

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Port of London Authority (PLA) is the Statutory Harbour Authority for the tidal Thames – the Port of London. As such it is subject to the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC). The PLA is compliant with the PMSC and, as part of that compliance, maintains a navigational Safety Management System (SMS) based on formal risk assessment. The SMS relates to navigation within the whole of the Authority's area of jurisdiction, which includes the upper reaches between Putney and Teddington. A wide variety of leisure and some commercial vessels use this area. There are long standing navigational conflicts between rowers and power driven vessels (and with some river users in general) in the upper reaches above Putney, which have, for some time, been regulated by local Rules introduced by the PLA.
- 1.2 Each year there are a number of complaints and incidents involving rowing boats in the upper reaches of the tidal Thames.
- 1.3 In order to improve safety on the river, the Port of London Authority (PLA) has commissioned a comprehensive, independent risk assessment into rowing on the tidal Thames between Putney and Teddington, including its impact on other recreational and commercial river users.
- 1.4 The risk assessment has been undertaken, within the scope of both the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code and the PLA's navigational Safety Management System, to:
- i. Establish the value and credibility of PLA Notice to Mariners U6 of 2002 (the Rowing Rules) and whether, as drafted and applied, they:
 - § constitute an effective regulatory framework; and
 - § as a risk control, contribute effectively to reducing the identified risk to As Low As Reasonably Practicable.
 - ii. Determine how well the present PLA Rowing Rules and ARA Safety Rules are understood and applied by:
 - Rowing Clubs, their Safety Representatives and Coaches;
 - Practicing rowers on the water;
 - Class V passenger vessel operators in the area;
 - Other leisure craft – both powered and non-powered;
 - PLA employees working in the area.

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- iii. Determine whether the overall safety of navigation for all river users between Putney and Teddington is better achieved by continuing with some form of Rowing Rules, including the modification to Rule 9 (a), or by withdrawing the Rules and reverting to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (1972).
- iv. If it is recommended that the Rowing Rules should remain part of the PLA's regulatory framework, identify any changes to the Rowing Rules, which could be made to improve the effectiveness of the Rules, whilst being acceptable to all river users.
- v. In any event, identify any changes to other established risk control measures, or any new risk control measures, which could be applied to reduce further, the identified risks to life and navigation.
- vi. Advise on how any revised Rules or new regulations could be more effectively promulgated to improve understanding and compliance from all parties.

Suggest the most effective form the regulations should take.
- vii. If it is established that those parts of the ARA Safety Code relevant to navigating are not being heeded by a significant majority of rowers, make recommendations to the ARA, Thames Rowing Council and PLA as to how better compliance could be achieved.
- viii. Determine the effect the height of tide and tidal stream has on the application of the Rowing Rules (especially at busy periods at LW around Hammersmith).
- ix. Establish if the wash normally created by power driven vessels between Putney and Teddington is greater than one would normally expect in a tideway with a speed limit of 8 knots.
- x. Determine if rowers are adequately prepared for the prevailing conditions (tidal stream, wave height, wash and weather).