



Delaware River Vessel Reporting System

Mariners' Advisory Committee For the Bay and River Delaware

The Mariner's Advisory Committee is comprised of Master Mariners, River Pilots, and concerns itself with safety of navigation. This manual is intended to provide mariners with specific information as to the best practices for operations within the tri-state Delaware River port complex.



DELAWARE RIVER VESSEL REPORTING SYSTEM

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Pilots' Association for the Bay and River Delaware	215-465-8340
Interport Pilots' Association.....	732-787-5554
Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River And Bay	215-925-1524
U.S. Coast Guard	
Waterways Branch.....	215-271-4889
National Response Center.....	1-800-424-8802
Moran Tug Company.....	215-755-4700
McAllister Tug Company	856-456-7200
Wilmington Tug Company	302-652-1666

DELAWARE RIVER VESSEL REPORTING SYSTEM

USER'S MANUAL

Introduction

The Delaware River and Bay is divided into two marine traffic information service areas:

The approach sea-lanes, the Two Way Traffic Zone, the Pilot Boarding Area, the lower bay area to Brown Shoal Light, and the Tanker Anchorage commonly referred to as Big Stone Beach anchorage are monitored by a voluntary traffic information service located on Cape Henlopen and operated by the Pilots Association of the Bay & River Delaware. This area is referred to as "Delaware Pilot Traffic Tower."

The area inside of the Brown Shoal Light LL # 1535 along all of the main channels to and including the channels leading into Salem, NJ, C&D Canal, Bulkhead Shoal channel leading into Delaware City, Christina River, Schuylkill River and all adjacent anchorages is monitored by the Delaware River & Bay Vessel Reporting system operated by the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay and referred to as "Delaware Maritime Exchange."

Both of these systems are in operation to promote vessel safety, environmental protection, port security, maritime commerce and effective anchorage utilization within the Delaware River and Bay Port area.

To accomplish this goal, both of these systems may use AIS, radar, radiotelephone, video cameras, and telephone to report status of the approach sea-lanes, the two-way traffic zone, main channels, all adjacent anchorages and berths.

Through proactive exchange of information with all mariners, the Delaware Pilot Tower VTIS and the Delaware Maritime Exchange VRS will endeavor to maintain predictability, safe and secure usage of the waterway, and effective utilization of the anchorages.

This manual is not intended to conflict with or modify any existing regulations in any respect, and vessels within these navigable waters shall be responsible for their safe navigation in accordance with existing Federal, State, and local rules.

Suggested Improvements

The U.S. Coast Guard, Mariners Advisory Committee for the Bay & River Delaware (MAC) and Maritime Exchange welcome any suggestions to improve this system. Any suggestions may be forwarded to:

- **Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay** via Homeport: <http://homeport.uscg.mil/delawarebay>
- **Maritime Exchange:** <http://www.maritimedelriv.com/> or exchange@maritimedelriv.com
- **MAC:** <http://www.macdelriv.org/>

In order to promote vessel safety, security, and environmental protection, Delaware Maritime Exchange, to the best of its ability and utilizing available information, will provide information services including position, identity, and intentions of vessels known to be operating within this VRS area.

The service will endeavor to assist mariners in making independent decisions regarding the safe navigation of their vessels, for which the mariner retains complete responsibility. In this sense, this service shall be regarded as a navigational aid and a tool that mariners should use along with numerous other tools to facilitate safe navigation.

This service will also attempt to provide for the effective utilization of all available anchorage areas.

Mariners are cautioned that Delaware Maritime Exchange may not know of all vessels or hazardous circumstances within the Delaware River & Bay VRS area. Unreported hazards may confront mariners at any time. Any conflicting circumstance or hazardous condition should be reported to Coast Guard immediately.

Participants

The following vessels are expected to participate in the Delaware River and Bay Vessel Reporting System:

- Every power driven vessel of 40 meters (approx. 131 Ft.) or more in length, while navigating;
- Every towing vessel of 8 meters (approx. 26 Ft.) or more in length while engaged in towing;
- Every vessel certified to carry 50 or more passengers for hire while engaged in trade but not operating on a published schedule.
- Every dredge or floating plant engaged in or near the main channels or anchorages in operations likely to restrict or affect navigation of other vessels except for an unmanned or intermittently manned floating plant under the control of a dredge.

Participants Responsibilities

1. Monitor the VRS radio frequency (14 VHF) at all times while operating and while anchored within the VRS area and respond promptly when hailed.
2. Make vessel movement reports to Delaware Maritime VRS as described in the reporting procedures section of this manual.

Non-Participants

All vessels that are not participating in the VRS but are operating within the VRS areas in vicinity of the main channels or sea-lanes are encouraged to:

- Monitor frequency (13 VHF) and answer when called.
- Contact Delaware Maritime Exchange on an as needed basis to obtain information on large commercial vessels operating in the area.
- Not interfere with large commercial vessels utilizing the sea-lanes, main ship channels and anchorages.

Communications

Voice Call Signs and Designated Frequencies: Delaware Maritime Exchange is the voice call sign for Delaware Bay & River Vessel Reporting System. Use Channel 14 VHF FM for communicating with both “Delaware Pilot Tower” and “Delaware Maritime Exchange.”

