

HARBOR SAFETY, OPERATIONS AND NAVIGATION COMMITTEE OF THE PORT OF NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY

DEEP DRAFT WORKING GROUP

May 28, 2025 ADVISORY

The Deep Draft Working Group is made up of representatives of all pilot groups and involved parties servicing deep draft vessels transiting within the Port of New York and New Jersey. This group continually assesses vessel size and navigational constraints, channel conditions (based upon official U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Condition Surveys and Controlling Depth Reports) and publishes ADVISORIES containing **guidelines** defining permissible tide and current conditions and other restrictions for vessel transits within the various Federal channels of the port. Additionally, the group publishes **guidance** adhered to by participating pilots regarding tug usage and selection. Unless specified elsewhere, readers of this and future ADVISORIES should take note of the recommended under keel clearance (UKC) of 3 feet in Ambrose Channel, 2 feet in all other channels, and 3 feet for Super Large Container Vessels (SLCVs) in all channels as promulgated by this committee and published in both the Coast Pilot and the VTSNY User's Manual. Advisories only provide Guidelines for navigation within the Federal Channels and DO NOT provide guidelines as to depths alongside berths. The port's UKC guidelines specify that moored ships always remain afloat; this has been interpreted to mean at least 1 foot under keel. Owners/Operators/Agents should ensure adequate water is available at intended berthing locations by closely communicating with terminal management.

The 50 Foot Harbor Deepening Project is complete. Subject to the below guidelines and the Port's UKC Guidelines ships are now able to avail themselves of the 50-foot channels from Ambrose to and through the Kill Van Kull to terminals on South Elizabeth Channel, Port Elizabeth Channel and Port Liberty New York at Howland Hook, as well as Port Liberty Bayonne through Port Jersey Channel.

Guidelines as of May 28, 2025

Restrictive Guidelines for Port Jersey Channel Arriving at the Narrows or sailing from Port Liberty Bayonne

Times for these jobs will be set up by pilots through applicable tug dispatch office.

See additional guidelines for ULTRA LARGE CONTAINER VESSELS (ULCV) SUPER LARGE CONTAINER VESSELS (SLCV) and MEGA LARGE CONTAINER VESSELS (MLCV) on pages 2-6.

DRAFT	TIME/TIDE CONDITIONS REQUIRED (arrival at Narrows or Sailing from Berth)
CV up to and including 41'	Anytime
CV greater than 41' and up to and including 47' ULCV up to and including 47' SLCV/MLCV up to and including 46'	Between 1 and 2 hours AFTER Low or High Water Battery (Vessels missing window will be required to wait for next window)
CV greater than 47' ULCV greater than 47' SLCV/MLCV greater than 46' Ship's Draft plus rise in tide up to 49'	Between 1 and 2 hours After High Water Battery Maximum draft Port Jersey Channel is 49'

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Additional Notes & Restrictions Port Jersey Channel:

Departures with draft ≥ 41 feet require three (3) tug boats.

No backing into Port Liberty Bayonne unless ABSOLUTELY necessary. Backing into Port Liberty Bayonne must be pre-approved by servicing docking pilots and, if approved, at least three (3) tugboats and SLACK WATER will be required.

Cruise Ship Moored at Cape Liberty:

No bunker barges shall be alongside moored cruise ships on arrivals or departures.

Cruise ship with max beam 168' or greater:

- Ships with beam $\leq 140'$ allowed to transit Port Jersey Channel.
- Ships with beam 106'-140' will transit between 1 and 2 hours after HW or LW Battery

SLCV shall not transit between a Cruise ship and a vessel moored at berth 3.

MLCV Requirements

Max sustained wind of 15kts regardless of direction.

MLCV transits require OPEN berths at both Cape Liberty AND Northeast Auto.

Restrictive Guidelines for Port Liberty New York (Howland Hook)

ULCVs to Port Liberty New York (Howland Hook) are restricted as follows: no SLCVs; MAX sustained winds of 25 Knots. Vessels may arrive inbound anytime. Vessel Sailings limited to one hour before battery high or low water. (SEE ADDITIONAL APPLICABLE RESTRICTIONS BELOW FOR GENERAL ULCV TRANSITS).

