



Notes of River Users Consultative Forum (Lower & Estuary) Meeting

24th November 2016 @ 10.30 hrs at London River House

Chair

Cathryn Spain CS Harbour Master Lower – PLA

Attendees

Simon Phillips	SP	Harbour Master VTS and SMS - PLA
Steve Rushbrook	SR	Deputy Harbour Master Lower – PLA
Sandra Baker	SLB	Executive Assistant PLA
Jon Beckett	JB	Manager, SMS - PLA
Denise Rowley	DR	Environment Officer, PLA
Ian Yarnton	IY	MRI, PLA
Terry Leach	TL	HM Coastguard
Linda Potter	LP	London River Users
Neil Withers	NW	Thames Operations Manager, RNLI
Stuart Smith	ST	London Port Health Authority
Kevin Boyd	KB	Svitzer
Richard Hart	RH	Assn. Thames Yacht Clubs
Chris Edwards	CE	RYA East
John Green	JG	RYA London & South East
Captain N. Dodson	ND	Trinity House
Geoff Holland	GH	Harbour Master, Port of Tilbury
Ian Clark	IC	Medway Peel Ports
John Gore	JG	MSBA
Mike Sharp	MS	Shoeburyness Watermen's Assn.+ Southend Interclub
Alan Hurrell	AH	Shipservthames Ltd
Richard Bain	RB	Jet Stream Tours

1. **Apologies**

Kent Police, A. Turner, D. Harding, D. Whitby, D. Read, G. Proctor, Insp. K. Thomas, J. Goodfellow, J. Greenleaf, Kent Police, Thurrock Council, P. Fitzsimmons, S. Strutton, T. Read, Capt. R. Barker, J. Potter, A. Pinfold, C. Middlemiss, T. Ferry, P. Rawson, A. Rudge, M. Greenwood, C. Hitchcock

2. **Minutes of last RUCF (Lower & Estuary) 19th May 2016**

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed.

RNLI Presentation – covered under Agenda Item 7h

3. **Matters Arising**

Leigh Buoy

CS to follow up with John Pinder (PLA Hydro) re up-to-date survey by Hydrographic Department

Risk Assessments

SR will be liaising with clubs regarding generic risk assessments and will feedback at next meeting. Early in the New Year reminders will be issued and monitored. –

Action SR to issue reminder to Clubs in January for Annual Risk Assessments.

4. Review of Membership

Results from the membership questionnaire indicate that members are happy with the representation and that the agenda considered fit for purpose.

5a PLA Update - Marine Operations:

CS confirmed that following the departure of Julian Parkes the following appointments had been made:

Cathryn Spain	Harbour Master, Lower District
Steve Rushbrook	Deputy Harbour Master, Lower District
Simon Phillips	Harbour Master (SMS and VTS)
Jon Beckett	Manager, SMS
Vacancy	Deputy Harbour Master, Lower District

5b Navigational Incidents: Total for 12 months – 144 compared to 176 previously Lower District Navigational Safety Incidents May – October 2016 – Appendix 1

- There were 4 ‘serious’ incidents in the period, compared with 2 in the previous 6 months, and 1 ‘very serious’ incident.
- The figures include 19 machinery/equipment deficiencies
- Reports of Pilot ladder deficiencies remain at 8 compared to the previous 6 months
- ‘Other’ incidents in this period include laser pens, non-compliance with tug requirements, parting of lines during berthing and a fatal injury of a Pilot whilst boarding.

Recreational Incidents:

- 2 Incidents of yachts impeding the passage of commercial vessels at the Muckings and Northfleet Hope
- 3 Motor cruisers lost power at Dagenham, Broadness and Gravesend Reach
- 2 Incidents involving recreational vessels aground – a round-the-world yacht at Shoebury Buoy and a canal barge on Blythe Sands
- 2 Moored leisure craft have broken free from their moorings at Gravesend – both due to shackles coming undone
- A yacht took on water at Maplin Sands and an SAR operation took place

5c Navigational Matters

The drive for recreational incidents/near misses to be reported was reiterated and for recreational users to monitor the relevant Port Control frequency for the area. GH mentioned recent events whereby cruise ships have had to delay departure due to recreational boats in the vicinity. (VTS broadcast a 10 minute advance notice of vessel departures) If necessary, the launch can be made available for assistance.

MS (Shoeburyness) reported that he is developing best practice for maintaining moorings (to include photographs) – PLA will promulgate via liaison meetings.

Princes Outer Buoy

Princes Outer Buoy was moved at the beginning of August following a survey showing depth changes in the area (Notice to Mariners L8 of 2016 issued). Currently the traffic situation is being monitored and how it is affecting larger vessels together with feedback from PLA pilots. ND and CS to discuss following the meeting – further review may be required in due course.

Dynamo Buoy

Currently under consideration

Sunk 2-Way Route

ND advised that the Sunk 2-way route is gradually moving NE. The Magenta line goes over the top of the bank, the buoys don't. – A paper will be presented at the next Nav. meeting. (The PLA are already in receipt of a paper regarding this from the MCA)

5d Risk Assessments

Any queries regarding 'generic' risk assessments for yacht clubs to be forwarded to lowerdistrictenquiry@pla.co.uk. Generic annual assessments will alleviate the necessity of individual event risk assessments. Any club wishing to refer to examples of assessments please contact Steve Rushbrook on this email address.

