

Notes of River Users Consultative Forum (Lower) Meeting
4th November 2010

Present:-

Captain Roy Stanbrook	RS	HM (L) - PLA
Captain Mark Towns	MT	DHM (SMS) - PLA
Captain Chris McQueen	CM	DHM (L) - PLA
John Window	JW	Havenmaster - PLA
Alan Turner	AT	Port of Tilbury
Paul Taylor	PT	Svitzer
Richard Lucas	RL	Svitzer
Alan Hurrell	AH	Waterman
Debra Read	DR	London Port Health Authority
Rod Owen	RO	Sea pilot_ PLA
John Potter	JP	Waterman
Andrew Rudge	AR	MCA
Paul Cave	PC	Sailors Society
Ian Dunkley	ID	RNLI
John A Skellhorn	JS	RYA (South East)
Peter Smith	PS	SE Regional Rowing
Ian Davison	ID	Research Team – Risk taking Resilience
Taku Fujiyama	TF	Research Team – Risk taking Resilience

1. Apologies

M Dodson, Trinity House. R Barker, Trinity House, Steve Seabrook, Joint Police Marine Unit (Essex & Kent). M Shefras RYA, Bryan Hopkins MCA, Richard Exley Port of Tilbury, Julian Parkes PLA.

2. Minutes of River Users Consultative Forum Meeting 7th May 2010.

Minutes last meeting agreed.

Matters arising

1, RNLI / PLA joint presentation to Thurrock Yacht Club still to be arranged.

On going RS to liaise with ID and Thurrock Yacht club on a date.

Action: RS

2, Towage Liaison Committee, wider spread of pilots, tug skippers and Waterman attendance is desirable. On going, committee meeting to be arranged June

Action: Complete

RL commented on tug tripping that it would be desirable for pilots and VTS to undertake trips on the tugs to improve their knowledge of tug types, get to know tug crews. The idea was supported by Svitzer and PLA.

A Hurrell asked about formalised mooring plans for berths. Safe mooring group meeting had considered developing plans for all berths but had decided it was not practical for all berths. However support was forthcoming at this meeting particularly with regard to Tilbury lock.

RO commented that very often ships entering locks rather than sending near side quarter line sent off side line first. AT agreed there was a case for a mooring plan for Tilbury lock ships and would look further into the idea.

Action: AT to develop Tilbury lock standard mooring plan.

4. PLA SITREP

i. Safety Management System

MT informed meeting

Harbour Revision Order has been prepared which will focus on changes to the Port of London Act 1968 to bring it up to date and to delete sections of Act which are no longer relevant – Consultation has now closed. Work is on going.

New Thames byelaws which are with Department for Transport, progress is very slow. PLA are in discussion with Dft to put pressure on to get the byelaws in place as soon as possible.

Revised Ship Towage Code of Practise is to be published in the next couple of weeks.

Craft Towage Code of Practise is being to be reviewed and updated and should be complete by the end of the year.

General Directions. There are a few new and minor amendments to general directions being considered internally which will be going out for wider consultation shortly. The two main ones being requirement for vessels to use authorised channel above Margaretness and safe mooring of passenger boats.

Leisure users, Video animations are being considered for other parts of the river following success of navigating the central London video.

Web based River Information Tool for leisure users is being developed which allow river users easy access to Notice to Mariners and similar info. Due next year.

Work on next edition of Recreational Users Guide is being progressed for release for next years season. Feedback and suggestions sought.

ii. Port Security and ISPS code

ISPS level 1 remains in operation.

MT gave an update on new Port Security Directive, The new government has decided not to press ahead with new London wide Port Security Authority and the current arrangements will remain in place for London. One reason stated for not going ahead was difficulty in defining designation areas for London, as well as London having existing security structures already being in place and established. The existing Port Security Committee will look at ways it can improve and develop.

iii. Environmental Matters

Nicola Jenkins is the PLA's new Environmental Manager, who unfortunately was unable to attend today's meeting.

