



# Notes of PLA Harbour Master's Recreational Navigation Group (PHRNG)

Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 31, 2018 at Pinnacle House, 23-26 St Dunstan's Hill London,  
EC3N 8HN

## Chair

Mark Towns MT Harbour Master Upper – PLA

## Attendees

Darren Knight	DK	Assistant Harbour Master Upper (Recreational) - PLA
Sarah Broad	SB	Nav Safety Systems Coordinator – PLA (Notetaker)
Banny	B	NCBA
Kevin East	KE	British Canoeing
Nick Edmunds	NE	Richmond Canoe Club
Peter Finch	PF	River Thames Society
Richard Hart	RH	ATYC, DSP/RYA L&SE
Alex Hester	AH	Chelsea Kayak Club
Tony Reynolds	TR	TRRC Regional Water Safety Advisor
Peter Finch	PF	RTS
Barry Singleton	BS	DBA – The Barge Association
Roger Squires	RS	Inland Waterway Association
Nadine Collins-Smith	NCS	Head of Thames Vision Delivery - PLA

1. **Apologies:** Bill Mitchell, Chris Winnington Ingram, Mike Chamber, Pam Chart, Ray Blair & Mike Wardle.
2. **Minutes of last PHRNG – Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2018**  
Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed. (1030 is the agreed start time for all future meetings with lunch following).
3. Actions from Previous Meeting(s)
  - Revised Basic Navigational Signage for various points along the river – have been installed. **(Closed)**
  - Tidal Stream - flow measurement control - to be provided on chart to members AHMR to discuss with the PLA Hydrographic Team about the possibility of providing tidal stream data at various points along the tidal Thames.

## Action:

- PLA to identify specific locations for flow measurement control (possibly: Kew/Cremorne and Blackfriars Bridge) (noting that the value of the information is on the bends)
- Action to take place 3 hours after high water on an ebb tide spring
- Data to be shared with PHRNG Group for value, opinion and feedback
- Decision then to be made whether to upload to the webpage or add to tide table books.

**Action:** DK to send to members by close of play next week (9<sup>th</sup> November) for comment

**Post Meeting Note:** a PLA Hydrographic team member will be attending the next meeting to showcase various tidal information with the group and what will be most relevant to the group/Port users.

- Kew Bridge Pontoon – now removed and repairs to steps completed. **(Closed)**
- Tide Gauge Hammersmith – no plans to go ahead with this as we have air draught gauges to cover and do not tend to have any issues with these and the addition will not make any difference currently. **(Closed)**
- Causeway at Kew Bridge – Recreational activity is accessed via draw dock, works to see if a causeway could be provided, looking to see if something can be done. Cost/funding may be an issue – PLA are looking into this. Any external interested parties are to be encouraged to look at funding for this. Looking at a shuttered concrete causeway (of approximately 40 metres). The ideal solution elevated structure which mud can pass through.
- Notice to Mariners – search function – new system is being trailed in house which will eventually go onto the website and date will be added to emailed notices in the future.
- PLA Open Day – Pontoon for visiting vessels – action closed as PLA could not arrange suitable and safe access due to be an ISPS site. **(Closed)**
- TTNC Tideway River Trip – action closed, trip conducted in July with a second trip already being planned. **(Closed)**
- Automated External Defibrillator (Class V Vessels) – PLA Deputy Harbour Master to raise awareness at the next MCA Class V Meeting (week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> November)
- Water Temperature Info – no data held, data would not be uploaded onto the PLA App as it is external data that would be hosted. Suggestion to put a link to the EA's information on the PLA's website/Twitter/Boating on the Thames – this would help with safety. Share the link to EA's info via Twitter/Boating on the Thames. App – PLA app does not hold any external companies data. NE to put on club website and mention to waterways EA team.

**Action:** PLA speak with the EA so that the link can go on BoTT website.

- Coaching skills – information forwarded to Paul Hyman and 'Look Ahead' and 'Take a Look' to be included in the next Rec User Guide (which is currently under review and due for print early December). **(Closed)**

4. a. **Mooring & Marina's Operators Forum** – PLA hosted which was initially a meeting to talk about mooring availability in summer months but now acts as general update, with this one more focused on the proposed Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf Bridge.

