



The St. Lawrence
Seaway Management
Corporation

Corporation de Gestion
de la Voie Maritime
du Saint-Laurent

NOTICE OF PROPOSED REVISIONS TO SEAWAY PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES TO BE EFFECTIVE THE 2026 NAVIGATION SEASON

Under agreement with the U.S. Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation, the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation is proposing to amend the joint Practices and Procedures (known as “regulations” within the GLS).

Please find below the proposed amendments to the Seaway Practices and Procedures for your review. For the sake of clarity, any section with a change has been included in its entirety with changes highlighted in red.

Please direct any comments with respect to these proposed amendments to Shari Grady, Senior Manager, Trade Relations & Compliance, no later than March 6, 2026 at sgrady@seaway.ca.

JOINT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES RESPECTING THE TRANSIT OF SHIPS ON THE ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

(U.S. Rules 401.1 to 401.97)

PART I - CONDITION OF SHIPS

9. Radio Telephone and Navigation Equipment

(1) Self-propelled ships, other than pleasure craft of less than 20 m in overall length, shall be equipped with **two** VHF (very high frequency) radio**telephone equipment**.

- (a) All communications shall be on the applicable VHF frequency. The use of personal electronic devices for communication between ships or with traffic control should be limited to necessity.
- (b) Please note that communications into the Traffic Control Centre may be recorded for quality assurance and training purposes.

(4)(2) The radio transmitters on a ship shall

- (a) have sufficient power output to enable the ship to communicate with Seaway stations from a distance of 48 km; and
- (b) be fitted to operate from the conning position in the wheelhouse and to communicate on channels 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 66a, 75, 76 and 77.



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(2)(3) Gyro compass error greater than 2 degrees must be serviced prior to transiting the Seaway, and if noted during a Seaway transit, must be reported to the nearest Seaway station and serviced at the first opportunity.

For details of section 9. (2) (b) refer to section 60 through 64.

PART III - SEAWAY NAVIGATION

29. Maximum Draught

(1) Notwithstanding any provision herein, the loading of cargo, draught and speed of a ship in transit shall be controlled by the master, who shall take into account the ship's individual characteristics and its tendency to list or squat, so as to avoid striking bottom. (The main channels between the Port of Montreal and Lake Erie have a controlling depth of 8.23 m.)

For details refer to Ship Transit and Equipment Requirements, Section 18.

The draught of a ship shall meet minimum draft requirement as defined at inspection on the Enhanced Ship Inspection form and not, in any case, exceed 79.2 dm or the maximum permissible draught designated in a Seaway Notice by the Manager and the Corporation for the part of the Seaway in which a ship is passing.

(2) Any ship will be permitted to load at an increased draught of not more than 7 cm above the maximum permissible draught in effect (also known as DIS draught) as prescribed under 29 (2) if it is equipped with a Draught Information System (DIS) and meets the following:

(a) An operational Draught Information System (DIS) approved by a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) as compliant with the Implementation Specifications found at www.greatlakes-seaway.com and having onboard;

- (i) An operational AIS with accuracy approved by the Seaway; and
- (ii) Up-to-date electronic charts; and
- (iii) Up-to-date charts containing high resolution bathymetric data; and
- (iv) Ships must be equipped with a bow thruster and bow thruster must be operational.

(b) The DIS Tool Display shall be located as close to the primary conning position and be visible and legible.

- (i) Verification document of the DIS must be kept on board the ship at all times and made available for inspection;
- (ii) DIS license to use the software must be valid;



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- (iii) Software version of DIS matches that in the IACS verification letter, or higher;
- (iv) A company letter attesting to officer training on use of the DIS must be kept on board and made available for inspection;
- (v) When transiting Seaway waters with the DIS, a trained officer on the use of the DIS must be on the bridge;

(c) Any ship not yet approved, but wishing to use DIS in the Seaway must notify the Manager or the Corporation at least 96 hours in advance so that arrangements can be made for appropriate testing for approval to use the DIS to transit the Seaway;

(d) A ship already approved to use DIS to transit the Seaway **and intending to use it** must email a completed DIS Confirmation Checklist to slsmcmarineservices@seaway.ca **once per navigation season, at least** 96 hours prior to its initial transit of the navigation season. The confirmation checklist can be found at www.greatlakes-seaway.com ;

(e) If for any reason the DIS, AIS, or bow thruster becomes inoperable, malfunctions or is not used while the ship is transiting at a draught greater than the maximum permissible draught prescribed under 29 (2) in effect at the time, the ship must notify the Manager or the Corporation immediately.

