

The following document reports on the targets and objectives as laid out in the PLA's Marine Safety Plan 2021-2023.

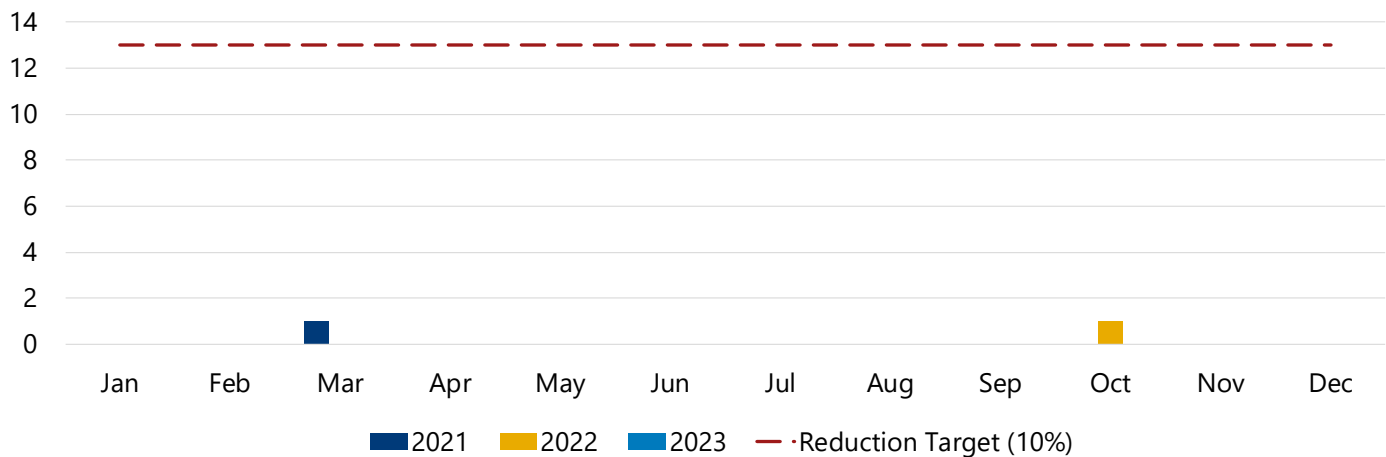
10% Reduction Target Serious/Very Serious Navigational Incidents

There was one serious navigational incident reported in 2021 and one in 2022. None were reported in 2023.

We have met our reduction target of 10% compared to the previous Marine Safety Plan. During the period of the last plan (2018-2020) a total of 15 serious navigational incidents were reported. During this plan's lifespan, the number of serious navigational incidents reduced by 87%.

The two incidents included the momentary grounding of an Ultra Large Container Ship (ULCS) in 2021 whilst the vessel was manoeuvring off London Gateway Port. The vessel did not sustain any damages and no pollution occurred. The second incident was the contact and grounding of a vessel at OIKOS Storage on Canvey Island in 2022. This incident resulted in moderate damage to the vessel and the berth. No pollution or injuries were sustained as a result of this incident.

Both incidents were investigated with lessons learned. Any actions arising from the investigation have also been addressed.



Serious Navigational Incident: Incidents which may involve major/life changing injuries, limited impact on environment and/or port operation with short or long term effects, and/or serious cost implications for the Port (<£5m).

Very Serious Navigational Incident: Incidents which may involve a single or multiple fatalities, significant impact on environment and/or port operation with long term effects, and/or very serious cost implications for the Port (>£5m).

Document Management System

Our target to develop an internal document management system capable of allowing users to prioritise viewing their own documents, whilst providing in-built, automated revision control, automated approval routing and archiving of historic versions, was achieved with the implementation of the PLA's Controlled Document Library. Off the back of the success, we have since upgraded further with a more advanced system being implemented in January 2024.

Port Wide Communication Guide

The substantive work to introduce a port wide communication guide to raise standards of voice communication to international level, to include all Thames river users is complete. Final checks prior to publication are taking place and the guide will be published in time for the new sailing season.

Mariners' Information



Essential information for safe navigation on the tidal River Thames.

Get started >>>

During the term of the 2021-2023 Marine Safety Plan, the PLA Hydrographic Service primary objective was to ensure compliance with the standards of the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) in relation to Hydrography and Conservancy. Some key achievements in this regard are presented below:

- In the period the PLA has invested in increased resourcing of people, plant and equipment within the hydrographic service, strengthening the provision and enabling the completion of over 500 separate channel and wider river and estuary safety of navigation surveys. In addition a further 400 monitoring surveys primarily related to the monitoring of operational terminal berths to determine safe working depths were completed.

