

## NOTICE TO MARINERS      No.1 of 2021

### REQUESTS FOR VESSELS TO PROCEED WITH CAUTION OR AT SLOW SPEED

The term "Ease Down" is a local term and its use is, thus, not in accordance with international procedures for VTS. Therefore, when a restriction on vessel traffic speed is required, the term "Proceed with Caution" or "Proceed at Slow Speed" is used by London VTS in appropriate broadcasts instead.

The impact of broadcasts for restrictions on vessel speed is lost if an excessive number of individual restrictions are made or if the restriction is further categorised by prefixes or suffixes. The following policy should be noted by Masters, Berth Operators and other river users when requesting speed reductions to be broadcast:

1. Whilst London VTS will not refuse any reasonable requests for reductions in speed of passing traffic, operators must consider carefully whether the request is really necessary, having regard to existing restrictions placed on vessels by General Directions or Notices to Mariners before seeking that one be broadcast.
2. As a guide, requests for reductions in speed are appropriate for activities such as diving, salvage, heavy lifting, working on the waterline from scaffolding or pontoon/small boat, and bunkering operations. They may also be appropriate where the mooring facilities are limited e.g. when the vessel overhangs the berth or when a vessel is about to take the ground at a Not always Afloat but Safely Aground (NAABSA) berth.
3. A request for a reduction in speed of passing traffic should not be sought as an alternative to good seamanship such as when a vessel's crew should be supervising the safe disembarkation of passengers or as an alternative to the proper tending of lines and moorings in a tideway.
4. London VTS should be informed as soon as the activity is complete or berthing restrictions cease to exist in order that the restriction can be cancelled.
5. Prefixes and/or suffixes such as "extreme slow speed" will not normally be issued when speed restrictions are broadcast. The activity requiring the speed reduction will be identified, from which Mariners should judge the speed appropriate to the circumstances.

When London VTS has agreed to broadcast a reduction in speed, the person responsible for the request must ensure that the vessel or installation concerned is displaying the international code flags "Romeo Yankee". Failure to do so will result in the termination of the broadcast

**2nd January  
2021**

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

**Terry Lawrence  
Harbour Master (Thames  
Tideway Tunnel)**



TO RECEIVE FUTURE NOTICES TO MARINERS BY **E-MAIL**,  
PLEASE REGISTER VIA OUR WEBSITE [www.pla.co.uk](http://www.pla.co.uk)  
**Telephone calls, VHF radio traffic, CCTV and radar traffic images may  
be recorded in the VTS Centres at Gravesend and Woolwich**  
**All Current Notices to Mariners can be found here -**  
**[http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Notices-to-  
Mariners/Notices-to-Mariners](http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Regulations-and-Guidance/Notices-to-Mariners/Notices-to-Mariners)**

