

LARNE PORT



Larne Harbour Ltd

PILOTAGE MANUAL

ISSUE: 7

CONTROLLED DOCUMENT

Document Status

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The table below identifies the current issue of each Section:

Section	Title	Issue No	Issue Date
1	Pilotage Directions	7	January 2026
2	Regulations to the Pilotage Directions	7	January 2026
3	Procedures to the Pilotage Directions	7	January 2026
4	Navigation and Port Information	7	January 2026
5	Appendices	7	January 2026

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This document comprises 5 Sections, the final section being constituted of 5 Appendices, each of which may be updated independently. To allow updating of the document in an efficient manner, each section has been allocated its own Issue number and Issue Date. The document Status Section contains an overall summary of the current version of this document.

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Introduction.

The Port of Larne (Pilotage Functions) Order 2002 authorised Larne Harbour Limited to be the Competent Harbour Authority for Larne Port within the meaning of the Pilotage Act 1987. As the Competent Harbour Authority, Larne Harbour Limited subsequently gives the following Pilotage Directions to the Masters of vessels in the Larne Pilotage District, in accordance with its powers under Section 7 of the 1987 Act.

In order to maintain and enhance safety of navigation within the Larne Harbour statutory harbour area, it is important that Masters and watchkeepers are aware of current Larne Port's local legislation, Byelaws, Directions and Notices to Mariners. It is therefore vital that owners and agents ensure that all such relevant information and publications are promptly distributed to vessels, or at least referred to the Port's website where such documents are available.

It is the duty of the Master of a vessel to which a Pilotage Direction applies to comply with that Direction. Failure by the Master of a vessel to comply with a general direction or special direction may render him/her guilty of an offence and subsequently liable under [Section 15 of the Larne Harbour Order \(NI\) 1998](#). However, it is a defence for the Master of a vessel to prove that he had reasonable grounds for supposing that compliance with the Direction in question would be likely to imperil his vessel or that in the circumstance's compliance was impracticable.

Regulations to the Pilotage Directions.

Also published in this document are Regulations to the Pilotage Directions. These regulations define the various administrative procedures and requirements, in particular those regarding the issue and renewal of Pilotage Exemption Certificates issued by Larne Port from time to time, which are necessary to support and implement the Pilotage Directions. These Regulations do not form part of the Directions.

Larne Port Control (LPC) Records and Communications.

Mariners are reminded that all communications with Larne Port Control, CCTV and radar images may be recorded in the Larne Port Control.

Section 1 *Pilotage Directions*

1.1 Application of Compulsory Pilotage.

Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels navigating within Larne Pilotage District - which comprises all waters within the statutory harbour limits as described in [Section 5 of the Larne Harbour Order \(NI\) 1998](#) - subject to the following exemptions:

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- (a) Vessels under 60 metres in length without a bow thruster, However, such vessels, if greater than 47.5 metres, are exempted only if berthing or unberthing in benign conditions (see below).
- (b) Vessels under 75 metres in length if fitted with an operational bow thruster and berthing or unberthing in benign conditions.
- (c) HM ships and foreign warships.
- (d) General Lighthouse Authority tenders.
- (e) Fishing vessels less than 47.5 metres.
- (f) Vessels under 130m in length with an operational bow thruster, and no defects, shifting berth within the port, conditional on the Master having the following:
 - 1. Significant manoeuvring experience of his vessel i.e. > 12 months service as Master on board the vessel that he proposes to shift, including at least 100 previous port movements of his vessel in the last year.
 - 2. At least 1 previous movement of his vessel in Larne Port in the last 12 months
 - 3. Previously held a PEC for Larne and/or holds a current PEC for another UK or Irish port
 - 4. Good standard of English
 - 5. Written approval from his owner or manager to shift his ship in Larne, without a pilot.
 - 6. He has undertaken a familiarisation visit at 'Larne Port Control' (LPC)
 - 7. He has undergone an assessment by the Harbour Master, at which he will need to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the port and its reporting procedures.

Shifting should however take place only in benign conditions.. The Master must also agree his shifting plan with LPC and complete a pilot chit if practicable prior to shifting. A licenced mooring contractor must also be engaged to let go and moor vessel.

For the purposes of this section (1.1), 'benign conditions' should be regarded as light winds (<av. 15kts), at slack water (1hr before or after HW/LW) and during daylight hours

1.2 Exemptions.

The exemptions contained in section 1.1, except (c and (d) will not apply to:

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- (a) Ships with a Passenger Certificate.
- (b) Ships carrying hazardous cargoes in bulk or marine pollutants.
- (c) Ships in ballast which are not gas free.
- (d) Ships not fitted with a working radar installation during periods that fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rain, or any other similar causes, reduces visibility to less than 1000m.
- (e) Ships or their tow, if any, having any one of the following defects:
 - (I) are unseaworthy in any respect, or
 - (II) have defects to main engine, steering gear or auxiliary machinery which may affect the manoeuvring of the ship, or
 - (III) have inoperable capstan, windlass, mooring winches or anchors that are not cleared or ready for use, or
 - (IV) have a list of over 5 degrees, or are excessively out of trim, or
 - (V) have any hull or machinery damage which may affect the safety of the ship or the containment or safety of the cargo or bunkers.
- (f) Any ship, that the HM or his assigned deputy determines should not be exempted following a specific risk assessment.

1.3 Vessels under Tow.

For the purpose of these Pilotage Directions the length of a tug and tow shall be calculated as the total length from bow of the towing vessel to the stern of the tow.

1.4 Suspension of Directions.

The Harbour Master may temporarily suspend any of these Directions from time to time without notice as, in his opinion, may be necessary.

