

# **Code Of Practice For Towage Operations In The Port of St Helier (Towage Guidelines)**



This Code Covers The Use Of Tugs And Towage In The Port Of St  
Helier

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## Introduction

1. For the purposes of this document “towage” refers to assistance provided to ships calling at St Helier by tugs operating within the port, whether towing with ship’s own lines or tug’s lines, pushing or standing by.
2. The Harbour Authority will continually risk assess activities within its areas of responsibility and apply appropriate safety control measures to ship movements, this could include a requirement to use of towage.
3. The prime consideration in developing these guidelines is to enhance the safety of those that operate in the ports and to prevent accidents, to enhance good communications and team work between towage operators, harbour authorities, Pilots and shipping companies.
4. In compiling these guidelines Pilots, Tug Masters, and RORO Ferry Operators have been consulted.
5. These guidelines are made up reflecting the content of article 9 of the PMSC Guide To Good Practice.
6. MAIB accident reports involving towage are assessed as to their relevance and where appropriate amendments made to these guidelines to reflect any recommendations.

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## Communication

Initial communication between the tug and tow should be on VHF channel 14 then change to a working inter-ship channel, normally VHF channel 11. Whilst towage operations are on-going, the VTS VHF channel 14 must also be monitored.

In the event of a failure of communications, or other emergency, requiring the tug to break away from the vessel being assisted, a sound signal consisting of Morse Code X-RAY ( **— ● ● —** ) shall be made.

## Visibility

1. Minimum visibility for all towage operations is such that the Master/Pilot can see the tug and the Tug Master can see the towed vessel's wheelhouse. This is considered to be:
  - For ship assist towage in St Helier Inner Harbour – 150m
  - For ship assist towage in the Elizabeth Harbour - 300m
  - For ship assist towage in La Collette Tanker Berth – 500m
2. Should visibility fall below the minimum once a towage operation has commenced, the Master/Pilot shall immediately reduce speed to a minimum safe speed and, if safe to do so, take all way off the vessel. Following discussion with the Tug Master, the contingency plan agreed at the planning stage should be implemented.

## Tug Operations

1. When a tug is involved in towage all her water tight and weather tight doors must be closed and secured.
2. When charter tugs are used for specific operations, or to relieve the port's own tug, the charter tug's capability will need to be fully assessed, including its certification and manning, prior to it being used. Risk assessments and procedures must also be reviewed and the charter tug's Master must be fully familiar with these guidelines. Due to the navigational hazards on the approach to the port and the large range of tide experienced, the charter tug may be required to carry a Pilot or suitably experienced, Local Knowledge Endorsement certificate holder, as determined by any risk assessment.
3. All towage within the jurisdiction of The Harbour Authority is undertaken in accordance with the United Kingdom Standard Towage Conditions

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4. Given the exposed entrance and confined layout of St. Helier Harbour, it is the normal, and preferred, practice that towage is provided by pushing the vessel without making fast.
5. Generally, the only vessel that will conduct towage operations using a line is the port operated tug “Duke of Normandy”. When towing with lines is considered, it is preferred that tug’s lines be used to ensure that lines are of an appropriate SWL, are certified and are known to be in a suitable condition.

### **Risk Assessments (RA)**

1. Risk assessments exist for routine towage operations and are available on request.
2. All other and non-routine towage operations are to be risk assessed on a case by case basis. The checklist provided in Annex 3 should be consulted in the production of such as risk assessment.

## **Routine & Non-Routine Towage Procedures**

### **Routine towage operations**

The towage operations which are conducted most frequently are considered to be routine operations. The typical procedures for these operations are in annex 4 of these guidelines and include:

- Regular conventional ferries arriving at the Elizabeth Harbour in strong SE’ly to SW’ly winds
- Regular conventional ferries arriving at the Elizabeth Harbour in strong NW’ly to NE’ly winds
- Regular tankers (all sizes) arriving and departing La Collette Tanker Berth during calm weather conditions
- Regular tankers (>80m) arriving at La Collette Tanker Berth in strong SE’ly to W’ly winds
- Regular tankers (>80m) arriving at La Collette Tanker Berth in strong NW’ly to E’ly winds
- Regular ships (<90m) operating within St Helier Inner Harbour
- Assisting high speed vessels arriving in adverse weather conditions when operating on reduce power

