

SPECIAL MARINE NOTICE

No. 1 of 2025

General Information on using Waterways Ireland navigations

Masters of boats, owners and waterways users are recommended to check the Waterways Ireland website at www.waterwaysireland.org for general information about the waterways and in particular the Marine Notices section which gives current operational information about the individual navigations such as works in progress, passage restrictions etc.

Safety on the Water

All users of the navigations are strongly recommended to make themselves aware of safety on the water for whatever activity they are involved in and to read the advice offered by the various governing bodies and water safety organisations.

The Dept. of Transport, Ireland published a revised Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft in 2024. This Code provides valuable information of recreational craft safety and should be read by all waterway users. Further information and access to the Code are available at: www.gov.ie/transport and <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/66ff7e-safe-operation-of-recreational-craft/> and www.safetyonthewater.ie.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency, UK,
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/maritime-and-coastguard-agency>

The RNLI – <https://rnli.org/safety>

Water Safety Ireland - <https://watersafety.ie/> - for information in terms of drowning prevention and water safety.

Registration of Vessels

All vessels using the Shannon Navigation (which includes the Shannon-Erne Waterway) and the Erne System must be registered with Waterways Ireland. Only open undecked boats with an engine of 15 horsepower or less on the Shannon Navigation, and vessels of 10 horsepower or less on the Erne System, are exempt. Registration is free of charge.

Boat registration should be completed online at :
[https:// www.waterwaysireland.org/boat-owners/craft-registration](https://www.waterwaysireland.org/boat-owners/craft-registration)

Permits for use of the Grand and Royal Canals and the Barrow Navigation

All vessels using the Grand and Royal Canals and the Barrow Navigation must display appropriate valid Permit(s) i.e A Combined Mooring and Passage Permit (€126) and if not intending to move every five days, an Extended Mooring Permit (€152).

Permit applications should be completed online at: <https://www.waterwaysireland.org/boat-owners/permits>

Invasive Species:

Prevention of the introduction and spread of invasive species on the waterways (Biosecurity)

Invasive species such as Zebra Mussel, Quagga Mussel, Asian Clam, *Lagarosiphon major*, *Crassula helmsii*, Crayfish plague, fish diseases and knotweeds have been introduced into and along Irish waterways.

Invasive species can have a detrimental effect on the health and ecology of the waterbody, adversely impact native species and surrounding habitats. In addition, invasive species can negatively impact recreational use, block waterways, hinder navigation, damage equipment and lead to increased requirements and costs for maintenance and control. Invasive species can spread easily into and through navigations by boats, angling equipment, non-powered watercraft, clothing and footwear.

To prevent the spread of invasives all waterway users should implement the ‘Check Clean Dry’ method before and after using a waterway.

Any persons importing/using a boat/vessel, motorised or personal watercraft from outside of the island of Ireland, should ensure strict adherence to biosecurity cleaning of the vessel/craft before placing it on a waterway, on the island of Ireland.

For further information please see:

[Boating - Invasives.ie](http://Boating-Invasives.ie), [Angling - Invasives.ie](http://Angling-Invasives.ie), Paddle Sports - Invasives.ie
General guidance - Invasives.ie.

ATTENTION WATER USERS - help stop the invasion!

Invasive plants and animals harm our wildlife and environments. They can cause disease, block waterways, interfere with fishing and damage boats. Please help stop their spread by following the **Check, Clean, Dry** code.

STOP THE SPREAD

CHECK Check your equipment, boat, and clothing after leaving the water for mud, aquatic animals, or plant material. Remove anything you find and leave it at the site.

CLEAN Clean everything thoroughly as soon as you can paying attention to areas that are damp and hard to inspect. Use hot water (at least 45°C) or a high-pressure spray.

DRY Dry everything until it is dry for at least 48 hours before using elsewhere as some invasive plants and animals can survive for weeks in damp conditions.

Disinfect everything if complete drying is not possible.

Remember to check these places

Remember to check these places

Protect the environment and sport you enjoy

Find out more about invasive plants and animals and how you can help to stop the spread at: invasives.ie/biosecurity/check-clean-dry

Report any invasive species you find including:

- FISH DISEASES
- KILLER SHRIMP
- AFRICAN CLAM
- QUAGGA MUSSEL

Logos: An tAisling Tírdhúchais, Buidéal Áisiúil agus Dúshlanachta, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage; National Biodiversity Data Centre, A Nature Card Programme; Waterways Ireland, United Waterways; Invasives.ie, Invasive Alien Species in Ireland; Fonn na Mara Marine Institute; Loughs Agency, Government of the Republic of Ireland; Leave No Trace.