5e Regulatory Update i Thames Byelaws

Following Consultation on Byelaws there have been some representations made in objection to Byelaw 49 – Discharge of Sewage into the Thames

ii General Directions

The revised General Directions have been approved by the Board and came into force in July 2016.

iii Current Consultations: Pilotage Directions

Pilotage Directions are currently out for Informal Public Consultation, ending 25.11.16. Main changes are the removal of 5 (2), which excepts tugs licensed under the PLA Act from compulsory pilotage; and the addition of vessels with a draught greater than 4m subject to compulsory pilotage.

iv Houseboat Mooring Guidance

Informal Public Consultation ended on 22.11.16.

v Code of Practice for Paddling on the Tideway

The Informal Public consultation for this new Paddling Code will begin 28.11.16. (for a period of 6 weeks)

vi Recreational Users' Guide – Copies tabled

The revised 2017 edition has been published, promulgated by NtM 21 of 2016. The revised guide includes updates to Port buoyage, general improvements to the wording and layout as well as the locations of visitor moorings. For further copies please email: safetymanagement@pla.co.uk. Reminder for clubs to encourage members to sign up to the TTNC (Tidal Thames Navigators Club) via the PLA website: www.pla.co.uk or www.boatingonthethames.co.uk

Vii Port Marine Safety Code

The revised Port Marine Safety Code has recently been updated by the DfT and the MCA – the most significant change is the relativity to marine facilities, berths and terminals. The Code strongly recommends that marine berths and terminals adopt a formal risk assessment process and implement a marine safety management system. (MSMS).

5f Port Security

The Thames Port Security Authority met on 12th October at which Julian Parkes officially resigned as Chair, succeeded by Cathryn Spain.

Project KRAKEN is a National Crime, Police and Border Force initiative to increase vigilance along the UK's coastline and maritime environment and is being re-invigorated to encourage the public to report suspicious or unusual activity to local

police on 101 or anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 (quote "KRAKEN").

Cyber security is a standing agenda for the Thames Port Security Authority and on everyone's radar - the PLA have carried out their own security measures with this regard.

5g Environmental Matters – Thames Ship Discount for Environmental High Performers

The PLA has created a low emission discount on port fees to recognize ship owners committed to progressively improving their environmental performance as part of a wider approach to reduce the port's environmental impact. (This is not currently being measured).

5h River Works

- West Street Pier – Ongoing maintenance, some dolphins refurbished and replaced, being monitored monthly.
- Cliff Creek – potential to develop - this may now change to a site at Goshems Farm on the north side (where there is already a temporary structure in place to remove spoil).
- Paramount Park – No further update at present
- Dartford Creek – Trip had taken place on 20.5.16 with the Licensing Team – currently with the Planning Team – timeframe unknown.
- Oikos/Calor Gas – Few minor repairs
- Purfleet Development – In discussion with a 15 year plan to develop
- Tilbury – Ongoing works at the lower arm

5i River Events

For a full list of events for entire River please refer to the PLA website.

(Reminder that if drones are to be used for any events – please advise the PLA in advance)

- Sept/Oct 2017 Thames Trafalgar Race (Erith Yacht Club)
- 22nd Sept – 8th Oct 2017 Waverley (Trips from Gravesend)
- 13th Apr-16th Apr 2017 Tall Ships Race (Greenwich Yacht Club)
- 16th Apr 2017 Parade of Sail approx. 1700 hrs (35 Tall Ships)

6. Members' Feedback & Questions – Nothing to report

7a Members' Updates: Maritime & Coastguard Agency – Terry Leach

TL reported that the Lord Harris Report launched in Oct 2016 to improve London's resources and readiness to respond to a major terrorist incident (127 recommendations for the Mayor, Government and Agencies to consider) not only covered London but SE as well. The River does get a mention with several objectives regarding security and they are aware of the RNLI review of safety on the River Thames but are more focused on security rather than SAR. The London Resilience Forum has looked at all of the recommendations to see which come under their scope to progress and will be working with the PLA. A few of the recommendations made are Government decisions and therefore cannot be acted on until Government decisions are made. Incident wise most have been in central London apart from the tragic loss of a PLA pilot in Gravesend Reach.

7b Environment Agency – No EA representative present

7c Trinity House – Capt. Nick Dodson

Inspection of lights recently undertaken by Graeme Proctor and Steve Rushbrook with notification of discontinuance to be issued as a NtM.

Action SR to issue NtM

- 7d Port of Tilbury – Geoff Holland**
Confirmation that the new land at purchased at Tilbury Power Station known as 'Tilbury 2' did not include the waterside (which will be purchased under Phase 2).
- 7e Medway Peel Ports – Ian Clark**
Medway VTS is being currently being upgraded and under consideration is relocation of the radar mast. 2017 will be the 350 year celebration of the Dutch Raid of Medway which will be a high profile event including royalty, war ships and a firework display. (June 8th-18th 2017)
- 7f London Gateway Port – No representative**
- 7g Police – No Police representative present**
- 7h RNLI – Neil Withers**
Presentation by Neil Withers.- Community Water Safety Assessment.
- 7i Royal Yachting Association – Nothing to report from East/South East**
- 7j Recreational Clubs & Associations – Mike Sharp**
Observation was raised over the lack of visibility of people swimming outside of moorings. Suggestions to raise visibility could be bright swimming hats/floats. This needs to be referred to Southend Foreshore Office, who have their own Byelaws and are responsible for their own open air swimming areas.
Action: MS to raise at next Forum Meeting and promulgate response/action at next RUCF Meeting.
- 7k Vessel Operators – Linda Potter**
Working well with pilot co-ordinators but pilot shortage still causing an issue. CS confirmed measures are in place to address this.
- 7l Others – Nothing to report**
- 8. Any other Business**
PLA mobile phone App should be launched in the next few weeks.
- 9. Date of Next Meeting** - Thursday 18th May 2017 @ 10.30 hrs at PLA London River House, Gravesend, DA12 2BG.
