

# ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GUIDELINES (MARITIME) VERSION 3.0

## ACTIVITY GUIDANCE

### To Note:

1. EPG(M) is generic precautionary advice applicable when operating within or adjacent to Marine Protected Areas (MPA). When undertaking activities within Port Authority jurisdiction or on MOD Ranges, Port Authority rules and Range Orders are to take precedence over EPG(M) if there is contradiction between them.
2. Should a unit need to operate against this advice when in or near to MPA, the CO is responsible for assessing the likelihood of any impact on the protected features of the MPA. NSC have provided a tool to support such assessments ([MESAT](#)) and recommend that this is used to ensure an adequate assessment is undertaken and suitable mitigation identified.
3. EPG(M) includes all MPA within the UK but only internationally designated sites outside UK waters. Therefore, operators are advised to consult local authorities to understand any local measures that may be in place in foreign waters. This is also the case when operating within waters not yet covered by EPG(M).

## GROUP 1 – Marine Protected Area (MPA) designated primarily for the protection of birds



### RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

#### **AIR:**

1. No activity involving air launch of live or inert munitions should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed with an established MOD air weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. No activity involving the firing of live or inert munitions should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. No activities involving live or inert firings or exploded ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. No activities involving live firings, exploding ordnance, smoke or flares are to take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. No activities involving exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless cleared as operationally essential (see Note <sup>1</sup>) or unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

### CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **AIR:**

1. All flying operations are to be in accordance with the UK Military Low Flying System (UKLFS) (see Note <sup>2</sup>).

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE:**

1. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities involving the use of fixed seabed arrays for acoustic trials, noise ranging and degaussing should be conducted within the established range limits and in accordance with range orders.
2. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.
3. Parachuting is only to take place with prior approval of the Unit's operational commander. Such approval must be informed by the Environmental Protection (EP) staff of Defence Training Estates (DTE).
4. Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FIAC) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC), When operating inside these MPAs where rafting aggregations of sea birds have been sighted, operators should moderate speed and proceed in such a manner as to eliminate risk of unnecessary disturbance. This control applies equally to high speed/power manoeuvres by any vessel.

#### **AMPHIBIOUS:**

1. Amphibious landings (including use of Landing Craft Air Cushion; LCAC) may take place across any shoreline within the area limits of the MPAs but must have the prior approval of the Unit's Operational Commander.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of sonar for MCM is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

### NO ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities not involving weapon firings or exploding ordnance.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. All Activities not involving weapons firings.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities relating to seabed sampling and equipment attachment to the seabed.
2. Human diving.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. All activities not involving weapons firings and exploding ordnance.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (see Note <sup>3</sup>):**

1. No restrictions on RAS, boarding, anti-piracy or anchoring.

#### **GENERAL:**

1. Units should remain vigilant at all times and moderate activities in accordance with SOPs whenever random encounters with marine mammals or aggregations of seabirds occur.

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**Note <sup>1</sup>:** Operationally essential is defined as activities conducted during hostilities or activities or for which there is an overriding public interest – in which case, a MESAT assessment is recommended, to determine level of environmental risk.

**Note <sup>2</sup>:** Seasonal avoidance of specific Schedule 1 nesting and breeding sites may be required and will be promulgated by UKLFS CAT Y NOTAM.

**Note <sup>3</sup>:** Miscellaneous activities include e.g. RAS, boarding, anti-piracy, high speed / power manoeuvres, sea-boat drills and anchoring.

## Group 2 – MPA designated primarily for the protection of general coastal features



### RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

#### **AIR:**

1. No activity involving air launch of live or inert munitions with land or sea surface impact should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD air weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. No activity involving firing of live or inert munitions with land or sea surface impact should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. No activities involving live or inert firings or exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. No live or inert weapon trials should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. No MCM or mine laying (including dummy mines) should take place within 0.5 nm of the MPAs.
2. No activities involving exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless cleared as operationally essential (see Note <sup>1</sup>) or unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (See Note <sup>2</sup>):**

1. Anchoring should not take place in or within 0.5 nm of the MPAs unless specifically cleared within harbour limits as part of port authorities' management plans.

### CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **AIR:**

1. All flying activities are to be in accordance with the UK Military Low Flying System (UKLFS).

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities involving the use of fixed sea bed arrays for acoustic trials, noise ranging and degaussing are to be conducted within the established range limits and in accordance with range orders.
2. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **AMPHIBIOUS:**

1. Amphibious landing operations (including use of Landing Craft Air Cushion; LCAC and parachuting of personnel and equipment) may take place across any shoreline within the area limits of the MPAs but must have the prior approval of the Unit's Operational Commander.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

2. Use of sonar for MCM is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

### NO ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **AIR:**

1. Air to air weapons firings.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. Any activity not involving firings.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. Any activities not involving firings.
2. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Use of flares or smoke.
2. Activities relating to seabed sampling, equipment attachment and human diving.
3. Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FIAC).
4. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of ROV.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (See Note <sup>2</sup>):**

1. No restrictions on miscellaneous activities except for anchoring as stated above.

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**Note <sup>1</sup>:** Operationally essential is defined as activities conducted during hostilities or activities or for which there is an overriding public interest – in which case, a MESAT assessment is recommended, to determine level of environmental risk.

**Note <sup>2</sup>:** Miscellaneous activities include e.g. RAS, boarding, anti-piracy, high speed / power manoeuvres, sea-boat drills and anchoring.

## Group 3 – MPA designated primarily for the protection of benthic seabed features with some depths less than 20 m



### **RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES**

#### **AIR:**

1. No air launched firings involving sea surface or water column impact or explosions should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD air weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. No activity involving sea surface or water column explosions should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. No activities involving exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.
2. No physical interaction with the seabed should occur within the MPAs.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. No activities involving live firings or exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.
2. Anchoring should not take place within 0.5 nm of the MPAs unless specifically cleared within harbour limits as part of the port authorities' management plans.
3. No human diving incorporating interactions with the seabed should take place within the MPAs.
4. No seabed samples should be taken and no equipment should be attached to the seabed with the MPAs.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. No MCM or minelaying activities (including dummy mines) should take place within 0.5 nm of the MPAs.
2. No activities involving exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless cleared as operationally essential (see Note <sup>1</sup>) or unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **AMPHIBIOUS:**

1. Amphibious landings (including Landing Craft Air Cushion; LCAC) are prohibited across any shoreline within the area limits of the MPAs without the prior approval of the Unit's Operational Command, unless within an established MOD site when local orders are to be observed.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Human diving activities including interaction with the seabed, should not take place within the MPAs.
2. No seabed samples should be taken within the MPA and survey equipment should not be attached to the seabed.

### **CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED**

#### **AIR:**

1. All flying operations are to be in accordance with the UK Military Low Flying System (UKLFS).

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities involving the use of fixed sea bed arrays for acoustic trials, noise ranging and degaussing are to be conducted within the established range limits and in accordance with range orders.
2. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.
3. Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FIAC) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC). When operating inside these MPAs and in shallow waters operators should moderate speed and proceed in such a manner as to avoid disturbance of the seabed.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of sonar for MCM is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

### **NO ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED**

#### **AIR:**

1. Air-to-air and air-to-land surface firings.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. All activities not involving sea surface or water column explosions.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities not involving exploding ordnance.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Parachuting of personnel and stores or equipment.
2. Use of flares and smoke.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of ROV.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (see Note <sup>2</sup>):**

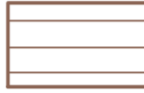
1. No restrictions on miscellaneous activities except for anchoring as stated above.

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**Note <sup>1</sup>:** Operationally essential is defined as activities conducted during hostilities or activities or for which there is an overriding public interest – in which case, a full MESAT assessment is recommended, to determine level of environmental risk.

**Note <sup>2</sup>:** Miscellaneous activities include e.g. RAS, boarding, anti-piracy, high speed / power manoeuvres, sea-boat drills and anchoring.

## Group 4 – MPA designated for the protection of marine mammals (including whales, dolphins and seals) and basking sharks



### RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

#### **AIR:**

1. No activity involving the air launch of live or inert munitions with land or sea surface impact should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD air weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. No activity involving firing of live or inert munitions should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. No activities involving live or inert firings or exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. No activities involving live firings, exploding ordnance, smoke or flares should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. No MCM or minelaying activities (including dummy mines) should take place within 0.5 nm of the MPAs.
2. No activities involving exploding ordnance should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless cleared as operationally essential (see Note <sup>1</sup>), or unless such firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

### CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **AIR:**

1. All flying activities are to be in accordance with the UK Military Low Flying System (UKLFS) (Note <sup>2</sup>). Caution should be exercised when flying over sighted aggregations of cetaceans, avoiding hovering or low level activities overhead.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool, noting that within Group 4 MPAs, units should routinely operate at low risk.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities involving the use of fixed sea bed arrays for acoustic trials, noise ranging and degaussing are to be conducted within the established range limits and in accordance with range orders.
2. Surveying should not take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless prior agreement has been reached with appropriate authorities.
3. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.
4. Parachuting is only to take place with prior approval of the Unit's operational commander. Such approval must be informed by the Environmental Protection (EP) staff of Defence Training Estates (DTE).
5. Fast Inshore Attack Craft (FIAC) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC). When operating inside these MPAs where marine mammals and / or basking sharks have been sighted, operators should moderate speed and proceed in such a manner as to eliminate risk of collision and disturbance. This control applies equally to high speed/power manoeuvres by any vessel.

