

## NAVIGATIONAL SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

### INFORMATION NOTE No. 3

#### **Public Consultation**

##### **Introduction**

A key element of the port's Navigational Safety Management System (SMS) is the need to involve port users, practitioners and other interested parties in the management of navigational safety. This includes the regular review and maintenance of the Port of London Authority (PLA) regulatory framework. This framework: byelaws, directions, codes of practice, and supporting guidance and information forms the basis of the control and regulation of navigation and marine operations in the port. These rules and advice are shaped by and directly related to the formal risk assessment of navigational safety on which the SMS is founded.

##### **The Consultation Process**

All the PLA's local rules, codes of practice and guidance are reviewed on a rolling three-year cycle. This helps to ensure that the regulatory framework remains current, fit for purpose and relevant to port operations and the trades and vessels using the port. Operating procedures are kept under constant review and proposals for change or development made when prompted by such issues as changing trade patterns, navigational incident or events.

Once the PLA Navigational Management Team has agreed the basic form of its proposed changes, it will seek the views of port users through a Safety of Navigation Consultation Notice. These notices provide details of the reasons for the proposed changes, identify the change and any impact they may bring.

Where general guidance or, say, a code of practice is subject to review, we may simply ask for views as to whether the code content remains current and appropriate, and seek suggestions for amendments and/or enhancements. Most consultation periods normally run for at least 6 weeks and details are sent direct to appropriate practitioners and users in hard copy or preferably by e-mail, and posted on the PLA website. When PLA byelaws are being reviewed, this informal consultation will always be followed by the statutory formal public consultation administered by the Department for Transport.

Consultation feedback is usually channelled through a central point of contact identified on the Consultation Notice, and we will always acknowledge receipt of your input. Once the consultation period has closed, the appropriate marine manager(s) within the PLA will review the comments and suggestions and consider what changes are appropriate to be made to the draft proposals.

A matrix will then be produced detailing the points raised in the consultation and the PLA's response to them, including any changes or developments of the proposals. The feedback matrix will then be copied to all those that responded and also posted on the PLA website. The PLA's Navigational Management Team will always endorse the final proposals and the PLA's position. All new/changed regulations – byelaws and directions are also approved by the PLA Board.