

Guidance Notes for Leisure Craft



FACTS TO BEAR IN MIND

1. As both the number of large commercial ships and recreational craft using the Port of Cork is increasing it is essential that close quarter situations do not arise.
2. Commercial vessels operating in Cork Harbour normally have a qualified pilot or certified Master with proven local knowledge on board. They "listen out" on VHF channel 12 when within the harbour limits.
3. Commercial vessels of 130 metres in length or greater must embark a pilot at the "outside" pilot station, 2.5 nautical miles south of Roches Pt. Vessels less than 130 metres in length can proceed to the pilot station at buoy no.20 at Cobh without a pilot onboard.
4. Commercial vessels under normal circumstances will follow the routes designated in the attached illustration. All recreational craft when obliged to navigate within such areas should do so with extreme caution following the Int. Collisions Regulations.
5. All vessels shall proceed at a safe speed at all times when operating within the Harbour. All vessels shall comply with the speed limits as set out in Port of Cork byelaws, Navigation Byelaw No. 22. A mechanically propelled vessel shall not proceed at a speed in excess of six knots in the following areas. In the Upper Harbour between Blackrock Castle and the Eamon De Valera and Michael Collins Bridges, (this is an area of concentrated rowing activity. Wash from all vessels should be reduced to a minimum, bear in mind that many young people are learning to row in this area. The safety of all river users is a priority.)

In the Owenboy River from navigation buoy C2 westward to the Carrigaline Bridge.

In the Lower harbour, East of Great Island between Marlogue point and East Grove quay.

Provided that, if the safe navigation of the vessel requires that it should proceed at a speed in excess of six knots then, such vessels may proceed at such increased minimum speed as is consistent with the safe navigation of the vessel having due regard for other vessels using the Port and or berthed/moored.

6. Ships that are light or partially loaded, particularly in windy conditions may carry large drift angles and at times may require a higher minimum speed to remain under full control.
7. A large ship visible on the horizon may take no more than 10 minutes to reach you under clear conditions, under hazy conditions this time could be much less. At 10 knots a ship will travel a nautical mile in 6 minutes, at 15 knots it only takes 4 minutes to travel one nautical mile.
8. As well as large cargo ships, a variety of working craft also use the port, tugs, pilot cutters, dredgers, ferries, barges under tow etc. In particular a towing line may be partly submerged and therefore potentially dangerous to other craft passing too close.

3. When obliged to cross the fairway, cross at right angles to the traffic flow. Also obey rule 9 of the Collision Regulations by either keeping to the starboard side of the channel or if the water depth allows outside the buoyed channel.
4. Do not cross close ahead of a commercial vessel at any time. Crossing close astern should also be avoided but where necessary cross at least 50 metre astern, be aware that the propeller wash from a large vessel can over-power small leisure craft.
5. Keep a good lookout at all times. Be aware of all ship movements, especially astern of you.
6. Do not underestimate the speed of ships. Allow plenty of time to take effective evasive action in the vicinity of large ships.
7. Be visible. At night make sure your navigation lights can be clearly seen. If you see the navigation lights of a vessel approaching and you think that he has not seen you, get out of the way. Use a torch or search-light to illuminate the sails (if appropriate). Remember, from the bridge of a loaded container ship or large tanker the captain/pilot may lose sight of you a half a nautical mile ahead, although you can see that ship clearly from your vessel at all times.
8. Keep watch at night. You may have difficulty seeing a large ship approach, even on a clear night. In reduced visibility you may have little warning of its approach. If you see a black shadow against the shore lights or as a growing shadow, at that point a close quarter situation is already imminent. Remember you cannot be easily seen at night (particularly in background of lights) and judging distances at night can prove difficult.
9. Watch the ships navigation lights. If you see both ships sidelights you are dead ahead, follow the International Collision Regulations And any alteration of course should be early, substantial and be visible to the approaching ship. Be aware that ships using the main navigation channel will have large course alterations en-route to their intended berth. Be aware of your position and the position of other vessels around you at all times.
10. Know the whistle signals. Five or more short and rapid blasts on the ships whistle indicates the ship is in doubt about your action or lack thereof. Check immediately if this signal was meant for you, if so take immediate and appropriate action. One short blast means "I am altering my course to starboard". Two shorts blasts "I am altering my course to port". Three short blasts, vessel is making astern movement.
11. Keep your VHF tuned to channel 12, the port working frequency, and have the volume high enough to hear above the noise of the engine. Listen for traffic information from Cork Harbour Radio. Only if you are the controlling vessel in a flotilla of other vessels, and you observe a hazardous situation developing, or in the event of an emergency developing within the ports jurisdiction, you should transmit on VHF channel 12.
12. Prior to going afloat it is prudent that you have advance notice of all shipping movements in your area, the daily shipping list is available on Port of Cork website – www.portofcork.ie.
13. Persons responsible for Flotillas of sailing craft with young sailors onboard, that intend to cross the main navigation channel bound for their intended sailing area should, contact Cork Harbour Radio on VHF channel 12 prior to departure. Cork Harbour Radio will up-date you on any shipping movements in your area. Contact should again be established before the flotilla returns to the Club.

