

English Bay Routing System and amended Traffic Separation Scheme

Background

Under the *Canada Marine Act*, all Canada Port Authorities may establish practices, procedures and safety control zones for ships and safe boating and recreational activities, within port jurisdiction. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority is the federal agency responsible for maintaining the safe and efficient movement of marine traffic within the Port of Vancouver and has had navigational and safe boating regulations in place within its jurisdiction for a number of years to ensure the safety of all port users.

On March 18, 2019 the port authority issued a notice of amendment regarding:

- Replacing the existing Vancouver and Approaches Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) with the English Bay Routing System (EBRS).
- Establishing associated procedures for the operation of vessels within the EBRS.

Following the 30-day public comment period, the port authority reviewed and considered all feedback before making updates to the practices and procedures. The final changes reflect the port authority's commitment to promoting safety on the water for commercial traffic and recreational boaters alike, and can be found in the [Port Information Guide](#).

Overview

The port authority received eight responses during the comment period between March 18, 2019 and April 18, 2019. This consideration report summarizes comments received along with the port authority's response to comments pertaining to the proposed amendments.

Summary of comment received	Response from Vancouver Fraser Port Authority
<p>The Clear Lane Restrictions section of the EBRS procedures as proposed in the March 15, 2019 Notice of Amendment states: <i>MCTS may direct other vessels which may otherwise be required to use the EBRS, to a</i></p>	<p>The purpose of the Clear Lane broadcast is to ensure that large ships, restricted in their ability to maneuver, can safely navigate unimpeded by other ships through the EBRS. Considering there is adequate sea room outside of the EBRS, ships masters should be able to safely navigate outside of the EBRS to comply with a Clear Lane broadcast.</p>

<p><i>suitable holding area agreed to by the master near the edge of the EBRS, to allow a vessel requiring a "Clear Lane" to overtake with a suitable safe distance, until conditions are such that a transit of the EBRS can be safely executed.</i></p> <p>The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA) received a request to amend this section to instead require ships to be directed to holding areas outside the EBRS.</p>	<p>The VFPA has amended this section of the procedures, to read: <i>MCTS may direct other vessels, which would otherwise be required to use the EBRS, to a suitable holding area agreed to by the Master outside of the EBRS traffic lanes, to allow a vessel requiring a "Clear Lane" to overtake at a safe distance, until conditions are such that a clear transit of the EBRS can be safely executed.</i></p>
<p>VFPA received a request for clarification on the EBRS Clear Lane Restrictions as they relate to recreational vessel traffic in English Bay.</p>	<p>Recreational vessel traffic operating in English Bay should be aware of all hazards, including ships using the EBRS. Recreational vessel traffic must not impede ships using the EBRS, regardless of whether or not a ship using the EBRS requires a Clear Lane.</p> <p>Clear Lane Restrictions apply specifically to ships required to use EBRS (i.e those greater than 20 metres in length).</p> <p>Recreational vessel traffic, should also be familiar with the following requirements, applicable in and around the EBRS:</p> <p><i>Rule 10 of the Collision Regulations applies to all ships navigating in or near a routing system, including recreational vessel traffic.</i></p> <p><i>Every power-driven vessel (ship) of more than 20 metres in length is required to use the routing system when approaching or leaving Vancouver Harbour.</i></p> <p><i>Vessels of less than 20 metres in length, sailing vessels and vessels engaged in fishing are encouraged to avoid the routing system if possible. If the routing system is the safest route, then these vessels must not impede the safe passage of those vessels required to use the routing system, irrespective of if a clear lane is in effect or not.</i></p> <p><i>Perhaps most importantly as it relates to the EBRS, all vessels navigating in the EBRS transition zone (i.e. between QB buoy and the western TCZ-1 boundary) shall do so with particular caution.</i></p>

<p>VFPA received a request to clarify whether there is a priority order of transit for ships using the EBRS.</p>	<p>The same order of transit used for the TCZ-1 will apply to the EBRS. VFPA has amended the EBRS procedures to include a section titled, Order of Transit.</p>
<p>Request to clarify whether VFPA will further seek approval to allow for larger ship clearance into Second Narrows.</p>	<p>VFPA is not seeking approval to allow for larger ship clearance into Second Narrows.</p> <p>The amendments to Vancouver & Approaches Traffic Separation Scheme are specific to ship routing through English Bay, for ships approaching and departing Vancouver Harbour via the TCZ-1.</p>
<p>Request to clarify whether these amendments will facilitate tanker traffic to Westridge Marine Terminal for the purposes of the proposed Trans Mountain Expansion (TMX).</p>	<p>The proposed TSS amendments are not specifically associated with the Westridge Marine Terminal expansion. All ships calling the Westridge Marine Terminal that are greater than 20 metres in length will be required to use the amended ship routing system as they transit through English Bay.</p> <p>The objective for the realignment of the ship routing system in English Bay is to enhance the safety of navigation for large ships, specifically those greater than 300 metres in length, calling the Port of Vancouver.</p>
<p>As a result of the amendments, request that the port authority identify the different types of larger vessels that would be permitted to enter First Narrows and the maximum size of vessel that would be permitted to enter First Narrows.</p>	<p>Existing procedures dictate that the largest ship permitted to transit the First Narrows Traffic Control Zone is 366 metres in length. Ships larger than 366 metres in length and less than 400 metres in length are able to transit the First Narrows Traffic Control Zone, however require prior approval from VFPA.</p> <p>VFPA anticipates both container and cruise ships, which are upwards of 366 metres in length, to continue to call the Port of Vancouver regularly.</p>
<p>VFPA received a comment concerning any considerations made in regards to marine habitat. Including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request to clarify if the amended TSS passes through the same habitat that the current TSS passes through. • Explain how potential impacts to the eelgrass near Point Grey and kelp beds 	<p>No physical works are associated with the amendments to the TSS, and as such these activities have not triggered VFPA's Project and Environmental Review. Environmental impacts are not anticipated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amended TSS area and EBRS are more focused and narrow than the existing TSS, and is located almost entirely within the existing TSS area. • As shown in the image below (<i>Image 1 - Approaches to Vancouver Harbour</i>), the northern boundary of the proposed TSS is not significantly closer to Point Atkinson than the existing

