



Harbourmaster

Harbourmaster's Office Operation of Vessels During Periods of Restricted Visibility. Navigation Safety Operating Requirements

Foreward

These Navigation Safety Operating Requirements set a single standard operating procedure for the Waitemata Harbour, Tamaki River and Motu Korea Channel during periods of restricted visibility.

The primary cause of restricted visibility that these requirements are designed for is fog and mist. This does not prohibit the use of the system during periods of restricted visibility caused by heavy rain, dust, smoke or similar conditions should the Harbourmaster or passenger ferry masters consider it is required.

Preamble

These requirements set out:

- i. The area to which they apply
- ii. The vessels to which they apply
- iii. The requirements for vessels navigating within the area.



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Definations

“**Auckland Pilotage area**” means that area defined as the Auckland Pilotage area in Maritime Rule 90.

“**Emergency response vessel**” means any vessel approved by the Harbourmaster for use in emergency response and may include Police, Customs, Harbourmaster, naval, port company, Coastguard, surf lifesaving vessels and club patrol or rescue boats (when supervising club activities).

“**Fog**” means mist or fog reducing visibility to less than 1 nautical mile.

“**Fog routine**” means the vessel routing, reporting and calling procedures contained with this document.

“**Passenger ferry**” means a ferry operating a scheduled service registered with Auckland Transport.

“**Restricted visibility**” means any conditions in which visibility is restricted by fog, mist, falling snow, heavy rainstorms, sandstorms or other similar causes.

“**Restricted visibility routine**” means the vessel routing, reporting and calling procedures contained with this document.

“**Required person**” means a contact person for a vessel operator.

“**Visibility**” is a measure of the distance at which an appropriately sized object or light can be clearly discerned.

Application

These operating requirements apply to all vessels operating within the defined areas shown on the chart in appendix I with the exception of:

- i. A vessel under the guidance of a licensed Pilot or Pilot Exempt master, or
- ii. A Ports of Auckland tug attending a vessel, or
- iii. A pilot vessel engaged on Pilotage duty, or
- iv. A vessel under the direction of the Search and Rescue authority of NZ, Police, Maritime Unit or Rescue Co- ordination Centre New Zealand.

These vessels must navigate in accordance with their approved operating procedures and have due regard to their special nature.



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Variation

The Harbourmaster may, upon written application, vary the requirements for specific vessels or time periods. This will be done on a case-by-case basis, and only where the overall harbour safety standards can be maintained.

Nothing in these requirements shall prevent the Harbourmaster from taking any action or issuing any directions he/she feels are required for the safety of navigation.

Purpose

To ensure the safe navigation of all vessels during periods where visibility is restricted to less than 1 nautical mile from the vessels bridge.

Areas of the Harbour to which these requirements apply

These requirements apply within the four areas shown on the accompanying chart. A restricted visibility routine may affect only one of these areas, or it may affect all areas. The areas are set to allow the differing ferry traffic patterns for the Harbour to operate effectively under restricted visibility routine whilst others may be in clear visibility.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the master for the safe navigation of their vessel. The master should have due regard to Maritime Rules, Harbourmaster's Directions and Bylaws together with the practice of good seamanship. This would include the master's knowledge that recreational vessels on the Waitemata Harbour may not conduct themselves in a responsible manner.

In situations where a vessel fails to navigate as required by the Maritime Rules or Bylaws a report should be made to the Harbourmaster giving details of the offending vessel so follow up action can be taken.

Vessels which may navigate during periods of restricted visibility

The Auckland Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2014 requires certain vessels to have an operational Automatic Identification System (AIS), when the Harbourmaster has declared an area fog.



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57 Automatic identification system

2. A person must not operate a fast commercial vessel within the Auckland pilotage area when the Harbourmaster has declared the area affected by fog, or operating under a fog routine, unless it has on board a fitted and operational Automatic Identification System.

The commencing of a restricted visibility routine as described in these requirements constitutes a method the Harbourmaster may declare the harbour in fog.

Light, shape and sound signals

Every vessel must comply with the light, shape and sound signals prescribed in Maritime Rule 22. The possible disturbance to nearby residences caused by a sound signal is no reason to fail to make a required signal.

