



# Annual report of the Marine Safety Management System (SMS) performance and incident statistics 2018

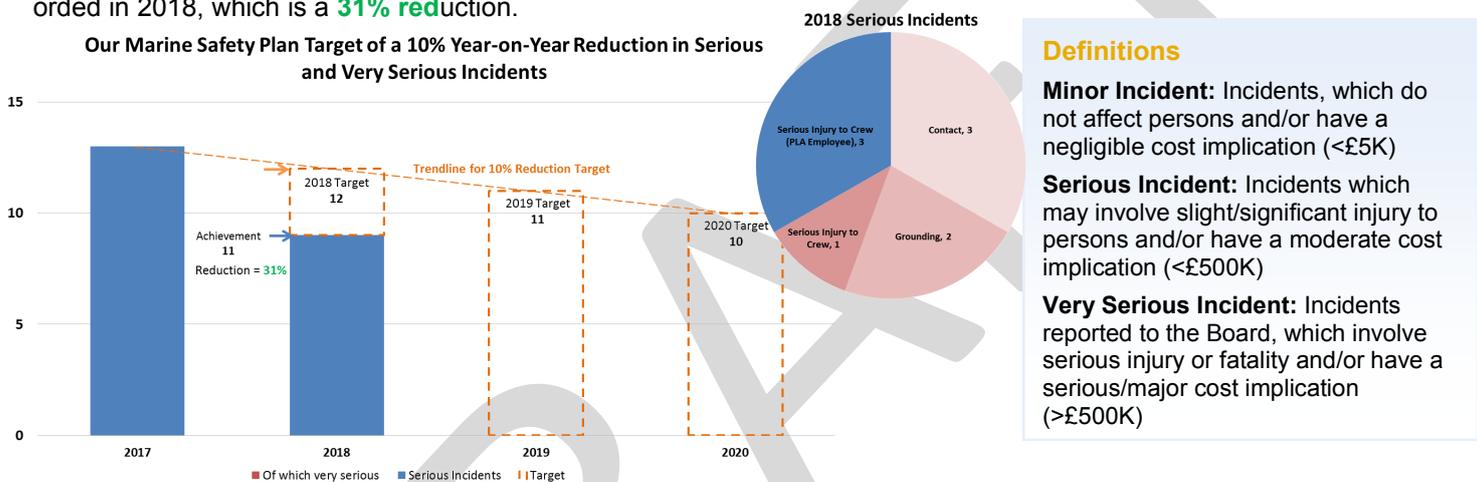
## Year 1 of the Marine Safety Plan (2018-2020)

### Marine incident targets for the period of the Marine Safety Plan

The targets set in the PLA's Marine Safety Plan were aimed at reducing incidents year-on-year— 3 of which were **fully achieved** and 1 **partially achieved** in 2018:

**Target 1—Reduce the number of serious marine incidents by 10% every year, based on the number at the start of the plan** **Fully Achieved**  
**31% Reduction**

Our target to achieve a 10% reduction in 2018 was 12 or fewer serious incidents. Only 9 serious incidents were recorded in 2018, which is a **31% reduction**.



**Definitions**

**Minor Incident:** Incidents, which do not affect persons and/or have a negligible cost implication (<£5K)

**Serious Incident:** Incidents which may involve slight/significant injury to persons and/or have a moderate cost implication (<£500K)

**Very Serious Incident:** Incidents reported to the Board, which involve serious injury or fatality and/or have a serious/major cost implication (>£500K)

- No incidents were classed as 'very serious' and Zero serious incidents in 2018 were subject to MAIB investigations.
- Contacts are the prominent serious navigational incident type (3) but 1 less than last year. Injuries to PLA staff afloat are now recorded within these statistics—there were 3 such incidents.