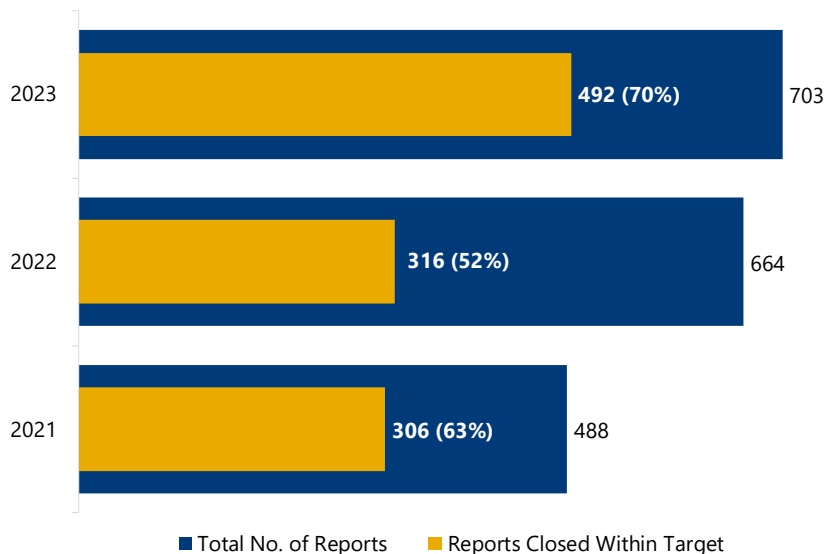
- During the period, the department extended band 6 ENC coverage upstream to the Upper Pool (London Bridge) completing IHO/IMO fully compliant S57 ENC coverage of the Thames Estuary and River utilised by SOLAS shipping. Band 6 ENCs are the largest scale official ENC products available, thus increasing the level of navigation information.
- The service has expanded and improved public access to our paper and digital navigational information through our GIS system including a live map application showing fully corrected chart products and associated records of all chart corrections see our [website](#). We have also updated our website improving visibility and access to information through a consolidated [Mariners Information](#) webpage.

Incident Investigation Closeout

Our target to complete incident investigation in the below timeframes has largely been met despite a 73% increase in reports during the period of the plan compared to the previous plan (2018-2020).

A review of our incident management process will be conducted in 2024 to determine where further efficiencies can be introduced, with a focus on reducing investigation close out timescales whilst maintaining the thoroughness and integrity of all investigations conducted by the PLA.

In 2023, the closeout performance improved with only 26% of incidents not completed within time.



Closeout Performance KPI

Very Minor/Minor/Moderate Incidents

The target for completing incident investigations with these severity ratings was within four weeks. (This also includes Near Miss reports).

Serious/Very Serious Incidents

The target completion time of the initial Harbour Master's Investigation Report for serious/very serious incidents was six weeks.

Any actions that may arise from an investigation must have been completed, with the incident then closed, within 10 weeks of a reported incident.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Our target to establish and implement a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) scheme for Thames based Masters and crew, with the Company of Waterman & Lighterman and Thames Skills Academy by the end of 2021 was achieved. The programme has been further developed over the last 2 years, becoming mandatory for masters of intra-port vessels from 01 January 2024. More information is available on the [Thames CPD website](#).

Continual Targets

The following were continual targets representing the PLA's commitment to compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code and continued service delivery to all Port users.