Pitsea Landfill site. Barge traffic has started going to the site under a strict management plan agreed between Veolia, Natural England, RSPB, PLA and barge operator. The possibility of night time traffic is being investigated with RSPB & Natural England.

London Array, size of wind farm has been reduced due concerns raised by RSPB by impact it would have on certain birds species that use the area.

iv. General

RS discussed trade – Trade has improved since the last meeting with a strong rebound. The upturn coincided with new bunker operation starting in the Queens Channel and need to place pilots on the London Gateway dredgers this has had put pressure on the Pilotage service and has led to delays in ships being served.

6. Navigational safety and Consultancy Matters

i. River Incidents

RO asked about access to Perspective so they can view incidents, MT commented that he is looking at web based solution.

The Fitness loss of life of crewman incident was discussed. The crewman was killed on ships discharge conveyor whilst the ship was discharging cargo at Red Lion Wharf. The Police are still investigating causes of incident.

PC commented on welfare issues.

16/06/10	Lady Francis	Lady Francis fishing vessel impeded passage of inward bound vessel Fri Ocean in Lower Hope. Warning letter issued to skipper
16/06/10	Duchess M	Duchess M crossing from West St Pier to Tilbury landing stage impeded passage of inward bound warship HMS Archer. Formal warning letter issued to skipper of Duchess M
29/06/10	Yasmine	Wash incident passing London Gateway reported by tug Odin, Yasmine generated 1.5 metre bow wave
01/07/10	Ionia	Tug Ionia left the channel inward bound approaching white hart buoy and contacted with yacht Morning Song. The cause of incident was due to the Mate slipping and knocking himself out whilst entering the wheelhouse from bridge wing, control of the vessel was lost. He was the only person on the bridge at the time of the incident
16/07/10	Oasis	Motor tank barge contacted anchored survey vessel Gems Researcher in the Lower Hope Reach. Master of Oasis issued with Formal warning
19/0910	Grande America	Oil was reported coming from scupper on the Grande America, TOSCA & ports pollution plan put into operation. Local Authorities carried out clean up of Southend and Canvey beaches.
28/09/10	Monarch M & Sharon	Work boats sunk at Monarch pier,

	M	resulting in minor pollution. TOSCA activated. Vessels sunk as result of vandalism.
--	---	---

ii. Inland Waterways – Nothing to report

iii. Olympic Update

There is only limited accommodation for leisure craft on tidal Thames and inland waterways, Some joint survey work with British Waterways is to be undertaken to gauge likely demand. Demand is expected to be strong and work on identifying suitable sites for moorings is being undertaken with consideration being given to sites with suitable landing points to provide some additional moorings but it may not be sufficient to satisfy demand. Tender services, waste disposal, provision of fuel are all issues that also need to be addressed.

It is highly likely visiting recreational craft will have to have pre-booked a mooring and those without booking will not allowed.

The Police has security concerns and Port Health have concerns over infectious diseases which have to be addressed and PLA will be working with them.

Sail Greenwich 2012 tall ship event is also being planned for July / August 2012. The event will be focused around Woolwich, Arsenal pier, there will be regular daily sailing of a small convoy of smaller tall ships taking passengers from Woolwich to Tower bridge. On shore, event organisers with Greenwich Council will be organising events which will include artificial beach on old Victoria deep water site.

There is also the Queens diamond jubilee in June 2012 which will include a river procession on the river.

7. Other up dates

i. MCA

AR gave update

The review of BMLs is in its final stages, final draft has been promulgated for feed back

Examining of candidates BML local knowledge exams have started.

AR had attended a seminar on reduced sulphur content bio mass fuels being introduced 2011, fuel has a limited lifespan as

it deteriorates over time, bugs, blocked filters, damaged seals will mean all users will have to carefully manage storage and use of fuel. All river users including recreational river users will be affected.