**RS raised concerns that** British Waterways Marinas are proposing to change Lime House Marina Basin. Five different versions of planning applications have already been put forward – this will include finger pontoons being installed (members of the group oppose this). As this is the only basin capable to take all vessels. Proposals will obstruct any rattle space. This will also take away flexibility for mooring large vessels.

A question was raised to ask if moorings at Limehouse are available for general use, it is deemed not sensible as Class V's pass by here often and create wash.

**Action** – DK to go to the next Moorings meeting to ask about this – changes to moorings to go into standing agenda items for this meeting. PLA to speak to Planning Team to see if any applications have been put in from British Waterways to modify Limehouse..

b. **Tidal Thames Water Safety Forum/London & Thames Water Safety Team** – MT gave a quick overview of the group – PLA are aligned with Met Police/RNLI/London Fire Brigade, MCA and London Ambulance Services to reduce drownings on Thames. There are thirty suicides per year; some are accidental due to drink etc. The focus is on the Kingston area in particular. PLA are taking forward public lifesaving equipment/new bridges ensuring prevention activated. The PLA are dealing with the retrospective boroughs. Exploring what measures can be taken to make it less easy for an individual to jump from a bridge. There are good examples where these issues have been tackled – using netting underneath a bridge etc. PLA are working in conjunction with the NHS and Marine Policing Service so that individuals can access mental health services more efficiently. There is continuing work to improve response on the river and on the education. PLA have written to Royal Palaces to see if a royal patron could help with this work, the mayor's office have also been contacted.

Netting Prevention – there is an opportunity with illuminated bridge project, could something be done? – This is on HMU's radar to be looked at. A question was raised as to whether or not CCTV could prevent suicides – MT said possibly not as a large number of monitors connected to CCTV are viewed by one individual and only looked at after something has occurred.

5. **Publications:**

- a. App – second edition is out – no major changes. Tying the Notice to Mariners in with the app and making them more 'interactive' is proving to be quite a challenge.
- b. Red Tape Challenge – Byelaws & General Directions have been reviewed and cut down, some GD's and Byelaws have been removed. Rewriting is to make simpler, with the solicitors at the moment then Dft. Could be three years to get through system. Condense regulations for a port information guide – interactive PDF for everything for navigating on Thames. Port information guide to get moving – ongoing over next few months.

- c. Combined Paddling & Rowing code – DK to start work in November on combining the two codes. The idea is to condense rowing code and combine into one. May have to be some tidying in areas and some variations – there are also British rowing & canoeing documents – this should be looked at in conjunction with the review as they need commonality. This needs to be a standard go to document. There were no objections to combining documents from the group and all think it is a good idea. DK suggested that the combined code Call it the Tideway Code? (Main title) this can be decided when the code is revised.

- 6. **Thames Vision Support and Promotion (London Sport)** – Nadine Collins Smith introduced herself as the new Head of Thames Vision Delivery – PLA. Intention of the vision is to increasing use of the river. At the recent Thames London Waterways Forum – the Vision Progress report launched <https://www.pla.co.uk/assets/visionprogress22018web.pdf>

Alistair Gale (Director of Corporate Affairs) has initially led on this. Nadine's role is to work with stakeholders and make sure vision is being taken forward. The updates in document – creation of best practice case studies these can be viewed on the PLA website. Areas to be focused on over next few years of the vision – integration of water sports facilities in east London – this is a priority for PLA Chief Executive. Vision is also supporting participation, creating strategy with clubs – ongoing process. There is a baseline figure in place – 1,900 river users sitting behind vision, building on this. Work with GLA, who have notified their stakeholders about this. A formal response has been sent highlighting various opportunities to participate on the river. Looking to work more closely with London Sport, team that offers support and development to clubs, have free listings service. Aim now is to support centres and clubs with free listings – promote participation membership etc. Open Sessions – leaflet circulated – fee marketing service. Producing an online guide to posting information – **sent with the minutes of the meeting.**

Thames Vision to promote use of defibrillators any safety aspects will be taken forward through the Thames Safety Forum. Defibs need to be on safety equipment radar – this will be fed back by MT to the TS forum.

- 7. **Events (refer to Future Events on the River List)** – New Years Eve – Notice to Mariners – M67/2018 – relates to changes in relation to recreational vessels and licensing. Commercial vessels are vetted through met police for safety and security. Met police have been challenged by Met Gold about rec vessels and security risks.

