

# THAMES AIS REVISED SPECIFICATION

## INTRODUCTION

A recent consultation on the future of Thames AIS resulted in a majority support for a new approach and subsequent revision of the Thames AIS Technical Requirements Specification which serves as an appendix to Thames Bylaw 12 – Thames AIS Carriage Requirements.

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## SUMMARY OF CHANGES;

- The requirement for Thames AIS compliant transmitters that can send compliant POB messages will be dropped and replaced with a minimum standard for any commercially available off-the-shelf AIS transmitter
- Operators will be required to submit “persons on board” (POB) information either via a web portal or automatically via an Application Programming Interface (API)
- The PLA will stop accepting POB information via Thames AIS transmitters (however the existing Thames AIS transmitters will continue to be compliant as an AIS transmitter)

**04/08/2023**

Port of London Authority  
London River House, Royal Pier Road,  
Gravesend, Kent DA12 2BG

**SIMON PHILLIPS**  
**Harbour Master (SMS/VTS)**

**EXPIRY DATE: 04/08/2024**

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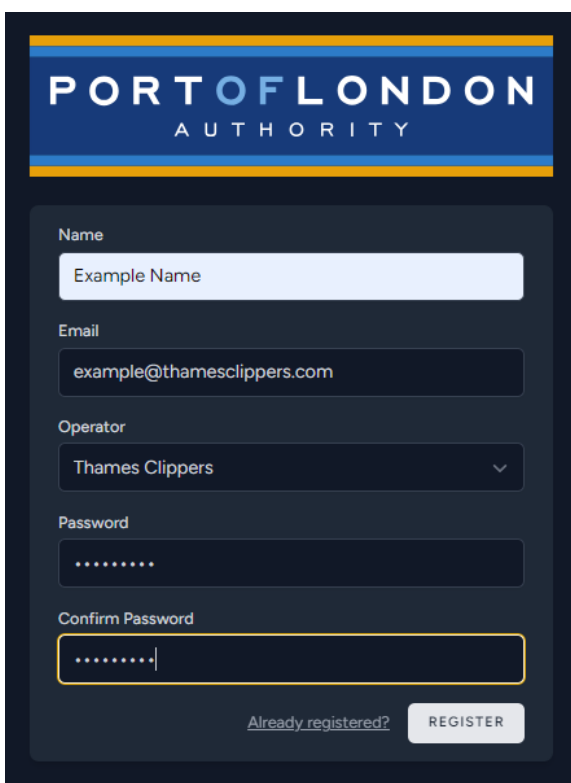
## HOW WILL THIS WORK FOR PEOPLE USING THE PORTAL?

All vessel operators required to comply with Thames AIS will need to set up an account on the web portal. To do so the following information should be submitted to:

[VTSEnquiry@pla.co.uk](mailto:VTSEnquiry@pla.co.uk)

- Business Name
- Email domain(s) for users (eg. exampledomain.com)
- A list of vessels including vessel names and MMSI numbers.

After that information is in the system you will be able to use the following link [to register yourself](#). Once you have verified your email you will be able to access the portal.



PORT OF LONDON  
AUTHORITY

Name  
Example Name

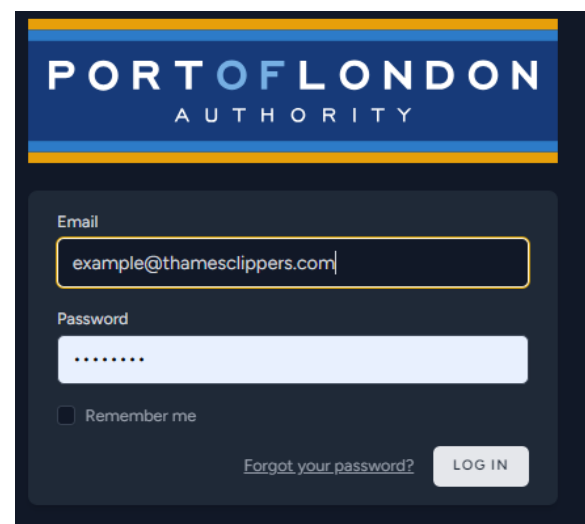
Email  
example@thamesclippers.com

Operator  
Thames Clippers

Password  
.....

Confirm Password  
.....

[Already registered?](#) REGISTER



PORT OF LONDON  
AUTHORITY

Email  
example@thamesclippers.com

Password  
.....

