

Wellington Regional Council

Harbourmaster's Direction 2/2026

Deep drafted channel and movements.

1. Preamble

This direction is issued pursuant to section 33F of the Maritime Transport Act 1994 (the **MTA**) enabling the Harbourmaster to ensure maritime safety.

This Direction is intended to create a deep draft track between Pencarrow Lighthouse and the Rear Leading Light (Hope Shoal light).

The deep draft track may be used when the vessel cannot safely navigate the standard recommended tracks around the time of their scheduled transit. Where the transit is time/tide critical the deep draft vessel will have priority. At other times consideration will be given to other scheduled traffic.

Clear and early communications is required between the deep drafted vessel and the vessels which can follow the standard approaches and recommended tracks.

2. Application

This direction applies to vessels over 500 GRT and those that are deep drafted.

3. Navigation Requirements

Under MTA 33F(1)(c)(i):

- The channel between the Rear Leading Light and Pencarrow Lighthouse becomes one directional based on the direction of the transit of the deep draft vessel.
- Traffic direction and priority is arranged in advance of the deep draft transit commencing.
- The deep draft vessel may deviate from the standard tracks in the Navigation Safety Bylaws and Harbourmaster Direction 4A/2004.

4. Guidance

These are not definitive requirements but are guidance as to how this Direction may be complied with:

- Once an intended deep draft transit has been confirmed, this information will be emailed to the Cook Strait Ferries.
- The ferries will be informed at their 10 min departure call or their Sinclair head arrival call if a deep draft transit is expected in their time frame.

- The traffic order would be arranged prior to the Pilot boarding the deep draft vessel, applicable for both arrivals and sailings.
- For inward vessels overtaking may commence after the Front Leading light.
- For outbound vessels, any overtaking of the deep draft vessel must be safely completed before Falcon Shoal pile.

5. Liability

The Wellington Regional Council shall not, in any case, be responsible for any loss or damage arising from the negligence of the master or crew of any vessel to which this direction applies, or for any loss, damage or incident involving the wharves.



N G Nalder
Regional Harbourmaster
Wellington Regional Council
25 March 2026