Section 2 *Regulations to the Pilotage Directions.*

2.1 Larne Pilotage District.

A Pilot Authorisation and/or PEC may be issued for use in Larne Pilotage District within the defined area as described below:

The CHA will exercise its functions within the port bounded by:

- (a) A straight line drawn from reference point 54°52.34'N. 05°49.19'W (Black Cave Head) to reference point 54°52.41'N. 05°45.13'W (the beacon at South Hunter Rock):
- (e) A straight line drawn from reference point 54°52.41'N. 05°45.13'W (the beacon at South Hunter Rock) to reference point 54°51.34'N 05°45.40'W (Skernaghan Point):
- (c) A straight line drawn from reference point 54°51.34'N. 05°45.40'W (Skernaghan Point) to reference point 54°51.30'N. 05°46.44'W (Barr's Point):

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- (d) The level of high water on the shores of Islandmagee from reference point 54°51'30"N 05°46.44'W (Barr's Point) to reference point 54°50.24'N 05°45.40'W (South-East of Ballylumford Power Station).
- (e) A straight line drawn from reference point 54°50.24'N. 05°46.40'W (South-East of Ballylumford Power Station) to reference point 54°50.24'N. 05°48.00'W (Curran Point).
- (f) The level of high water from reference point 54°50.24'N. 05°48.00'W (Curran Point) extending in a northerly direction to reference point 54° 52.34'N. 05° 49.19'W (Black Cave Head).

2.2 Pilotage Exemption Certificate Policy.

A bona fide Deck Officer of a vessel subject to compulsory pilotage within Larne Pilotage District may apply for and be issued with a Pilotage Exemption Certificate for the area, in accordance with Pilotage Act 1987, as amended by Marine Navigation Act 2013, subject to their fitness and qualification both by examination and experience, as described in PEC requirements. See [Appendix A](#), as well as Forms in [Appendix C & D](#)

Note: "Bona fide Deck Officer" means a person signed on the ship's articles as a Deck Officer and holding an appropriate OOW Certificate of Competency.

2.2.1 Authority not to grant a PEC.

Larne Harbour Limited as CHA may apply to the Secretary of State to be allowed not to grant certificates when LHL believes that exceptional navigational hazards exist within the pilotage district, such that safety considerations dictate that all vessels must take an authorised pilot.

2.2.2 Regulations for the use of a PEC.

- (a) A PEC may only be used by an individual acting in the capacity of a bona fide Deck Officer.
- (e) A PEC may only be used on a vessel which has been nominated and named on that PEC.
- (c) The Holder of the PEC reported to Larne Port Control as having conduct of the navigation of the vessel must be on the navigating bridge of that vessel throughout the passage unless relieved by another PEC Holder.
- (d) Larne Port Control must be apprised immediately of any change of watch between PEC Holders, which takes place within the Pilotage District.
- (e) A PEC remains valid for one year from the date of issue or renewal. It is the responsibility of the Holder to ensure that his / her PEC remains valid.
- (f) A PEC will only remain valid while the Holder's Certificate of Competency and Medical Certificate are also valid.
- (g) Larne Pilotage Authority reserves the right to inspect the supporting documents of a PEC Holder and or relevant documents of the vessel on which the PEC is being used, or has been used, at any time.

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- (h) PEC holders are not permitted to use a tug to tow – only push - their vessel, unless specifically and individually authorised to do so by the Harbour Master, who will consider the PEC holders level of experience and familiarity with respect to the operation of tugs and the intended towage operation, before issuing such authorisation. In the absence of such HM authorisation, a Pilot should be assigned for this type of towing operation.
- (i) Any PEC holder, returning to a vessel for which he holds a PEC, after a period in excess of 3 months, must complete at least one arrival and departure under supervision of a Master who is a current Larne PEC holder, before being authorised to pilot the vessel. This is to ensure adequate refamiliarization with bridge team management, bridge procedures and the manoeuvring characteristics of the vessel.

2.2.3 *Nominated Vessels.*

- a) Pilotage Exemption Certificates apply to nominated vessels upon which examination and / or assessment is based. A PEC may be limited at the discretion of the Authority to particular berths and ship type and will be limited to vessels of substantially similar size and with similar handling characteristics to those on which the candidate has acquired his/her pilotage experience.
- b) PEC Holders employed on High-Speed Craft must obtain specific training in this class of vessel and Applicant's employer must confirm the bona fide Deck Officer is 'type rated'.
- c) Any new vessel nominated for inclusion on an existing PEC Holders certificate must be of similar type, operated under the same ISM Safety Management System and should not significantly exceed the dimensions of any vessel for which the PEC was originally issued. However, at the discretion of the Authority, a PEC holder will normally be entitled to pilot similar type vessels up to 10 percent larger (by LOA) and with similar handling characteristics as those on which he/she has pilotage experience *subject to the PEC holder being signed off as familiarised with the new nominated vessel under the vessel's SMS*. In addition, the PEC Holder must have previously gained at least one year experience as a PEC holder at Larne, and piloted the ship (or ships) to which the PEC relates for at least the same number of acts during the previous year as that required for the initial exemption qualification..
- d) The adding of another vessel that is substantially larger or smaller than that the PEC Holder is currently certified to pilot will require the candidate to be signed off as familiarised with the newly nominated vessel under the vessel's SMS and also to undertake number of familiarisation trips on the new nominated vessel determined by the Harbour Master following specific risk assessment, all of which should be assessed by a Senior Master who holds a current Larne PEC for that newly nominated vessel, or an authorised Pilot.

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2.2.4 *Monthly Returns*

Whilst Larne Port Control will maintain or have access to records of the pilotage acts completed by PEC holders and those reported to be training for their PEC, it will be the PEC holder's duty and responsibility to record any trips he/she undertakes to meet the requirements of PEC examination, renewal or reauthorisation.

2.2.5 *Renewals.*

A Pilotage Exemption Certificate will be issued for a period not exceeding 12 months. It will be renewed provided that the Authority is satisfied that the PEC holder has piloted the ship (or ships) to which the PEC relates for at least the same number of acts during the previous year as that required for the initial exemption qualification, and there has been no significant incident involving the PEC holder during that period.

Where candidates fail to meet the above, then a renewal will only be granted subject to a further examination.

When a PEC is continuously renewed the holder will be re-authorised every 5 years, *subject to re-assessment by the Harbour Master during which the PEC holder will be required to demonstrate continuing local knowledge.*

2.2.6 *Major Incidents and Emergencies.*

A PEC holder may be requested to assist the Harbour Master during declared Major Incidents and Port Emergencies. In particular, a PEC holder may be called upon to provide local marine expertise either on-scene or at the Command Centre.

