



1.0 Introduction

Dee Conservancy is the formal name given to a defined harbour area for which Natural Resources Wales, NRW, is the conservancy, harbour and local lighthouse authority. This harbour area includes the River Dee and its estuary, extending from Wilcox Point downstream of the weir at Chester, seawards to an imaginary line linking the Point of Ayr on the Welsh coast to Hilbre Point on the Wirral peninsular.

The Port marine Safety Code, published by the Department of Transport (DfT) requires harbour authorities to publish a safety plan for marine operations. The Dee Conservancy Safety management System (DCMSMS) has been developed to meet the requirements of the Code.

2.0 Policy Statement

NRW is committed to promoting good management of its available resources so as to:

- Undertake and regulate marine operations in a way that safeguards the Dee Conservancy, its users, the public and the environment to achieve the standard of marine safety required by the Port Marine Safety Code.
- Promote the use of the Dee Conservancy and ensure that its economic development takes into account and balances the views and needs of all stakeholders with the use of natural resources and conservation of the environment.

3.0 Plan Objectives

To meet the requirements of the Code and our Policy Statement, we review progress against the following (DCMSMS) objectives:

- The relevant duties and powers will be kept under review to ensure NRW can effectively regulate and conserve safe navigation within its statutory harbour area and approaches.

The outcome of the DfT's decision with regards the Dee Conservancy Harbour Revision Order (HRO) proposal for the estuary remains pending. Until a decision is made, the additional and modernising powers enabling the harbour authority to best meet its safety obligations and comply with the requirements of the port marine safety code cannot be realised. Following discussions between the Conservancy and Mostyn Docks Ltd, a new Statement of Common Ground between the parties is now with the DfT which will hopefully allow the final decision to be given promptly. The ability to publish Harbour Directions is now available under the Marine Navigation Act 2013, but for this a harbour has to be 'designated' by DfT Ports Division to do so. The procedure for becoming designated was investigated, and although an expression of interest was made for the Dee Conservancy, time limits and concern about possible implications on the HRO decision meant this was not carried forward at this point.

- The DCMSMS will be maintained on the basis of thorough assessment of risk.

The principle marine operations in the Dee Conservancy have not changed significantly during the past twelve months and the risk assessment of the approaches to the Dee Conservancy - Issue 1, Nov 2007 and the review of the Port Marine Safety Code risk assessment completed in August 2001 – Issue one, April 2008 remain valid.

- Risk assessments for marine operations will be kept under review to ensure that they remain valid and the controls identified to mitigate against risks are appropriate and effective in reducing the risks to as low as reasonably practicable.

The Dee Conservancy monitors new marine operations occurring in the estuary and where practical engages with stakeholders well in advance of commencement to ensure that appropriate control measures are introduced where required. E.g. Dee Conservancy Harbour Master (DCHM) and Port of Mostyn Harbour Master were both in discussion with the contractors towing lengths of plastic pipe for lining the horizontal drillings under the river for the North/South HVAC Western link connector in both the planning and delivery of the move. DCHM also oversaw the transportation work at Connahs Quay which was completed successfully.

From the 2014 audit it is recommended that the current risk assessments are updated and consolidated taking into consideration increase vessel traffic movements in the MOA and additional control measures operated by the RWE/Gwynt y Môr vessel co-ordination centre.

- The monitoring, inspection and review requirements, documented in the DCMSMS will be implemented as appropriate by the Dee Conservancy Harbour Master, a nominated deputy, or authorised contractor.

A documented, independent and quantifiable audit of the revised DCMSMS has taken place during 2014. The overall level of compliance has improved compared with last year's audit, with all 2013 deficiencies identified as actioned. The Designated Person has attended to monitor and verify several of the audit sessions.

- NRW will provide aids to navigation in order to enhance safety of navigation and meet the requirements of the General Lighthouse Authority (Trinity House).

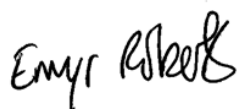
The Dee Conservancy continues to provide 60 aids to navigation that allow vessels to safely transit the river and estuary during suitable high water periods. The ongoing review of survey data and regular visual inspection, allows for changes in the channel positions to be monitored and aids to navigation deployed or removed as required. Following damage to areas of the North Training wall, and some of the North Training Wall aids, in the winter storms of 2013/14, an assessment was completed by DCHM. After consultation with the Master of the Dee River Craft, the main user of the aids it is considered that the remaining aids satisfactorily mark the wall pending its full repair and replacement of damaged aids.

- NRW will monitor and maintain its aids to navigation to ensure their performance standards meet the target requirements set by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA).

All aids to navigation are inspected weekly and are subject to an annual planned maintenance schedule. These aids to navigation have again exceeded the average reliability standard of 97% set by Trinity House as General Lighthouse Authority and the IALA. The North Training Wall perches destroyed by the 2013 winter tidal surge have however had an adverse impact on reported availability of Aids as required annually by Trinity House.

Signed:

Date: 1 December 2014

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emyr Roberts', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emyr Roberts
NRW Chief Executive
Dee Conservancy Duty Holder