



Advisory to Ship Masters and Agents

Anchorage Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (the port authority) is responsible for the assignment and management of anchorages within the boundaries of the Port of Vancouver. However, when anchorages and terminals in the Port of Vancouver are full, a vessel must anchor elsewhere until space becomes available.

The [Interim Protocol for the Use of Southern B.C. Anchorages](#) was put in place by Transport Canada on February 8, 2018, to address the increased usage of anchorages, and ensure the balanced use of these sites across the region. The protocol applies to cargo vessels anchoring in the area of the Southern Gulf Islands, collectively referred to as the South Coast of B.C., and includes measures that vessels must follow in an effort to minimize disturbances, such as those caused by noise and lights.

The Code of Conduct specifically addresses the responsibilities of ships at anchor for the purpose of reducing negative social impacts. Anchorages in the South Coast of B.C. lie in significantly eco-sensitive coastal waters and the presence of ships at anchor has the potential to disturb local communities, including Indigenous peoples.

For thousands of years, Coast Salish First Nations have lived and prospered in the south coast of British Columbia, with complex systems for trade and commerce in the Salish Sea, including Burrard Inlet, the Fraser River and the Southern Gulf Islands, long before settlers arrived and recognized this area as an ideal trading region.

The port authority acknowledges that the Code of Conduct will be implemented within the traditional territories of a number of Coast Salish peoples throughout the Southern Gulf Islands and Vancouver area.

2. Application

The objective of the Code of Conduct is to minimize impacts on local communities and the environment, caused by the presence of ships at anchor.

Assignment to an anchorage is based on the vessel agreeing to comply with the port authority's applicable practices and procedures for anchored vessels, Transport Canada's *Interim Protocol*, and the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies to all anchorages assigned and managed by the port authority, and shall apply at all times, except when instructed by the port authority or Canadian Coast Guard, and in emergencies when it is the responsibility of the Master to take any and all action to ensure safety of their vessel consistent with the prevailing circumstances and conditions.

Nothing in these practices and procedures relieves the Master of the vessel from his obligations for safety, or from following the requirements under any applicable international or Canadian statutes, regulations, and guidelines.

3. Code of Conduct Content

Appendix 1: Maintenance of an Anchor Watch – Regional Guidelines

Appendix 2: Minimization of Noise and Light Pollution

Appendix 3: Minimization of Overside Discharges

Appendix 4: Conditions for Waiver of Compulsory Pilotage in the Coastal Waters of British Columbia

4. Responsibilities

Master: Responsible for acknowledgement and compliance with the Code of Conduct.

Vessel Agent: Responsible for keeping their principals informed and timely distribution of the Code of Conduct to the Master. The agent is responsible for maintaining effective communications between the port authority and the vessel, and for close coordination with the Master and the ship owner to take swift action to resolve any complaints related to the ship.

VFPA: Responsible for developing practices and procedures including assignment and management protocols for anchorages. The port authority is responsible for working with the vessel agent and Master to take timely action to resolve complaints.

Transport Canada: Responsible for marine transportation policies and programs including compliance with *Canada Shipping Act 2001* as it relates to foreign ships.

Canadian Coast Guard, Marine Communications and Traffic Services (MCTS): Monitoring of South Coast of B.C. and communicating safety information (such as deteriorating weather conditions) to anchored vessels.

Pacific Pilotage Authority: Responsible for providing safe and efficient marine pilotage and related services in the coastal waters of B.C.

BC Coast Pilots / Fraser River Pilots: Responsible for providing navigation and anchoring advice to ship's Master and to exercise local knowledge to respond to any questions from the Master related to the application of the Code of Conduct.

Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct

By my signature, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.

Vessel's Name: *(Ship's Stamp)*

Master: *(Signature / Date)*

Vessel Agent: *(Signature / Date)*

Appendix 1: Maintenance of an Anchor Watch – Regional Guidelines

The guidelines in this section are based on local experience and are not intended to negate compliance with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972 (Colregs) or the requirement for the Master or person-in-charge of a vessel at anchor to maintain a continuous navigational watch in compliance with the Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watch Keeping (STCW) Code Chapter VIII Section A-VIII/2 Part 3 S/No. 51, and other applicable regulations.