2.2.7 *Accident or Damage.*

If any accident or damage has happened to or been caused by a vessel in his charge whilst within the limits of the Pilotage District, a PEC holder will report the facts in writing to the Harbour Master as soon as practicable. This includes damage to quays, dolphins, fenders, ramps, bollards, navigational marks, mooring tenders, tugs, barges and other vessels or any injury to personnel ashore.

The Pilotage Incident Report Form can be found in [Appendix E](#)

2.2.8 *Reporting.*

A PEC holder who observes an alteration to any of the banks, channels, quays or the position or condition of buoys, beacons or perches, or any other circumstance likely to affect the safety of navigation must, as soon as practicable, report his/her observation to Larne Port Control and/or the Harbour Master .

2.2.9 *CHA Investigations / Inquiry following an Incident.*

Pilotage Exemption Certificate holders shall attend the Harbour Office at the order or summons of the CHA to answer any complaint or charge which may be made against them

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for any alleged incompetence, or in respect of any marine casualty which may have occurred whilst they were in charge of their vessel.

2.2.10 *Suspension or revocation of a PEC.*

- (d) Suspension of a PEC: Where a PEC Holder has been involved in an incident in which the safety of navigation may have been compromised, the CHA may, in the interests of safety, temporarily suspend the PEC by giving written notice setting out its reasons and giving the PEC Holder a reasonable opportunity to make representations for consideration pursuant to formal investigation of the incident.
- (b) If, following an appropriate enquiry by the CHA, the PEC holder is found guilty of negligence, incompetence or misconduct, the CHA may suspend or revoke a PEC in accordance with Section 8A and 8B of the Pilotage Act 1987, as amended by [Section 3 of Marine Navigation Act 2013](#).

2.3 Pilot Authorisation Policy

It is the policy of Larne Harbour Limited, as the CHA, to have an agreement in place with Belfast Lough Pilotage Services Ltd for the pilotage of all non-PEC exempted ships.

“The Agreement” between LHL and [BLPS](#) reflects the general conditions under which the pilots will operate in the pilotage district including regulation of rest hours, medical standards, training levels, incident reporting, discipline, grievance and complaints procedure. The purpose of the Agreement is to regulate the relationship between the CHA and BLPS in the proper interests of both.

BLPS Pilots will be authorised by Larne Harbour Limited for pilotage duties in Larne Pilotage District in compliance with the [Pilotage Act 1987](#) (with subsequent guidance from the Pilotage Review of 1998).

2.3.1 *Authorisation.*

LHL will authorise only competent Pilots (i.e. trained, qualified, experienced) who are members of BLPS Ltd. Authorisation will occur only after they have completed the required training and gained experience in the Larne Pilotage District, which should include not less than 24 pilotage acts – in, out or shifts – a minimum of 6 of which should be port entries and 6 departures. They should also be assessed by a senior pilot from BLPS who is certified as an assessor ([TAQL Level 3](#)) and successfully complete an oral examination by the Harbourmaster and/or his deputy.

Pilot authorisations are valid for 5 years, subject to the pilot undertaking 12 pilotage acts in the previous ‘rolling year’. If, a pilot has not completed this level of movements in the preceding year, an otherwise authorised pilot must demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the port by successfully undertaking a Local Knowledge Assessment (LKA), prior to his/her next pilotage movement. He/she however must also be involved in regular pilotage work of similar type vessels at Belfast and/or other local port.

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Reauthorisation after 5 years will be subject to successful completion of an Advanced Local Knowledge Assessment and interview with the Harbour Master to review the pilot's performance and continuing suitability.

2.3.2 .Suspension or Revoking Authorisation.

LHL may suspend or revoke a Pilot's authorisation if it is justified, after an appropriate LHL investigation, that the authorised person has been guilty of any negligence, incompetence, or misconduct likely to affect his ability as a Pilot.

Before doing so, prior written warning of the suspension or revocation will be given as will the right to make representations. LHL's decision on suspension or revocation of a Larne pilot's authorization being final after any representations having been considered.

2.3.3 Pilot's Responsibilities.

Pilots shall be responsible to the Master and owners of any vessel under pilotage and to the Competent Harbour Authority, for the provision of proper advice on all matters relating to the safe navigation within the pilotage district.

2.3.4 Pilot's Administration.

The Harbour Master and/or his Deputy shall together with the Secretary of Belfast Lough Pilotage Services Ltd be responsible for: -

- (a) Appointing pilots to vessels as per Section 2.3.5;
- (b) Administration of the training and examination schedule and/or professional updating for all current pilots.

2.3.5 Appointment of Pilots to Vessels

Pilots shall be appointed to vessels by Belfast Lough Pilotage Services Ltd in accordance with the 'LHL and BLPS Agreement', ensuring the need for maintaining proficiency of individual pilots and pilot training requirements. BLPS shall consider the GT of vessels requiring Pilots to arrive at, depart from or shift within Larne Port and ensure that only appropriately qualified Pilots are allocated. This will be confirmed with the duty Marine Officer prior to the vessel movement.

The appointed pilot to a vessel will report to LPC not less than 30 minutes before embarking on the pilot boat or departing vessel, so as to receive a pilot chit and to prepare a passage plan and discuss any concerns of the pilotage act together with the Marine Officer.

2.3.6 Pilot Watch System.

A pilot watch system is not implemented at the Port of Larne due to the infrequent requirement for pilots to attend vessels. The Pilots are on a roster for the Belfast District and each week a Duty Roster is published and sent to Larne Port Control identifying named pilots that are available for Larne for the week ahead.

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2.3.7 *Pilot Ordering*

Pilots are ordered by Larne Port Control, who shall make best endeavours to keep BLPS updated as regards any changes to ETA's and ETD's. If, due to any circumstances, it becomes apparent that the appointed pilot cannot undertake the programmed act of pilotage, he/she shall inform LARNE PORT CONTROL as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made.

2.3.8 *Pilot Over Carriage.*

Over carriage will be avoided if at all possible and should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the consent of the Pilot. Over carried pilots will usually disembark at the first reasonable opportunity en route. This will usually be Belfast Lough. If it cannot be guaranteed that the pilot can disembark in Belfast Lough or some other local port agreed with the ship and pilot, then the sailing should be delayed to avoid overcarrying of a Pilot.