Speed

Bylaw and Maritime Rules set maximum speeds for certain areas. Maritime Rule 22.6 states

22.6 Safe speed

Every vessel must at all times proceed at a safe speed so that proper and effective action to avoid a collision can be taken and the vessel can be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions. In determining a safe speed, the following factors must be among those taken into account

(1) For all vessels:

- (a) the state of visibility
- (b) the traffic density, including concentrations of fishing vessels or any other vessels
- (c) the manoeuvrability of the vessel, with special reference to stopping distance and turning ability in the prevailing conditions
- (d) at night, the presence of background light such as from shore lights or from the back scatter of the vessel's own lights
- (e) the state of wind, sea, and current, and the proximity of navigational hazards
- (f) the draught in relation to the available depth of water.



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(2) Additionally, for vessels with operational radar:

- (a) the characteristics, efficiency, and limitations of the radar equipment
- (b) any constraints imposed by the radar range scale in use
- (c) the effect on radar detection of the sea state, weather, and other sources of interference
- (d) the possibility that small vessels, ice, and other floating objects may not be detected by radar at an adequate range
- (e) the number, location, and movement of vessels detected by radar
- (f) the more exact assessment of the visibility that may be possible when radar is used to determine the range of vessels or other objects in the vicinity.

When navigating in or near an area of restricted visibility a vessel should be able to be stopped in a maximum distance no more than half the visibility. A vessel on a scheduled service will be very unlikely to operate to that time schedule during a period of restricted visibility.

Bridge team and watch keeping

A vessel must maintain an appropriate level of lookout. Given the high density of traffic within the Auckland Pilotage Area, and the close proximity of shoal areas, wharfs and other navigational hazards the bridge team may well require additional personnel during periods of restricted visibility. A master should not hesitate in using additional crew members to enhance the bridge team and lookout.

Communications

All vessels must maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 12.

VESSELS ENCOUNTERING RESTRICTED VISIBILITY (commencing restricted visibility routine)

When a passenger ferry, within the areas to which these requirements apply, encounters restricted visibility the master must assess whether there is a need to commence "restricted visibility routine". Where a master believes that restricted visibility routine should commence they shall make a call to Harbour Control on VHF channel 12 and request that restricted visibility routine be commenced. This call shall include:

1. Vessel name, and
2. Position, and
3. Area(s) for which restricted visibility routine is required.



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The operator at Harbour Control, when requested to commence restricted visibility routine by a passenger ferry for an area shall make an all ships call on VHF channel 12 stating:

“All vessels within the <insert area of harbour> area must comply with the restricted visibility routine”

The operator at Harbour Control will also use the text alert system to notify the ‘required persons’ that an area is now operating under restricted visibility routine. Harbour Control undertakes no vessel traffic function under this operating requirement.

Routing and radio reporting during restricted visibility routine

When a vessel is navigating within an area that is operating under a restricted visibility routine the master must:

1. Follow the vessel routing shown on the charts in appendix II, and
2. Make an “all ships” call on the VHF when approaching the points shown on the charts in appendix II. (Note: the VHF channel is also shown. VHF channel 12 for all areas except Tamaki River which is VHF channel 8).

The “all ships” call shall include:

- I. Vessel name
- II. Vessel position
- III. Direction of travel
- IV. Destination

Radio reporting positions are positioned in areas where vessels converge or join a main navigational channel.



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cancelling a restricted visibility routine

When a passenger ferry operating within an area under restricted visibility routine finds the visibility has cleared the master must decide if the restricted visibility routine is still required. Where the master believes the restricted visibility routine is no longer appropriate they shall contact harbour control on VHF channel 12, and request restricted visibility routine for that area be cancelled. This call shall include:

1. Vessel name, and
2. Position, and
3. Area(s) for which restricted visibility routine is cancelled.

A master must consider the entire area when considering cancelling a restricted visibility routine. It is not appropriate to cancel restricted visibility routine for any area when some of that area remains affected by restricted visibility.

The operator at Harbour Control, when requested to cancel restricted visibility routine by the master of a passenger ferry for an area shall make an all ships call on VHF channel 12 stating:

“All vessels within the <insert area of harbour> area the restricted visibility routine is now cancelled”

The operator at Harbour Control will also use the text alert system to notify the ‘required persons’ that an area has cancelled the restricted visibility routine. Harbour Control undertakes no vessel traffic function under this operating requirement.

Harbour Bridge precautionary area

The Harbour Bridge navigational span is an identified area of risk for vessels. During a period of restricted visibility this risk is greatly increased. The bridge structure paints a significant echo on a radar screen and can mask the echo of other vessels.