Policy Section	Objective	Status	Comments
1. Safety Management Systems	Ongoing review on the PLA Regulatory Framework and SMS Documentation with a continuous aim to refine content for ease of use and understanding and maintain compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.	Achieved	Document Strategy Review has simplified access to and understanding of SMS Documentation whilst ongoing legal review of Regulatory Framework has simplified a number of publications. Both these strategies will be ongoing into 2024 to continue to enhance where opportunities are identified.
2. Pilotage	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.	Partially Achieved	Over the period of the plan, we recruited trained and Authorised sufficient pilots to maintain throughout 2023 a 99.6% service level. Pilot Exemptions were Authorised to a similar standard. For 2024, we will recruit a further 14 pilots. Two serious navigational incidents occurred during acts of Pilotage.
3. Vessel Traffic Services	1. Maintain an effective VTS across all sectors in accordance with UK national, IMO and IALA standards ensuring a 99.9% service availability. 2. Ensure no VTS assisted incidents take place.	Achieved Achieved	1. 100% service level was maintained during the period of the plan. 2. No VTS assisted incidents took place.
4. Hydrography	1. To continually review the authority's long term survey and hydrographic data provision strategy to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose. 2. To continue our collaborative work with MCA and UKHO to develop and provide port users with the most appropriate scale electronic and paper chart products for their vessel which comply with national and	Achieved Achieved	3. The Hydrographic department have expanded access to paper and digital navigational information and instigated a risk-based programming tool for the setting of it's annual survey programme. 4. The department extended BAND 6 ENC coverage upstream to the Upper Pool completing fully compliant digital chart coverage of the Thames Estuary and River.
5. Vessel Licensing	Deliver a vessel licensing regime to identify compliant organisations and ensure their accountability with associated regulations.	Achieved	A vessel licensing regime was delivered with 99% of applications in 2023 actioned within 10 working days.
6. Vessel Survey	Deliver a vessel surveying service which supports operators managing their vessels and meeting the requirements of TFS or IWSPBC.	Achieved	The primary focus was on delivering a high level of customer satisfaction while simultaneously ensuring compliance with all regulatory requirements and industry standards. By maintaining an open line of communication, we were able to address any concerns promptly and proactively, minimising any disruptions to their operations.
7. Emergency Preparedness and Response	1. Establish and maintain a detailed and robust schedule of regular training and exercises for implementing emergency plans and oil spill procedures. 2. Run and/or attend exercises with external stakeholders such as local authorities and the emergency services.	Achieved Achieved	Over the period of the plan, we conducted 17 table top exercises, 1 live exercise and 6 mobilisations of equipment. Seven external exercises were attended by members of the PLA.
8. Enforcement and Prosecution	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.	Achieved	The PLA have continued to support efforts by raising this at industry and government-level as appropriate via meetings and forums.

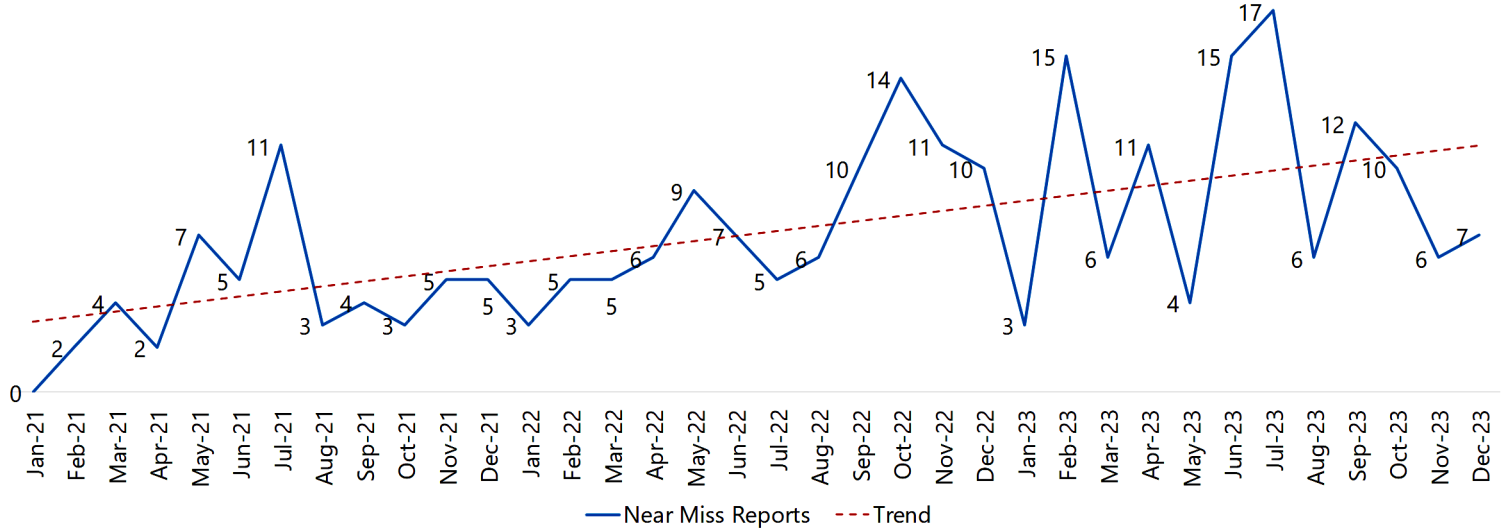
Safety Campaigns

During the life of the plan, we launched **three** safety campaigns:

Navigational Near Miss

This campaign, aimed at promoting near miss reporting on the river was launched in Summer 2022.

In the first six months prior to the campaign, we had received 35 reports, compared to 56 reports in the second half of the year following the launch. This trend continued into 2023 with a total of 168 near miss reports made since July 2022, compared to 91 reports between January 2021 and June 2022.