- Local weather conditions can deteriorate quickly on the passage of a frontal system. Therefore, the ship's position must be frequently checked using all means available and marked on the chart in use. The largest scale chart of the area should be made available.
- Maintain the vessel's Automatic Identification System (AIS) in transmission mode
- Ensure ship's main engines are readily available for use
- Continuously observe meteorological and tidal conditions including wind strength and the state of the sea
- Maintain close attention to Marine VHF channels 12 and 16 (or otherwise as directed). Channel 11 is also to be monitored in the Southern Gulf Islands.
 - Advise the Master immediately should a warning be received of deteriorating weather conditions or if there is an indication that the vessel may be dragging her anchor
 - In the event of sustained winds of 25 knots and above, the vessel's main engines should be brought to immediate notice and, if necessary, used to relieve weight on the anchor chain
 - Note: Utilizing VHF Channel 12, MCTS will broadcast an Anchorage Warning Advisory to all vessels in Vancouver Harbour when the following criteria has been met:
 - Winds reach or exceed 25 knots from any direction or,
 - At the discretion of the MCTS Shift Supervisor after consultation with the port authority's Operations Centre
- For the purpose of minimizing windage and optimizing propeller immersion and rudder effect, vessels without sufficient cargo onboard should consider using ballast to adjust ship's draft. Take all applicable measures to protect the environment from pollution in all its forms.

Ship's Master is responsible for maintaining safety of their vessel at all times.

Nothing in these guidelines shall supersede the requirements or instructions provided by of Canadian Coast Guard, the port authority, and Transport Canada.

Appendix 2: Minimization of Noise and Light Pollution

Vessels anchored near coastal communities can cause negative social impacts, including ambient noise and light pollution. The ship's Master is responsible to ensure that when occupying an anchorage assigned by the port authority that all measures to reduce ambient noise and light pollution are taken for the purpose of minimizing impacts to local communities and the environment.

1. Noise

Vessels shall seek to restrict all forms of noise emission by:

- Using all available means to monitor noise generated by the ship, and regularly enter noise readings and activities that may generate noise into an appropriate log
- Only run the minimum number of generators and fans required for safe operations and preservation of cargo
- Limit the use of the ships whistle, except as required under the Collision Regulations
- Avoid the use of external loud hailers
- Avoid use of deck machinery
- Close exterior access to machinery spaces
- Suspend rolling of hatch covers during the hours of 20:00-08:00 daily

For the purpose of managing noise-generating activities, the port authority has established an activity authorization process to monitor vessel maintenance activities and ensure relevant details on these activities are available for local communities. The purpose of the activity authorization process is to minimize impacts to local communities caused by ambient noise and light pollution.

Vessels at anchor must receive approval from the port authority's Operations Centre to conduct any external maintenance likely to generate elevated noise levels, including the use of power tools. Any approval issued by the port authority to conduct external maintenance will be conditional that the work is conducted during the hours of 08h00-20h00. The port authority may grant an exemption to any of the above requirements for reasons of vessel safety or in order to permit essential maintenance, always subject to a successful application and approval from the vessel or its representatives.

The vessel's Agent may request authorization to conduct any external maintenance or any other vessel activities likely to generate elevated noise levels through the Pacific Gateway Portal, Vessel Service Request, and by contacting the port authority's Operations Centre.

2. Light Pollution

For the purpose of reducing negative social impacts such as light pollution:

- Ensure that deck lights be kept at a minimum consistent with the safety and security of the vessel
- Ensure that main deck flood lights are projected downwards and not directed into the surrounding area, towards neighbouring residential properties

3. Anchoring Procedure

Where practical and safe to do so, Pilots and Masters are required to walk out an anchor (rather than letting go) during the hours of 20:00-08:00 at anchorages which are in proximity to residential properties.