**Target 2—Reduce the number of inland waterway, non-passenger vessel incidents by 10% every year, based on the number at the start of the plan** **Not Achieved**  
**12% Increase**

**Definitions**

**Commercial Shipping:** Incidents involving sea-going commercial ships.

**Inland Waterways:** Incidents involving intra-port / 'categorised waters' commercial vessels, both passenger and freight

**Recreational:** Incidents involving non-commercial vessels

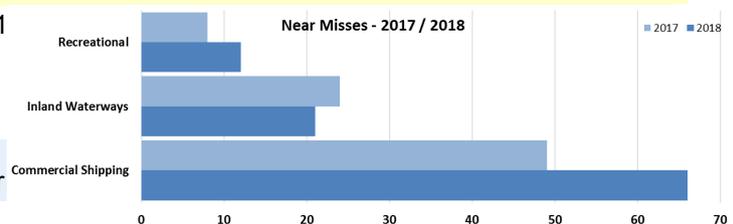
- Increase** in inland waterway, non-passenger vessel incidents—12%, from 41 to 46.
- Decrease** in the number of serious incidents— 4 out of the 9 serious incidents in 2018 were Inland Waterways Non-Passenger, 3 less than 2017.
- All vessel types have seen an increase in incidents in 2018—28% for Commercial Shipping and 7% for Recreation. The proportion of all incidents that were inland waterways, non-passenger was 20% - **down** from 22% in 2017. The increase in incidents, near misses and deficiency reports of all vessel types may suggest an improving reporting culture.

**Target 3—No serious or very serious incidents resulting from errors made by PLA Pilots** **Not Achieved**  
**1 Incident**

- Unfortunately, 1 incident resulted from an error by a PLA Pilot. There was another serious incidents involving a ships with an embarked Pilot, however this was a result of a mechanical breakdown,

**Target 4—Increase the number of near miss reports by 10% year-on-year** **Achieved—22% Increase**

- There were 99 Near Miss reports in 2018, compared to 81 in 2017—a 22% increase.
- There were fewer Near Miss reports in Inland Waterways (both passenger and non-passenger).
- Fewer Near Miss reports have been labelled as Near Miss—Contact, and many more have been labelled under 'Navigation Hazard' (from 14 in 2017 to 40 in 2018)



To view our new Plan, visit: <http://www.pla.co.uk/Safety/Marine-Safety-Plan>

**Target 5—Complete incident investigations within the following targets:**

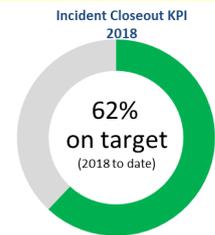
- **Minor Incidents, near misses and deficiencies – close within 4 weeks**
- **Serious / Very Serious Incidents – produce an investigation report within 6 weeks and close within 10 weeks of being reported**

Partially Achieved

62%

44%

- The 4 week target has been achieved for 242 (**62%**) of all incidents, near misses and deficiencies in 2018—up from 55% in 2017. There has been an improvement in meeting this target, even though incidents, near misses and deficiencies have increased 27%.
- Of the **9** serious incidents in 2018, 4 met the 10-week closeout target (compared to 3 in 2017), another 3 have missed the target and 2 are still under investigation within target.
- Where prosecutions are involved, we also aim to pass the appropriate documentation to our lawyers within 10 weeks.

**Target 6—Initiate a safety campaign aimed at improving the Port's safety culture, focussing on reducing incidents caused by breakdowns**

Achieved

- Four simple animations were launched as part of Maritime Safety Week.
- 40% of Inland Waterways breakdowns are caused by debris in the water – mainly ropes. 'bin it'.
- 18% are caused by electrical faults (wiring and switch faults). 'check it'.
- 10% by overheating (largely failed water pumps) 'cool it'.
- 8% by fuel problems (for example blocked filters and contamination) 'clean it'.

**Objectives to fulfil the Navigational Safety Policy**

To continuously improve the management of marine safety and toward achieving zero harm

**1: Safety Management Systems – Red Tape Challenge**

The red tape challenge on the PLA Regulatory Framework is underway, with a number of changes been consulted on internally with a view to reduce the volume by approximately 50%. This awaits final legal scrutiny before public consultation commences, which is planned for 2019.

**2: Pilotage – Provide a pilotage service of well-trained, suitably qualified and authorised pilots, resulting in no serious or very serious incidents caused by errors made by PLA Pilots**

The pilot service level achieved over 90% for 2018 and has been above 95% since August 2018. A review of Pilot Authorisations and Training is commencing. The number of Sea & River Pilot Incidents are reducing.