Remember me

[Forgot your password?](#) LOG IN

Once in the system, you will be able to see your existing submissions and create a new submission by entering the MMSI number of the vessel (the system will remember your commonly used MMSI numbers) and the POB. You will be required to do this before departing any berth on the river.

VESSEL NAME	PASSENGERS	MESSAGE TYPE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	CREATED
Sun	10	START			6 seconds ago

Number of Passengers: 10

Vessels

- Select an option
- Select an option
- Sun
- Twin Star
- Storm
- Star
- Sky

### HOW CAN I INTEGRATE MY SYSTEM WITH THE API?

We will also accept submissions via a HTTP JSON POST request that contains an API key (to be part of the request headers) issued to your organisation, the MMSI number of the vessel and the number of people on board as follows:

```
... "mmsi": "235003348", ..... //required
... "passengerNumber": 50, ..... //required
... "reportTime": "2023-08-03 12:00:00", ..... //optional
... "message_type": "intermediate", ..... //optional
... "latitude": "0.22111", ..... //optional
... "longitude": "51.00551" ..... //optional
```

Response: 201 "Record added successfully."

Result:

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Latest POB records from today". It includes search filters for Vessel Name, Passengers (Min/Max), and Message Type. Below the filters is a table with one record:

VESSEL NAME	PASSENGERS	MESSAGE TYPE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	CREATED
Sun	50	INTERMEDIATE	51.00551	0.22111	3 seconds ago

At the bottom, there is a pagination control showing "Page 1 of 1" and a "Show 5" dropdown menu.

Note: A much more detailed document can be provided for all possible API responses if needed.

## **WHAT IMPACT WILL THIS ON EXISTING EQUIPMENT?**

As stated above, your existing Thames AIS equipment will continue to be compliant with the standard; however, you will no longer be required (or able) to submit POB information via that equipment and instead will use the portal or API.

## **WHEN ARE WE PROPOSING TO DO THIS?**

The new system will be effective from 4<sup>th</sup> September. **Note that the PLA will stop accepting POB information from Thames AIS transmitters at the same time.**

Please see Appendix A of this document for the proposed requirements, procedures and technical specifications.

## **THAMES AIS TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS SPECIFICATION AND PROCEDURES FOR THE OPERATION OF THAMES AIS AND PERSONS ON BOARD REPORTING SYSTEM**

- 1.0 Thames AIS consists of:
- 1.1 A Class Alfa Universal AIS transponder complying with IMO resolution MSC.74 (69) Annex 3 as specified by IEC 61993-2 and ITU-R M.1371-5 and IALA technical clarifications of ITU-R M.1371-5 with the following exceptions:
- a) IMO number is only required where it has been allocated. Default setting is zero.
  - c) Vessel heading and the navigational status are optional. Default setting is "underway using engines". and
  - d) Destination and ETA parameters are not required.
- 1.2 The AIS Unit must be connected to a Graphical Display Unit that:
- a) Provides appropriate situational awareness suitable for navigation and collision avoidance;
  - b) Is capable of decoding and displaying targets in accordance with ITU-R 1371-5 nominal reporting interval for given speeds;
  - c) Is positioned so that it is visible to the person with conduct of navigation;
  - d) Provides a means to transmit a broadcast emergency alert message (safety related);
  - e) Provides a means to alert the operator of the system and operational alarms including:
    - i) Reception of safety related messages; and
    - ii) Failure of positioning sensor (GPS outage)
  - f) Displays AIS targets clearly labelled with vessel name and in accordance with IMO guidance on the presentation of navigation-related symbols;
- 2.0 Persons On Board (POB) Reporting:
- 2.1
- a) All vessels required to comply with Thames AIS must submit POB using the Thames AIS Portal (TAP)
  - b) POB submissions are made directly via the TAP web portal or via an Application Programming Interface (API)

## **PROCEDURES FOR THE OPERATION OF THAMES AIS AND PERSONS ON BOARD REPORTING SYSTEM**

1. Class IV, V and VI Passenger Vessels complying with THAMES AIS in accordance with Byelaw 12 are required to:
  - a. Operate Thames AIS and its associated Persons On Board (POB) reporting system at all times when underway within Port Limits;
  - b. Report POB, which means the total number of crew and passengers, to the PLA via the Thames AIS Portal (TAP)
  - c. Update this information prior to departing the berth and whenever the number changes.
2. All vessels operating THAMES AIS in accordance with Byelaw 12 are permitted to continue to transmit when alongside for short periods but are to turn off THAMES AIS when unmanned or out of service.