Passage on the Royal and Grand Canals – Dublin Area

For boat passage through the locks east of Lock 12 into / out of Dublin on either the Royal or Grand Canals, Masters are requested to contact the Waterways Ireland Eastern Regional Office (Mon - Fri 9.30am - 4.30pm) on tel: +353(0)1 868 0148 or email dublincanals@waterwaysireland.org prior to making passage in order to plan the necessary lock-keeping assistance arrangements.

On the Grand Canal a minimum of two days notice prior to the planned passage should be given, masters should note that with the exception of pre-arranged events, a maximum of 2 boats per day will be taken through the locks, travelling either east or west.

Movements in or out of the city will be organised by prior arrangement to take place as a single movement in one day. Boaters will be facilitated to travel the system if their passage is considered to be safe by Waterways Ireland and they have the valid permit(s) for mooring and passage.

Newcomen Lifting Bridge

On the Royal Canal two weeks' notice of bridge passage (Newcomen Lifting Bridge) is required for the pre-set lift date, and lock assistance will then also be arranged. A minimum of 2 boats is required for a bridge lift to go ahead.

Waterways Ireland Eastern Regional Office (Tel: +353(0)1 868 0148 or dublincanals@waterwaysireland.org) is the point of contact for the bridge lift.

A maximum number of boats passing will be implemented to keep to the times given above for the planned lifts (16 for the Sat / Sun lifts & 8 for the weekday lifts). Priority will be given on a first come first served basis.

On day of lift, boaters and passengers must follow guidance from Waterways Ireland staff about sequence of passage under bridge & through Lock 1 and must remain within signed and designated areas.

Royal Canal, Dublin - Navigation Restriction - Lock 10

Waterways Ireland would like to advise Masters of Vessels wishing to make passage on the Royal Canal in Dublin that a navigation restriction has been applied to Lock 10. The maximum beam of craft that is permitted to pass through this lock is restricted to 3.5m until further notice. This restriction is due to the cross-sectional profile of the lock which requires a limiting of the size of craft that can pass through the lock. Waterways Ireland is investigating the feasibility of making structural changes to Lock 10 to allow passage of similar craft as can pass through other Royal Canal locks (January 2025).

Events Held on the Waterways

All organised events taking place on the waterways must have the prior approval of Waterways Ireland. This is a twelve week process and application forms must be accompanied with the appropriate insurance, signed indemnity and risk assessment. The application should be completed on the Waterways Ireland events page at : <https://www.waterwaysireland.org/contact-us/organise-an-event>

Time Limits on Mooring in Public Harbours

On the Shannon Navigation and the Shannon-erne Waterway boats may berth in public harbours for five consecutive days or a total of seven days in any one month.

On the Erne System no vessel may berth at a public mooring for more than 48 hours without a four-hour intermission within that period, throughout the year.

Winter Mooring on the Shannon Navigation and Shannon Erne Waterway

Winter mooring may be availed of by owners during the period 1 Nov to 31 Mar by prior arrangement and payment of a charge of €63.50 per boats. Boats not availing of Winter Mooring must continue to comply with the “5 Day Rule”. Winter Mooring applications should be completed online at: <https://www.waterwaysireland.org/boat-owners/winter-mooring>

Owners should be aware that electricity supply and water supply to public moorings is disconnected for the winter months. This is to protect against frost damage, to reduce running costs and to minimise maintenance requirements during the winter months.

Vessel owners are advised that advance purchasing of electricity on the power bollards leading up to the disconnection date should be minimal. Electricity credit existing on the bollards will not be recoverable after the winter decommissioning date. Both services will be reinstated prior to the commencement of the next boating season.

Smart Cards

Waterways Ireland smart cards are used to operate locks on the Shannon Erne Waterway, to access the service blocks, to use the pump-outs along the navigations, to avail of electrical power at Waterways Ireland jetties.