<p>near Point Atkinson have been considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how the TSS amendments might contribute to foreshore erosion and impact species that require foreshore to carry-out life processes (i.e. Forage fish spawning habitat). 	<p>boundary of the TSS. The proposed southern boundary of the TSS is further offset from Point Grey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VFPA has not conducted a study to determine how the TSS might contribute to foreshore erosion. However, based on the opinion of a local engineering firm, VFPA understands that the open waters of English Bay are subject to natural wave conditions and prevailing winds, and that these natural occurrences can exceed wash from large ships transiting at low speeds. The TSS confines the passage of large commercial ships to a focused area, and the design ensures they are not required to transit nearer to shorelines, which has been common practice historically.
<p>Identify whether the TSS amendments cause any interactions between vessels and this outflow of grey water.</p>	<p>The routing of ships within the First Narrows Traffic Control Zone is not changing.</p>

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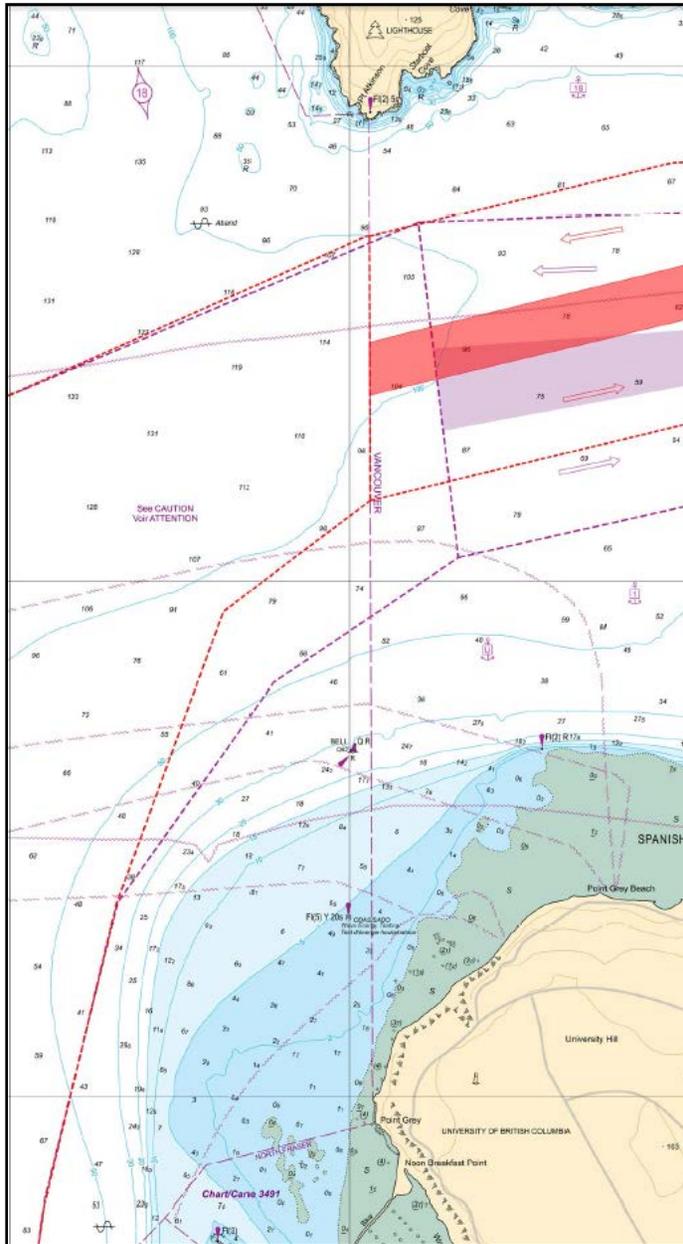


Image 1 – Approaches to Vancouver Harbour
Magenta channel lines show the old TSS; and red channel lines show the new TSS / EBRS. Pt. Atkinson is shown at the top of the image to the north of the EBRS and Point Grey is shown at the bottom, to the south of the EBRS.