34. Ships in Tow

(1) No ship that is not self-propelled (including but not limited to tug/tows and/or deadship/tows) shall be underway in any Seaway waters unless it is securely tied to an adequate tug or tugs, in accordance with special instructions given by the Manager or the Corporation pursuant to section 33 and must be equipped with an operational anchor. Refer to section 49.

(2) Every ship in tow has to be inspected prior to every transit unless it has a valid Seaway Inspection Certificate. The owner/master shall give a 24 hour notice of arrival when an inspection is required. For details refer to section 79 2 (d).

(2)(3) Every ship in tow must be adequately manned for transit in the Seaway.

35. Navigation Underway

Every ship transiting between calling-in point 2 and Tibbetts Point and between calling-in points 15 and 16 shall

(a) man the propulsion machinery of the ship, including the main engine control station;



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- (b) operate the propulsion machinery so that it can respond immediately through its full operating range;
 - (i) Ships equipped with an Engine Power Limitation system (EPL) or Shaft Power Limitation System (ShaPoLi) shall override the EPL or ShaPoLi while transiting the Seaway.
 - (ii) For ships equipped with the ability to remove any limitation on propulsion (ex. increase limitation button), all members of the bridge team, including the pilot onboard must be aware of this functionality and be capable of activating it on request or if needed.
- (c) man the wheelhouse of the ship at all times by either the master or certified deck officer, and a helmsman, and;
- (d) have sufficient well rested crewmembers available for mooring operations and other essential duties.

37. Mooring at Tie-Up Walls

- (1) Upon arrival at a lock, a ship awaiting instructions to advance shall moor at the tie-up wall, close up to the designated limit of approach sign or to the ship preceding it, whichever is specified by the traffic controller or an officer.
- (2) Crew members being put ashore on landing booms and handling mooring lines on tie-up walls shall wear approved personal floatation devices.
- (3) Should the situation arise where a tie up at an approach wall is provided by Seaway personnel at the Canadian Locks, synthetic mooring lines should be used.

40. Entering, Exiting or Position in Lock

- (1) Unless directed by the Manager and the Corporation, no ship shall proceed into a lock in such a manner that the stem passes the stop symbol on the lock wall nearest the closed gates.
- (2) On being cast off in a lock, no ship shall be allowed to fall back in such a manner that the stern passes the stop symbol on the lock wall nearest the closed gates.
- (3) Every ship proceeding into a lock shall be positioned and moored as directed by the officer in charge of the lock.
- (4) **Vessel Self Spotting (VSS) displays at the Canadian Locks are meant to assist ships to spot position of the ship's stem in the lock. The VSS display does not relieve the Master of the responsibility of ensuring that the ship's stem does not pass the STOP symbol marked on the Lock wall as required Section 40(1) by using its own spotting method such as visual spot by ship's crew.**



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(4)(5) No ship shall use thrusters when passing a lock gate or a Hands Free Mooring (HFM) unit.

48. Turning Basins

No ship shall be turned about in any canal, except

- (a) with permission from the traffic controller; and
- (b) at the locations set out in the table to this section.

TURNING BASINS	
South Shore Canal:	
a)Turning Basin No. 1	- Opposite Brossard
b)Turning Basin No. 2	- Immediately below Côte St. Catherine Lock
Welland Canal:	
a)Turning Basin No. 1	Between Lock 7 and the Guard Gate Cut for ships up to 180 m in overall length
b)Turning Basin No. 2	Immediately south of Port Robinson (mile 13)
c)Turning Basin No. 3	North of Lock No. 8 for ships up to 170-140 m in overall length
d)For ships up to 80 m in overall length	
(i) North end of Wharf No. 1	
(ii) Tie-up wall above Lock 1,	
(iii) Tie-up wall below Lock 2,	
(iv) Wharf No. 9,	
(v) Between the southerly extremities of Wharves 18-2 and 18-3	

49. Dropping Anchor or Tying to Canal Bank

Except in an emergency, no ship shall drop anchor in any canal or tie-up to any canal bank unless authorized to do so by the traffic controller.

