

Risk Alert

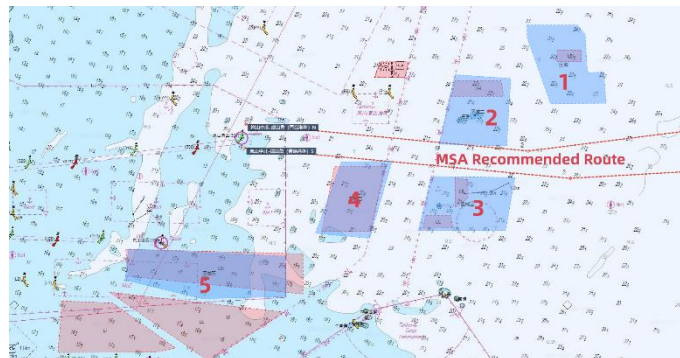


Safety of Navigation – China Coastal Waters (Fishery Zones and Navigation Routes)

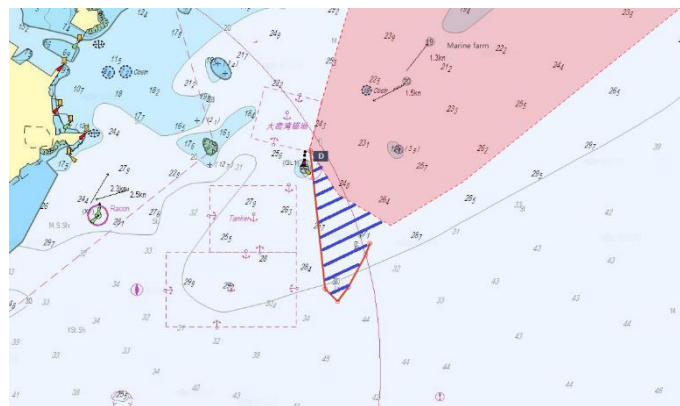
Introduction

The Club is aware of casualties and other losses arising from navigation in the proximity of fish farms, and through close quarter interaction between merchant vessels and fishing vessels. A vessel passing through a fish farm could result in consequential losses due to damage to both equipment and produce. Similarly, a vessel manoeuvring within the vicinity of fishing vessels and without due consideration to the available sea-room, a vessel's manoeuvring parameters and safe speed, has the potential to result in a casualty.

Members are encouraged to routinely review and consult Maritime Safety Administration (MSA), China circulars for the most recent updates on the geographical locations of fish farms, and recommended navigation routes in the coastal waters and approaches to ports in China.

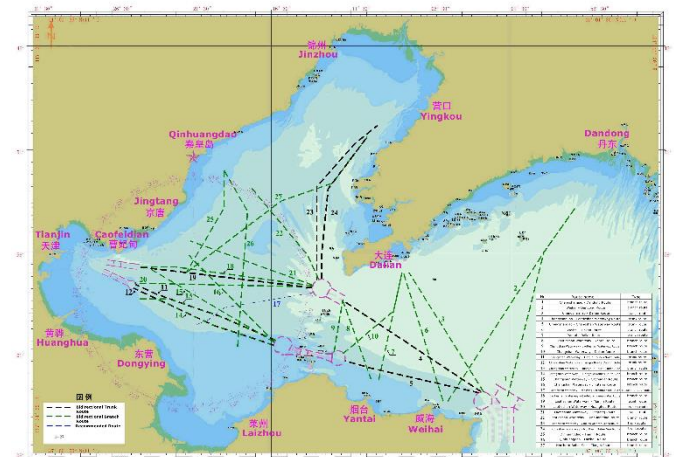


Note: Red areas - fishery farms / Blue areas - navigation obstruction nets (ref - [PNI \[2023\]04 Huatai Circular](#))



Note: Red area - fishery farms / Blue diagonal area - newly expanded fishery farms (ref - [PNI \[2023\]04 Huatai Circular](#))

This Risk Alert is intended to remind the Club's Members of the potential risks of navigating in the vicinity of fish farms and fishery zones and of the importance of plotting all the latest available information on the appropriate navigational charts and ECDIS.



