

Notice to Mariners No. 7 of 1941.

Marine Department,
Wellington, N.Z., 17th March, 1941.

(Reprint of Admiralty Notice No. 1 of 1941.)

CAUTION WHEN APPROACHING AND NAVIGATING WITHIN
BRITISH PORTS.

Former Notices: Admiralty Notices Nos. 1 and 1437 of 1940; New Zealand Notices Nos. 17 of 1939 and 28 of 1940 hereby cancelled.

PART I.

Control of entry.

(1) My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty hereby give notice that measures are in operation to control the entry of shipping into the majority of ports of the United Kingdom and the British Empire.

(2) Subject to the provisions of the Defence (Approach of Merchant Vessels) Order, 1940, issued in pursuance of Regulation No. 43 of the Defence Regulations, 1939, which restricts the approach of merchant vessels within 3 miles of the coasts or ports of the United Kingdom at night or in fog or low visibility, vessels may approach thereto by day or night, but, before entry, they will be subject to the orders of the Examination Service (see Part II). Particular caution should be used when approaching in a fog.

(3) If it is necessary to prohibit entry to a port which is usually open, the following signals will normally be displayed by the Examination Vessel and/or in a conspicuous position ashore:—

By Day—Three red balls disposed vertically.

By Night—Three red lights disposed vertically.

If these signals are displayed, vessels must approach the port with the greatest caution and keep a good lookout for signalled instructions which may be given by the Examination Vessel or Signal Station.

Should lighting restrictions necessitate, it may not be possible to display these signals at night, and Examination Vessels may be withdrawn in bad weather or for other reasons. Vessels not finding the Examination Vessel in her usual station should, unless instructed to the contrary, assume that the port is closed and either anchor in the Examination Anchorage or proceed to sea.

Vessels are particularly warned not to enter a declared "Dangerous Area" or approach boom defences without permission, nor to anchor or remain stopped in a dangerous area or prohibited anchorage, unless specially instructed to do so.

PART II.

Examination Service.

(4) In addition to controlling entry generally it is also necessary to take measures to examine individual vessels before they are permitted to enter. This is the function of the Examination Service.

(5) Examination Vessels, carrying the distinguishing flags or lights mentioned in paragraph (7), are charged with the duty of examining ships who desire to enter a port, and may allot positions in which they are to anchor, or give such other directions as are necessary for the safety of the vessels and the security of the port, including the channel to be followed, should up-to-date information on this point not already have been issued by routing authorities.

Notes.

(a) Information regarding emergency alterations of searched channels, closing of ports or other instructions may also be passed to merchant vessels by patrols.

(b) Where pilotage is compulsory the pilots will be in possession of the latest information regarding the searched channels, as well as the regulations for the entry into the port.

(6) It is the responsibility of the approaching vessel to identify the Examination Vessel by the signals mentioned in paragraph (7) and to bring-to at once if ordered to do so. Failure to obey these orders will be met by the firing of a bring-to round by the Examination Battery, followed by effective fire if the way is not immediately taken off the ship.

(7) By day the distinguishing flag of the Examination Vessel will be a square flag coloured white and red horizontal surrounded by a blue border. Examination Vessels who are commissioned will wear the White Ensign; if not commissioned, the Blue Ensign.

By night the Examination Vessel will carry:—

(a) Three white lights vertically disposed if the port is open.

(b) Three red lights vertically disposed if the port is closed (see also paragraph (3)).

The above lights will be carried in addition to the ordinary navigation lights and will show an unbroken light around the horizon.

NOTE.—These lights may not invariably be displayed (see paragraph (3)).

(8) Merchant vessels approaching a British port at which an Examination Service is in force must hoist their signal letters on arriving within visual signal distance of the port, and are not to wait for the signal "What is the name of your vessel" to be made by the Examination Vessel.

(9) Vessels allowed to proceed into harbour by the Examination Vessel will be given a special signal to hoist consisting of a combination of flags by day and coloured lights by night to enable them to pass the defences in safety. Vessels should be ready to hoist these signals immediately, and should by night have two red and two white lanterns ready for this purpose.

By day flags should be well shaken out.

The Examination Vessel will give instructions as to the point at which these signals can be lowered.

As a general rule merchant vessels will be examined in the order of their arrival, and, if permitted to enter, will proceed up harbour in the same order unless instructed to the contrary.

(10) If ordered to anchor in the Examination Anchorage Masters are warned that it is forbidden, except for the purpose of avoiding accident, to do any of the following things without permission from the Examining Officer:—

To move the ship.

To work cables.

To lower any boat.

To communicate with the shore or with other ships.

To allow any person or thing to leave the ship.

To get into communication with the Examining Officer when in the Examination Anchorage merchant vessels are to hoist the following signals:—

By Day—Flags J.G. International Code.

By Night—2 lights, red over white, 3 ft. apart at the fore masthead.

(11) The restriction on communications in the Examination Anchorage also applies to vessels when approaching the port when the use of private signals, whether by day or night, will render a vessel liable to be fired upon. The sounding of sirens or whistles by ships in British waters which might be heard on land is to be restricted to the minimum necessary for the safety of navigation.

Attention is drawn to the regulations forbidding the use of W/T in tidal waters of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and to such orders as may be issued similarly in British Dominions and Colonies. W/T offices will normally be sealed on arrival in harbour and the seals may not be broken without the permission of the Customs or other authority responsible.

PART III.

Lights to be displayed.

(12) Subject to any other general or local orders the following regulations regarding display of lights at night are to be observed:—

(a) Outside the harbour, including the Examination Anchorage, if so situated, steaming and bow lights are only to be exhibited when necessary for safe navigation and to avoid danger of collision. Similarly, anchor lights of vessels in the Examination Anchorage are to be displayed only when other vessels are navigating in their immediate vicinity. They are always to be ready, however, for use as described above.

(b) Inside the harbour, vessels permitted to navigate are to employ bow and steaming lights, and vessels at anchor, anchor lights.

(c) All these lights are to be screened from above and dimmed as laid down in "Navigation and Anchor Lights Order, 1939," issued in pursuance of Regulation No. 43 of the Defence Regulations, 1939.

(d) No other lights are to be visible from outboard, as laid down in "Darkening Ship Order, 1939," issued in pursuance of the above Defence Regulation No. 43.

PART IV.

Internal Movement and leaving the Port.

(13) Local instructions regarding internal movement can be obtained from the Examining Officer, and particular attention should be paid to the action to be taken during air-raid alarm periods. Merchant vessels are invariably to keep clear of H.M. ships and Government vessels whether under way or not.

(14) Vessels are only to leave the port under instructions from the local authorities, and it must be stressed that they must leave punctually at the time ordered so that they may be passed safely through the defences and avoid delaying and thus endangering other vessels. A blue flag hoisted ashore indicates that no merchant vessel is to leave the port while this signal is flying.