Berthing in Public Harbours

Masters are reminded of the following:

- Equip their vessel with mooring lines of appropriate length and strength and only secure their boat to mooring bollards and cleats provided for this purpose.
- Ensure mooring lines, electric cables and fresh water hoses do not create a trip hazard on public jetties for others users.
- Carry sufficient fenders to prevent damage to your own vessel, other vessels and WI property.
- Allow sufficient space between your vessel and the vessel ahead /astern (c.1m) for fire safety purposes and /or to recover somebody from the water.
- Do not berth more than two vessels side by side and ensure there is safe access/egress at all times between vessels and onto the harbour itself.
- Do not berth in such a way to prevent use of harbour safety ladders, slipways or pump-outs.
- Do not allow the bow of your vessel to overhang the walkway of a floating mooring thus creating a hazard for others with an overhanging anchor or bow fendering.
- Animals are not allowed to be loose or stray at any time.
- Harbour and jetty infrastructure such as railings, power pedestals, freshwater taps, electric light poles, safety bollards, ladders etc are not designed for the purpose of mooring boats, they will not bear the strain of a vessel and will be damaged.
- At Carrybridge on the Erne System, Masters of vessels are not permitted to use stern on mooring. Masters of vessels must use the mooring fingers for mooring of vessels and for embarkation / disembarkation from vessels.

Passenger Vessel Berths

Masters of vessels should not berth on passenger vessel berths where it is indicated that an arrival is imminent. Passenger vessels plying the navigations generally only occupy the berths to embark and disembark passengers and rarely remain on the berths for extended periods or overnight.

Lock Lead-in Jetties

Lead-in jetties adjacent to the upstream and downstream gates at lock chambers are for the purpose of boats waiting to use the lock and should not be used for long term berthing.

Some lead in jetties are provided with a lower section for launching and recovering of canoes / kayaks / paddle boards.

Vessel Wake

Vessel wake, that is, the wave generated by the passage of the boat through the water, can sometimes be large, powerful and destructive depending on the hull shape and engine power of the vessel. This wake can be detrimental to other users of the navigation when it strikes their boat or inundates the shoreline or riverbank. Masters are requested to frequently look behind and check the effect of their wake / wash particularly when passing moored vessels, on entering harbours and approaching jetties and to be aware of people pursuing other activities such as fishing on the riverbank.

Speed Restriction

A vessel or boat shall not be navigated on the Shannon Navigation at a speed in excess of 5 kph when within 200 metres of a bridge, quay, jetty or wharf, when in a harbour or canal or when passing within 100 metres of a moored vessel or boat.

Vessels navigating the Shannon-Erne Waterway should observe the general 5 kph speed limit which applies along the waterway. This is necessary in order to prevent damage to the banks caused by excessive wash from vessels.

Vessels navigating the Erne System should observe the statutory 5kt / 6mph / 10kph speed limit areas.

A boat on the Royal and Grand canals shall not be navigated at a speed in excess of 6km per hour.

A boat on the Barrow Navigation shall not be navigated at a speed in excess of 11km per hour except as necessary for safe navigation in conditions of fast flow.

Bank Erosion

Narrow sections of all the navigations are particularly prone to bank erosion due to the large wash generated by some boats. Masters are requested to be vigilant and to slow down to a speed sufficient to maintain steerage when they observe the wash of their boats inundating the river-banks.

Unusual Waterborne Activity

Unusual waterborne vessels may be encountered from time to time, such as, hovercraft or amphibious aircraft / seaplanes. Masters of such boats are reminded to apply the normal "Rule of the Road" when they meet conventional boats on the water and to allow extra room to manoeuvre in the interest of safety.

Sailing Activity

Mariners will encounter large numbers of sailing dinghies from late June to August in the vicinity of Lough Derg, Lough Ree and Lower Lough Erne. Sailing courses are marked by yellow buoys to suit weather conditions on the day. Vessels should proceed at slow speed and with due caution and observe the rules of navigation when passing these fleets, as many of the participants are junior sailors under training.

Rowing

Mariners should expect to meet canoes and vessels under oars on any part of the navigations, but more so in the vicinity of Athlone, Carrick-on-Shannon, Coleraine, Enniskillen and Limerick. Masters are reminded to proceed at slow speed and especially to reduce their wash to a minimum when passing these boats as they can be easily upset and swamped due to their very low freeboard and always be prepared to give way in any given traffic situation.

Canoeing

Canoeing is an adventure sport and participants are strongly recommended to seek the advice of the sport's governing bodies i.e Canoeing Ireland and the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland, before venturing onto the navigations.

