding Week' next week, following on from the success of Safe Boarding Week in 2024. The week-long safety initiative, **from Monday 06th October to Sunday 12th October 2025**, aims to increase awareness of safe access and highlight the importance the PLA places on safety on the 95 miles of the tidal Thames that it manages.

Safe access to and from the varied range of vessels on the Thames, including ladders onto ships, as well as ship to shore access at berths, terminals, jetties and piers, is a key concern for the PLA. Inspired by Panama Canal Authority (ACP)'s Safe Boarding Week, an annual event since the late '80s, the PLA decided to initiate its own safety event, which aligns with its proactive approach to safety and safe boarding.

*"I am delighted that in accordance with our Marine Safety Plan we will be conducting our third Safe Boarding Week. This is part of our commitment to safety on the river. Globally, accidents involving gangways and pilot boarding ladders continue to occur and it is only through focussed campaigns and engagement with ships' crew, their management and the berths/jetties operators that we can make tangible improvements. The focus this year will be on shoreside access from higher-risk locations, combination ladder arrangements and checking for un-certified pilot ladders."*

*"Safety is at the heart of the what the PLA does every day. 'Safe Boarding Week' aims to increase awareness of the PLA's commitment to safe vessel access on the river Thames."*

**James Stride, Chief Harbour Master**

During the seven days of Safe Boarding Week, the PLA aims to conduct targeted inspections of boarding facilities on cargo and passenger vessels, as well as of terminal operators, jetties and piers. The results of these comprehensive assessments will enable the PLA to influence further improvements to safe boarding on the river Thames.

The responsibility for safe access on and off the vessels on the tidal Thames is shared between the master of the ship/vessel, in respect to Safe Access regulations, and the jetty or terminal operators, who must abide to the [Port and Marine Facilities Safety Code](#)\*.

Telephone calls, VHF radio traffic, CCTV and radar traffic images may be recorded in the VTS Centre



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James Stride, Chief Harbour Master

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The PLA's Chief Harbour Master management team, along with our patrol crews and pilots, will be undertaking the inspections and assessing the quality and safety of access arrangements. Access arrangements will be checked against the requirements of [SOLAS Regulation V/23](#) and the guidance from HSE and Port Skills and Safety provided in [SiP014](#)\* (related standards, codes and legislation are provided in that document on pages 21-22.)

\*Denotes a hyperlink to a destination other than PLA owned/operated websites. Be aware that those websites may have different security and privacy policies to that of the PLA, for which the PLA takes no responsibility.

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