Safe Boarding Week

This European-first week long safety initiative involving office-based and operational staff inspecting boarding arrangements across the tidal Thames, took place in February/March 2023.

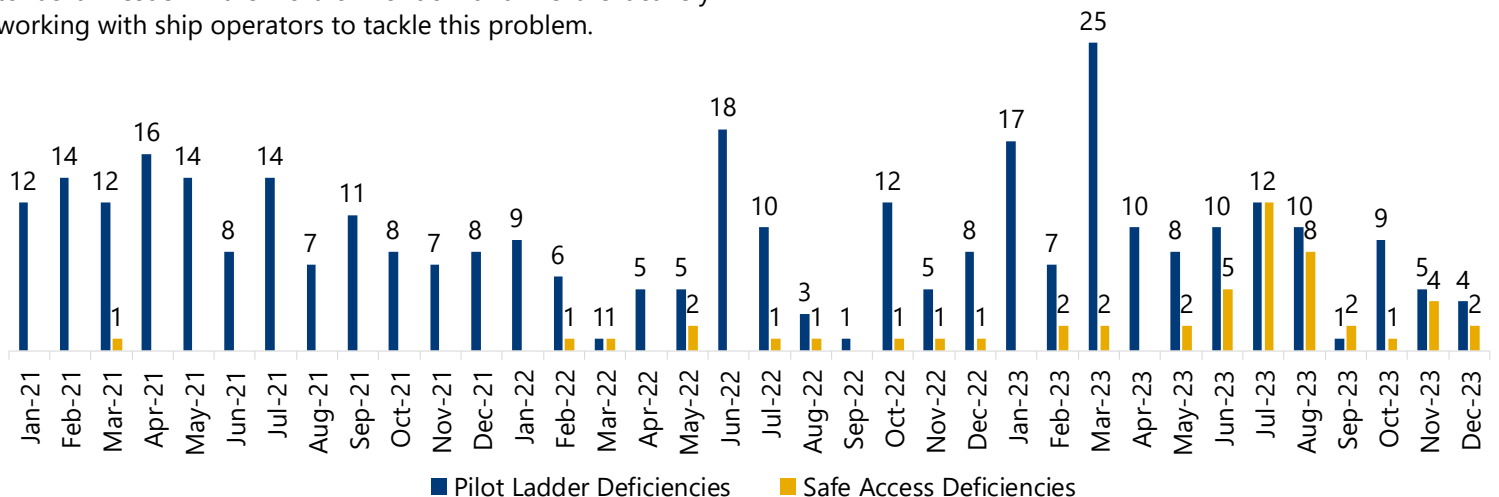
During the campaign, 265 inspections were carried out. The full results report is available on our [website](#). Since the campaign launched, there has been an increase in reporting of boarding deficiencies with 38 Safe Access Deficiencies reported since March 2023 alone, compared to 12 between January 2021 and February 2023.

The PLA is working with berth and ship operators to ensure safe access is in place for all vessels calling at the Thames.

A second Safe Boarding Week is scheduled to take place in March 2024 to continue to raise awareness of the importance of safe access. Pilot Ladder Deficiencies continue to be an issue in the Port of London and we are actively working with ship operators to tackle this problem.



Baroness Vere of Norbiton was joined by PLA Chief Executive Robin Mortimer (left) and Chair Jonson Cox CBE (right).



Watch Your Wash

This campaign aimed at raising awareness of the effects of wash and draw-off from vessels on the Thames, first launched in July 2023 as part of Maritime Safety Week 2023. The campaign is ongoing and we are monitoring the outcome.

The campaign included two [educational videos](#) as well as a safety bulletin ([SB02-23](#)) and port wide Notice to Mariners ([P05-23](#)).

We continue to investigate any Wash/Draw-off reports received and are working with operators to raise awareness of the effects of wash and draw-off on all river users.

All river users are reminded to be mindful of the wash created by your vessel making way, and all river users are encouraged to submit reports via our reporting portal. [See our website for more details on how to report.](#)



WATCH YOUR WASH

As the master of a power-driven vessel operating on the river Thames, you have a responsibility not only to your passengers and crew, but also other river users and the environment. The wash created by your vessel making way, as well as the draw-off effect, can be dangerous to those around you.

Marine Safety Plan 2024-2026

MARINE SAFETY PLAN

2024



Our new Marine Safety Plan for the period of 2024 to 2026 is now live on our [website](#). Performance reports will continue to be published on a six-monthly basis.

To read our previous reports, visit this site: [Incident Investigations, Reports and Data | Port of London Authority \(pla.co.uk\)](#)