Restrictive Guidelines for South Elizabeth Channel

No two vessels arriving or departing berth 98 with a combined beam of 265 feet or more may pass a vessel in berth in South Elizabeth Channel; Bunker barges may be required to be moved from vessels at berths 94-96; ULCVs will berth and depart South Elizabeth Channel $\frac{1}{2}$ hour after to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours after Battery high or low water. Any vessel with a draft greater than 43 feet will berth and depart South Elizabeth Channel from Battery high or low water to 2 hours after Battery high or low water. MAX sustained winds of 30 knots.

Restrictive Guidelines for Arthur Kill

No vessel 500 feet or greater in length shall meet or overtake a Suez Max tanker (defined as greater than 898 feet in length) in the Arthur Kill unless agreed to by the docking pilot.

Berths

To reiterate: Adequacy of water depths at berths is the responsibility of facility owners and operators and must be coordinated between ships, agents, and terminals prior to arrival.

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Special Guidelines Applicable to Ultra Large Container Vessel (ULCV) Transits

ULCVs are defined as any container vessel with LOA of 997 feet or greater or with a beam of 140 feet or greater.

Experience with larger ships calling on the port has clearly shown that, to promote an acceptable level of safety, Ultra Large Container Vessels (ULCVs) should employ an appropriate number of tugs and additional navigational safety measures. The Working Group has established the following guidelines for transit of ULCVs above The Narrows.

1. Prior to starting a ULCV inbound to the Kill Van Kull from Ambrose the berth must be confirmed "clear."
2. TWO (2) tugs to be available at The Narrows with a docking pilot aboard one of the tugs. This will provide for immediate tug assistance should a vessel be required to turn around and either anchor or return to sea in the event the ship cannot continue into the KVK or Port Jersey (due to visibility restrictions or other impediments). The docking pilot and the Sandy Hook Pilot will communicate as necessary.
3. For ULCVs **with** a working bow thruster bound into the Kill Van Kull, three (3) tug boats will be assigned from KVK LB 9 to the Berth. For vessels bound for Port Jersey a third tugboat will be assigned at Robbins Reef.
4. For ULCVs **without** a working bow thruster bound into the Kill Van Kull, four (4) tug boats will be assigned from KVK LB9 to the Berth. For vessels bound for Port Jersey a fourth tugboat **MAY** be assigned at Robbins Reef (docking pilot to assess need based upon ship and tidal conditions).
5. ULCVs should not transit Bergen Point in visibility of less than 1 ½ miles.
6. ULCVs should not transit Bergen Point in sustained winds of 30 knots or gusts greater than 34 knots as measured at Mariners Harbor.
7. No bunker barges allowed alongside a vessel berthed along the Kill Van Kull (KVK) or Port Elizabeth Channel while a ULCV passes unless agreed to by the docking pilot.
8. Terminal obligations:
 - (1) Cranes stopped until vessel is alongside and all fast.
 - (2) There must be minimum of 75 feet between ships at adjacent berths.
 - (3) Must be a minimum of 475 feet of useable channel between berthed vessels at opposite berths along Port Elizabeth channel.

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Special Guidelines Applicable to Super Large Container Vessel (SLCV) Transits

SLCVs are defined as any container vessel with an LOA of 1,165 feet or greater or a beam greater than 159 feet.

Simulation studies of 14,000 TEU Super Large Container Vessel (SLCV) transits in the Port of NY/NJ indicate that to promote an acceptable level of safety, SLCVs should employ an appropriate number and type of tugs, and additional navigational safety measures. Based upon these findings, the Working Group has established the following preliminary guidelines for transit of SLCV's above the Narrows. These

guidelines will be amended as "hands on" experience is gained by the docking pilots.