As soon as it becomes clear that a Pilot is to be over carried he will inform Larne Port Control who will advise the ship's agent to make the necessary arrangements for disembarkation and return travel. When a pilot is over carried for any reason, the Duty Marine Officer shall inform the Harbour Master expediently. All costs of over carrying a pilot shall be for the vessel.

2.3.9 *Pilot Sickness Cover.*

Belfast Lough Pilotage Services Ltd will provide cover from the duty roster for sickness and over carriage, when necessary.

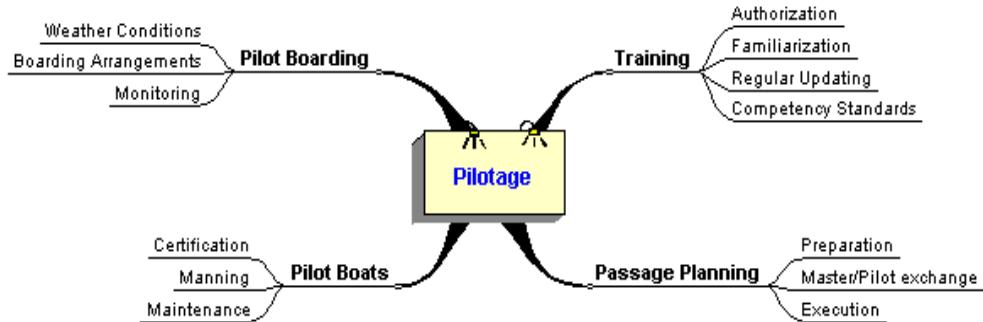
2.3.10 *Bad Weather.*

The local Pilotage Service will be closed down in times of bad weather. The criteria for bad weather operations are promulgated in this manual, [Section 3.5](#) . The Duty Pilot will review the situation at regular intervals and advise Larne Port Control when the pilotage service is to be resumed.

In such circumstances, if conditions permit, ship's owners may elect to ship a Pilot authorised for Larne Harbour at Belfast or another port by prior arrangement. Any additional costs incurred will be for the ship owner's account.

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2.3.11 *In Summary Pilot System*



Section 3 *Procedures to the Pilotage Directions.*

3.1 Preamble and Background.

Masters, PEC Holders and Authorised Pilots will acquaint themselves with the *Larne Harbour Order (NI) 1998* and understand the implications of all the content therein. Specific attention to the following articles is important:

- [Article 10: General Rules for Navigation;](#)
- [Article 12: General Directions to Vessels;](#)
- [Article 13: Special Directions;](#)
- [Article 15: Failure to comply with Directions.](#)

All vessels should always be navigated in accordance with the ICS Bridge Procedures Guide.

The pilot (BLPS or PEC Holder) is entitled to expect navigational support from the Bridge Team of the vessel he is engaged to pilot. Teams are therefore expected to make proper use of appropriate navigational procedures, including the use of leading marks, parallel indexing and clearing bearings, to properly monitor the ship's position within and progress along the planned track, in order to be in a position to give the pilot this support as required. Masters of vessels failing to do so will be cautioned and continued failure will be reported to the Harbour Master.

3.2 Larne Port Control (LPC)

Larne Port Control is operated on a continuous 24-hour basis to provide a safe and efficient regime for vessel traffic and protection for the environment.

Larne Port Control provides the co-ordination and communications centre for the Port of Larne Pilotage Service, and the pilot boarding and landing activities at the Pilot Station.

Larne Port Control provides a **Local Port Service**, it's officers having the authority of the Harbour Master to issue Special Directions in accordance with Section 13 of the Larne Harbour Order (NI) 1998. Failure, without good cause, to obey a direction given by Larne Port Control with the purpose of preserving marine safety, may constitute an offence, under [Section 15 the Larne Harbour Order \(NI\) 1998.](#)

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3.3 Extent of Pilotage

Except when proceeding directly to the pilot boarding position from the East for the purposes of embarking a pilot, vessels shall be piloted either by an Authorised Pilot or by a bona fide Deck Officer with a valid Pilotage Exemption Certificate throughout the full extent of the compulsory pilotage district.

If, for any reason, a pilot is unable to board a vessel subject to compulsory pilotage at the normal pilot boarding positions, the Duty Marine Officer, after consultation with the pilot, will instruct the vessel to either remain outside port limits until such time as a pilot is able to safely board, or to embark the pilot at a more sheltered location - see [section 3.9 \(b\)](#).

3.4 Restricted Visibility Operations.

Restricted Visibility Terms: Visibility at Larne is referenced as follows:

Very poor:	Visibility less than 1000 metres	
Poor:	Visibility between 1000 metres and 2 nautical miles	
Good:	Visibility between 2 and 5 nautical miles	Very
Good:	Visibility more than 5 nautical miles	

Larne Port Control has access to the latest Met. Office forecasts for the North Channel.

Visibility may deteriorate for several reasons such as – fog, snow, heavy rain and also because of the presence of smoke or dust.

When visibility is restricted to 1000m in any part of Larne Harbour's Authority's Area, the following regulations are to be followed.

3.4.1 *VHF Discipline.*

Larne Port Control (which is responsible for VHF discipline at all times) will exercise particular vigilance concerning VHF discipline during periods of Restricted Visibility.

All Masters authorised pilots and PEC holders have a responsibility to monitor the main working VHF channel when underway and preparing to get underway. All vessels alongside will exercise extreme caution when communicating with a vessel underway.

3.4.2 *Very Poor Visibility - Restricted Entry into Port.*

No vessel shall enter or move within the Pilotage District if the visibility is less than 500m except:

- Regular scheduled vessels, e.g. ferries, can move in any visibility conditions, at the discretion of the Master and the Harbour Master or his/her assigned deputy;. The PEC holder however must be experienced in blind pilotage techniques involving the use of ECDIS and radar parallel indexing. Vessels must manoeuvre with great caution and at a speed appropriate for the conditions. The vessel should be manually steered at all times whilst within port limits by a dedicated and competent helmsman, having given close consideration to having sufficient resourcing of the bridge management team.