**3: Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) – Operational capability and delivery**

VTS service levels have been maintained at 99.9%, meeting our target. A means of recording and reporting positive interventions by VTS staff has been developed

**4: Conservancy and Hydrographic Survey delivery**

35% of the outstanding hydrographic surveys have been carried out in 2018, therefore on track to achieve the 3 year target over the life of the Marine Safety Plan

A review of the authority's long term survey strategy to ensure it remains relevant and fit for purpose is ongoing and in hand to be achieved by the end of the Marine Safety Plan.

An agreement with the UKHO is in place for the publication of larger scale PLA Electronic Navigation Charts for use in ship ECDIS systems, in order to provide port users with the most appropriate scale electronic chart products for their vessel which comply with national and international requirements.

**5: Vessel Licensing**

In 2018, the vessel licensing and vessel surveying functions of the PLA were separated. Applications for licences are now made through the Planning and Environment Department, and vessel surveys are made with the marine surveyors.

**6: Management of River Activities and Works**

The Thames supported around 400 events during 2018, including gun salutes, filming and fireworks

Event organisers to improve risk assessments and safety plans. River closures in 2018 were predominately for regular, long-standing upriver rowing events, continuing to meet our objectives.

For the Thames Tideway Tunnel (TTT) project, all marine activities have been managed and risk assessed using site specific risk assessments and a project wide cumulative navigation risk assessment, with the latter reviewed monthly.

**7: Emergency Preparedness and Response**

A Thames Resilience Group has been established to liaise more effectively with stakeholders along the river in relation to resilience and other emergency response requirements. A more detailed and robust schedule of regular emergency training, exercises and table-tops is in place to improve our response capability. Moving forward, this is planned to include external stakeholders such as local authorities and the emergency services.

**8: Enforcement and Prosecution**

The PLA continues to support efforts to bring into force the same drink-drive and drugs legislation for recreational users as applies already to commercial users under the Railways and Transport Safety Act 2003.

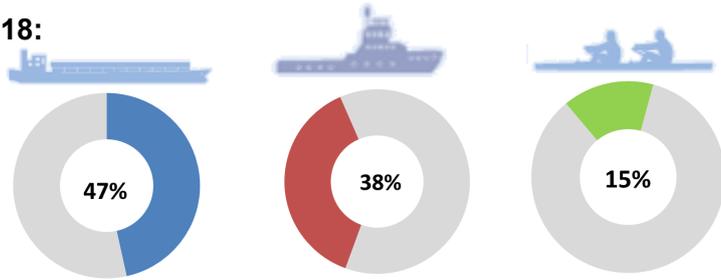


# Incident Statistics

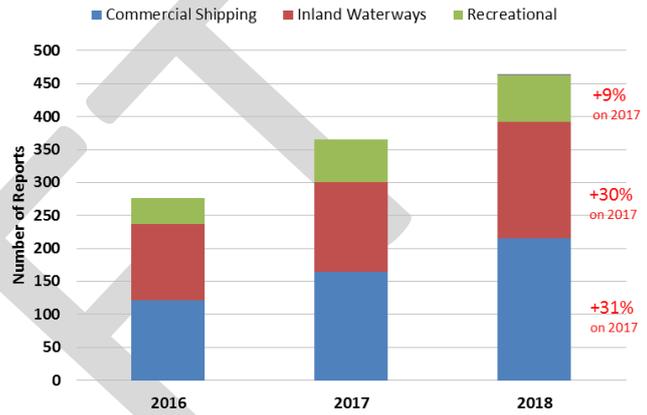
## A closer look at our marine incident reports in 2018

**There were 464 reports in 2018, an increase of 99 on 2017 - up 27%**  
 21% of the reports were near misses, a similar percentage to last year