If the anchor is dropped, the master of the ship shall immediately report it to the nearest Seaway station.

Every anchor shall be suitably rigged for immediate release, holding and efficient retrieval.



PART V - DANGEROUS CARGO

73.1 Acceptance of Hot Work **Permission**

Before any hot work, defined as any work that uses flame or that can produce a source of ignition, cutting or welding, is carried out by any ship on any designated St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC) approach walls, Cote St. Catherine wharf or wharves in the Welland Canal, a written request must be sent to the SLSMC, preferably 24 hours prior to the ship's arrival on SLSMC Approach walls or wharves. The hot work shall not commence until **approval—the hot work request is accepted and acknowledged by is obtained from a SLSMC Traffic Control Centre.**

(a) **Permission**—The SLSMC Traffic Control centre will accept the request to perform hot work **is granted** under the following conditions:

- (i) Copy of ship's "Hot Work Permit" provided to SLSMC before welding commences;
 - In the Welland canal send to: nrerie@seaway.ca & nrshipinspectors@seaway.ca
 - In the MLO Section send to: cdo@seaway.ca & inspecteursvm@seaway.ca
- (ii) Name of company performing the hot work;
- (iii) Effective fire watch is maintained;
- (iv) Welding operations shall temporarily cease during ship meets and lockages;
- (v) Welding operations shall cease at the direction of a Traffic Controller; and
- (vi) All sparks and/or flames to be contained on the ship.

73.2 Special Requirements for Tankers Performing Hot Work

(1) Prior to arriving at any SLSMC designated Approach wall or wharf a tanker must be gas free or have tanks inerted. The gas-free certificate must be sent to the SLSMC Traffic Control Centre in order to obtain clearance for the ship to commence Hot Work.



PART VI - FEES ASSESSMENT AND PAYMENT

74. Transit Declaration

- (1) A Seaway e-business Transit Declaration (Cargo ~~and Passenger~~) shall be completed and submitted to the Manager by the representative of a ship, for each ship that has an approved preclearance except non cargo ships, within fourteen (14) days after the ship enters the Seaway on any upbound or downbound transit.
- (2) The e-business Transit Declaration must be filled directly on the St. Lawrence Seaway website at www.greatlakes-seaway.com and submitted from e-business.
- (3) The use of the Harmonized System (HS Codes) and the UN Location Codes on the e-business Transit Declaration is mandatory to identify cargo and ports respectively.
- (4) The loaded or manifest weight of cargo shall be shown on the Seaway e-business Transit Declaration, except in the case of petroleum products where gallonage meters are not available at the point of loading, in which case offloaded weights may be shown on the e-business Transit Declaration.
- (5) Where a ship carried cargo to or from an overseas port, an electronic copy of the cargo manifest, duly certified, shall be submitted with the Seaway e-business Transit Declaration.
- (6) A Weigh-Scale Certificate or similar document issued in the place of a cargo manifest or a bill of lading may be accepted in lieu thereof.
- (7) Where a submitted Seaway e-business Transit Declaration is found to be inaccurate concerning the destination, cargo ~~or passengers~~, the representative shall immediately forward to the Manager, revision of the submitted Declaration.
- (8) Submitted Seaway e-business Transit Declarations shall be used in assessing fees in accordance with the St. Lawrence Seaway Schedule of Tolls, and fees invoice shall be forwarded to the representative or its designated agent.
- (9) Where government aid cargo is declared, appropriate Canadian or U.S. customs form or a stamped and signed certification letter from Canada or U.S. Customs must accompany the e-business Transit Declaration or notification must be made to the Manager.



PART VII - INFORMATION AND REPORTS

79. Advance Notice of Arrival, Ships Requiring Inspection

(1) USCG Advance Notice of Arrival – All foreign flagged ships of 300 GRT or above intending to transit the Seaway shall submit one completed United States Coast Guard (USCG) Electronic Notice of Arrival (ENOA) prior to entering at call in point 2 (CIP 2) as follows:

If your voyage time to CIP 2 is 96 hours or more, you must submit an ENOA **96 hours** before entering the Seaway at CIP 2.

