



**MARINE SAFETY AND SECURITY
INFORMATION BULLETIN
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Coast Guard Sector San Francisco

Enforcement of Navigation Rules in San Francisco Bay

This Marine Safety Information Bulletin (MSIB) promulgates a list of the major deep draft channels, traffic separation schemes, and adjacent waters in San Francisco Bay and approaches, which are designated as either "narrow channels or fairways" or "traffic separation schemes" for the application of the Inland and International Rules of the Road. The designation is intended to reduce the serious hazards created when large vessels are impeded by smaller vessels by providing clear guidance on the applicability of Rules 9 and 10. This MSIB supersedes and cancels Captain of the Port Advisory 05-95.

For any vessel operating within a narrow channel or fairway east of the COLREGS Demarcation Line, Rule 9 Inland, Narrow Channels applies. 33 CFR §80.1142 defines the COLREGS Demarcation Line for San Francisco Harbor as a straight line drawn from Point Bonita Light through Mile Rocks Light to the shore.

The following locations are designated as "narrow channels or fairways" within San Francisco Bay. This list is not all-inclusive, but identifies areas where deep draft commercial and public vessels routinely operate.

1. All traffic lanes, separation zones and precautionary areas within the San Francisco Bay Region's Regulated Navigation Area defined in 33 CFR §165.1181 including:
 - a. Golden Gate Traffic Lanes Golden Gate Precautionary Area
 - b. Central Bay Traffic Lanes
 - c. Central Bay Precautionary Area
 - d. North Ship Channel RNA
 - e. San Pablo Strait Channel RNA
 - f. Pinole Shoal Channel RNA
 - g. Benicia-Martinez Railroad Bridge RNA
 - h. Southampton Shoal Channel/Richmond Harbor RNA
 - i. Oakland Harbor RNA
2. Point Potrero Reach/Turn
3. Richmond Harbor Channel
4. Santa Fe Channel
5. Oakland Inner Harbor from Inner Harbor Channel Light "5" (LLNR 4670) to, and including Brooklyn Basin South Channel.
6. Oakland Outer Harbor.
7. Alameda Naval Air Station Channel
8. South San Francisco Bay Channels between the Central Bay Precautionary Area and Redwood Creek Entrance Light "2" (LLNR 5180)
9. Redwood Creek between Redwood Creek Entrance Light "2" (LLNR 5180) and Redwood Creek Daybeacon "21" (LLNR 5265)

10. Carquinez Strait between the Pinole Shoal Channel RNA and the Benicia- Martinez Highway Bridge
11. Mare Island Strait between Mare Island Light "2" (LLNR 6095) and Mare Island Causeway Bridge.
12. Suisun Bay Channels between the Benicia-Martinez Highway Bridge and Suisun Bay Light "34" (LLNR 6655)
13. New York Slough between Suisun Bay Lighted Buoy "30" (LLNR 6585) and San Joaquin River Light "2" (LLNR 6670)
14. Sacramento River and Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel from Suisun Bay Light "34" (LLNR 6655) to the Port of Sacramento.
15. San Joaquin River from San Joaquin River Light "2" (LLNR 6670) to the Port of Stockton.

According to Rule 9 Inland, vessels and powerboats less than 20 meters, all sailboats, and vessels engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of a vessel that can safely navigate only within a narrow channel or fairway. Additionally, a vessel shall not cross a narrow channel or fairway if such crossing impedes the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within that channel or fairway. The term "shall not impede" means a small craft must keep well clear and not hinder or interfere with the transit of larger vessels. All vessels shall avoid anchoring in a narrow channel, unless doing so is in the immediate interest of navigation safety.

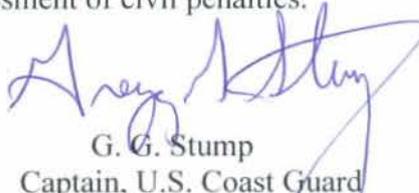
For any vessel west of the COLREGS Demarcation Line operating within the Off San Francisco Traffic Separation Scheme, Rule 10 International, Traffic Separation Schemes, applies.

The following areas are designated Traffic Separation Schemes per 33 CFR §167.400-406.

1. Off San Francisco: Precautionary Area
2. Off San Francisco: Northern Approach
3. Off San Francisco: Southern Approach
4. Off San Francisco: Western Approach
5. Off San Francisco: Main Ship Channel
6. Off San Francisco: Area to be avoided

According to Rule 10 International, a vessel using the traffic separation scheme shall proceed in the appropriate traffic lane in the general direction of traffic flow and, so far as practicable, keep clear of a traffic separation line or separation zone. A vessel less than 20 meters in length or a sailing vessel shall not impede the safe passage of a power-driven vessel following a traffic lane.

Timely reporting and enforcement of Rules of the Road infractions promotes safer navigation. Vessel masters, pilots, and operators are encouraged to report incidents which merit investigation. Reports will be fully investigated and may result in license suspension or revocation proceedings or the assessment of civil penalties.



G. G. Stump
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Captain of the Port