

CONSERVATORS OF THE RIVER CAM

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR COMMERCIAL PUNT OPERATORS

(being those in ownership categories 4¹, 5 and 6)

(amended 2006)

Preamble

Existing Code	Proposed amendment
At their meeting on Thursday 12 January 2006, Conservators amended the Code of Practice, introduced in 2004/05. Operators are required to accept the Code of Practice as a condition for the registration of their vessels. Subsequent failure to comply with the Code could be grounds on which the Conservators would refuse to register vessels in the future.	The statement will be amended with the revision date if Conservators agree to change the existing Code of Practice. The statement will also draw attention to the Code meeting the general definition of byelaw 3, control of traffic on the river.

General

Existing Code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
6. Operators are responsible for ensuring that their vessels are in a fit state for safe use.	1. Operators are responsible for ensuring that their vessels are in a fit state for safe use and maintained in this state while being used for hire.	Conservators' Byelaw 8.4b to meet standards of construction and equipment, Byelaw 12.2 no vessel may be left on the navigation in an unsafe condition
Requirement for £1,000,000 indemnity stated on annual registration form	2. The operator shall take out and maintain a Third Party and Passenger Liability Insurance to cover a minimum sum of £1,000,000 and the policy (and current premium receipt) for such Insurance shall be produced on request to an authorised officer of the Conservators. Copies of this documentation shall be provided on initial application and subsequent renewal of annual registration.	Byelaw 8.4a
None	3. Operators may not operate in times of high flows or	Byelaw 4.1a

¹ According to MCA/AINA definitions, Category 4 does not need to meet commercial requirements if the boat is not hired out to members of the public (see Appendix)

	when conditions are dangerous for navigation.	
None	4. The operator must have a suitable and sufficient system in place to ensure that proper records are kept which show how many punts have been hired at any time, the number of passengers carried, the expected time of return and emergency procedures to be implemented on the failure of a punt to return.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code
None	5. An operator shall not anchor, moor, berth or stop in such a position as to impede the clear and free passage of any other vessel. Each punt after taking its turn in disembarking its passengers shall, if there be any other boat or boats at or near to the landing stage awaiting a fresh load of passengers, sheer off from the landing place and take its turn with the other boat or boats before embarking a fresh load of passengers from any public landing place.	Byelaws 12.1 and 3
None	5. A punt operating in the hours of darkness must carry a white lantern or electric torch to be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent collision.	International Collision Regulations Rule 25, d(ii), byelaw 4.5
No equipment standard specified	6. One suitable lifebuoy shall be carried with a buoyant line (of at least 18m in length) Note: punt cushions may be substituted as floatation devices/buoyancy aids. Lifejackets or buoyant apparatus shall be made available to assist vulnerable passengers. Each punt shall carry a minimum of 2 metres of rope secured to the bow of the punt. Each punt shall carry a bailer or bucket.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code

4. All punts must display clearly legible signs regarding the maximum number of passengers and their disposition, such signs to be determined by the Control Officer (see Appendix).	7. The maximum number of persons to be carried shall not exceed the number permitted. All punts must display clearly legible signs regarding the maximum number of passengers and their disposition (see Appendix).	Byelaws 8.3a and 8.3c
1. Operators will maintain a record of accidents, including, where possible, information on the date, time, location and the circumstances, and the contact details of those involved. These records are to be open for inspection by the Conservators and, if necessary, by the Police and insurers.	8. Operators will maintain a record of accidents, including information on the date, time, location and the circumstances, and the contact details of those involved. These records are to be open for inspection by the Conservators and, if necessary, by the Police and insurers.	The Conservators as a navigation authority have a reporting duty to the MCA when an incident takes place involving a passenger vessel.
2. Any accident which results in a complaint, personal injury or damage to vessels is to be reported as soon as possible to the Conservators' Control Officer.	9. Any accident which results in a complaint, personal injury, accidental immersion or damage to vessels is to be reported as soon as possible to the Conservators' Control Officer and within 72 hours of that accident having taken place. A damaged punt may not be put back into use until repairs have been carried out.	Byelaw 8.5
3. The Control Officer, assisted by the River Bailiff, will investigate accidents reported to him (whether by operators or others) and the outcome of each investigation will be reported to the Conservators, who will take whatever action they deem to be necessary that is within their powers, including refusal to register the vessels of the operator or operators involved in succeeding years.	10. Authorised officers of the Conservators will investigate reported accidents (whether by operators or others) and the outcome of each investigation will be reported to the Conservators, who will take whatever action they deem to be necessary that is within their powers, including refusal to register the vessels of the operator or operators involved in succeeding years.	The Conservators as a navigation authority have a reporting duty to the MCA when an incident takes place involving a passenger vessel.
7. The lashing together of	11. The lashing together of	Byelaw 3