If your voyage time to CIP 2 is less than 96 hours, you must submit an ENOA before departure, but at least 24 hours before entering the Seaway at CIP 2.

If there are changes to the ENOA, submit them as soon as practicable but at least 12 hours before entering the Seaway at CIP 2.

The NOA must be provided electronically following the USCG National Ship Movement Center's (NVMC) procedures (<http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov>).

To complete the ENOA correctly for Seaway entry, select the following:

- “CIP 2” as the Arrival Port,
- “Foreign to Saint Lawrence Seaway” as the Voyage Type, and
- “Saint Lawrence Seaway Transit” as the Arrival State, City and Receiving Facility.

(2) **Foreign** Ship Inspection program:

(a) Foreign flagged ships are subject to an **-Enhanced Ship Inspections (ESI) – physical ship inspection** once every two navigation seasons. Agents must provide the **Seaway Ship Inspectors via email** an initial 120 hours' notice of inspection (ESI or self-inspection) prior to the ship's arrival at CIP 2. An additional 24 hours' notice for **all an ESI (physical inspection)s** prior to ship arriving at CIP 2 is also required. (to email: inspecteursvm@seaway.ca and to vtc@dot.gov)

(b) **Foreign flagged ships may be permitted a Self-Inspection** in the interim season subject to satisfactory performance. As such, they must complete and submit the **“Seaway Ship Inspection Report”** electronically to inspecteursvm@seaway.ca and to vtc@dot.gov 120 hours prior to transiting the Seaway.

(c) The ESI or self-inspection is required on the first transit of the navigation season

(3) Inland domestic ships which are approved by the Seaway for the **“Self-Inspection Program”** and are ISM certified and have a company quality management system, must submit the **“Seaway Ship Inspection Report”**, every 2 navigation seasons and not later than 30 days after “fit out”. A **“Seaway Ship Inspection Report”** must be submitted electronically to nrshipinspectors@seaway.ca.

(a) Inland domestic ships not participating in the **“Self-Inspection Program”** are subject to a Seaway inspection every 2 navigation seasons.



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- (2) Tug/barge combinations not on the “Seaway Approved Tow” list are subject to Seaway inspection prior to every transit of the Seaway unless provided with a valid Inspection Report for a round trip transit.
- (3) A tall ship, passenger ship, or ship of an unusual design is subject to Seaway yearly ~~ESInhanced Ship inspection~~.
- (4) The ESI or self-inspection is required on the first transit of the navigation season



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INFORMATION ON SHIP TRANSIT AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

16. Walk-through Procedures (Lock 8 - Welland Canal) ~~and Iroquois Lock - Montreal to Lake Ontario~~

When water conditions permit, a walk-through procedure may be used at Lock 8 – Welland Canal ~~or at Iroquois Lock – Montreal to Lake Ontario section~~.

With this procedure, a ship passing through the lock will not be required to secure in the lock but will proceed under her own power at a speed consistent with safety.

The ship must have personnel ready at mooring stations with mooring lines ready for deployment in the event they are required, ~~at Iroquois Lock~~.

MOORING SHIPS – CANADIAN LOCKS

3. Ship Mooring Locations

The ship mooring locations at Canadian locks in the Seaway system have been standardized as much as possible.

The following table shows the targeted position of the ship's stem in the lock for each ship length category.

Ship Length	<i>Ship Mooring Position (Stem at Lock Wall Marker)</i>
211.00 m - 222.5 m (692' - 730')	"stop" marker
202.00 m - 210.99 m (663' - 692')	5 m marker
185.00 m - 201.99 m (607' - 663')	10 m marker
145.00 m - 184.99 m (476' - 607')	25 m marker
105.00 m - 144.99 m (344' - 476')	50 m marker
less than 105.00 m (less than 344')	75 m marker

Mooring positions are the same for upbound and downbound lockages.



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Exceptions:

The table does not apply

- (1) at Lock 8, Welland Canal
- (2) where Final Mooring Position (FMP) adjusted to accommodate Hands Free Mooring (HFM) pad attachment
- (3) multiple lockages at all locks
- (4) ships with OAL greater than 222.5 (730')
- (4) (5) **Where ships are permitted to float free in the lock**

For these exceptions ships will be moored as directed by the lock operator.