Persons in charge of canoes are reminded of the inherent danger to these boats associated with operating close to weirs, sluice gates, locks and other infrastructure particularly when rivers are in flood and large volumes of water are moving through the navigations due to general flood conditions or very heavy localised precipitation e.g. turbulent and broken water, stopper waves. Shooting weirs is prohibited without prior permission of Waterways Ireland.

Canoeists should check with lockkeepers prior entering a lock to ensure passage is completed in a safe manner. Portage is required at all unmanned locks.

Canoe Trail Network – "Blueways"

Masters of powered boats are reminded that a canoe trail network is being developed across all navigations and to expect more organised canoeing along these trails necessitating slow speed and minimum wash when encountering canoeists, rowing boats etc.

Equally, persons using canoes, kayaks, Stand Up Paddleboards, rowing boats and other such boats should be aware that barges and other larger boats are slow to manoeuvre in confined waters. Appropriate safety measures consistent with the prevailing circumstances and conditions should be exercised by persons using canoes, kayaks, Stand Up Paddleboards, rowing boats and other such boats in the vicinity of barges and larger boats.

Rockingham and Drummans Island Canals – Lough Key

Rockingham and Drummans Island Canals on Lough Key are accessible by non-powered boats only, eg canoes, kayaks, rowing boats.

Fast Powerboats and Personal Watercraft (Jet Skis)

Masters of Fast Powerboats (speed greater than 17kts) and Personal Watercraft (i.e. Jet Skis) are reminded of the inherent dangers associated with high speed on the water and especially in the confines of small bays and narrow sections of the navigations. Keeping a proper look-out, making early alterations to course and /or reducing speed will avoid conflict with slower vessels using the navigation. Personal Watercraft are not permitted to be used on the canals.

Towing Waterskiers, Wakeboarders, Doughnuts etc

Masters of vessels engaged in any of these activities are reminded of the manoeuvring constraints imposed upon their vessel by the tow and of the added responsibilities that they have to the person(s) being towed. These activities should be conducted in areas which are clear of conflicting traffic. It is highly recommended that a person additional to the master be carried to act as a "look-out" to keep the tow under observation at all times.

Prohibition on Swimming

Swimming in the navigable channel, particularly at bridges, is dangerous and is prohibited due to the risk of being run over by a vessel underway in the navigation.

Age Restrictions on operating of powered craft

In the Republic of Ireland, Statutory Instrument 921 of 2005 provides the legal requirements regarding the minimum age for operating of powered craft. The Statutory Instrument contains the following requirements:

- The master or owner of a personal watercraft or a fast power craft shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person who has not attained the age of 16 years does not operate or control the craft.
- The master or owner of a pleasure craft powered by an engine with a rating of more than 5 horse power or 3.7 kilowatts shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person who has not attained the age of 12 years does not operate or control the craft.

Lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's)

Lifejackets and PFD's are the single most important items of personal protective equipment to be used on a vessel and should be worn especially when the vessel is being manoeuvred such as entering / departing a lock, anchoring, coming alongside or departing a jetty or quayside.

In the Republic of Ireland, Statutory Instrument 921 of 2005 provides the legal requirements regarding the wearing of Personal Flotation Devices. The Statutory Instrument contains the following requirements:

- The master or owner of a pleasure craft (other than a personal watercraft) shall ensure, that there are, at all times on board the craft, sufficient suitable personal flotation devices for each person on board.
- A person on a pleasure craft (other than a personal watercraft) of less than 7 metres length overall shall wear a suitable personal flotation device while on board an open craft or while on the deck of decked craft, other than when the craft is made fast to the shore or at anchor.
- The master or owner of a pleasure craft (other than a personal watercraft) shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person who has not attained the age of 16 years complies with paragraph above.
- The master or owner of a pleasure craft (other than a personal watercraft) shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person who has not attained the age of 16 years wears a suitable personal flotation device while on board an open craft or while on the deck of a decked craft other than when it is made fast to the shore or at anchor.

- The master or owner of a pleasure craft (other than a personal watercraft) shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that a person wears a suitable personal flotation device, at all times while – (a) being towed by the craft, (b) on board a vessel or object of any kind which is being towed by the craft.
- Further information is available at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/si/921/made/en/print>

Firing Range Danger Area – Lough Ree

The attention of mariners is drawn to the Irish Defence Forces Firing Range situated in the vicinity of buoys No's 2 and 3, on Lough Ree on the Shannon Navigation. This range is used regularly for live firing exercises, throughout the year, all boats and vessels should stay clear of the area marked with yellow buoys showing a yellow "X" topmark and displaying the word "Danger".