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- Any vessel's operation that requires to work with tugs within the harbour shall not normally take place if the prevailing visibility is less than 1000m. However, if the visibility is greater than 500m and the Master, Pilot and tug skipper are satisfied that it is safe to do so having assessed the vessel's manoeuvring capabilities, navigation systems, crew competence and familiarity in relation to any additional risk posed by the restricted visibility, they may be permitted to do so upon receipt of specific Harbour Master approval. Leisure vessels and fishing vessels may move in very poor visibility, only with the specific permission of the Harbour Master or his/her assigned deputy.

3.5 Wind Restrictions.

Wind restrictions for vessels entering, departing or shifting within the port are subject to the vessel's capabilities, as well as the below procedures. For the purpose of these procedures, wind speeds are defined as average wind speeds over the preceding 10 minute period, as shown on the Larne Port Control equipment.

- (a) Vessels shall not enter, leave or move within the port with an average wind in excess of 40 kts; however exceptions may be made for regular scheduled ferry movements, at the discretion of the Master and the Harbour Master.
- (b) Irrespective of any general limits agreed between regular ferry Masters and the Harbour Master, nothing should be deemed to override the principles that:
 - (I) Movement of regular ferries shall, at all times, be at the discretion of and under the authority of the Ship's Master
 - (II) The Harbour Master has the authority to prohibit the movement of any and/or all vessels in the event that he/she deems that, due to the prevailing circumstances and/or conditions, they are unsafe.
- (c) As a consequence, there exists an obligation and expectation that a ferry's master and Harbour Master – or his/her assigned deputy - will consult with each other in the event that a movement or prohibition is anticipated outside any agreed general limits.
- (d) Bunker tankers shall not manoeuvre alongside receiving vessels in winds in excess of 30 knots, nor when swell conditions are in excess of 0.75metres. When winds are in excess of 25 knots or swell height in excess of 0.5m, such manoeuvres alongside, are permissible only with specific approval from the Harbour Master or his assigned deputy.

3.6 Storm Tide Warnings.

A 'storm tide' is when the tide level is higher (or lower) than predicted astronomical tides. The Storm Tide Forecasting Service (STFS) plays a pivotal role in flood prevention around the coasts of England, Wales and Scotland. The Met Office provides the Northern Ireland Environment Agency with its forecasts of coastal flooding, surge and wave activity, together with warnings when hazardous situations are seen to be developing. The Northern Ireland Environment Agency then acts on this information.

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3.7 Port of Refuge.

Vessels requesting to use the port, as a port of refuge will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and subject to individual risk assessment. In general, it is considered that the location and approaches to the port of Larne will normally render it less suitable as a port of refuge than other ports in the vicinity

3.8 Special Restrictions.

The Harbour Master may, in accordance with Section 3 of the [Dangerous Vessels \(Northern Ireland\) Order 1991](#), give directions prohibiting the entry into or requiring the removal from the harbour of any vessel, if in his opinion, the condition of that vessel or the nature or condition of anything it contains is such that its presence in the harbour might involve grave and imminent danger to persons, property or the vessel itself.

3.9 Pilot Embarkation and Disembarkation

Pilot embarkation/disembarkation should be carried out in accordance with the port's Pilotage Manual and the "[Code of Safe Practice for Embarkation and Disembarkation of Pilots](#).". [Pilots during embarkation or disembarkation must wear appropriate PPE including non-slip safety footwear and properly secured lifejacket / pilot coat. The wearing of a protective bump cap/helmet is also recommended.](#)

3.9.1 Pilot Boarding Procedures

- (a) Prior to an arrival at the pilot station, Larne Port Control will request the vessel to prepare the pilot ladder on the side of the vessel preferred by the pilot and pilot boat coxswain. Larne Port Control will also seek confirmation from the vessel that the boarding arrangements are in good order, well maintained and in line with IMO standards. Failure from the vessel to give a positive answer to this will result in the automatic suspension of the pilotage service for that vessel.
- (b) Boarding will normally take place approximately 1.0 Nmils North of Larne No. 1 buoy, (54°52.7'N, 005°47.5'W). However, in adverse weather, it may be necessary for the Master, Pilot and the pilot boat coxswain to agree an alternative boarding position, in advance, subject to the 'aborting procedures' contained in [section 4.1.9](#). The side on which the ladder is to be rigged, the preferred ship's speed through the water, and how a lee is to be created such that the pilot can safely be transferred, should also be similarly agreed.
- (c) In adverse weather conditions, where risk to personnel as well as the pilot boat may be significant, the decision whether or not to place the pilot boat alongside the vessel to be served should ultimately be the responsibility of the coxswain. Every pilot together with the pilot boat coxswain must decide if it is safe to board a vessel or not. The decision is free from any external pressure and should solely be based on the conditions presented

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to the pilot at the time of boarding. If there is any doubt at any time about the safety of the transfer operation, the pilot should not attempt to board the vessel.

- (d) Insofar as it is practicable and safe to do so, the pilot boat crew member should test the ladder, by pulling on it prior to the pilot transferring onto a pilot ladder.
- (e) If the pilot at any stage discovers that the pilot boarding arrangements are not or were not to the standard required, he/she is to collect evidence and present it to the Harbour Master for further investigation and actioning. A Larne Port Marine Incident/ near miss form should also be completed by the pilot at the earliest opportunity.

3.9.2 Pilot Disembarkation Procedures

- (a) Pilot disembarkation is not anticipated to be undertaken prior to an outward vessel passing No. 1 buoy, variations to this direction being permissible only when wind and weather conditions are adverse and specific approval from the Harbour Master or his Deputy has been granted.
- (b) The side on which the ladder is to be rigged, the preferred ship's speed through the water, and how a lee is to be created such that the pilot can safely be disembarked should be agreed between pilot, Master and pilot boat coxswain in advance.
- (c) Vessels should be advised/reminded not to adjust course or speed whilst a pilot boat is alongside unless specifically asked by the coxswain to do so. They should alter speed and course only once it has been confirmed – preferably visually from the bridge – that the pilot boat has left the ship's side and is clear of the vessel.

3.10 Bridge Manning and use of Autopilots

Bridge manning must be sufficient to ensure that vessels can be safely operated and navigated within the port limits, but in any event should never be less than 3 personnel. The use of autopilots is not permitted within the approach channel nor inner harbour, there being a requirement for a dedicated and competent helmsman, who should not be the piloting officer i.e., PEC holder nor authorised pilot.

