



Navigation in Restricted Visibility in Cowes Harbour

Daylight savings came to an end last weekend, moving the UK into Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and back from British Summer Time (BST), whilst in Cowes the final racing event of the season was held by the Cowes Etchells fleet.

Since our newsletter earlier in the month, and as many harbour users will be aware from widespread local and national reporting, on 21st October a Red Funnel vehicle ferry had an incident in the harbour in thick fog. Cowes Harbour Commission is fully aware of the concerns raised by a further Red Funnel incident. I would like to confirm that CHC, Red Funnel and the appropriate authorities are taking these incidents extremely seriously.

As a result of the investigation into the Red Funnel incident in September, and prior to the incident above, CHC issued a temporary General Direction restricting the movement of large vessels if visibility was 0.1 nautical miles or less. Following this second incident and after discussions with relevant stakeholders, this temporary General Direction has now been updated, as detailed in the lead story below.

I would like to remind stakeholders that the safety of harbour users remains CHC's top priority. However, whilst investigations are under way to identify lessons learnt and implement them to further improve navigational safety in the harbour, we are duty bound to ensure that we maintain Cowes as an "open port" and not to jeopardise vital emergency links to the mainland.

Capt. Stuart McIntosh - Cowes Harbour Master

Ferry incident in dense fog

On the morning of Sunday, 21st October 2018 and in restricted visibility conditions, an incident occurred within the Inner Harbour at approximately 0810 hours when a Red Funnel vehicle ferry came into contact with a yacht whilst entering Cowes Harbour and ran aground off East Cowes.

Cowes Harbour Commission (CHC) initiated its emergency response procedures and informed the relevant authorities of the incident. The harbour was closed to all traffic to allow the ferry to be re-floated and brought alongside the East Cowes Red Funnel terminal. There were no reports of any injuries to anyone who was involved in the incident. The ferry was later permitted by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) to sail back to Southampton.

In order to minimise any further risk to navigation and the environment, the 32ft cruising yacht that had sunk in the main harbour Small Craft Moorings Area as a result of the incident was salvaged on 22nd October. The recovery of the yacht was completed successfully by CHC and MMC Diving Services, and the vessel taken to the Cowes Harbour Services Boatyard at Kingston Wharf for inspection.

The MCA, Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB), Red Funnel and Cowes Harbour Commission are all conducting independent investigations into this Red Funnel ferry incident.

Red Funnel's CEO Fran Collins issued a further statement on 22nd October regarding Sunday's incident: "Our Southampton-East Cowes service is operating as scheduled today following yesterday's incident. An underwater survey and detailed inspection found that there was no damage to the ship, which is back in service and operating normally.

"Red Funnel has a proactive safety management culture and a detailed internal investigation into this incident has been initiated to identify the root cause. Whilst the investigation is underway, the navigational team involved in the incident will not be rostered on board, which is in accordance with best practice. As normal, the investigation will also consider any other similar incidents that have occurred, both internally and industry-wide, and will seek to identify any common factors. Prior to completion of the report, however, and as a precautionary measure, some amendments to our bridge operating procedures in reduced visibility have been made although these changes are not expected to impact on the reliability of the service or the frequency of weather-related cancellations."

As a result of the September incident in Cowes Harbour involving a Red Funnel ferry in fog and following this further incident on 21st October, CHC has updated the temporary General Direction on navigation in the harbour in restricted visibility. General Direction No. 3.18.2 (T) can be viewed [on the CHC website](#).

Cowes Harbour Master Capt. Stuart McIntosh stated: "Cowes Harbour Commission's number one priority is safety in the harbour. CHC takes these incidents extremely seriously and is prioritising the investigation to ensure that lessons will be learned and any actions or recommendations to further improve safety will be implemented as soon as possible. I confirm that CHC is working closely and with the full cooperation of Red Funnel's senior management team on these investigations into recent incidents in the harbour, and also assisting the MCA and MAIB with their investigations."

Harbour users are advised that CHC has also issued a Cowes Local Notice to Mariners, [No. 30 of 2018: Vessel Movements in Restricted Visibility Within Cowes](#).

Consultation on management of net fishing in coastal waters



The coastal waters of the Isle of Wight, Hampshire and Dorset are ecologically rich habitats, providing valuable nursery and refuge areas for a variety of fish species. The estuaries in these areas form an important migratory route for salmon and sea trout. Our harbours, estuaries and piers are also important places for people, offering a place to enjoy recreation, work or provide a source of income. In particular, these areas hold great significance for recreational and commercial fisheries

Southern Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) is undertaking a review of net fishing management arrangements for estuary, harbour and pier areas in the district. It is the Authority's objective to review and, if necessary, develop netting regulations. A public consultation is underway to seek views on a series of proposed measures. The closing date for this consultation is Friday, 7th December 2018.

[See the full article and consultation link on the CHC website](#)

Advisory Committee meeting topics of discussion and minutes

The Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee (CHAC) meeting last month was very well attended with 15 stakeholder representatives present, who were joined by CHC Chairman David Riley and Cowes Harbour Master Capt. Stuart McIntosh.

Items on the September 2018 agenda included the Cowes Outer Harbour Project, harbour safety, the Floating Bridge, Medina Yard, and the Red Funnel East Cowes development.

[Read the full story online with links to the minutes - revised constitution - stakeholder representatives - and contacting CHAC](#)





Cowes Local Notices to Mariners

We are pleased to report that email subscriptions to Cowes Local Notices to Mariners (LNTMs) have now reached 700 harbour users. May we encourage those harbour users not already signed up to receive direct email notification of Cowes LNTMs to consider subscribing. This will ensure you will be up to speed with all the important navigational information, enabling you to use the harbour safely. You can revoke your consent to receive emails at any time by using the SafeUnsubscribe@ link, found at the bottom of every email.

[Sign up to receive Cowes LNTMs](#)

See the lifeboats behind the rescues at new RNLI visitor centre

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution has built its inshore lifeboats at the charity's Inshore Lifeboat Centre in East Cowes since 1963. Now, thanks to a new Visitor and Heritage Centre at the site, you can see the work that goes into creating a lifesaving boat for yourself.

The Visitor and Heritage Centre depicts the history of the charity at the East Cowes site, and visitors can learn about how the charity's D class and Atlantic 85 class lifeboats are built, by going on a free tour of the site.

[Read more on the CHC website and find out how to book a free tour](#)

Photo: The Visitor and Heritage Centre at the Inshore Lifeboat Centre in East Cowes. Credit RNLI/Nathan Williams



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[Cowes Harbour Commission](#) | chc@cowes.co.uk | 01983 293952

[Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee](#) | chac@cowes.co.uk

Cowes Harbour Commission | Harbour Office, Town Quay, Cowes, PO31 7AS United Kingdom

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