Appendix 3: Minimization of Overside Discharges

Discharges from vessels into Canadian water are governed and enforced by Transport Canada under the *Vessel Pollution and Dangerous Chemicals Regulations*. For the purposes of the *Act*, the following substances are prescribed pollutants:

- Oil and any oily mixture
- Garbage
- Organotin compounds that act as biocides

Oil discharges to water can be toxic to marine life, are difficult to clean up, and can last for years in ocean sediment and the marine environment. The presence of garbage, dry cargo, and other debris in waters as a result of accidental or intentional release results in a number of environmental impacts. These range from damage to marine habitat, entanglement of wildlife, ingestion of plastics and other unsuitable items by marine mammals and birds.

In the context of the significant eco-sensitivity of the locations to which vessels may be assigned to an anchorage in Southern B.C., it is therefore important to restrict discharges from vessels in all forms. Masters are therefore requested to exercise due diligence in the management of:

- Liquid waste products
- Deballasting operations
- Retention of garbage
- Retention of hold washings
- Use of wash water on deck

The discharge of black water (waste from toilets) and grey water (waste from sinks, showers, and drains) into the environment by any vessel certified to carry more than 15 passengers or over 400 tons, is not permitted within the Port of Vancouver unless an overview of the Transport Canada approved waste water treatment plant is provided to and accepted by the port authority. All vessels should retain black/grey water on board, using pump out facilities as appropriate, or arranging for a collection barge/vessel to properly dispose of the waste while in the port. Any new applicable regulations must be adhered to at all times by vessels at anchor.

Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems

Exhaust gas cleaning systems (often referred to as scrubbers) are an International Marine Organization approved mechanism to remove sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter from a ship's engine and boiler exhaust gases.

The discharge of wash water from exhaust gas cleaning systems (EGCS) and from fuel combustion machinery (excluding engines in use for propulsion) into the environment is not permitted while a vessel is at anchorage in the Port of Vancouver. This applies to the wash water from open-loop and closed-loop systems but does not apply to inert-gas scrubbers required by tankers for cargo operations and compliance with safety procedures.

While in the Port of Vancouver, ships fitted with hybrid scrubbers shall switch to the closed-loop mode and operate the scrubber in a zero-discharge mode. Bleed-off from closed-loop scrubbers is prohibited and all EGCS wash water must be retained on the vessel in a holding tank or be disposed of at an authorized reception facility. If wash water cannot be recirculated, vessels must switch to compliant fuel. The change-over should be effected as soon as possible after arrival to anchorage with ECGS overboard

discharge valves should shut and secured/sealed in the closed position. All vessels are required to electronically submit a 24 hour pre-arrival declaration through the Pacific Gateway Portal.

Vessels which are assigned an anchorage by the port authority's Operations Centre outside of the Port of Vancouver, are similarly requested to support this program to the extent that it is practical to do so.

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Appendix 4: Conditions for Waiver of Compulsory Pilotage in the Coastal Waters of British Columbia

We draw your attention to the following extract from the Canadian General Pilotage Regulations Section 10 under which The Authority may waive compulsory pilotage in respect of a ship if:

- (A) The ship is in distress
- (B) A person on board the ship requires medical evacuation
- (C) The ship is engaged in rescue or salvage operations
- (D) The ship is seeking refuge
- (E) A licensed pilot is not available to perform the functions of a pilot and the following conditions have been met:
 - the owner, Master or agent of the ship has complied with Sections 12* and 13**, and
 - all persons in charge of the deck watch are familiar with the route and the marine traffic control system in the compulsory pilotage area that the ship is entering; or

The Authority may waive compulsory pilotage in respect of a ship that:

- (A) Is warping and is not using its engines or a tug except as a line boat for the handling of the ship's lines
- (B) Is proceeding directly and, if applicable, in accordance with an established traffic separation scheme, to a pilot boarding station located within a compulsory pilotage area for the purpose of embarking a licensed pilot; or
- (C) Is proceeding directly and, if applicable, in accordance with an established traffic separation scheme, out of a compulsory pilotage area after disembarking a licensed pilot at a pilot boarding station located within that area.

* Section 12: Notice to Obtain Pilots

** Section 13: Required Information in Notice