

NTM 85/18 Safety of Navigation and Safe Speed Within Oban Bay

Categories : [Notice to Mariners](#)

Date : 7th September 2018

Latitude 56° 25.133? North (WGS-84 datum)
Longitude 005° 29.182? West (WGS-84 datum)

Vessels navigating in Oban Bay and approaches are reminded of the existence of a voluntary Code for Safe Navigation within the area. The Code is published on the Oban Harbour website and can be accessed at:

http://obanharbour.scot/files/2114/9313/1556/oban_code_of_practice.pdf

The Code defines the seaward limits of Oban Bay as being an area bounded to the north by an imaginary line joining Rubh'a' Bhearnaig (56° 25-52'N, 5° 30-02'W) and Maiden Island (56° 25-93'N., 5° 29-57'W.), and to the south by an imaginary line passing east-west through Sgeirean Dubha light (56° 22-82'N, 5° 32-19'W), and includes Oban Harbour.

Mariners are advised that many large vessels (20m or more in length, and/or >3m draught) and in particular RoRo ferries operating within the approaches to Oban Bay are 'vessels constrained by their draught' or 'vessels which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway' within the meaning of Rule 9 of the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGS).

While not specifically mentioned within the Code it is recommended these vessels, when so constrained, display the signals prescribed in Rule 28 of the COLREGS, i.e. three all-round red lights in a vertical line, or a cylinder, in order to be afforded the privileges of Rules 8(f) (i) and (ii) (Actions to avoid collision), 9 (Narrow channels) and/or 18(d) (i) (Responsibilities between vessels when one is constrained by draught).

If the Masters or Skippers of vessels under 20m in length, sailing vessels or crossing vessels are in any doubt as to whether a particular large vessel is indeed a 'vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway' or a 'vessel constrained by its draught' then they should always give it the benefit of the doubt and treat it as such.

Safe Speed

All Mariners navigating within Oban Bay and approaches are also reminded of the importance in

proceeding at a safe speed at all times as defined in Rule 6 of the COLREGS.

‘Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that she can take proper and effective action to avoid collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions’.

Review of recently reported and observed navigational events within Oban Bay and harbour has identified this is of particular importance for consideration by Masters of large vessels when within or approaching areas where their ability to manoeuvre may be constrained. Masters are requested to ensure they adhere to the 10kts and 6kts limits prescribed within the Code and further regulate their speed when necessary below these levels to be able to make an early, appropriate and obvious alteration of speed in response to prevailing or developing navigational events.

Mariners should exercise particular vigilance and pass at minimum safe manoeuvring speed and sufficient distance from vessels lying alongside piers, harbour walls or moorings where there may be a risk of damage or injury being caused by the passing vessel’s wash or displacement.

Further details can be obtained using the contact details below:

David McHardie
Harbour Master

Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited
Municipal Buildings, Fore St.,
Port Glasgow
PA1 4 5EQ
Tel: 01475 749 920
email: info@cmassets.co.uk