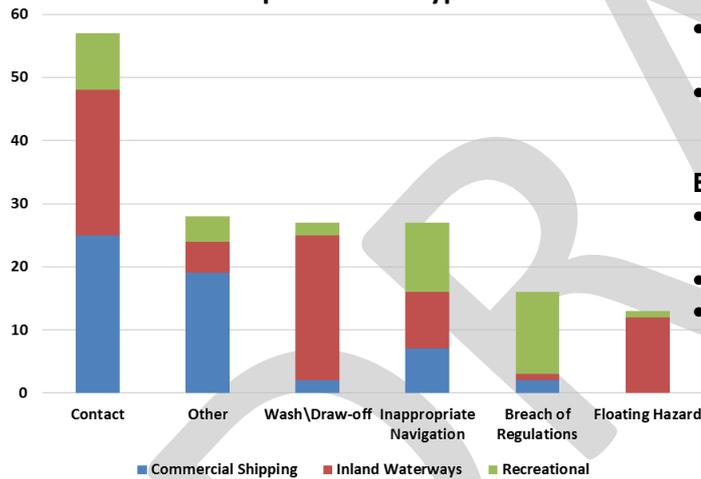
2018:



- These are the proportions of reports in 2018 from Commercial Shipping, Inland Waterways and Recreational Vessels, which have remained similar over the last 3 years.



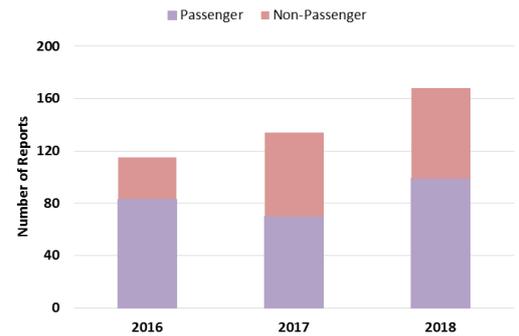
**Top 6 incident Types**



- The top category (incidents only) is Contact, making up 25% of all incidents—a similar proportion to 2017.
- 'Other' incidents are mainly in the Commercial Shipping' sector, and include machinery defects, parted tow ropes and fouled propellers.

**Breaches of Regulation—2017/18 comparison**

- There are fewer breaches of regulation, particularly of commercial vessels
- Increase seen for recreational vessels—8 to 13.
- Jet Skis navigating in breach of Thames Byelaws largely account for this and the PLA has increased its efforts to inform, educate and where necessary, take enforcement action in this area.



**Inland Waterways**

- In 2018, 59% of inland waterways incidents, near misses and deficiencies were caused by passenger vessels.
- Passenger journeys are slightly lower than last year.

**Near Miss reports in 2018**

- **22% increase on 2017**, as well as a large increase in pilot ladder deficiency reports—from 30 to 50 (+66%) and safe access deficiency reports—from 3 to 8 (+166%).

**Near Miss Case Study**

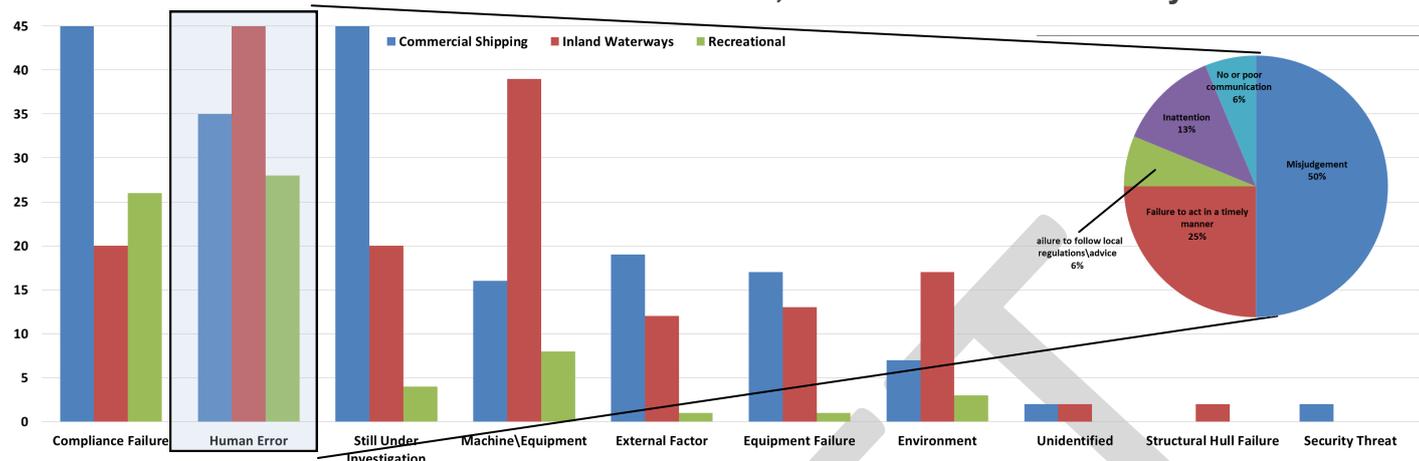
Reporting Near Misses allows us to prevent serious incidents before there occur. Don't dismiss a Near Miss