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**Non-routine operations and activities**

- Any other towage operation or activity is considered to be non-routine.
- All non-routine towage operations must be risk assessed as detailed above and planned using the Checklist for Tug Assistance (see Annex 3). This process would normally be carried out by the duty Pilot & Tug Master. The Port Marine Operations Manager should be consulted as to the appropriateness of the planned operation. All planning and risk assessment documentation must be kept for future reference.
- A Pilot should be embarked on a vessel over 35m engaged in a planned, non-routine towage operation in order to facilitate the execution of the plan and assist with communication.
- A routine operation can become non-routine if it differs from the plan for any reason.
- If the nature of an operation changes whilst it is in progress, the Tug Masters must use their experience and training to ensure the safety of their vessel and crew as well as continuing to provide assistance where possible.
- When the Harbour Authority are advised that a “new” ship is expected, the ship’s Agent and/or Owners are required to provide the port with a copy of its Pilot Card and to complete a “New Ship Arrival Form”. This is to allow a formal pilotage RA of the ship to be carried out. This RA could impose towage control measures on the vessel’s movement within the port. Alternatively, a request could be received from the ship for towage during its arrival/departure.
- All Pilotage RA’s will be documented and recorded for future reference.
- An updated briefing will take place between the duty Pilot and the duty Tug Master prior to the Pilot proceeding to the ship. The RA shall be reviewed to ensure that there is agreement and understanding on the planned towage operation.
- VTS and the duty Acting Harbourmaster should be briefed prior to the operation taking place so that they are aware of the proposed plan and they can provide input on other commercial vessel movements.

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**Annex 1 Port Operated Towage Assets**

All Ports of Jersey Ltd vessels are operated in accordance with the JH Small Ships SMS.

**Duke of Normandy**



- Duke of Normandy is owned & crewed by Ports of Jersey Ltd
- The vessel is manned Monday to Thursday 08.00 – 16.30 Friday 0800 - 1430
- On call outside of normal hours with 1 hours' notice through VTS
- Minimum manning is Master, Engineer & 2 deckhands

**Outline of the vessel**

- 26 metre (LOA) multipurpose workboat (Daman Shoal Buster Tug)
- 28 ton bollard pull
- Fitted with quick release tow hook
- Twin screw fixed pitch and nozzles with rudders behind the nozzles
- 120hp bow thruster
- Well fendered on the bow for pushing
- A 15 ton towing winch with 600 metres of 30mm towing wire
- Fire fighting capability through wheelhouse mounted monitors at 600m<sup>3</sup> per hour at 10bar
- This vessel is fully certificated for towage and cargo handling activities in accordance with the Jersey Small Commercial Work Boat Code of Practice. Certifying authority MECAL

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## Halcyon



- Halcyon is owned & crewed by Ports of Jersey Ltd
- The vessel is manned Monday to Thursday 08.00 – 16.30 Friday 0800 - 1430
- On call outside of normal hours with 1 hour's notice
- Minimum manning is 1 leading deckhands who has been signed off for towing & 1 deckhand

### **Outline of the vessel**

- 8.0 metre (LOA) open workboat
- 0.9 ton bollard pull (Perkins 92Hp)
- Single screw geared drive fixed pitch propeller
- No bow thruster
- Bow strengthened and fendered for pushing
- Small quick release tow hook
- This vessel is fully certificated for her activities by the Jersey Small Commercial Work Boat Code of Practice. Certifying authority MECAL

As the Halcyon is an open boat it shall normally only be used for vessel assistance (pushing only) within St Helier Inner Harbour only. Any other use of the vessel for towage should be considered a non-routine operation and assessed as such.