- All users shall continuously monitor channels 13 & 14 VHF and respond when hailed while operating in these areas.
- All communication must be in the English language.

Report Types

The following reports are required from Participants to provide necessary information to Delaware Maritime Exchange so watch standers can utilize and pass timely, relevant, and accurate information to VRS users:

1. Sailing Plan (Check-In)
2. Sail Plan Deviation (Destination or route change)
3. Position Report (Passing designated reporting points)
4. Final Report (Check-Out)

Sailing Plan (Check-In)

Participants shall report the following information via VHF-FM to Delaware Maritime Exchange prior to entering or getting underway within the VRS (preferably in this order):

1. Vessel Name
2. Location
3. Destination (include any anticipated stops and intended anchorages where applicable- see Anchorage Intention & Reports)
4. Tow Configuration (How many and number of loaded/unloaded barges)
5. Type of cargo being carried

Sailing Plan Deviation: Participants shall report any change in destination.

Check In and Check Out Points - Delaware Maritime Exchange

- Brown Shoal Beacon – Changing over from “Pilot Traffic Tower” to “Delaware Maritime Exchange” systems
- Biddle Point in C&D Canal (East Bound)
- Reedy Point Entrance to C&D Canal (West Bound)

Check In and Check Out Points – Pilot Traffic Tower

- Inbound at McCrie Shoal Lighted Gong buoy “2MS” (Two Way Traffic Route)
- Inbound when entering the Five-fathom sea-lane buoy
- Inbound at when entering Delaware sea-lane

Position Reports

Participants shall contact Delaware Maritime Exchange with name and position when passing the following Reporting Points:

- Off Harbor or Refuge Light Station (inbound only)
- Marcus Hook Range
- Mifflin Range
- Any other location when directed by Delaware Maritime Exchange

Anchorage Intention and Reports

Any vessel intending to anchor at any anchorage within the Delaware Bay and River shall be guided by the anchorage recommendations contained in the Transit Advisories published by the Mariners Advisory Committee for the Bay and River Delaware as published in Chapter 6 of Coast Pilot Volume 3.

- Notify Delaware Maritime Exchange prior to arriving at the anchorage. This notification shall include the estimated time of arrival (ETA), intended time that the vessel will be at the anchorage and the reason for anchoring.

- Notify Delaware Maritime Exchange of any change as to this intention, including changes of the ETA at the anchorage.
- Delaware Maritime Exchange, to the best of its ability with information provided, will notify the anchorage intended vessel of other vessels that are in the anchorage and their estimated time of departure (ETD), other vessels bound for the anchorage, current limitations of the intended anchorage and any other possible conflicts with this intention.
- No vessel may remain at anchor in any anchorage covered by this section longer than 48 hours unless receiving a waiver from U.S.C.G. Sector Commander. Authority to anchor for more than 48 hours may be given upon application to the U.S.C.G. Sector Commander; however, extensions at Marcus Hook and Mantua Creek Anchorages will be by exception only.

All Vessels While at Anchor

Any vessel while at anchor in all anchorages within Delaware Bay and River shall:

- Continuously monitor VHF Channels 14 and 16.
- Continuously monitor position.
- Be prepared to get underway as directed by U.S.C.G. Sector Commander.
- Have propulsion machinery available within 30 minutes in case of anchor dragging or other situation.
- Update Delaware Maritime Exchange of any changes as to the vessel's ETD from the anchorage.
- Insure that the vessel's AIS is turned on, operating and transmitting properly while underway and at anchor.
- Vessels at anchor in Marcus Hook or Mantua Creek Anchorages may have to temporarily move to facilitate the maneuvering of large vessels while docking or undocking at the adjacent terminals.

Tugs with barges shall be in attendance of their tows or barges. Any towing vessel that is departing, but leaving its tow at anchor in any anchorage, shall inform Delaware Maritime of the estimated time of returning to the barge, continuously monitor VHF Ch 14, and by any means appropriate monitor the position and status of the tow.

Vessels Leaving Anchorage

All vessels leaving an anchorage shall inform Delaware Maritime as directed in the Sailing Plan section of this manual.

Meeting Passing and Overtaking

All VRS Users must comply with the appropriate Inland Navigational Rules or International Rules for Prevention of Collisions at Sea for all meeting, crossing, or overtaking situations in this area.

Final Report

Participants shall report name and position:

- On arrival at the vessel's destination within the VRS, or
- When departing this VRS area

Dredges and Floating Plants

Dredges and floating plants shall provide the following information to the VRS prior to beginning operations within the VRS Area:

- Name
- Location and duration of intended operation
- Description of intended operation – including any channel obstructions
- Configuration of pipeline
- Termination point of pipelines
- Time required to re-open the channel for vessel passage
- Any operating impairments
- Any notification requirements to channel traffic (e.g., requests for Slowbell, no meeting or overtaking, divers in the water, etc.
- Means of contacting the dredge control station
- Telephone numbers and names of assist vessels
- Telephone number and name of project superintendent

Dredges and floating plants that will obstruct the Main channel shall be equipped with and utilize AIS.