

			<p>The byelaw as currently written suggests that any leisure craft travelling above 12 knots are dangerous but the Harbour Master's launch or other commercial vessels travelling above 12 knots are safe. This is clearly illogical and something the PLA needs to correct.</p> <p>We apologise for the misinterpretation of your views.</p> <p>Byelaw 18.1 has been in place for many years and reflects the need, on occasion, for certain vessels to exceed the speed limit. The Byelaw includes a caveat which does not allow such vessels to exceed the speed limit as and when they wish, but only where observance of the speed limit would hinder their purpose. This also applies to recreational vessels operating in a safety and safety training capacity.</p> <p>We accept that occasionally, some regulatory vessels may not have operated at speeds appropriate to their immediate purpose. We will continue to seek to ensure that all such vessels navigate at appropriate speeds at all times.</p>
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14	BYELAW 24 LOCAL KNOWLEDGE REQUIREMENTS	Gus Lewis – Royal Yachting Association	<p>One key concern that does not appear to have been addressed is our point in relation to the local knowledge endorsement in proposed Byelaw 24. We acknowledge the PLA's wish for skippers of commercial passenger and towing vessels to hold a local knowledge endorsement and this intention does not of itself present us with any difficulties. Our concern is that the definition of "Pleasure Vessel" is such that the Byelaw would require a local knowledge endorsement on certain recreational vessels and this would, in our view, be unduly onerous. For example, if a family owned their own yacht and wished to navigate up-river to St Katharine's Dock, the skipper would not need a local knowledge endorsement. If the same family had instead bare-boat chartered the same yacht from a charter company (being chartered, the yacht does not fall within the definition of a Pleasure Vessel) then the skipper would need a local knowledge endorsement. We cannot see, however, how there would be any material difference in risk from the PLA's point of view but the requirement for the skipper to obtain a local knowledge endorsement would be prohibitive.</p> <p>Equally, it is arguable that the dinghies used by RYA training centres such as the Shadwell Basin Outdoor Activity Centre may fall outside the definition of "Pleasure Vessel" and therefore be subject to a local knowledge endorsement – which would clearly be impractical. We therefore consider that the wording of Byelaw 24 should be revised to exclude pleasure vessels (as defined), recreational craft on bareboat charter and recreational craft used for training.</p> <p>The PLA accepts the point made about pleasure vessels chartered or hired. The definition of 'pleasure vessel' will be amended to include such vessels.</p>
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16	<p>BYELAW 35 HYDROFOIL VESSELS, HOVERCRAFT AND VESSELS EXCEEDING A SPEED OF 12 KNOTS</p>	<p>Graham Negus – VTSO, PLA</p>	<p>A flat top pontoon recently arrived under tow onto a new mooring buoy off Shellhaven. The port controller quite rightly asked that the pontoon should be lit (duty of care etc.) the buoy was not yet charted.</p> <p>Checking the River Byelaws 1978 they clearly state that a lighter is not required to be lit. Technology has moved on since the Byelaws were introduced and I am sure with solar power, automatic generator systems and modern battery design it is possible to illuminate most floating objects that might be a hazard to navigation. My sympathies lie with the boating fraternity as well as with the possibility of a commercial incident e.g. George Lyras.</p> <p>We agree that moored barges that present a danger to navigation should be lit at night. Advances in lighting technology also make this requirement cheaper and easier. Byelaw 35 will be amended to include such a requirement, following identification through risk assessment of which moored barges should be lit.</p>