This was highlighted – met police have put a new process in place whereby pre registration of rec vessels will be required if wishing to attend NYE celebrations this will follow the same process as Olympics. PLA are supporting this. There are no caps on number of vessels to be registered.

Tideway Event – Andrew Triggs Hodge – working for Tideway – dealing with a large scale event on river. They are proposing an event which will coincide with

the Annual Barrier closure day– with vessel racing between Putney and Greenwich. PLA have concerns and speaking with Tideway as this would be an exceptionally large river closure.

Apprentices barge drive – cancelled because of the weather – PF asked if there was anyway to communicate this. I.e. an event is cancelled on the events calendar.

**Action:** DK ask IT team to see if there is an option to do this or communicate that an event has been cancelled at short notice. Events calendar is on line – member highly encouraged sending any forthcoming events for 2019 to DK.

8. **Incident Report** – Highlights the fact that compliance with regulations is an issue and no passage plans being prepared. There also shows an increase in mechanical breakdowns – a campaign for ‘Breakdowns’ has been produced, but will not be released until Spring 2019. Case Study 3 shows that a vessel was stopped – due to drink driving. The Jet Ski chase from Essex was mentioned – the Jet Ski’s were chased back out of Central London at 45 knots by the Police. Culprits were photographed – facial shots and ID numbers were identified (three culprits), two have no fixed abode; one does have and will be prosecuted for not complying with navigation regulations.

Case Study 2 – Not complying with isophase lights – question was raised - do users from upriver understand what an isophase light is? The information is on the PLA website - PLA are currently sourcing signs like those at Thames Barrier – and will trial this during Tideway project – MT has aspiration to change lights to green and red. This would make life easier for river users.

Ebb Tide stats are updated to end of September in the report - with large periods of time remaining in Black Flag Status.

Thames Water has dropped plans to take water from above Teddington Lock – PLA and group pleased with change.

9. **River Works**

- a) I **Hammersmith Bridge** – pushed back another year – July/August 2019 – no further updates.

II **Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf Bridge** – Proposal is for a pedestrian cycling/footbridge – TfL have undertaken preliminary work & looked at proposed costings. This has been discussed with the mayor who has advised to continue with work and any future options. There are a number of areas PLA does not agree with TfL mainly with the alignments. MT has meeting with TfL next week. Work needs to be carried out on navigational risk assessment for bridge – to be able to get cruise ships and war ships through, recreational vessels and masted craft. Air draft is another issue. Consultation to be communicated towards end of 2018 from TfL. The bridge will be vertically lifting – PLA in a position of having a bridge of a reasonable height – Potentially Tower Bridge style, which is not ideal. Will have a larger opening than Tower Bridge. PLA will be going to Wallingford simulator to test the bridge – and then feedback to TfL with regards to the design.. To close the bridge could potentially take a long time, air draught needs to be high enough. An electric ferry proposal has been proposed as another

option. The bridge would primarily be for commuters, and would be operative for the majority of the day. The PLA would encourage members of the group to make representations on this proposed project. For the Consultation Report please visit the following website: [www.tfl.gov.uk/R2CW-crossing](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/R2CW-crossing).

Contact: [consultations@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@tfl.gov.uk)

**III Nine Elms Footbridge** – This project is still slowly progressing, as reported at last meeting, nothing else to feed back on.

NE noted that Richmond Council are looking at the potential for a pedestrian bridge, initial plans were seen a year ago. DK said that one of the plans was outside of the PLA's jurisdictions. If a plan for a new bridge is to go ahead then it needs to be in line with the specification of the bridges in the surrounding area. In one of the planning documents a cost is quoted and also mentions a PLA sum of money (River Works Licensing) this implies that someone from the PLA has been asked a question. MT suspects that they may have looked at the cost for an existing bridge they may have and tried to work something out from there. MT reiterated that no costing would come from the property team until such time that scaled drawings have been provided and where the bridge would be situated. MT has said this is probably a guess in this instance.

**b) Fulham FC** – construction starting in May 2019, currently out for tender. PLA have had meetings with some of the companies. Not much detail at the moment, PLA will be engaging through the process. Increased lighting – no significant issues raised. Floodlights at night a problem, building out because of the shoals. PLA will be encouraging barges etc. to bring materials upriver at night. Jack up barges will be moored and delivery barges – the structure will potentially be 40 – 50m out onto the river.