punts is prohibited except when empty punts are being moved to other parts of the river (notice issued by the Control Officer in February 2004 under Byelaw 3).	punts is prohibited except when empty punts are being moved to other parts of the river. Vessels may only be moved in this way at off-peak times of the day	
Not in Code, refer to byelaws	12. There shall be no playing of amplified music, voice or amplified musical instruments which might give reasonable cause for annoyance to any person.	Byelaw 15.11

Chauffeur Punts

Existing Code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
1. No age stipulated.	13. The minimum age of the master/skipper should be 17 years. The operator will provide a list of all chauffeurs to the Conservators upon request.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code
10. Chauffeurs are the masters of their vessels and therefore are responsible for the safety of their passengers. Masters are responsible for ensuring that their vessels carry no more than the permitted maximum number of passengers and that they are correctly seated.	14. Chauffeurs are the masters of their vessels and therefore they are responsible for the safety of their passengers. Chauffeurs are responsible for ensuring that their vessels carry no more than the permitted maximum number of passengers and that they are correctly seated. At the start of each trip, the skipper must give a safety briefing to all passengers.	Byelaws Definition of Master, Byelaw 8.3c, industry best practice
11. As the professional masters on the river, chauffeurs are expected to set a high standard of consideration for other vessels. In particular, chauffeurs must put safety considerations before speed. They should set a proper example of navigating on the right and through the right hand arch of all bridges as the normal rule of the river.	15. As the professional masters on the river, chauffeurs are expected to set a high standard of consideration for other vessels and the masters of other vessels. Chauffeurs must put safety considerations before speed. They must set a proper example of navigating on the right and through the right hand arch of all bridges as	Byelaw 4.1b, 4.2a, International Collision Regulations

	the normal rule of the river. When crossing from one side of the river to the other, or when entering the river from any side channel or cut, the chauffeur shall do so at a proper time having regard to vessels navigating up and down the river and they shall give way to such vessels.	
8. All chauffeurs are to be given reasonable training in a fully laden punt of the size they are to operate.	16. The operator must give reasonable training to all chauffeurs in a fully laden punt of the size they are to operate. The chauffeur must be able to demonstrate that he/she is competent, with particular attention given to the ability to stop in an emergency.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code
9. A training record is to be maintained for all trainees.	17. A training record is to be maintained for all trainees. These records are to be open for inspection by the Conservators or their authorised officers.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code
None	18. The chauffeur shall hold either a valid 1. Elementary First Aid Certificate, or 2. RYA Small Craft First Aid Certificate, or 3. Certificate issued by the Ambulance Service or a voluntary society following the successful completion of a first aid course approved by the Health and Safety Executive. These records are to be open for inspection by the Conservators or their authorised officers.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code
None	19. The operator shall have in place a drug and alcohol policy. This should include a statement to the effect that no chauffeur is to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while in charge of the punt, or when preparing to take charge of the punt.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code

12. When an accident occurs and people are at risk (for example, of drowning) chauffeurs who have been involved or are in the vicinity have a duty to assist to the best of their ability, consistent with the safety of their own passengers.	20. When an accident occurs and people are at risk (for example, of drowning) chauffeurs who have been involved or are in the vicinity have a duty to assist to the best of their ability, consistent with the safety of their own passengers.	The Obligation to Render Assistance at Sea (SOLAS V Regulation 33 - Distress Situations: Obligations and procedures)
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Self-hire Punts