During a period of restricted visibility on the Upper Harbour Area only one vessel may navigate within the Harbour Bridge Precautionary Area at any one time. A vessel must wait for a vessel in the Harbour Bridge Precautionary Area to manoeuvre clear of the area prior to entering. A series of “waiting areas” are provided for vessels, these are well clear of the navigational area.

Where several vessels are waiting to transit the Harbour Bridge Precautionary Area the priority shall be as follows.



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- 1) passenger ferries navigating from west to east, then
- 2) passenger ferries navigating from east to west, then
- 3) vessels navigating from west to east, then
- 4) vessels navigating from east to west.

Where there are two passenger ferries waiting to transit from west to east a passenger ferry tied to the Northcote Point Wharf shall wait for the other passenger ferry(s) to transit first.

Vessels navigating away from the prescribed routing

A vessel in the areas of Upper Harbour, Waitemata and Tamaki as shown on the chart on Appendix II must follow the routing shown on charts in Appendix II. Where a vessel needs to depart from the routing to navigate to its destination it must remain on the routing until it can no longer do so. Such vessel must navigate with extreme caution when joining or departing from a routing.

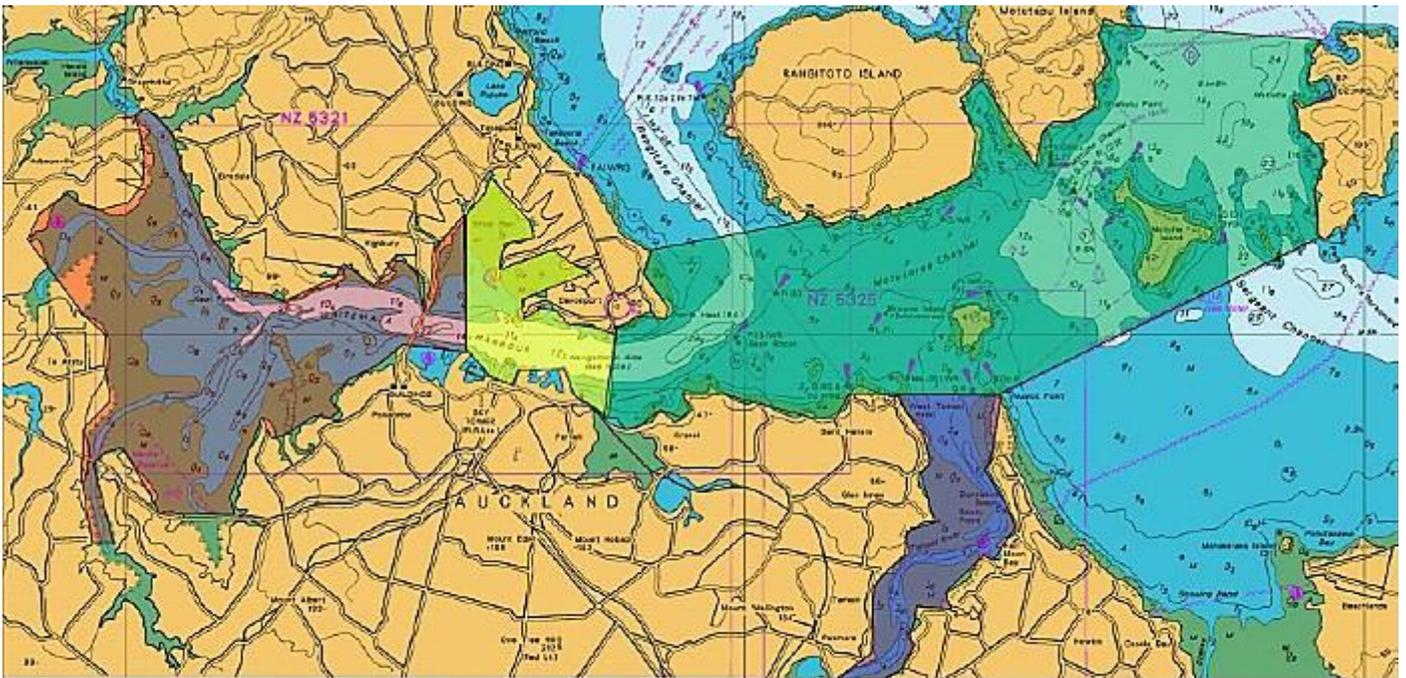
A vessel in the area of Motu Korea as shown on the chart on Appendix II must follow the routing shown on charts in Appendix II when navigating in the vicinity of them. Where a vessel is navigating clear of the routing (navigating to or from an area the routing does not cover) that vessel is not required to follow the routing but must remain well clear of the routing and navigate with extreme caution when joining or departing from a routing.



