

GIBRALTAR MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
(Ministry of Maritime Affairs)



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Local Maritime Direction – 009

To: All local Agents and Operators

Weather Restrictions Imposed on Locally Operated Domestic Passenger Craft

One of the restrictions imposed within the conditions set for the safe operation of craft engaged in dolphin watching and daytrips is based on wave heights. As there has in the past been no independent method of assessing the wave height in the Bay of Gibraltar, the set restriction has been based on the Beaufort Scale and the "probable mean wave heights" associated with wind speed. In future, with the co-operation of the Gibraltar Port Authority (GPA) and the Gibraltar Pilots, we will be trialing a revised system where the actual wave height in the Bay is the controlling factor.

As it is now a requirement under the Port Authority Circular 9 of 2007 for vessels carrying passengers to report to the GPA before departure informing them of the number of passengers and crew on board, at that point the GPA will take into account the wave height in the Bay and give the necessary clearance for the craft to proceed to sea. If they are in doubt as to the true wave heights, they in turn will contact the Gibraltar Pilots for clarification. The GPA will hold on record the maximum wave height restriction for each vessel where these limitations apply.

As it is expected that the wave height conditions in the southern part of the Bay near the pilot rendezvous point will be more accurately known, again for a trial period, we will extend the allowable operating areas to include area 'C' but restricted to south of Europa Point to a line east of the lighthouse bearing 90 degrees, and within Gibraltar territorial waters.

It will now be a condition that these craft report to the Gibraltar Maritime Administration and copy the GPA any accidents, incidents involving personnel injury of any kind to passengers or crew, close quarter encounters or near misses or any occurrence that could affect the safety of the craft or the people on board.

Amended 'Safety Survey Certificates' will be issued to the craft concerned as appropriate.

The information given by the Pilots to the GPA is an indication only as to the conditions to be expected in the Bay and that at all times it remains the responsibility of the boat operator and Skipper for the safety of their craft and the persons on board.

Tony Nation
Maritime Administrator

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All notices are available through www.gibmaritime.com

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