Remember VHF channel 12 is the primary working channel for Cork Harbour Radio and used to manage port traffic. No private or unnecessary communications should take place on this channel.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

1. Current applicable legislation: Harbours Act 1996, Port of Cork Byelaws, Maritime Safety Act 2005 – a link to this Act is available on the Port of Cork website, under "useful links".
2. Avoid sailing in the buoyed channel area where possible, as marked on the Chart, ships manoeuvring to pick-up pilots may not be capable of taking avoiding action in close quarter situations. This is especially critical in periods of reduced visibility.



MARINE LEISURE EVENTS

When planning a marine leisure event that may impact on commercial shipping movements or occupy the main navigational channel, e.g. regattas and swim events, a “Marine Leisure Event Application” should be completed and returned to the office of the Harbour Master. Guidelines and the application form are available on the Port of Cork website.

COLLISION AVOIDANCE CHECK LIST

Avoid the busy shipping channels and routes. Cross them at right angles and as quickly as possible after checking that it is safe to do so. Recreational users of the port area are particularly requested to be familiar with the Int. Collision Regulations (particularly Rule 9), Port of Cork Byelaws and Local Notices to Mariners. Information is also available on Port of Cork website - www.portofcork.ie.

Remember

- ✓ Keep a good lookout, particularly at night
- ✓ Do not under-estimate the speed of ships
- ✓ Be visible
- ✓ Watch for navigation lights of other vessels
- ✓ Know the whistle signals
- ✓ Keep your VHF tuned to channel 12

Obey any instructions given by Cork Harbour Radio. They are also interested in your safety.

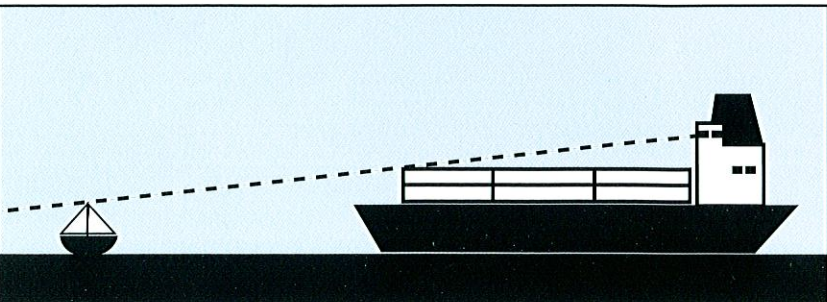
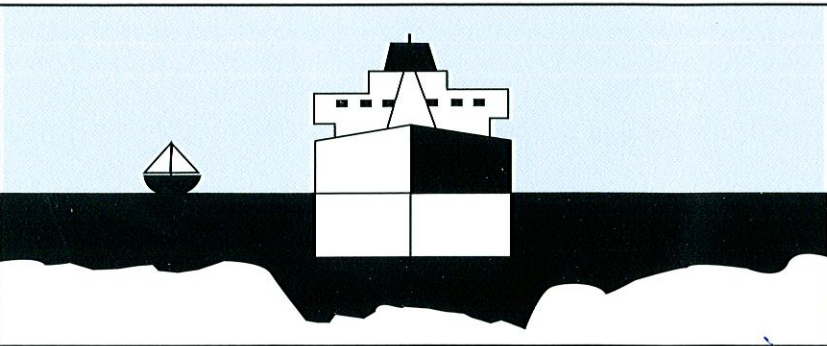
INTERNATIONAL REGULATIONS FOR THE PREVENTION OF COLLISIONS AT SEA

Rule 9- Narrow Channels (Excerpt)

- (a) A vessel proceeding along the course of a narrow channel or fairway shall keep as near to the outer limit of the channel or fairway, which lies on her starboard side as, is safe and practicable.
- (b) A vessel of less than 20 metres in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway.
- (c) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.
- (d) A vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within such channel or fairway. The latter vessel may use the sound signal prescribed in Rule 34d or if in doubt as to the intention of the crossing vessel.

Rule 10- Traffic Separation Schemes (Excerpt)

- (i) A vessel of less than 20 metres in length or sailing vessel shall not impede the safe passage of a power-driven vessel following a traffic lane.



MANOEUVRING AND WARNING SIGNALS

Excerpt from rule 34

These signals may be supplemented by light signals:

1 SHORT BLAST
Altering to starboard

2 SHORT BLASTS
Altering course to Port

3 SHORT BLASTS
Operating astern

5 OR MORE SHORT BLASTS
Keep clear