**c) Tideway Tunnel** – still plenty of worksites on the river, tunnelling to start at end of year in the Kirtling Street Area - Battersea Worksites have been a challenge.

**d) Illuminated Bridges** – work to start end of 2018/beginning 2019 – PLA supportive of this project.

#### **10) Any Other Business**

- Putney Bride Canoe Club –poorly lit vessels or not at all – encourage reporting this – note to go to Harbour Service Launches to look out.
- London Waterways Forum – Albert Dock Presentation – encouraging – boatyard Class V Operators - aspect is something that is being worked on. Existing Gallions Marina (new owners) – concerned this should be maintained within the Albert Dock Project – Keep a check on – AHMR to visit and make contact with new owners. Thames Vision to review the master plans. In later stages institute of technology will be situated here too.
- Chiswick Pier – ID's for Kayaks – pointed towards paddling code – should this be adopted – centres and club owned vessels should be complying with

paddling code; it is up to privately owned companies to do as they wish in relation to this. PLA comfortable with where they stand on this currently. Advice & Guidance is not a requirement.

**Date of Next Meeting:**

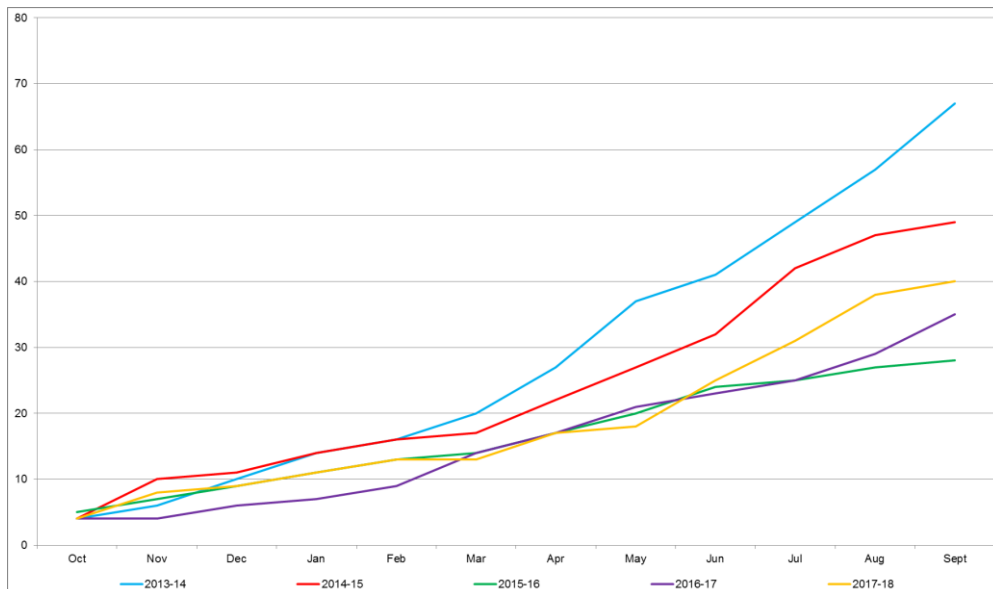
Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 @ 1030 (followed by lunch) Outlook calendar invitation to follow.



# ANNUAL PHRNG INCIDENT REVIEW

## 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2017 TO 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2018

### Accumulative Recreational Incident Statistics



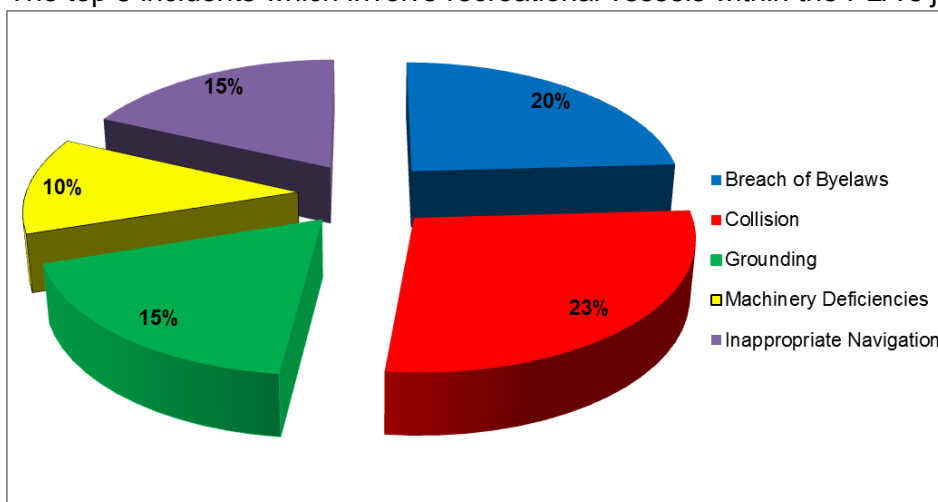
➤ 40 reported recreational incidents between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2018

