



# CONSULTATION STATEMENT: C02-25:

## Updates to General Directions for Navigation in the Port of London 2025

This consultation ran from 22/05/2025 to 21/06/2025. The below statement has been provided to summarise the Port of London Authority's response.

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Following a thorough consultation on proposed changes to the General Directions for Navigation in the Port of London, which ran from 22/05/2025 to 21/06/2025, feedback was received from various stakeholders, with several, common points raised. Below is a summary of the main points raised and the Port Authority's responses, sorted by General Direction (GD) affected.

### **GD 4 GENERIC PASSAGE PLANS AND NAVIGATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Minor wording changes were proposed in 4.3, to include a requirement for the provision of other information which may be specified by the Harbourmaster. There were no objections to this, but two stakeholders had concerns about the existing wording, with one suggesting it be changed so that certain information only needs to be submitted in the event of significant changes to or expansion of an operation, as opposed to any change or expansion.

PLA Response: although this change was outside of the scope of the original consultation, the PLA felt the points raised were valid and amended the wording of the existing GD to take the feedback into account.

### **GD 17 NAVIGATIONAL RESTRICTIONS AND EXCLUSION ZONES**

Some stakeholders were concerned that there was confusion among recreational boaters, as to whether the requirement in GD17.5 that vessels with an operating draught of less than 6.0 metres need permission from London VTS to use the Black Deep, applies to pleasure vessels crossing it.

PLA Response: it was agreed to amend the wording of GD 17.5 to make it clear that the need to obtain permission from London VTS does not apply to pleasure vessels crossing the Black Deep.

### **GD 28 LARGE VESSEL TRANSITS WEST OF MARGARETNESS**

One stakeholder requested proposed GD 28.4 (regarding vessels with the sole purpose of turning and departing the Upper Pool) needing written permission of the Harbourmaster, be amended to take account of operations such as tug and tows or large passenger vessels, which may have operational reasons for turning there.

PLA Response: it was felt the current wording is sufficient to take account of this, as those vessels would be given the prior permission of the Harbourmaster, where necessary.

### **GD 36 RESTRICTIONS ON BLUE FLASHING LIGHTS**

One stakeholder objected to the introduction of this new GD and felt it would be difficult for some of their vessels to comply with the requirement not to have a blue light fitted. They also felt the definition of Emergency Vessels was too narrow and conflicts with the definition contained within the Civil Contingencies Act.

PLA Response: the GD will not be withdrawn, but it has been amended to take account of feedback. Wording has been changed, requiring the light not to be displayed, rather than not to be fitted. The PLA believes the definition of Emergency Vessels is appropriate and that the Civil Contingencies definition is too broad for the purpose of this GD. The wording of the GD provides scope for other vessels to be covered with the permission of the Harbourmaster.

### **GD 37 DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION AND PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTATION**

There were several objections to this proposed new GD. Some stakeholders felt it was premature to introduce it now, pending the outcome of the HRO enquiry. Others felt it was inappropriate, or that it had no legal basis.

PLA Response: the intended purpose of the GD was to allow the Harbourmaster to gain information which would assist in improving safety, e.g. information to assist in safety investigations following significant incidents. However, the PLA has taken account of feedback and decided to withdraw the GD from this update, pending the outcome of the HRO enquiry.

### **Miscellaneous Feedback**

It was suggested that the use of gender-neutral pronouns should be used throughout the document, instead of he/him.

PLA Response: the use of they/them was considered as an alternative to he/him, but this was subsequently rejected on legal advice. Section 2 of the GDs states that where one gender is used, it has the meaning of any other gender. This was opened to all genders in the previous update.

Some other points were raised on existing GD's, which were outside of the scope of this consultation. However, these have been noted and will be reviewed prior to any future GD consultations, to determine if they should be included for consideration.

### **Conclusion**

The consultation highlighted broad support for the proposed changes, including from the Chamber of Shipping, but with some suggested amendments in certain areas, as described above. The General Directions have been updated to incorporate the changes agreed as a result of stakeholder feedback and the Chamber of Shipping has been consulted on and has agreed with these changes.

I would like to thank everyone who responded to the consultation for your valuable contributions.

*Cathryn Spain*  
*Senior Harbour Master*