

Uniform Shipping Laws Code 2008

Section 17: River Murray Traffic Regulations (CTH, NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC & WA)

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The official version is that last published by the Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, copies of which can be obtained from the National Marine Safety Committee.

SECTION 17

River Murray Traffic Regulations

CONTENTS

1. This Section is divided into Parts as follows:
 - Part 1—PRELIMINARY (Clauses 2 - 4)
 - The Schedule—River Murray Traffic Regulations

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

2. This Section should be read in conjunction with the Introduction, Definitions and General Requirements Section, and shall apply to all vessels, both new and existing
3. Notwithstanding reference on the title page to Commercial Vessels, in this Section the definition of Vessel shall be that set out in The Schedule.
4. An obligation should be placed on the master, mate or the person concerned with the navigation, management or working of a vessel to comply with the River Murray Traffic Regulations.

(Amendment dated 15 August 1995)

THE SCHEDULE
RIVER MURRAY TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

PART A – GENERAL

RULE 1

Application

- (a) These Rules shall apply to all vessels on the River Murray, its tributaries and anabranches and to the Lake Albert, Lake Alexandrina, the Coorong and all other navigable waterways and streams connected with such River, Lakes and Coorong.
- (b) Nothing in these Rules shall interfere with the operation of special rules made by an appropriate authority as to navigation in any lock, or in the immediate vicinity of any lock, bridge, or construction work on the River Murray or any of its tributaries.
- (c) Navigable channels and waterways will when marked be marked in according to the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities Maritime Buoyage System 'A'.
- (d) These rules other than 8 (f), 18 (d), 18 (e), 23 and 31 shall not apply to ferries and punts crossing a river or fairway by means of ropes or cables.

RULE 2

Responsibility

- (a) Nothing in these Rules shall exonerate any vessel, or the owner, master or crew thereof, from the consequences of any neglect to comply with these Rules or of the neglect of any precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamen, or by the special circumstances of the case.
- (b) In construing and complying with these Rules due regard shall be had to all dangers of navigation and collision and to any special circumstances, including the limitations of the vessels involved, which may make a departure from these Rules necessary to avoid immediate danger.

RULE 3

General Definitions

For the purpose of these Rules, except where the context otherwise requires:

- (a) The word 'Vessel' includes every description of water craft, including non-displacement craft, seaplanes and non-commercial craft, used or capable of being used as a means of transportation on water.
- (b) The term 'power-driven vessel' means any vessel propelled by machinery.
- (c) The term 'sailing vessel' means any vessel under sail provided that propelling machinery, if fitted, is not being used.
- (d) The word 'seaplane' includes any aircraft designed to manoeuvre on the water.
- (e) The term 'vessel restricted in her ability to manoeuvre' means a vessel which from the nature of her work is restricted in her ability to manoeuvre as required by these regulations and therefore is unable to keep out the way of another vessel and includes but is not limited to:
 - (i) a vessel engaged in laying, servicing or picking up a navigation mark, underwater cable or pipeline;
 - (ii) a vessel engaged in dredging, surveying or underwater operations.

- (f) The term 'underway' means that a vessel is not at anchor, or made fast to the shore, or aground.
- (g) The words 'length' and 'breadth' of a vessel mean her length overall and greatest breadth.
- (h) Vessels shall be deemed to be in sight of one another only when one can be observed visually from the other.
- (i) The term 'restricted visibility' means any condition in which visibility is restricted by fog, mist, heavy rainstorms, sandstorms or any other causes.
- (j) The word 'mile' means the international nautical mile of 1852 metres.

PART B—STEERING AND SAILING RULES

SECTION I—CONDUCT OF VESSELS IN ANY CONDITION OF VISIBILITY

RULE 4

Application

Rules in this Section apply in any condition of visibility.

RULE 5

Look-out

Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions.

RULE 6

Safe speed

- (a) Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed adapted to existing circumstances and conditions, so that she can take proper and effective action to avoid collision.
- (b) A vessel shall not proceed at a speed greater than 8 kilometres per hour over the ground when within 100 metres of a ferry crossing.

RULE 7

Action to avoid collision

Any action taken to avoid collision shall be positive, made in ample time and with due regard to the observance of good seamanship.

RULE 8

Narrow Channels

- (a) Every vessel when proceeding along the course of a river, channel, or fairway shall when it is safe and practicable, keep to that side of the river, channel or fairway which lies on the starboard side of such vessel.
- (b) In any channel, a vessel which can safely navigate outside such channel shall not hamper the safe passage of a vessel which can navigate only inside such channel. A power driven vessel navigating upstream shall not impede the progress of a vessel navigating downstream.
- (c) A vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any other vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway.
- (d) A vessel nearing a bend or an area of a narrow channel or fairway where other vessels may be obscured by an intervening obstruction shall navigate with particular alertness and caution and shall sound the appropriate signal prescribed in Rule 30 (c).
- (e) Any vessel shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid anchoring in a narrow channel.
- (f) All vessels shall keep out of the way of a ferry or punt which is crossing a river or fairway by means of ropes or cables, provided that such ferry or punt shall not proceed across a river or fairway if danger of collision with a passing vessel exists.

SECTION II—CONDUCT OF VESSELS IN SIGHT OF ONE ANOTHER

RULE 9

Application

Rules in this Section apply to vessels in sight of one another.

RULE 10

Sailing vessels

- (a) When two sailing vessels are approaching one another, so as to involve risk of collision, one of them shall keep out of the way of the other as follows:
 - (i) when each has the wind on a different side, the vessel which has the wind on the port side shall keep out of the way of the other; and
 - (ii) when both have the wind on the same side, the vessel which is to windward shall keep out of the way of the vessel which is to leeward.
- (b) For the purposes of this Rule the windward side shall be deemed to be the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried.

RULE 11

Overtaking

- (a) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Rules of this Section any vessel overtaking any other shall keep out of the way of the vessel being overtaken.
- (b) A vessel shall be deemed to be overtaking when coming up with another vessel from a direction more than 22.5 degrees abaft her beam, that is in such a position with reference to the vessel she is overtaking, that at night she would be unable to see either of her sidelights.
- (c) When a vessel is in any doubt as to whether she is overtaking another, she shall assume that this is the case and act accordingly.
- (d) Any subsequent alteration of the bearing between the two vessels shall not make the overtaking vessel a crossing vessel within the meaning of these Rules or relieve her of the duty of keeping clear of the overtaken vessel until she is finally past and clear.
- (e) In a narrow channel or fairway, a vessel shall only overtake another if this can be done safely.

RULE 12

Head-on Situation

- (a) When two power-driven vessels are meeting on reciprocal or nearly reciprocal courses so as to involve risk of collision each shall alter her course to starboard so that each shall pass on the port side of the other.
- (b) Such a situation shall be deemed to exist when a vessel sees the other ahead or nearly ahead and by night she could see the masthead light and/or both sidelights and by day she observes the corresponding aspect of the other vessel.
- (c) When a vessel is in any doubt as to whether such a situation exists she shall assume that it does exist and act accordingly.

RULE 13

Crossing Situation

When two power-driven vessels are crossing so as to involve risk of collision, the vessel which has the other on her own starboard side shall keep out of the way and shall, if the circumstances of the case admit, avoid crossing ahead of the other vessel.

RULE 14

Action by Give-way vessel

Every vessel which is directed to keep out of the way of another vessel shall, so far as possible, take early and substantial action to keep well clear.