

GUIDELINES FOR NAVIGATING IN REDUCED VISIBILITY

Navigating the San Francisco Bay during periods of reduced visibility requires mariners to exercise additional caution and vigilance. These guidelines acknowledge that the Bay region is a series of bays and rivers, and that in-Bay distances are long and that there is not a single Bay region climate, but a series of microclimates with variable fog.

These guidelines should be used by the mariner when planning, initiating or navigating a transit in the Bay during periods of reduced visibility. These guidelines acknowledge that **Large Vessels** are not as maneuverable as smaller vessels and therefore define **Large Vessels** as power driven vessels of 1600 gross tons or more, and tugs with petroleum barges of 1600 gross tons or more. Mariners are at all times to comply with the requirement of the COLREGS.

Critical Maneuvering Areas (CMA): There are areas within the Bay where additional standards of care are required due to the restrictive nature of the channel, proximity of hazards, or the prevalence of adverse currents. **Large vessels** should not transit through CMA's when visibility is less than 0.5 nautical miles.

Locations within the Bay identified as Critical Maneuvering Areas:

Redwood Creek
San Mateo Bridge
Oakland Bar Channel*
Islais Creek
Richmond Inner Harbor
Richmond/San Rafael Bridge, East Span
UPRR Bridge
New York Slough, up-bound
Rio Vista Bridge

*Note: the Oakland Bar Channel is identified due to cross currents and its proximity to the Bay Bridge and Yerba Buena Island.

Vessels Docked: **Large vessels** at a dock within the bay should not commence a movement if visibility is less than 0.5 nautical miles at the dock.

Vessels proceeding to Dock: **Large vessels** proceeding to a dock should divert to anchor if visibility at the dock is known to be less than 0.5 nautical miles. Vessels shifting from anchor to a berth should remain at anchor until conditions improve at the berth.

Note: Vessel pilots or operators should notify VTS upon determination that a scheduled movement will be delayed or cancelled. If underway, they shall make a sailing plan deviation report per VTS regulations.