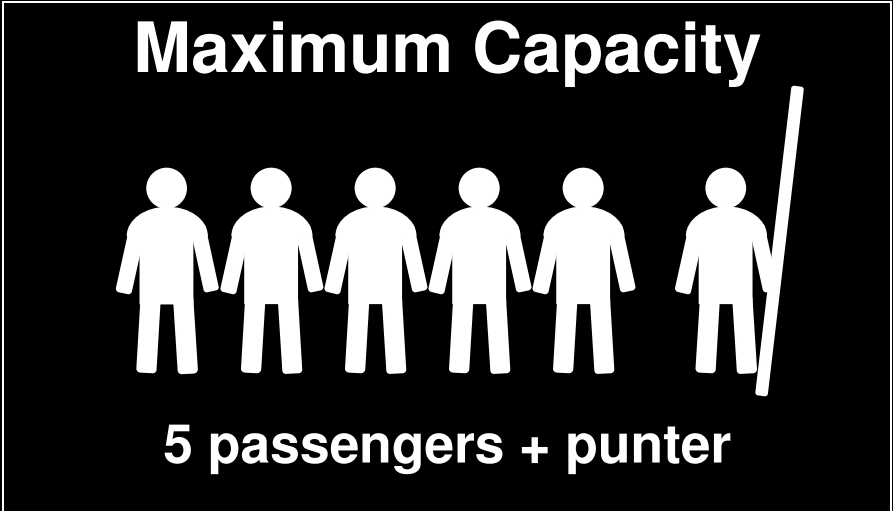
Existing Code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
5. No vessel with a capacity in excess of six persons in total is to be hired on a self-punt.	21. No vessel with a capacity in excess of six persons in total is to be hired out on a self-punt basis.	Byelaw 3
None.	22. No self-hire punt shall be hired to a person or persons under the age of 16 years.	Aligns with industry best practice and other local authorities with powers to regulate passenger vessels
13. Operators must offer all hirers reasonable information on the basic requirements of safe punting and make self-hirers aware of the navigational rules (particularly, navigating on the right and through the right hand arch all bridges) and of their obligation to abide by such rules as far as possible, consistent with their punting ability and to advise that if there is an accident the master/hirer is responsible for reporting it to the operator.	23. Operators must offer all hirers reasonable information on the basic requirements of safe punting and make self-hirers aware of the navigational rules (particularly, navigating on the right and through the right hand arch of all bridges) and of their obligation to abide by such rules as far as possible, consistent with their punting ability and to advise that if there is an accident the master/hirer is responsible for reporting it to the operator.	Aligns with industry best practice set out in MCA/AINA Inland Waters Small Passenger Boat Code

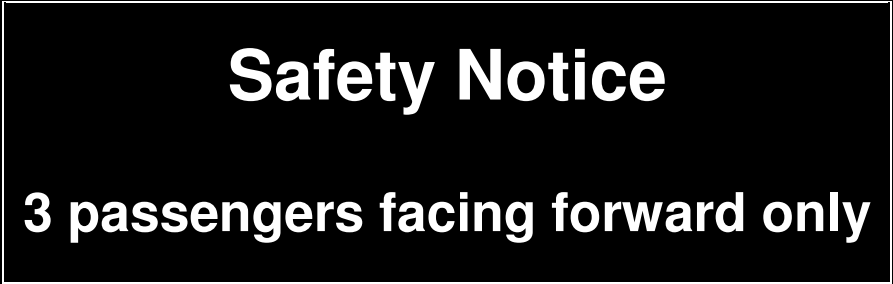
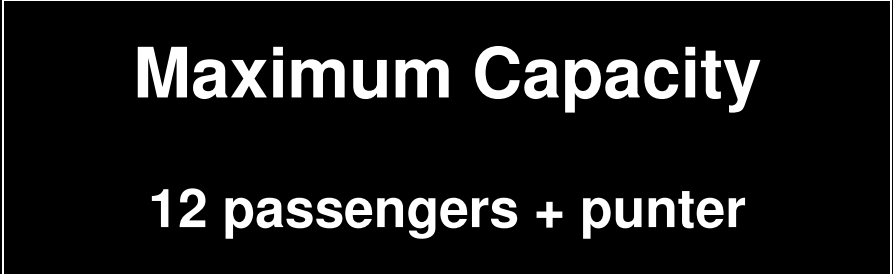
**APPENDIX TO THE
CODE OF PRACTICE FOR COMMERCIAL PUNT OPERATORS
(being those in ownership categories 4, 5 and 6)**


PUNT SIGNAGE

Existing Code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
4. Every punt shall display the alphanumeric identification mark registered with the Conservators on both sides of the punt so that it is legible at all times from both banks of the river.	1. Every punt shall display the registration number assigned by the Conservators on both sides of the hull so as to be clearly legible at all times at a distance of 15 metres.	Byelaw 8.6a