Fuel suppliers will have a responsibility to supply correct fuel.

Within MCA the government has announced 40% cuts and ETVs are to be scrapped in years time.

MCA is taking a proactive stance over staff fatigue on vessels. Prohibition and improvement notices are being issued following shortcoming being found on ships inspected.

Update to MCA Legislation issues and presentation for District Marine Safety committee brief. Notes attached.

Pilots ladder deficiencies whilst boarding and landing AR highlighted the importance of early notification to MCA.

New ship inspection regime to come into place for 2011, targeting ships with poor record of defects will inspected every time ships enter UK port others will be inspected at two yearly intervals.

- ii. Environment Agency – no attendance.
- iii. RNLI – ID advised there has been a slight increase in the number of incidents on the river.

Atlantic 85 is working well, new boats are being obtained for the upper section of river to replace E class March next year.

Olympics, RNLI are looking at what support they can offer but need better understanding of what is happening on the river.

Following RNLI Holehaven causeway night exercise involving the landing of a casualty over low water ID commented on silting at the entrance to the creek taking place.

- iv. Police (Joint Marine Kent & Essex Unit) – no attendance
- v. RYA – JS commented that experience of leisure users is the use of sound signals is not being used by ships. RO commented use of sound signals has reduced, pilots had noted knowledge of understanding of specific sound signals by leisure is not great particularly non RYA trained. It should be noted use of sound signals is enshrined in IRPCS & river byelaws.

Standards of leisure users was discussed in the context of Olympics and crews boarding and landing from their boats on moorings in the river using their tenders. ID commented there had been 30 recent incidents involving people transferring using tenders. Use of tenders would be discouraged and arrangements would be put in place for dedicated taxi service.

- vi. Welfare - PC, raised issues concerning difficulty in access to ships at Jurgens jetty and ships crew not being allowed ashore through the site by the Terminal owners.
- vii, Port Health - DR no issues to raise.

8. River Events

Firework display @1930 5th November 2010.

Thames Sailing Barge race 23rd June 2011

9. River Works

i. London Gateway

Reclamation work progressing, construction of new Shell jetty is complete and fitting out of jetty has commenced. At this point in time only one dredger is working.

Sea Reach Centre line buoy moves, first move is expected to take place in December and further buoy moves will take place in the New Year as required. completion.

ii. Belvedere Waste and Crossrail

Fitting out of waste plant continues work on jetty is completed. Date for Belvedere Waste entering service but it is expected to be soon.

iii. Crossrail

It is planned that spoil material from building of Crossrail will be moved to Wallasea island by river. The RSPB has plans to build pontoons for wading birds at Wallasea island. It is expected that motorised barge traffic movements will commence spring 2011 using craft under 80 metres in length.

iii. Marina developments

RS reported Greenhithe marina developer has made a new application to Local Authority. Suitable access and parking are likely to be main issues developer will need to address if they are to be successful.

iv. Wind Generation, riverside locations

AT reports Tilbury wind generation is going ahead, core sampling work is being undertaken now, construction expected to start sometime in the New Year.

v. Town Pier Gravesend

Pontoon for Town pier, invitations for tender took place 2 months ago, nothing further to report.

vi. Lower Thames crossings - nothing new to report.

vii. Brit Ned cable

Work on the Brit Ned cable inter connector is almost complete.

10. Any other Business

AT repairs and maintenance work to the middle gates to take 12 weeks full lock remains operational.

JW asked whether there were any plans to use Holehaven creek for additional moorings during the Olympics. There are no plans to use creek.

ID asked what are the minimum manning levels for safety vessels working on the river. RS stated this is addressed by Health & Safety risk assessment by operator/ construction developer.

RO commented on the Targe ASD tugs now having contracts with CSAV and MOL lines for tug provision for their TCS ships. Commented their practice of push pull working, what happens in the event of an engine break down?

11. Time/ Date Of next meeting

1030 / Thursday 5th May 2011