#### **AMPHIBIOUS:**

1. Amphibious landings (including use of Landing Craft Air Cushion; LCAC) may take place across any shoreline within the area limits of the MPAs, but must have the prior approval of the Unit's Operational Commander.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

3. Use of sonar for MCM is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

### NO ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. All activities not involving weapon firings or explosions.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities not involving weapon firings or explosions.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of ROV.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities relating to seabed sampling, seabed equipment attachment and human diving (see control measures for use of sonar). Such activities are to be moderated to take account of any marine mammals in the close vicinity.
2. Units are to remain vigilant at all times and moderate activities in accordance with SOPs whenever random encounters with marine mammals or rafting aggregates of seabirds occur.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (see Note <sup>3</sup>):**

1. No restrictions on miscellaneous activities except for high speed/power manoeuvres as stated above.

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**Note <sup>1</sup>:** Operationally essential is defined as activities conducted during hostilities or activities or for which there is an overriding public interest – in which case, a full MESAT assessment is recommended, to determine level of environmental risk.

**Note <sup>2</sup>:** Seasonal avoidance of specific Schedule 1 nesting and breeding sites may be required and will be promulgated by UKLFS CAT Y NOTAM.

**Note <sup>3</sup>:** Miscellaneous activities include e.g. RAS, boarding, anti-piracy, high speed / power manoeuvres, sea-boat drills and anchoring.

## Group 5 – MPA designated primarily for the protection of benthic seabed features entirely at depths greater than 20 m



### RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. No MCM or minelaying activities (including dummy mines) should take place within 0.5nm of the MPA.
2. No activities involving exploding ordnance on the seabed should take place inside or within 500 yards of the MPAs unless cleared as operationally essential (see Note <sup>1</sup>) or unless firings are programmed within an established MOD weapons range when local range orders are to be observed.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (see Note <sup>2</sup>):**

1. No anchoring should take place in or within 0.5 nm of the MPAs.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. No physical interaction with the seabed should occur within the MPAs.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. No human diving incorporating interactions with the seabed should take place within the MPAs.
2. No seabed samples should be taken and no equipment should be attached to the seabed with the MPAs.

### CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities involving the use of active sonar are to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 Vol.5 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Activities involving the use of fixed seabed arrays for acoustic trials, noise ranging and degaussing are to be conducted within the established range limits and in accordance with range orders.
2. Use of sonar in surveying is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of sonar in MCM is to be in accordance with the Command Guidance in BRd 4985 and s2117 assessment tool.

### NO ADDITIONAL CONTROL MEASURES REQUIRED

#### **AIR:**

1. Firings, both live and inert, are to be managed in accordance with established MOD clear range procedures.

#### **ANTI-AIR AND ANTI-SURFACE WARFARE:**

1. All forms of anti-air and anti-surface firings, both live and inert, are to be conducted in accordance with established MOD clear range procedures.

#### **SUBMARINE AND ANTI-SUBMARINE WARFARE:**

1. All activities involving live or inert firings are to be conducted in accordance with established MOD clear range procedures.

#### **GENERAL AND INSHORE ACTIVITIES:**

1. Use of flares or smoke.
2. Parachuting of personnel and stores or equipment.
3. Fast Inshore Attach Craft (FIAC) and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC).

#### **MCM AND EOD:**

1. Use of ROV.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS (see Note <sup>2</sup>):**

1. No restrictions apart from anchoring.

#### **GENERAL:**

1. Units should remain vigilant at all times and moderate activities in accordance with SOPs whenever random encounters with marine mammals or aggregations of seabirds occur.

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**Note <sup>1</sup>:** Operationally essential is defined as activities conducted during hostilities or activities or for which there is an overriding public interest – in which case, a full MESAT assessment is recommended, to determine level of environmental risk.

**Note <sup>2</sup>:** Miscellaneous activities include e.g. RAS, boarding, anti-piracy, high speed / power manoeuvres, sea-boat drills and anchoring.

