



ASSOCIATED  
BRITISH PORTS  
SOUTHAMPTON

CAPTAIN PHILIP HOLLIDAY  
**HARBOUR MASTER**

OCEAN GATE  
ATLANTIC WAY  
SOUTHAMPTON  
SO14 3QN

**TELEPHONE** (023) 8048 8800

**FACSIMILE** (023) 8023 2991

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An Open Letter to all leisure sailors in The Solent

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To whom it may concern

### **Close Quarters Situations with Large Vessels**

Whilst the majority of sailors in the Solent area are knowledgeable and focussed upon safety I believe it is appropriate to remind some and informing others of how we can maintain and improve the excellent safety record we share.

Our incident statistics clearly indicate the growing number, year-on-year, of close quarters situations between recreational vessels, predominantly (but not exclusively) under sail, and large commercial vessels transiting the Central Solent and Southampton Water. The incidences suggest an apparent lack of knowledge of the Port of Southampton's regulations, relevant in particular to 'The Precautionary Area' and 'Moving Prohibited Zones' but, more worryingly, they indicate an actual lack of appreciation of the potential consequences of being involved in a close quarters situation with a large commercial vessel.

To improve knowledge and understanding the Port's Byelaws and Notices to Mariners and "The yachtsman's guide to Southampton Water and its approaches" can all be downloaded from the ABP Southampton website [www.southamptonvts.co.uk](http://www.southamptonvts.co.uk). I would urge you to reacquaint yourselves with these documents and to pass them on to your friends taking up sailing etc – please spread the word.

I hope all who read this letter take the opportunity to refresh their knowledge and inform others of the available guidance and in doing so I am sure you will contribute to an enjoyable and safe sailing season this year and in the future.

Yours faithfully,

Captain Philip Holliday  
Harbour Master Southampton

**“...Guys, just remind me – who’s supposed to stand on??...”**

