

INTERIM PROTOCOL FOR THE USE OF SOUTHERN B.C. ANCHORAGES

Rev. 4, 27 November 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This protocol has been developed by Transport Canada (TC) in collaboration with the Chamber of Shipping of British Columbia, the Shipping Federation of Canada, the Pacific Pilotage Authority, the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority and the Port of Nanaimo (working group members). It also takes into account comments provided to TC by coastal communities about the impact of increased use of anchorages in their surrounding waters. Drafts of this document were also shared with coastal communities and First Nations.

The protocol, while voluntary, is fully supported by these representatives of the marine community, and the marine industry have agreed to comply with it, as an interim measure to reduce some of the impacts of large vessels at anchor, while the comprehensive national review of anchorages is conducted.

Application:

This protocol takes effect **February 8, 2018**, and applies to commercial cargo vessels anchoring in the area of the Southern Gulf Islands (SGI), collectively referred to as the **South Coast of B.C.** (see chartlet below). The area extends from Race Rocks, Haro Strait and Boundary Pass in the south to Gabriola Island in the north, and bounded to east and west by the Strait of Georgia and Vancouver Island. The six anchorages at the Nanaimo Port, the five at Esquimalt (Royal Roads), and Constance Bank anchorage, are not part of this protocol, so there is no change to existing procedures for requesting an anchorage at these locations. Figure 1 at the end of this document provides additional detail.



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Nothing in this protocol 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.

This protocol is in effect until July 2019, unless otherwise agreed by all parties. Transport Canada, in collaboration with working group members, will regularly review activities and anchorages data, and publish monthly summaries of anchorage use.

Findings will also inform the development of a longer term strategy for the management of anchorages under the Oceans Protection Plan.

Background and Purpose:

Canada has the world's longest coastline, and our water is one of our most important resources. Canadians across the country rely on marine transportation to go about their everyday life or to deliver products to market in a safe and responsible way.

That is why the Government of Canada, under the Oceans Protection Plan Anchorages Initiative, will bring together government, marine industry, Indigenous groups and stakeholder communities to conduct a detailed review of the management and use of anchorages currently outside ports jurisdiction. The work will include an assessment of social and environmental impacts, development of a process to identify new sites, and recommendations for best practices and changes to regulations or legislation.

While the national review is underway, and so that no one South Coast of B.C. anchorage is overused, Transport Canada has asked, through this voluntary protocol, that the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA) manage the assignment of anchorage locations along the south Coast. This is a change from current practice in which anchorages are selected by the ship's Master in consultation with a Coast Pilot, without considering equitable rotation through suitable locations.

Ships destined for the ports of Nanaimo or Vancouver who require an anchorage location in the south Coast waters, will follow the guidelines that are detailed in the following section of this protocol.

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OBTAINING AN ANCHORAGE IN SOUTHERN BC

1. All vessels requesting assignment to an southern British Columbia anchorage must provide the following information to the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority (VFPA) through VFPA's Pacific Gateway Portal at

<https://customerportal.portvancouver.com/login>

- a) Vessel name
- b) LOA – vessel length overall
- c) Expected Duration (Estimated from Arrival & Departure times)
- d) Expected cargo type.
- e) Maximum Draught.
- f) Reason for Anchorage (to be entered under remarks)

(Note: this is the same set of information requested by ports)

2. Assignment to an anchorage is predicated upon the vessel confirming that it will adhere to this Protocol.
3. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority will assign anchorages as equitably as possible, subject to individual anchorage size restrictions, using their computerized queueing system which takes into account specific anchorage usage over the previous 30 days. The objective of this method is to balance the usage, so that no single anchorage is in constant use, and that that there is an equitable rotation of use through all suitable anchorages.
4. Plumper Sound Anchorage X is reserved for emergency use only and will not be included in the rotation of assignments.
5. Effective December 1, 2018, requests for assignment to Plumper Sound Anchorage D (MOA) are part of this protocol. This site will only be used for transloading.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF SHIPS AT ANCHOR

Vessels shall comply with all international and Canadian statutes, obligations, and guidelines relating to safety, the environment, fisheries, and the common practice of good seamanship.

1. Watchkeeping Arrangements

While at anchor, a continuous navigation watch is to be maintained in accordance with chapter VIII, section A-VIII/2, part 4-1, paragraph 51 of the STCW Code

2. Noise and Lights

All vessels, while at anchor, should minimize noise levels and light usage in consideration of local residents. The following guidelines apply:

Noise:

- Generator usage should be reduced to the minimum required generator(s) to operate essential services and systems;
- External doors and hatches to machinery spaces must be kept closed as often as possible;
- Use of power tools and chipping hammers must be kept to a minimum and is not permitted on deck on weekends, nor between 1900 and 0700 hours on weekdays.

Lights:

- While the vessel is to be lit in compliance with the Collision Regulations, deck lights must be kept to a minimum, and
- Lighting used to illuminate a vessel's decks must be aimed downward, and not outward or toward the shore.

3. Fishing

Fishing may be undertaken only by ship's crew who hold a valid British Columbia tidal water sports fishing licence.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Effective October 2018, in response to comments from coastal residents,

- the Pacific Pilotage Authority will advise pilots to direct ships to the furthest point away from the community within the prescribed anchoring area.
- the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority will request agents of vessels that are being redirected from the Port of Vancouver to the south coast to make best efforts with timing and ordering of pilots so as to avoid arrivals in the Gulf Islands during nighttime silent hours.

CONTACTS

- Comments on the content of this document can be made at any time to Transport Canada, Oceans Protection Plan, Pacific Region

TC.PacificAnchorages-Ancragesdupacifique.TC@tc.gc.ca

and will help inform the National Anchorages Initiative under Canada's Oceans Protection Plan.

- For noise and light concerns related to vessels using Southern B.C. anchorages, contact the VFPA Operations Center and provide details by completing the [online form](#) or go to <https://www.portvancouver.com/southern-b-c-anchorage-noise-and-light-concerns/>
- Suspected marine pollution should be reported to the Canadian Coast Guard. For more information visit

<http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/e0003876>

- Any observations about apparent illegal fishing can be reported to Department of Fisheries and Oceans - Observe, Record, Report (ORR) at 1-800-465-4336

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Figure 1: Location of South Coast of British Columbia Anchorages

NOTE TO READERS: This chart extract shows all anchorages along the B.C. South Coast, including six locations managed by Nanaimo Port and five at Esquimalt (Royal Roads), which are NOT part of this protocol.