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**ANNEX 2 CHECK LIST FOR COMPILING TOWAGE RISK ASSESSMENT**

Item	Checked
Bollard pull versus vessel's displacement and windage	
Size, type and manoeuvrability of ships assisted, e.g. tankers, gas carriers, container vessels, ferries etc.	
Communication methods between vessels. (Normally undertaken on VHF channel 14 which is recorded at VTS)	
Historical evidence and experience, including past reports and incidents	
Physical and environmental limitations including tidal streams, wind speeds and directions, and restricted visibility	
Redundancy and back up of equipment	
The geography of the port and its approaches, i.e. its navigational complexity	
Difficulties associated with particular berths, etc, including their condition, and limiting water depths in manoeuvring/approach areas	
Environmentally sensitive areas	
Dead-ship or and declared manoeuvring difficulties	
Preferred method for securing tug, ship's lines or tug's line from the tow hook or use of the tug's tow winch	
SWL of tow lines	
Abort positions	
Passage planning with particular reference to weather forecasts	
Communications	
Tug positions	
Tug assist methods	
Speed of vessel	
Contingency, including lay berths, anchorages and turning areas	
Tug manning	
Number of pilots involved in the operation, on the ship and on tug or tugs	
Other relevant port and emergency procedures and legislation	

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### **Annex 3 – Routine Operations**

#### **Regular Conventional Ferries Arriving At Elizabeth Harbour In Strong SE'ly To SW'ly**

##### **Winds:**

Typical assistance routine:

- Tug to stand-by in a location which allows it to position on the ferry's port bow when the ferry comes to a stop
- Tug to make contact as gently as possible, aft of the ferry's bridge wing on the vertical part of the ferry's side
- Tug to advise the ferry when in position & push as requested by the ferry Master
- Tug to stay in position whilst the ferry moves astern
- Keep sufficient room astern of the tug so that it can escape if plan fails, particularly if the ferry is berthing on the Elizabeth East Berth

#### **Regular Conventional Ferries Arriving At Elizabeth Harbour In Strong NW'ly To NE'ly**

##### **Winds:**

Typical assistance routine

Tug to stand-by in a location which allows it to follow the ferry into the Elizabeth Harbour

- When the ferry is in a suitable position, tug to lean on ferry's starboard quarter to assist in pushing its stern through the wind
- Tug to advise the ferry when in position & push as requested by the ferry Master
- Keep sufficient room astern of the tug so that it can escape if plan fails, particularly if the ferry is berthing on the Elizabeth West Berth
- Ferry Master to allow the tug sufficient time to break away
- Once clear, the tug to reposition & stand-by on the ferry's port side
- Tug to advise the ferry when in position & push as requested by the ferry Master

#### **Regular High Speed Ferries Arriving At Elizabeth Harbour In Strong Winds:**

Typical assistance routine.

This routine is for the tug to provide the high speed vessel with effectively a mobile dolphin and would only occur if the ferry is manoeuvring on only 3 of its 4 engines and strong 30 knots + wind.

- Tug to discuss the positioning with vessels Master
- Tug to position accordingly

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- Tug to ensure that ferry does not land heavily onto the tug and to use power as necessary to hold ferry in required position as it turns prior to going astern up to its designated berth.

**Regular Tankers (>80m) Arriving At La Collette Tanker Berth In Strong SE'ly To W'ly Winds**

Typical assistance routine:

- Tug to stand-by in a location which allows it to position on the tanker's starboard side
- Tug to position on the tanker's starboard side as it turns to port
- Tug to advise the tanker when in position & push as requested by the Master/Pilot as the tanker stern boards to the berth

**Regular Tankers (>80m) Arriving At La Collette Tanker Berth In Strong NW'ly To E'ly Winds**

Typical assistance routine:

- Tug to stand-by in a location which allows it to position on the tanker's port quarter
- Tug to position onto the tanker's port quarter
- Tug to advise the tanker when in position & push as requested by the Master/Pilot as the tanker swings to port
- Tanker Master/Pilot to allow the tug sufficient time to break away before the tanker's stern enters the basin

**Regular Ships (<90m) Operating Within St Helier Inner Harbour**

Typical assistance routine:

- Work boat Halcyon in attendance for pushing operations only
- Location of Halcyon to be agreed between Halcyon's skipper and vessel's Pilot/Master.

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