

NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL REPORT


NAP Date:	1 Feb 2006	Owner:	VTS Manager	NAP Ref:	12	NAP Title:	Navigating Through Bridges
------------------	------------	---------------	-------------	-----------------	----	-------------------	----------------------------

Panel Members:

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Barry Goldman, Chair	PLA - VTS Manager	Stuart Rush	JJ Priors (Transport) Limited	Wayne Bennett	A.C. Bennett & Sons
James Howard	Woods River Cruises	Rick Elliott	Laphorn Shipping	Rod Shaw	MCA
Peter Hurford	London River Services	James Gilbert	London River Services	Tim Keech	Cory Environmental
David Foster	PLA - Deputy Harbour Master (Upper)	Adrian Bates	MCA London Coastguard	Mark Wilson	Catamaran Cruises/Bateaux London
Mike Janes	PLA - TBNC Duty Officer	Julian Parkes	PLA - Marine Admin. Support Manager	Chris Franks	PLA - Harbour Service Launch Master
Christopher Mendoza	PLA - Harbour Master (Upper)	John Pinder	PLA - Port Hydrographer	John Reid	PLA - Pilot
Phiroz Dalal	Transport for London	Graeme Faulkner	General Port Services	Paul Wilson	City Cruises

Detail / Terms of Reference	Observation/Recommendation
Terms of Reference attached	<p>a. Bridge clearances should be identified on a vessel by vessel basis through risk assessment and submitted to the PLA for approval. Operating procedures should be put in place (para 6d). Action: All Operators.</p> <p>b. General Directions should be amended to include the requirements of recommendation 19a above. (para 6d). Action: PLA</p> <p>c. The channel as shown on the chart should be reviewed and bridge arch markings should be checked to ensure that only those arches wholly or mainly in the channel are marked as suitable for navigation. (para 8). Action: PLA</p>

- d. The type of markings on bridge and channel signage to be reviewed and a standard adopted. (para 9). **Action: PLA**
- e. The Special Signal Light system should be checked to ensure that lights are triggered correctly and at the ranges expected (Para 10). **Action: PLA**
- f. GD 19 should be reviewed to ensure that guidance on operating procedures for mobile units are clear and unambiguous with particular reference to occasions when units should be switched on or off and instructions included to incorporate the additional requirement to report to TBNC on VHF if using an arch other than the central arch (para 10). **Action: PLA**
- g. Tide boards should be placed at selected berths (paras 12, 13, 15). **Action: Berth Operators**
- h. Tide boards should be placed at strategic locations along the river and consideration given to the use of piles to reduce planning difficulties (paras 12, 13, 15). **Action: PLA**
- i. The tide gauge system should be extended to include Chelsea (paras 14, 15). **Action: PLA**
- j. Additional air draught boards be places at selected bridges (para 15). **Action PLA**
- k. The requirement for the mandatory carriage of charts by small commercial vessels operating on the Thames should be reviewed (para 16b). **Action: PLA**
- l. Electronic displays for bridge arch clearances should be considered as part of the PLA's longer term procurement strategy (para 17). **Action: PLA**
- m. The potential use of the PLA's bridge simulator by operators for assessment and training should be considered (para 18). **Action PLA**

Panel Chairman:	Barry Goldman	Signature:		Date:	3 May 2006
-----------------	---------------	------------	---	-------	------------

NAVIGATING LONDON BRIDGES

Terms of Reference

Consider, through the principle of formal risk assessment and in the context of the PLA's navigational SMS, the different types and frequency of commercial vessel traffic navigating the Thames bridges between Tower Bridge and Teddington. Submit a report with recommendations as appropriate to the PLA's Navigational Management Team which should, inter alia, address the following issues.

Operational Procedures

- a. Review PLA regulations with respect to navigation through bridges and designated navigable bridge arches and whether they remain appropriate.
- b. Review contacts that have occurred with bridge piers including contacts with the overhead structures.
- c. Review collisions or incidents which occurred within or near to a bridge arch.
- d. A review of groundings that have occurred under, or on the approaches to, bridges and any changes to practitioners operating procedures that may be appropriate.
- e. Review the overhead clearances and minimum criteria used by practitioners when passing under bridges, together with an assessment of their methodology and the adequacy of procedures to avoid bridge strikes.
- f. The suitability of bridge navigation marks and lights and associated procedures.
- g. The operation and effectiveness of the Special Signal Light system and whether the procedures should be amended.

Dissemination of Information

- h. The adequacy of documentary navigational information and its promulgation to river users, including tidal information, charts, navigational publications, bridge clearance information, Notices to Mariners, PLA regulatory publications.
- i. Frequency and adequacy of survey and the associated promulgation of changes.
- j. The adequacy of navigational broadcasts and the provision of real time tidal and overhead clearances through the provision of tide gauges/boards or other means including the location of gauges and how this is to be related to bridge arches.

Future Development

- k. Any opportunities or changes to VTS procedures as a result of the impending introduction of CCTV in central London and the proposed introduction of Thames AIS.

Training

- l. The adequacy of the current and assessment process and projected BML local knowledge requirements for testing the knowledge of bridge heights, navigating bridge arches and vessel reporting points.