Section 4 Navigation and Port Information

4.1 Navigation

4.1.1 Off Lying Dangers

Hunter Rock, with a least depth of 0.8 metres, is marked by cardinal buoys to the north and south. A magnetic anomaly exists in this area. Tidal streams set Northwest and Southeast in the vicinity of the rock at rates of up to 2½ knots.

Local headlands including Ferris Point, Barr's Point and Skernaghan Point have drying rock outcrops extending up to one cable offshore.

4.1.2 Port Approaches.

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Vessels may approach the vessel's main channel at No. 1 Buoy from the east or north, passing clear of the Hunter Rock (see [Larne Port Passage Plan](#)). The Northern approach allows vessels more time to identify and steer a course in accordance with the channel's leading marks and lights. From the East, the white sector of Chaine Tower light leads between Hunter Rock and Barr's point with a least depth of 6 metres. Ferry traffic normally enters and leaves from/to the East.

Commercial vessels are not allowed to pass into the Channel other than between No 1 Buoy and Ferris Buoy.

4.1.3 *Leading Marks.*

Leading marks situated on the south side of Larne Lough No. 11 and No.12 lead $184^{\circ} 19'$ clear through the channel, to No 5 buoy. The marks may however be difficult to distinguish in marginal visibility during the daytime.

4.1.4 *Buoyage.*

The channel is marked by 2 buoys on the West side (No. 1 and No. 3) and Ferris buoy and two beacons on the East side (No. 2 and No. 4). The positions of buoys are generally reliable but cannot be guaranteed, particularly in and after conditions of heavy weather.

No. 1 buoy can be difficult to distinguish from the background shore lights, particularly from certain ship bridge heights. No. 3 buoy intrudes slightly into the channel on the West side and may require larger vessels to deviate from the leading line to clear it, particularly in strong cross winds.

4.1.5 *Anchorage.*

There is no anchorage zone in LHL port limits, although advice regarding anchorage areas in the vicinity outside port limits may be requested from Larne Port Control.

The normal waiting anchorage for vessels is 1.2 nautical miles North of No. 1 buoy in depths of 20 metres. It has reasonable holding, however it is exposed to wind and swell from North to South-east (through North-east directions). Note should also be taken of the proximity of 2 cross channel subsea cables extending from North of Black Cave Head.

In strong North to South-east winds, anchorage may be found in Belfast Lough.

4.1.6 *Swell Effects.*

During and after North-easterly gales, there may be a heavy swell running straight into the channel making steering and track-keeping difficult. Fast Craft Ferries are particularly prone to steering difficulties in these conditions and require maintaining speeds of up to 12 knots to maintain adequate steering. The swell effect can be encountered throughout the Harbour.

4.1.7 *Controlling Depths and Underkeel Clearance*

The seabed topography is stable, and the bottom is generally gravel, clay and silt, although some boulders are present.

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However, for the most up-to-date controlling depth for the main channel and for depths, including all commercial berths, refer to the most recent [Notice to Mariners](#), available on the Port's website.

The minimum underkeel clearance for vessels navigating within the port is the greater of 1.0 metre or 10% of the vessel's deepest draft, it being necessary to make due allowance for the effects of squat and swell, which will particularly affect vessels in strong onshore conditions.

A vessel berthed alongside should maintain a minimum of 0.25m underkeel clearance at all states of tide and loading condition.

4.1.8 *Tidal Streams.*

Off the port entrance, tidal streams run approximately parallel to the general trend of the coastline at speeds of up to 2 knots. Within the main channel, streams run approximately parallel to the channel at speeds of up to 3 knots. In the port, tidal streams generally run onto the berths on the ebb and off the berths on the flood; however localised cross tides occur in various areas within the port.

4.1.9 *Abort Procedures.*

A vessel can abort its approach to Larne for a number of reasons. The most common are either technical in nature or environmental.

A vessel which is in doubt whether or not an approach to the harbour is safe should abort before coming within 0.5 Nautical miles of No. 1 buoy; 0.75 Nm in the event of strong Northerly winds. For ferries this distance may be reduced to 0.3 Nm, provided all manoeuvring aids are fully operational. After this point a vessel will find itself committed to the channel until clear of No. 4 beacon.

A vessel which finds itself unable to berth can abort the berthing at any stage of the manoeuvre. It is up to the Pilot/PEC holder to decide the best course of action.

The main actions to consider are: stand off the berth, anchor in the Ballylumford turning basin or swing in the Ballylumford turning basin and proceed to sea. Larne Port Control is to be informed at the earliest opportunity of the abort and consequent intentions of the vessel.

4.2 *Port Information.*

4.2.1 *General Introduction.*

For the most up-to-date and comprehensive information on the port, including soundings surveys, passage plans, information on local conditions, etc, mariners are recommended to visit the [Port Information](#) page of the port's website.

All the quays are exposed to the South-east and vessels may experience difficulty manoeuvring on and off the quays in strong South-easterly wind conditions.

Swinging room is limited off Continental, and to a lesser extent off Chaine and MacKean Quays. More room is available off Curran Quay and vessels are recommended to use this

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area to swing if required. No. 4 Beacon marks the extent of the available swinging room off MacKean Quay.

4.2.2 *Small Craft.*

Fishing boats operate occasionally throughout the year off the entrance to Larne Lough. The East Antrim Boat Club organises races both inside and outside the Lough. Races taking place outside the harbour will involve yachts racing through the harbour entrance. Small dinghy racing and rowing activities take place generally in the inner harbour, but may occasionally extend out to the port approaches.

4.2.3 *Speed.*

The proximity of Continental Quay to the central axis of the channel renders vessels berthed alongside liable to interaction from vessels passing in the adjacent channel. Passing vessels must navigate at their minimum safe manoeuvring speed when passing vessels moored alongside Continental Quay.

Vessels berthed at Continental Quay should also consider this factor, along with the wind and strong tidal conditions that can be experienced at this berth, when determining their mooring arrangements whilst alongside.

4.2.4 *Power Station Outfall.*

The outflow from the power station outfall (near No. 4 beacon) produces a strong local eddy, which may affect the manoeuvring of vessels turning in this area and small vessels passing.

