

**Wellington Regional Council
Harbourmaster's Direction 4/2024
Changes to entrance channel and approaches**

To: Pilots and PEC Masters of vessels over 500GRT using Wellington Harbour entrance.

I, **GRANT NALDER**, Wellington Regional Harbourmaster, issue the following Direction pursuant to section 33F(1)(c)(i) of the Maritime Transport Act 1994 **UPON THE GROUNDS** that the Direction is necessary for the purpose of ensuring maritime safety;

BACKGROUND

In 2021 Greater Wellington and Centreport commissioned South Maritime Services to assist in reviewing how vessels enter and depart from Wellington harbour and identify any risk areas and provide recommendations. This was further refined with a risk review meeting in September 2024.

The resulting report and recommendations were shared in December 2024 for further consultation. As sections of the report are considered and changes are introduced this Direction will be amended to give effect to those changes.

Changes will be introduced in a staged manner where possible, with prior warning and opportunity to comment. These changes (and this Direction) can be reviewed and modified as/when required. Once all changes are implemented there will be a period of time before review and either further modification or the start of a process to review and change the Navigation and Safety Bylaws 2021 (the Bylaws).

Initial steps have already been implemented, specifically moving the Pilot Boarding Grounds slightly south to increase separation between inbound PEC vessels and Piloted ships. To further increase this separation we are modifying Bylaw 6.1.5 to allow inbound PEC vessels to join the leading line further north.

Additionally, we are implementing a 'no passing' zone for vessels over 500GRT.

As of 21 August 2025 there is no longer an outward bound route west of Falcon Shoal beacon for vessels over 500GRT.

APPLICATION

This Direction applies to PEC and Piloted vessels over 500GRT entering or departing from Wellington Harbour.

DIRECTION

- PEC vessels entering Wellington Harbour must be steady on the leads by the time their vessel reaches a point 1.5nm south of the charted position of Barrett Reef Buoy. This amends Bylaw 6.1.5. that currently requires joining before 2nm. This is applicable from 16 December 2024.
- There is to be no overtaking between applicable vessels in the area between the Front leading light and the charted position of Barrett Reef buoy. This is applicable from 16 December 2024.
- No vessel departing Wellington Harbour is to proceed west of the Falcon Shoal beacon.

This direction will be reviewed either to incorporate additional changes or to resolves issues arising from changes, as required.

DATED at Wellington this 20 August 2025.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'ngnall', is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Grant Nalder
Regional Harbourmaster
Wellington Regional Council