➤ 40% less than compared to the same period in 2013-14, however there has been an upward trend since 2015.

➤ Recreational incidents account for 24% of all incidents in the upper harbour master district.

### Top 5 Incident Categorisation (Oct 2017 – Sept 2018)

The top 5 incidents which involve recreational vessels within the PLA's jurisdiction are demonstrated below:



- 81% due to Compliance Failure and 19% due to Human Error, however the overriding factor is failing to comply with the rules and regulations.

- The other main causal factors is due to no or poor passage plan and the PLA would like to remind representative bodies of SOLAS Regulation 34 which requires Master's to ensure that the intended voyage has been planned thoroughly.

The PLA continues to encourage sustainable use of the tidal Thames for sporting, leisure and recreational activities, however it is important that all river users comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREGs), local byelaws and general directions and the PLA's easy to digest Codes of Practice, to ensure that all activities are conducted in a safe environment.

The PLA continues to ask representative to encourage greater reporting of incidents and near misses by your members, to ensure we gain a clear understanding of what navigational issues are being experienced by recreational mariners on the tidal Thames. We would also ask that you remind all members of the requirements as detailed in Thames Byelaw 8, which requires all incidents to be reported immediately to London VTS (VHF Channel 14 or 020 8855 0315) and followed up with a written report as soon as practicable, following the verbal report to the Harbour Master.

### Case Studies

#### ➤ **Poor passage planning**

Master of a narrowboat navigating inward bound with the flood tide was approaching Barnes Railway Bridge and about to transit No.1 arch; however on approaching the bridge he saw a rower heading outward bound in the Inshore Zone. The Master of the narrowboat steered to Port to transit the Centre arch, but the manoeuvre was undertaken too late and the tide set the narrowboat onto the buttress of the rail bridge. Emergency services attend and towed the narrowboat to safety. Upon investigation it was apparent the Master was not fully prepared for the passage, as the vessel had suffered a mechanical failure the previous day in Central London. The Master was reminded of the importance of preparing a passage plan thoroughly (SOLAS Regulation 34) and was supplied with various educational materials.

#### ➤ **Motor cruiser near miss with tug and tow**

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.

#### ➤ **Don't mix booze and boat – Boat smart, be sober**

A motor cruiser navigating outward bound from Chertsey ran out of fuel in the vicinity of Coin Street Moorings. A PLA Harbour Service Launch attended the scene to assist, upon arrival the vessel had managed to moor on the midstream moorings and it was evident that the four persons aboard the vessel were intoxicated. The Master insisted that he had *“only had a couple of drinks”*. The Marine River Inspector (MRI) did not consider it safe to tow the vessel to a pier with shore access, due to the intoxication of the persons aboard but agreed to take persons aboard the launch to go ashore to gain more fuel. During the transit all four persons were breathalysed and only one person passed the test. It was agreed that the launch would return them to their vessel, once they had gained fuel and escort them to St. Katherine's Pier for the night. The Master of the vessel was issued with a Harbour Master's Warning, along with a variety of educational documents and we stress to all mariners *“Don't mix booze and boat – Boat smart, be sober”*.

### Safety Bulletins

During this period the PLA has produced no safety bulletins and have no national/international reports to bring to members attention.

### PLA Ebb Tide Flag Stats

Since the 1st January 2018 to 30th September 2018 the PLA Ebb Tide Flag Stats are as follows and illustrated in the pie chart below:

The PLA reminds all recreational mariners to have up-to-date charts on board and not to rely solely on electric chart plotters to assist their navigation. Furthermore all river users should consult the PLA's Ebb Tide Flag Warning System, because the **'Black Flag – Caution – Low Fluvial Flows'** will assist you in planning your passage especially during the hours either side of low water when river users should expect chart datum or lower than chart datum depths.