4.2.5 *Larne Harbour Information.*

No	Name	Max LOA	Ramp	Remarks
1	Continental	135m	Twin	Berth provided with dolphin to accept lines and a buoy for Headlines
2	Chaine	130m	Twin	
3	MacKean	180m	Twin	Berth provided with dolphin to accept lines at north end.
4	Olderfleet	70m	Nil	
5	Curran	185m	Single	Berth provided with dolphin to accept lines at north end.

Hydrographic surveys are frequently carried out by the port, for the latest survey results please consult the relevant local [Notice to Mariners](#) or [Port Information](#) page on the port's website.

4.2.6 *Ballylumford Power Station "B" Jetty*

It should be noted the last tanker at this berth was November 2006. The jetty has subsequently been decommissioned.

4.2.7 *Ballylumford Power Station "A" Jetty*

This is the service jetty for the power station, which was refurbished in 2003 and was used to accommodate coastal tankers for the import of distillate for the gas-fired "A" power station.

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However, a special survey of the berth's water depths and fenders would be required before use by any vessel.

The jetty is aligned with the axis of the stream and presents no special problems. There is ample swinging room off the berth.

4.2.8 *Larne Lough, South of Curran Point.*

This area lies outside the port limits of Larne Harbour Limited and is not within the pilotage district.

For general information only: the main channel continues to the South-east, and was previously maintained to a depth of 5 metres for approximately one mile, close to the Islandmagee side of the lough. The main channel then turns South to the derelict cement works at Maghermourne. The channel is not marked.

Tidal streams are approximately rectilinear and generally weak to the south of Curran Point. The seabed is mainly mud and sand within the Lough.

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Section 5 Appendices.

5.1 Appendix A. Pilotage Exception Certificate Requirements

Pilotage Exemption Certificate Requirements

Applications and Qualifications

Pilotage Exemption Certificates (PEC's) for the Port of Larne Pilotage District will be granted by Larne Harbour Limited (the Competent Harbour Authority) to persons who are bona fide Deck Officers of ships, subject to their fitness and qualifications both by experience and examination.

Note: “*Bona fide Deck Officer*” means a person signed on the ship’s articles as a Deck Officer and holding an appropriate OOW Certificate of Competency.

The following conditions must be satisfied before a PEC will be issued to a Deck Officer for any vessel:

- 1) **Certification:** Applicants must hold a valid STCW certificate of competency appropriate for the capacity in which he/she serves and valid for the vessel(s) in which the PEC will be used.
- 2) **Notification:** Applicants must notify LHL of their intention to undertake qualifying trips in advance of starting the process. No credit will be given for trips undertaken prior to the notification.
- 3) **Tripping:** A minimum of 12 trips in and 12 trips out to and from any berth within the Pilotage District. Any such tripping should be completed in a range of weather and tidal conditions and at least 50% of the trips must be undertaken during the hours of darkness. Qualifying trips should be undertaken in the 12 months immediately prior to application.
 - **Berth-to-ship** and **ship-to-berth** operations may be considered for inclusion in the total trip count, provided the **Harbour Master** or their **nominated deputy** deems these manoeuvres to be of sufficient complexity and relevance. The applicant must obtain explicit confirmation from the Harbour Master or their delegate that such operations are eligible for inclusion in the qualifying trips tally. The decision will be made based on the operational circumstances, including the nature of the manoeuvre and the level of navigational skill required.
- 4) **Assessment:** 2 acts of pilotage (1 inward, 1 outward) will be onboard assessment acts. Assessment acts will be undertaken with a Senior Master (the Assessor), who should also be an authorised PEC Holder for the vessel for which the PEC is sought, or an Authorised Pilot. The PEC candidate will be responsible for ensuring that the Confirmation Form is completed by the assessor and is forwarded to the Harbour Office prior to the oral examination.

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- 5) **Language:** Applicants must be capable of communicating effectively using the English language, by VHF radio.
- 6) **LPC Visit:** Candidates must have visited Larne Port Control within the preceding month prior to the examination and be fully conversant with the port's procedures within the pilotage district. They must ensure that the Confirmation Form is signed by the Duty Marine Officer.
- 7) **Familiarisation** trip: Each candidate will complete a familiarisation trip of the harbour on board a tug and, if possible, attend a berthing of a ship. They must ensure that the Confirmation Form is signed by the tug skipper.
- 8) **Blind Pilotage** : Candidates must provide evidence of having undertaken 'blind pilotage' training should they wish to be granted approval to pilot their vessel in 'Very Poor Visibility' (See [Section 3.4.2](#))

Application: On completion of the required number of qualifying trips, applicants should submit their application along with the following items of qualifying evidence:

- a) Applicant's tripping log identifying all the qualifying trips and each record properly countersigned by the Senior Master (PEC Holder) or Authorised Pilot present during the trip. LHL will verify these details by cross-referencing with LPC records;
- b) A copy of the Applicant's Certificate of Competency;
- c) A copy of the Applicant's valid Medical Certificate;
- d) Application Form - Completed;
- e) Confirmation Form from Assessor- completed;
- f) Letter from Applicants employer confirming suitability.
- g) Confirmation from Senior Master evidencing that the candidate has completed adequate Blind Pilotage training should they wish to be granted approval to pilot their vessel in Very Poor Visibility

Conditions Relating to Examination

Examinations will be conducted by the Harbour Master, assisted wherever practicable by an experienced LPC Marine Officer. A Senior Master (PEC Holder), experienced in the operation of that class of vessel in the port of Larne, is also entitled to attend the examination upon request.

The Pilotage and/or PEC examination syllabus is described in [Appendix B](#)

TRAINING UPDATE: ASSESSMENTS AND COURSES

Candidate to advise if any of the following training courses have been carried out within the previous 5 years

- Simulation training, including ship handling?
- Bridge Team Management Course or similar type?