Shannon Navigation, Portumna Swing Bridge Tolls

No attempt should be made by Masters of vessels to pay the bridge toll while making way through the bridge opening. Payment will only be taken by the Collector from Masters when they are secured alongside the jetties north and south of the bridge.

Shannon Navigation, Lock and Bridge Opening Times

Shannon Lock Opening Hours (excl. Sarsfield Lock)			
Season	Dates	Weekdays Mon- Sat	Sundays
1	Mar 14 - Mar 31	09:30 - 18:30	09:30 - 18:00
2	Apr 01 - Sept 30	09:30 - 19:30	09:30 - 18:00
3	Oct 01 - Oct 31	09:30 - 18:30	09:30 - 18:00
4	Nov 1 - Mar 13	09:00 - 12:00	09:00 - 11:00
LUNCH BREAK 13:00 - 14:00			

Portumna Bridge – Opening times

Season	Dates	Hours of Operation Weekdays Mon- Sat	Portumna Bridge Closing Times	Hours of Operations Sundays	Portumna Bridge Closing Times Sundays
1	Mar 14 - Mar 31	09:30 - 18:30	10:00, 11:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:30, 17:30	09:30 - 18:00	10:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:00, 17:00
2	Apr 01 - Sept 30	09:30 - 19:30	10:00, 11:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:00, 17:30, 18:30	09:30 - 18:00	10:00, 11:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:00, 17:00
3	Oct 01 - Oct 31	09:30 - 18:30	10:00, 11:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:30, 17:30	09:30 - 18:00	10:00, 12:30, 14:30, 16:00, 17:00
4	Nov 1 - Mar 13	09:00 - 12:00	09:30, 10:30, 11:30	09:00 - 11:00	09:30, 10:30

Navigating from Killaloe to Limerick – Ardnacrusha and Sarsfield Locks

The navigation from Killaloe to Limerick involves passage through Ardnacrusha locks, the associated headrace and tailrace and the Abbey River into Limerick City. Careful passage planning is required to undertake this voyage. Considerations include: lock passage at Ardnacrusha, water flow in the navigation, aircraft under bridges on Abbey River in Limerick, state of tide in Limerick

Users are advised to contact the ESB Ardnacrusha hydroelectric power station (00353 (0)87 9970131) 48 hours in advance of commencing their journey to book passage through the locks at Ardnacrusha. It is NOT advised to undertake a voyage if more than one turbine is operating (20MW), due to the increased velocity of flow in the navigation channel, which can be dangerous. To ascertain automatically in real time how many turbines are running, users can phone +353 (0)87 6477229.

For safety reasons the ESB has advised that only powered boats with a capacity in excess of 5 knots are allowed to enter Ardnacrusha Headrace and Tailrace Canals.

Passage through Sarsfield Lock should be booked on +353-87-7972998, on the day prior to travel and it should be noted also that transit is not possible two hours either side of low water.

A Hydrographic survey in 2020 of the navigation channel revealed that the approach from Shannon Bridge to Sarsfield Lock and the Dock area has silted up. Masters of vessels and water users are advised to navigate to the Lock from Shannon bridge on a rising tide one or two hours before High Tide.

Overhead Power Lines (OHPL) and Air draft

All Masters must be aware of the dangers associated with overhead power lines, in particular sailing vessels and workboats with cranes or large air drafts. Voyage planning is a necessity in order to identify the location of overhead lines crossing the navigation.

Overhead power line heights on the River Shannon are maintained at 12.6metres (40 feet) from Normal Summer level for that section of navigation, masters of vessels with a large air draft should proceed with caution and make additional allowances when water levels are high.

If a vessel or its equipment comes into contact with an OHPL the operator should NOT attempt to move the vessel or equipment. The conductor may still be alive or re-energise automatically. Maintain a safe distance and prevent third parties from approaching due to risk of arcing. Contact the emergency services for assistance.

Anglers are also reminded that a minimum ground distance of 30 metres should be maintained from overhead power lines when using a rod and line.

Submarine Cables and Pipes

Masters of vessels are reminded not to anchor their vessels in the vicinity of submarine cables or pipes in case they foul their anchor or damage the cables or pipes. Look to the river banks for signage indicating their presence.