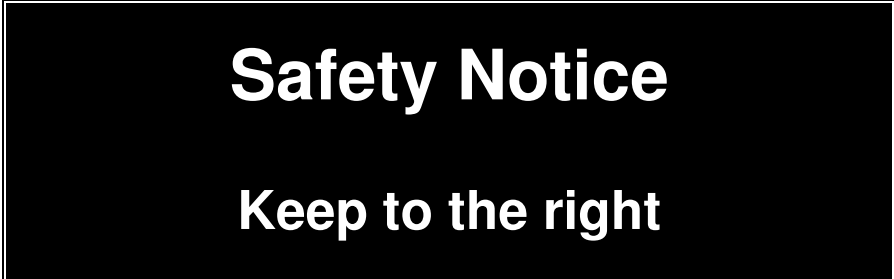
Existing code	
1. Every 'single' punt (up to 1 metre in beam), carrying no more than 6 persons, shall display one of each of the following signs in the appropriate places:	<p>1.1</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Safety Notice</p> <p>1 passenger facing forward only</p> </div> <p>1.2</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Maximum Capacity</p> <p>6 people including punter</p> </div>


Proposed amendment	
2. Text as above	<p data-bbox="497 309 536 338">2.1</p> <p data-bbox="497 380 1406 488">Signage as above. The purpose of this sign is to prevent uneven load distribution in single punts and to stop passengers from sitting on the front deck where they might suffer an injury in a collision.</p> <p data-bbox="497 564 536 593">2.2</p> <div data-bbox="501 636 1398 1144">  <p>The image shows a rectangular sign with a black background and white text and graphics. At the top, the words 'Maximum Capacity' are written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below the text is a row of six white human silhouettes. The first five silhouettes are standing side-by-side, holding hands. The sixth silhouette is on the right, holding a long, thin white pole that extends vertically above its head. Below the silhouettes, the text '5 passengers + punter' is written in a bold, sans-serif font.</p> </div>

Existing code	
<p data-bbox="188 1232 472 1594">2. Every 'ferry punt' (beam between 1 metre and 1.95 metres), carrying no more than twelve passengers, shall display one of each of the following signs in the appropriate places:</p>	<p data-bbox="497 1232 1075 1261">2.1 Where there are forward facing seats.</p> <div data-bbox="501 1303 1398 1585">  <p>The image shows a rectangular sign with a black background and white text. The words 'Safety Notice' are written in a large, bold, sans-serif font at the top. Below the text, the words '3 passengers facing forward only' are written in a bold, sans-serif font.</p> </div> <p data-bbox="497 1628 536 1657">2.2</p> <div data-bbox="501 1700 1398 1984">  <p>The image shows a rectangular sign with a black background and white text. The words 'Maximum Capacity' are written in a large, bold, sans-serif font at the top. Below the text, the words '12 passengers + punter' are written in a bold, sans-serif font.</p> </div>

Proposed amendment	
3. Text as above	<p>3.1 Where there are forward facing seats.</p> <p>Signage as above.</p> <p>3.2</p> 

(The number of passengers shown as a maximum on this sign shall be the number of passengers permitted by the Conservators for the size of punt in question.)

Existing code	
3. Every punt shall display the following sign visible to those punting the vessel.	

Proposed amendment	
4. Text as above	

Existing code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
All signs shown above are actual minimum size (120mm x 35mm) with white lettering on a contrasting background, with white border printed in Arial, minimum font sizes 26 (headings) and 20 (remainder of text).	Signage. These need to be made larger, e.g. 200 mm x 15 mm, especially the labels showing the loading limits.	Signs are clearly being ignored at present. They are for the passengers' benefit as much as for the operators.

Existing code	Proposed amendment	Justification / legislation
The document title infers that this Code applies to ownership categories 4, 5 and 6. There are no guidance notes in the existing Code to explain what these categories are (they are however published on the Conservators' registration application form).	Notes. This Code applies to the following Owner categories: 5 University/College or other corporate owners who hire to the general public 6 Operators for hire to the general public of boats in categories 01-12 inclusive ⁺ in Part 1.	According to MCA/AINA definitions, Category 4* does not need to meet commercial requirements if the boat is not hired out to members of the public.

* Category 4 being University/College or other corporate owners of boats in Part 1 categories 0-12 inclusive for use solely by their members

+ Categories of vessels are available from the Conservators' office and they are published on the Conservators' web pages at www.camconservators.org.uk