Note: Schematic Diagram of Major Public Navigation Routes (centre line) in the Bohai Sea (Ref: [Circular - Shanghai P&I Services](#))

Considerations

COLREGS (Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972) sets the rules for safe navigation between vessels, having due regard to any special rules made by coastal states such as those for additional station or signal lights, or shapes, for fishing vessels engaged in fishing as a fleet. It should be noted that Article 103(1) of the China Maritime Traffic Safety Law sets out fines for "A vessel entering and exiting ports or anchorages, or passing through waters of the bridge area, straits, narrow channels, important fishery waters, areas with dense navigable vessels, vessel alignment areas, and traffic control areas fails to strengthen look-out, maintain safe speed, or comply with the special navigation rules of the aforesaid areas"

Coastal states will often promulgate details on changes to the locations of fishery zones and navigation routes together with information on other hazards to surface navigation. These warnings often include the coordinates and, if applicable, the seasonal duration when these zones/routes are active. Other



Risk Alert

details may include any Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS) and recommended routes that have been established for the purpose of safely navigating these areas together with any requirements for reporting to Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) or for the monitoring of radio broadcasts on a designated channel.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Information on navigation hazards could be available in Navigation Warnings or over Navtex and EGC (Enhanced Group Calling) services. Alternatively, information could also be verified and available through a local agent or correspondents' network.

Ensuring that fish farm coordinates and information, along with any specific navigation warnings, are clearly referenced in the passage plan, and plotted on the appropriate navigation charts including ECDIS, is essential. Likewise, ensuring that the watch keeping teams, OOW and lookouts are fully appraised of and familiar with the details of fish farms and other navigational hazards is key to promoting safe navigation.

Undertaking a full appraisal of the navigational situation by sight and hearing, as well as using all available means, is critical when determining the strategy for safely executing the passage. Note that, even if some fish farms and fishing vessels should be fitted with AIS, DO NOT rely solely on AIS signals to locate and track their position or to navigate around them – **ALWAYS USE ALL AVAILABLE AIDS TO NAVIGATION.**

Assessing and understanding the information available in regard to fish farms and fishing fleets, with consideration to the prevailing circumstances and conditions, is essential when establishing a safe speed, taking appropriate actions for planning, and executing a safe passage. The recommended routes are for reference and planning purpose ONLY, and do not exempt vessels from responsibility of ensuring safe navigation of their vessels.

Safety should always take priority over commercial considerations.

The above guidance supplements other widely available industry guidance which is not addressed in this risk alert.

Acknowledgement

The Managers wish to acknowledge correspondents Huatai Insurance Agency & Consultant Service Ltd and Shanghai P&I Services for the details and information reproduced from their articles.

Suggested References

COLREGS (Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, 1972)

[Maritime Traffic Safety Law PRC 2021](#)

[Safety of Navigation-- China Maritime Safety Administration \(msa.gov.cn\)](#)

[Ship's Routing and Reporting System - China Maritime Safety Administration \(msa.gov.cn\)](#)

[Navigational Warning-- China Maritime Safety Administration \(msa.gov.cn\)](#)

[MSA Guideline for the prevention of Collision between merchant vessels and fishing vessels in coastal Waters of China](#)

[Precautions when Navigating in Fishing Areas in Ningbo-Zhoushan port, P.R. China \(mardep.gov.hk\)](#)

[Ningbo, China MSA's Advisory on Navigating in Fishing areas \(Annex 1\) \(mardep.gov.hk\)](#)

[Circular Letters - Marine Department \(mardep.gov.hk\)](#)

[Circulars - Huatai Marine](#)

[Circulars – Shanghai P&I Services \(not available in Edge\)](#)