Water Levels - Precautions

Low Water Levels:

When water levels fall below normal summer levels masters should be aware of:

Navigation

To reduce the risk of grounding masters should navigate on or near the centreline of the channel, avoid short cutting in dog-legged channels and navigating too close to navigation markers.

Proceeding at a slow speed will also reduce “squat” effect i.e. where the vessel tends to sit lower in the water as a consequence of higher speed.

Slipways

Reduced slipway length available under the water surface and the possibility of launching trailers dropping off the end of the concrete apron.

More slipway surface susceptible to weed growth requiring care while engaged in launching boats, from slipping and sliding on the slope. Note also that launching vehicles may not be able to get sufficient traction on the slipway once the boat is launched to get up the incline.

Bank Erosion

Very dry riverbanks are more susceptible to erosion from vessel wash.

Lock Share.

Maximising on the number of vessels in a lock will ensure that the total volume of water moving downstream is decreased. Lock cycles should be used for vessels travelling each way.

High Water Levels:

When water levels rise above normal summer level masters should be aware of:

Navigation

Navigation marks will have reduced height above the water level or may disappear underwater altogether making the navigable channel difficult to discern.

In narrow sections of the navigations water levels will tend to rise more quickly than in main streams and air draft at bridges will likewise be reduced.

There will also be increased flow rates particularly in the vicinity of navigation infrastructure such as bridges, weirs, locks etc where extra care in manoeuvring vessels will be required.

Harbours and Jetties

Due care is required in harbours and at slipways when levels are at or near the same level as the harbour walkways as the edge will be difficult to discern especially in reduced light conditions. It is advised that Personal Flotation Devices be worn if tending to boats in a harbour in these conditions.

Lower Bann Navigation

The attention of all users is drawn to the “Users Code for the Lower Bann”, in particular to that section covering “Flow in the River” outlining the dangers for users both on the banks and in the navigation, associated with high flow rates when the river is in spate. Canoeists should consult and carry a copy of the “Lower Bann Canoe Trail” guide issued by the Canoe Association of Northern Ireland. Users should also contact the DfI Rivers Coleraine, who is responsible for regulating the flow rates on the river, for advisory information on the flow rates to be expected on any given day.

DfI Rivers Coleraine. Tel: 0044 28 7034 2357 Email: rivers.coleraine@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Lower Bann Navigation – Newferry – No wake zone

A No Wake Zone exists on the Lower Bann Navigation at Newferry. Masters of vessels are requested to proceed at a slow speed and create no wake while passing the jetties and slipways at Newferry.

Slipways

Slipways should only be used for the purpose of launching and recovering of boats or other objects from the water. Before using a slipway it should be examined to ensure that the surface has sufficient traction / grip for the intended purpose such as launching a boat from a trailer using a vehicle, that there is sufficient depth of water on the slipway to float the boat off the trailer before the concrete apron ends and that the wheels of the trailer do not drop off the edge of the slipway. That life-saving appliances are available in the vicinity, that the vehicle is roadworthy and capable of coping with the weight of the trailer and boat on the incline. It is recommended that slipway operations are conducted by two persons.

Caution to be Used in Reliance upon Aids to Navigation

The aids to navigation depicted on the navigation guides comprise a system of fixed and floating aids to navigation. Prudent mariners will not rely solely on any single aid to navigation, particularly a floating aid to navigation. With respect to buoys, the buoy symbol is used to indicate the approximate position of the buoy body and the ground tackle which secures it to the lake or riverbed. The approximate position is used because of the practical limitations in positioning and maintaining buoys in precise geographical locations. These limitations include, but are not limited to, prevailing atmospheric and lake/river conditions, the slope of and the material making up the lake/riverbed, the fact that the buoys are moored to varying lengths of chain, and the fact that the buoy body and/or ground tackle positions are not under continuous surveillance. Due to the forces of nature, the position of the buoy body can be expected to shift inside and outside the charted symbol.

Buoys and perches are also moved out of position or pulled over by those mariners who use them to moor up to instead of anchoring. To this end, mariners should always monitor their passage by relating buoy/perch positions with the published navigation guide. Furthermore, a vessel attempting to pass close by always risks collision with a yawing buoy or with the obstruction that the buoy or beacon / perch marks.

Masters of Vessels are requested to use the most up to date navigation guides when navigating on the Inland Waterways.

**P Harkin
Inspector of Navigation
Waterways Ireland
03 Jan 2025**