A motor cruiser, navigating outward bound, encountered a near miss with a tug pushing a 1500 ton barge heading inward bound near London Bridge on the flood tide. Isophase lights were being activated and the tug sounded five short blasts as a warning. The tug had to take all way off to avoid a serious collision.

The PLA held an educational discussion with the Master of the motor cruiser emphasising the importance of passage planning, keeping to starboard side of the fairway and the seriousness of the near miss with the tug and tow. We highlight this incident in particular, as freight movements on the tidal Thames will continue to increase with additional movements navigating to/from the eleven Tideway Tunnel sites and will rise further in 2019.

## Causal analysis—Incidents, Near Misses and Deficiencies

25% of the occurrences in 2018 were Human Error, which is **down** from last year's 30%



### Human Error

- 2018 has seen a reduction in Human Error as the causal factor (5%) which is largely due to Commercial Shipping—dropping from 45 in 2017 to 35 in 2018. Inland Waterways and Recreation are up slightly.
- The proportion being misjudgement is up from 23% to 50% in 2018. This increase is mainly in Inland Waterways.
- When discounting 'Deficiency' reports, Human Error in 2018 accounts for 34% (down from 40% last year).

### Compliance Failure

- 47% of all occurrences in 2018 were attributed to Compliance Failure. This has increased dramatically over the last few years, particularly on last year— from only 26% in 2017.
- This is largely due to an increase in reporting defects on Commercial Ships—mainly reporting of Pilot Ladder Deficiencies, showing an improving reporting culture. Inland Waterways also has a slight increase.
- Pilot Ladder Deficiency reports are up from 30 in 2017 to 50 in 2018—a 60% increase.

### Machine / Equipment

- Inland Waterways has seen a dramatic increase in the number of occurrences caused by Machine/Equipment failures.—31 in 2017 up to 52 in 2018. The majority are passenger vessels. Commercial Shipping has conversely seen a decrease.

### Enforcement undertaken in 2018<sup>1</sup>

A summary of the enforcement carried out in 2018, which can be from education and advice, to informal verbal warnings, through formal written warnings to action in the Courts

Educational discussions and letters issued by harbourmasters and Marine River Inspectors with river users involve a variety of subjects in 2018, so

***“Keep a proper lookout” “Report incidents” “Plan your passage” “Don’t impede larger ships”***  
***“Maintain secure moorings” “Navigate on the starboard side of the channel” “Follow Byelaws”***  
***“Listen on the appropriate VHF channel” “Wear your lifejacket!” “Maintain your Pilot Ladder!”***

3 verbal warnings have been issued in 2018—2 for failing to report an incident, as per Thames Byelaw 8 1 under Section 108 of the PLA Act for dangerous overtaking manoeuvres.

**11** harbourmaster warnings have been issued in 2018:

- 3 regarding Dangerous Navigation
- 1 for failing to display adequate navigation lights and navigating through a closed bridge arch
- 1 for navigating on incorrect side of fairway & failing to keep a listening watch on the appropriate VHF channel.
- 3 regarding a ship's Pilot Ladder arrangements not adhering to SOLAS and IMO Regulations
- 1 regarding Passage Planning, adherence to Rule 9 of the Colregs, and dangerous navigation.
- 1 regarding dangerous navigation and River Byelaw 9 - Drink and Drugs
- 1 for a failure to comply with the Pilotage Act 1987 & dangerous navigation.

**1** Harbourmaster's Reprimand has been issued for dangerous navigation and failure to adhere to Rule 6 (Safe Speed) and Rule 5 (Look Out) of the Colregs. The persons involved are undergoing additional training.

2 incidents resulted in the Master of the vessel being subject to their company's internal disciplinary procedures and suspended from duty.