1. Prior to starting SLCV inbound to the Kill Van Kull from Ambrose the berth must be confirmed "clear", and an anchorage spot should be confirmed available for bailout purposes.
2. SLCVs will not transit Bergen Point nor Port Jersey Channel in visibility less than 1.5 NM.
3. SLCVs will not transit Bergen Point, regardless of direction, maximum sustained winds exceed 20 knots or maximum gusts are 25 knots or higher. Mariners Harbor wind gauge to be used as reference station for the Kill Van Kull.
4. SLCVs will not transit Port Jersey Channel, regardless of direction, if/when maximum sustained winds exceed 20 knots or maximum gusts are 25 knots or higher. SLCVs will not transit Port Jersey Channel if another vessel occupies Berth 3 and maximum sustained winds are 15 knots. Robbins Reef wind gauge to be used as a reference station for Port Jersey Channel.
5. Transiting Bergen Point restricted to one hour either side of HW or LW Battery. A minimum three foot Under Keel Clearance (UKC) shall be required for transit from the Narrows to "Off" the berth. Due to berth controlling depth, maximum draft 49'0".
6. TWO (2) tugs to be available at the "Narrows" with a docking pilot aboard one of the tugs. This will provide for immediate tug assistance should a vessel be required to turn around, and either anchor or return to sea in the event the ship cannot continue into the Kill Van Kull or Port Jersey Channel (due to visibility restrictions or other impediments). The docking pilot and the Sandy Hook Pilot will communicate as necessary.
7. For SLCVs **with** a working bow thruster bound into the Kill Van Kull (KVK), TWO (2) additional tugs will be assigned from KVK LB 9 to the Berth. For vessels bound for Port Jersey Channel TWO (2) additional tugs will be assigned from Robbins Reef.
8. For SLCVs **without** a working bow thruster bound into the Kill Van Kull, five (5) tugs will be assigned from KVK LB9 to the Berth. For vessels bound for Port Jersey Channel a fifth tugboat **MAY** be assigned at Robbins Reef (docking pilot to assess need based upon handling characteristics of vessel and tidal conditions).

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Note: With regards to (6), (7) and (8) above, when vessel handling characteristics and/or where identified berthing constraints have determined, that special purpose escort tractor tugs tethered and operated in the "direct", "arrest" or "indirect" mode must be used, special purpose escort tractor tugs will be substituted.

9. No ULCV or SLCV may meet or overtake an SLCV while the SLCV is transiting the Kill Van Kull (KVK) and Port Elizabeth Channel, unless agreed to by the docking pilot.
10. No bunker barges allowed alongside a vessel berthed along the Kill Van Kull (KVK) or Port Elizabeth Channel while a SLCV passes unless agreed to by the docking pilot.
11. The following additional restrictions apply:
 - a. All vessels required to go BOW in and back out. *Note: A deviation from this guideline may be allowed with pre-approval of the servicing docking pilot. If approved, four tugboats and slack water will be required.*
 - b. Port Jersey Channel – Max Beam (including max width above the waterline) of cruise ships at Bayonne Cruise Terminal is 168 ft. There cannot be a cruise ship at Bayonne Cruise Terminal and a vessel at NEAT at the same time. One or the other acceptable.
 - c. SLCV capable berths: All berths on the face of Port Elizabeth, PNCT B59, B61, Maher B62, B64, B66, B68, B72, and Port Liberty Terminal.
12. Terminal obligations:
 - a. Cranes must be centered in berth and stopped until vessel is alongside and all fast.
 - b. Cranes must be fully boomed up.
 - c. Head lines and Stern lines cannot be more than two lines per bollard.
 - d. There must be 100 feet between ships at adjacent berths.
 - e. There must be a minimum of 475 feet of useable channel between moored vessels at opposite berths along Port Elizabeth Channel.

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Special Guidelines Applicable to Mega Large Container Vessel (MLCV) Transits

MLCVs are defined as any container vessel with an LOA of 1,215 feet or greater or a beam greater than 169 feet up to and including 180 feet.

Guidelines are yet to be developed for vessels with a beam greater than 180 feet.

1. All SLCV restrictions apply to Mega Large Container Vessels, with the following stipulation:
 - a. MLCVs are ONLY allowed to berth at B92 and Port Liberty Bayonne terminal.

NOTE: Any specific vessel with dimensions not defined by the current ULCV/SLCV/MLCV guidelines will be reviewed by the Deep Draft Committee on a case-by-case basis. The working group will establish guidelines specific to that vessel, to include requiring an appropriate number of tugs and additional navigational measures to promote an acceptable level of safety.

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