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- ARPA course or equivalent e.g. ECDIS? **CONDITIONS OF USE**

Larne Pilot / PEC Holder to confirm and agree to 'Conditions of Use' as follows:

- Pilot/PEC Holder not to carry out other duties whilst conducting pilotage,
- Pilot/PEC Holder to ensure he is adequately rested and fit,
- Pilot/PEC Holder to be satisfied there is adequate bridge manning levels and support for pilotage passage.
- Pilot/PEC Holder to maintain updating of knowledge and capability,
- Pilot/PEC Holder to understand requirement to report an incident to Harbour Master or his/her assigned deputy without delay, with a written report to follow,
- Larne Port Control will maintain a record of passages conducted, but Pilot/PEC Holder should also do so as a comparison and present it if required.

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- Pilot/PEC Holder is required to report to the Harbour Master when instructed,
- Pilot/PEC Holder is required to report any defective Aid to Navigation,
- Pilot/PEC Holder required to report any onboard defects,
- To understand and be cognisant of the renewal criteria and period of validity, (k) Incident investigation procedures.

5.2

Appendix B. Pilotage and /or PEC Examination Syllabus.

Pilotage and/or PEC Examination Syllabus

An applicant for authorisation as a PILOT or for a PILOTAGE EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE is required to be fully conversant with the Port and its navigational requirements. They should subsequently request a copy of the most recent 'Advanced Local Knowledge' course and/or access it on the port's website.

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5.3 **Appendix C. Application Forms for a Pilot Exemption Certificate.**

APPLICATION FORM

PILOTAGE EXEMPTION CERTIFICATE

Please complete and forward to: Harbour Master, Larne Harbour Ltd

I hereby submit my application for the issue of a Pilotage Exemption Certificate (PEC)

1. Full Name:

2. Address:.....

3. Date of Birth:.....

4. Nationality:.....

5. Name & Address of Employer / Shipping Company:

.....
.....

6. Position / Rank in which PEC is to be used:.....

7. Certificate of Competency held:

8. Number of Certificate of Competency:.....

9. Navigational experience of the Larne Pilotage District.

(a) Vessel Name:..... Dates.....

(b) Vessel Name:..... Dates.....

(c) Vessel Name: Dates.....

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Tripping data in previous 12 months.	Tides		Environment	
	Ebb	Flood	Daylight 50%	Darkness 50%
<i>In- 12 minimum</i>				
<i>Out- 12 minimum</i>				
<i>Shift Berth to Berth</i>				
<i>Shift Berth to Ship</i>				
<i>Shift Ship to Berth</i>				
Total				

Please itemise and/or describe the range of wind speeds/direction and tidal conditions that you have experienced during the period of undertaking qualifying trips.

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Please supply copy of evidence of capability:

(a) Employer affidavit

(b) Completed Confirmation Form.

11. Vessels for which PEC is required?

Vessels Name	Vessel Type	Length Overall	Load Draft	Gross Tonnage

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5.4 Appendix D Confirmation Form.

CONFIRMATION FORM

Every applicant must complete these visits or trips, confirmed by an Assessor.

1. LPC Visit:

Date & time of Visit: Verified by Marine Officer

2. Assessment Trips

The applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated to the below Assessor that he / she is ready to be examined.

Inward Passage:

Ship: Date & time : Pilot / Master:

Outward Passage:

Ship: Date & time : Pilot / Master:

3. Confirmation of experience of Blind Pilotage Techniques:

Ship: Master..... (Submit record)

4. Port and Tug Familiarisation Trip.

Trip Date:..... Tug Skipper:.....

State if any towage undertaken or if familiarisation only :

5. Declaration: I hereby declare that the above information is correct and confirm the following:

I have received copies of or viewed copies on the port's website of the following documents and am now sufficiently familiar with them to be examined.

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- (a) The Port of Larne Pilotage Manual and Directions, including syllabus for local knowledge
- (b) The International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea.
- (c) Larne Port Control reporting procedures.
- (d) Larne Harbour (NI) Order 1998

- (e) Notices to Mariners in force for Larne Port.
- (f) Larne Port Marine Services Manual.
- (g) The Port of Larne Emergency Plan.
- (h) The Dangerous Substances in Harbour Areas Regulations 1987 (i)
The tides in the pilotage area.
- (j) Inspected recent survey charts.
- (k) I have an understanding of the English Language and knowledge of the use of Marine Standard Communication Phrases.
- (l) Evidence of Medical Fitness (ENG1 Certificate or equivalent) is enclosed.

Applicants Signature:..... **Date:**.....

Harbour Master Signature:..... **Date:**.....

5.5

Appendix E Incident Report

LARNE PORT INCIDENT REPORT FORM

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Author: Choose an item.	Number: Select
-------------------------	----------------

1 ENVIRONMENTAL DETAILS			
Date:	Click here to enter a date.	Location	Click here to enter text.
Time:	Click here to enter text.	Visibility	Choose an item.
Daylight/ Dark	Choose an item.	Sea State	Choose an item.
Wind Dir Spd	Click here to enter text.	Weather	Choose an item.
Height of Tide	Click here to enter text.	Flood /Ebb	Choose an item.
Over all conditions		Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>
		Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Poor <input type="checkbox"/>

2 VESSEL(S)			
Name	Choose an item.	Name	Choose an item.
Length	Click here to enter text.	Length	Click here to enter text.
Beam	Click here to enter text.	Beam	Click here to enter text.
Draft	8	Draft	Click here to enter text.
Pilot/ PEC	Choose an item or type	Pilot/ PEC	Choose an item or type
Type	Choose an item.	Type	Choose an item.

3 OPERATIONS		Berthing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Un berthing	<input type="checkbox"/>	At Anchor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Underway within the Harbour		<input type="checkbox"/>	Engaged in Towing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Engaged in pilotage	<input type="checkbox"/>	Conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Underway within the Approaches		<input type="checkbox"/>	Debris	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mooring operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bunker/Cargo ops	<input type="checkbox"/>

4 MAIN INCIDENT TYPE (Max 3 per incident)								
	Minor	Moderate	Serious		Minor	Moderate	Serious	
Collision – any other vessel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Contact – Fixed object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Person Overboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Grounding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Machinery or Hull failure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Near Miss (Estimate)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Capsize/Listing/Sinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Fire/Explosion/Flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <u>on board</u> incident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

5 DESCRIPTION (Please use an additional sheet if required, attach photos if possible)								
<p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>								

7 SUBMISSION DETAILS								
Please send the completed form to the Harbour Master								

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