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Areas to which these requirements apply

These requirements apply to the following Harbour areas:



Upper Harbour



Waitemata



Motu Korea



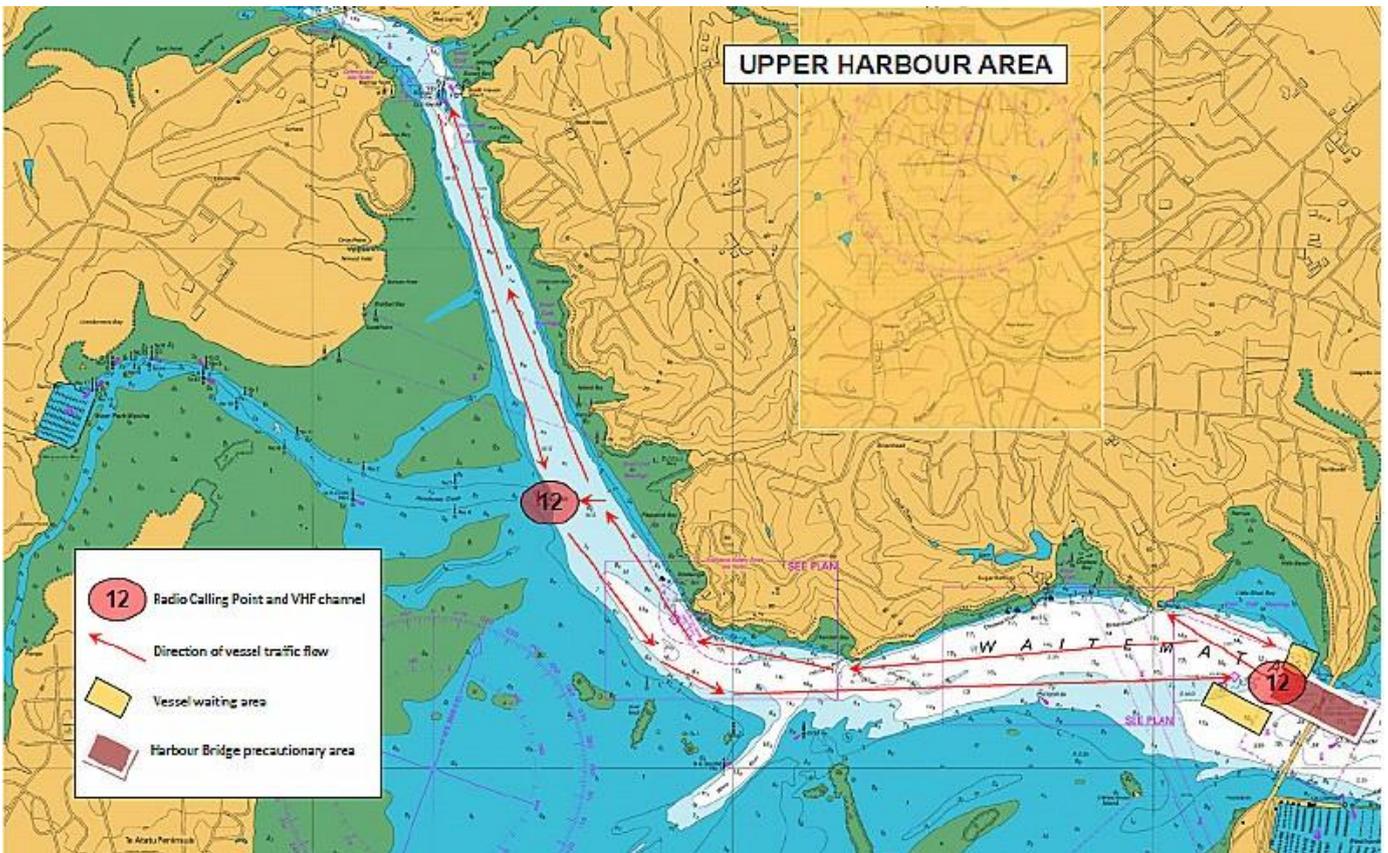
Tamaki



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Areas to which these requirements apply

These requirements apply to the following Harbour areas:

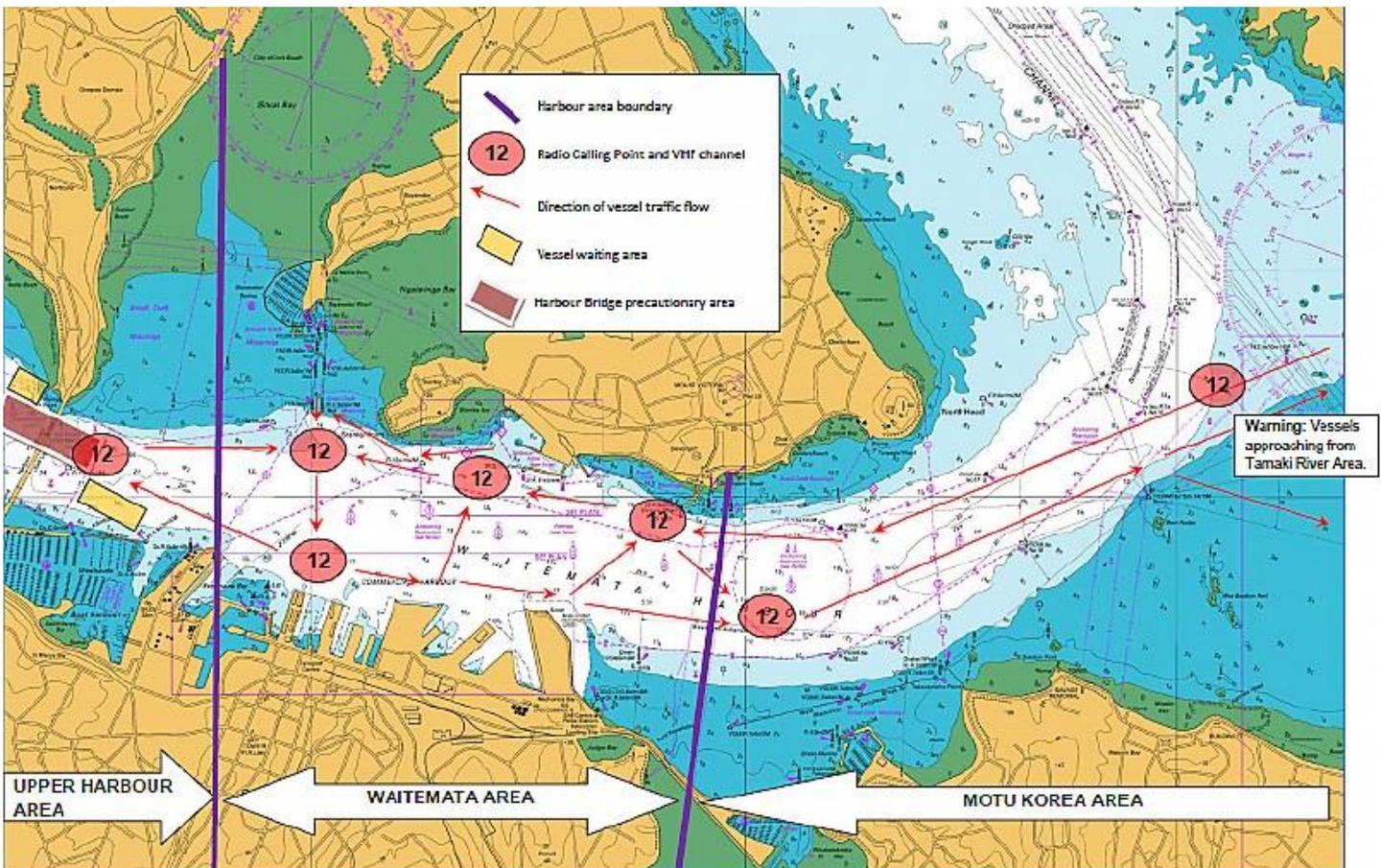




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Areas to which these requirements apply

These requirements apply to the following Harbour areas:

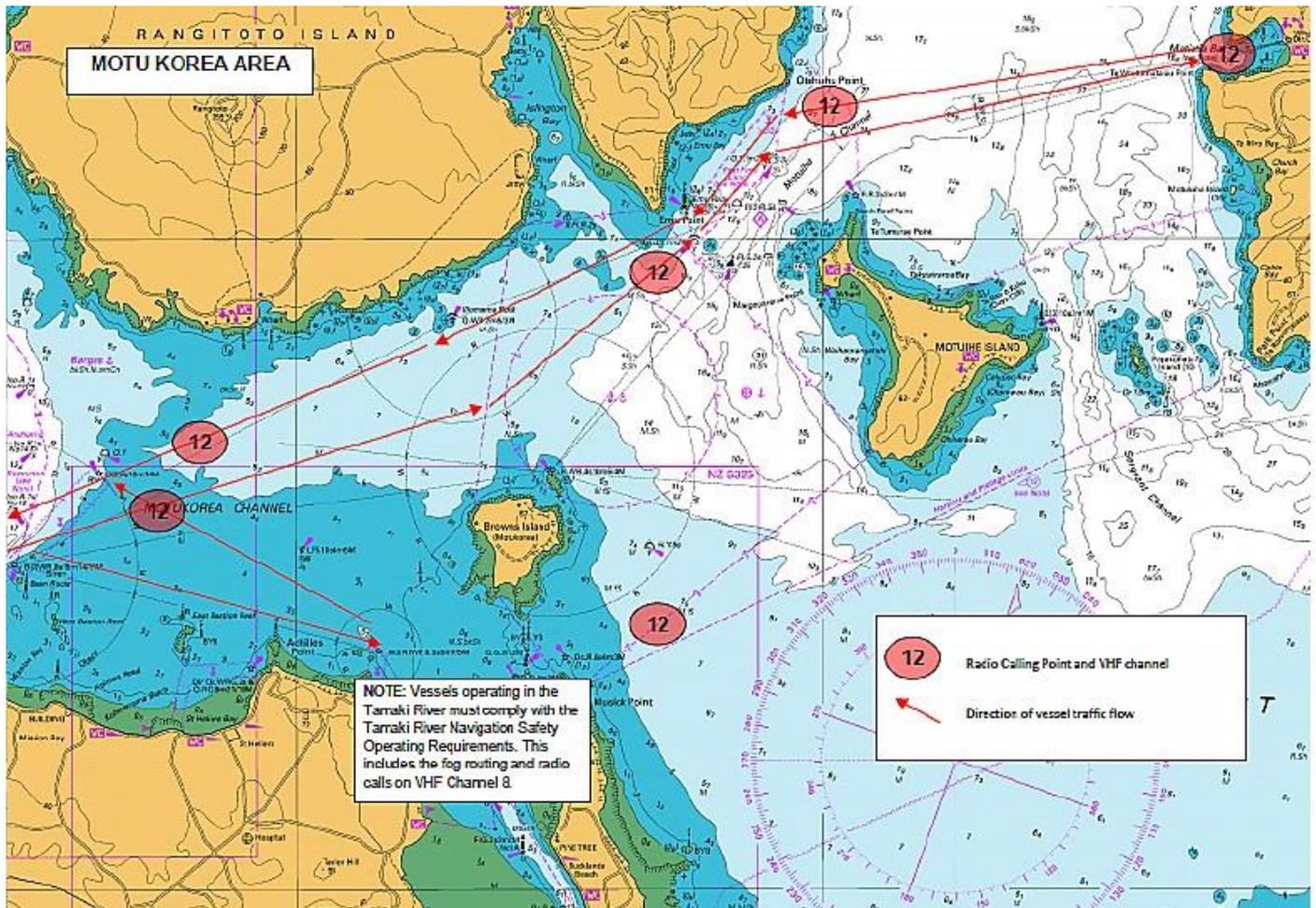




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Areas to which these requirements apply

These requirements apply to the following Harbour areas:





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Master's Checklist

The master of a vessel navigating in or near an area of restricted visibility must take the following factors into account:

Speed:	Reduce to a safe speed. Stop if required, vessel can be anchored to await improvement in visibility if required.
Position:	Ensure vessels position is effectively monitored.
Lookout:	Post extra lookouts if required.
Navigation lights:	Switched on and checked working.
Sound signals:	Correct sound signals made.
Radar:	Must be switched on and at an appropriate range (tuned correctly), use of long range scanning.
AIS:	Must be switched on and transmitting. Onboard display must be visible to master.
Chart plotter:	On appropriate range or chart scale.
Watertight doors:	Are all appropriate watertight doors or hatches closed.
Distractions minimized:	Cell phone, stereo, passengers in wheelhouse.
Notify passengers:	Expected delays.
Record in logbook:	Update logbook.
VHF:	Switched to appropriate channel.
Designated person:	Notify your companies designated person if required.
Is restricted visibility spreading?	Be prepared for the spreading of restricted visibility into other areas. Does the restricted visibility routine need to be extended to other areas or cancelled in your current area?

Harbourmaster's Office

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