

SAFETY OF NAVIGATION **CONSULTATION NOTICE**

DRAFT THAMES BYELAWS 2008 INFORMAL PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION

Introduction

The Port of London Authority (PLA) has recently concluded a comprehensive review of the Port of London River Byelaws 1978 (as amended). The study was conducted as part of our work continuously to improve navigational safety standards on the tidal Thames. The byelaws were assessed in the light of the changing uses of the river, developments in technology. The process also included risk assessments done with experienced users of the Thames and discussions in a range of forums.

Through this work a number of changes to byelaws were identified including the:

- Removal of no longer relevant rules
- Simplification where possible
- Updating in the light of new techniques/approach
- Introduction of new byelaws, where needed

Consultation

This current, informal public consultation is the first stage of the consultation process. We are undertaking this additional stage of consultation so that port and river users and other interested parties have a further opportunity to raise concerns or issues prior to the next, formal consultation stage.

The feedback from this informal consultation will inform the byelaws we ultimately submit to the Department for Transport, who will undertake a statutory, formal consultation about them. Subject to any objections being resolved by that stage, the byelaws will be confirmed by the Secretary of State for Transport and will then become law.

Thames Byelaws 2008 – Review Process

Details about the process through which the byelaws were developed and the major changes proposed are set out below.

The new set of Thames Byelaws 2008 was developed through the extensive review and dialogue process we undertook. They will completely replace the 1978 River Byelaws, which will be revoked in full.

Whilst the majority of byelaws will remain the same, several new byelaws are proposed in support of the port's navigational safety management system and a number have been amended and developed in response to changing trades and port operations. The 'Steering and Sailing', 'Lights and Shapes' and 'Sound Signals' byelaws remain substantially unchanged. Three byelaws were transferred into General Directions in 2006 and will therefore be revoked. Finally, it is proposed also to revoke several byelaws as they are no longer relevant and appropriate, as a result of new procedures and modern communication methods and practices.

Summary of Main Changes

This list is provided as an indication of the main changes from the 1978 River Byelaws. It does not list every change and development. The attached consultation document details the full set of new Thames Byelaws 2008, including Appendix I and II.

New Byelaws:

- Byelaw 22 – Permission to Dive
- Byelaw 24 – Local Knowledge Endorsement
- Byelaw 53 – Discharge of Sewage into the Thames
- Byelaw 55 – Requirement to Survey and Inspect Operational Berths

Revised Byelaws:

- Byelaw 9 – Reporting Accidents and Incidents
- Byelaw 10 – Drink or Drugs
- Byelaw 11 – Boat Races, Regattas, Processions and Other River Events
- Byelaw 12 – Small, Fast Vessels
- Byelaw 15 – Water-skiing and Other Similar Activities
- Byelaw 16 – Use of Personal Watercraft
- Byelaw 18 – Speed Limit
- Byelaw 23 – Bathing and Swimming
- Byelaw 35 – Hydrofoil Vessels, Hovercraft and Vessels exceeding a speed of 12kts
- Byelaw 49 – General Prohibitions (Richmond Lock)
- Byelaw 52 – Protection of the Foreshore
- Byelaw 59 – Advertisements

Byelaws not carried forward into the Thames Byelaws 2008*:

- Byelaw 6 – Restrictions of movement of certain vessels – Transferred to General Directions 2006
- Byelaw 7 – Persons on the Bridge – Transferred to General Directions 2006
- Byelaw 37 – Vessel requiring Waterman – Revoked
- Byelaw 38 – Gravesend Reach – Revoked
- Byelaw 39 – Signals for Port Health Authority – Revoked
- Byelaw 40 – Vessels approaching Tower Bridge – Revoked
- Byelaw 41 – Restrictions on Towing and Pushing – Transferred to General Directions 2006
- Byelaw 43 – Manning of Lighters – Revoked

* The byelaw reference numbers relate to the existing River Byelaws 1978

Feedback

Any comments you may have regarding the above proposals should be addressed, in writing, to Julian Parkes, Harbour Master(SMS) at the address below or by email: cn@pola.co.uk to arrive no later than **Friday 25 July 2008**.

6th June 2008

Port of London Authority
London River House
Royal Pier Road
Gravesend, Kent DA12 2BG

DAVID SNELSON
CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER



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www.portoflondon.co.uk

