

LP 05/2025 Guidelines for Safe Anchoring in the Yangtze River Estuary and Adjacent Waters

I. Navigating the Yangtze River Estuary

The Yangtze River Estuary and its adjacent waters serve as a major hub for vessels entering or exiting the Yangtze River, Shanghai Port, and north-south transit routes. With over 1,000 ships passing through daily, this area faces challenges including high traffic density, frequent fishing activity, and significant anchorage demand. Limited anchorage space, combined with irregular anchoring practices, increases risks such as collisions with fishing boats or cable damage. Adhering to proper procedures is critical for safe navigation.

II. Lessons from Recent Incidents

Case 1

January 25, 2025, at 18:40: Vessel *J* (anchored) collided with sailing vessel *L* (bound for Jingjiang) 27 nautical miles east of the Yangtze River Estuary. The accident occurred because *J* anchored unsafely in a high-traffic convergence zone between Channel A's extension and the Tianjin-Guangzhou Outer Routing.

Case 2

February 24, 2025, at 23:06: Export vessel *M* collided with northbound vessel *H* 24 nautical miles east of the South Channel light buoy. The incident location overlapped with the convergence of Channel B's extension and the Tianjin-Guangzhou Outer Routing.

Key Takeaway: Both collisions occurred near 123°E on the Tianjin-Guangzhou Outer Routing, a high-risk convergence area. Extra vigilance is required when navigating or anchoring here.

III. Anchoring Best Practices

Based on the *Yangtze River Estuary Ship Routing System (2008)* and Shanghai MSA regulations:

1. Select Appropriate Anchorage Areas

- Avoid anchoring in **Channels A, B, C1, C3**, their extensions, or the Diverting Waterway (a north-south transit route).

- Immediately notify maritime authorities if emergency anchoring is unavoidable.

2. Avoid Submarine Cable Zones

- Check nautical charts to identify submarine cable areas (especially near the north-south reporting line). Anchoring in these zones is prohibited.

3. Stay Clear of Fishing Activity

- During fishing seasons, maintain distance from fishing vessels and nets.
- After anchoring, monitor surroundings closely—especially at night or in low visibility. Use radar and visual checks to track fishing boats without AIS signals.

In this regard, the Association recommends that the Member ships navigating through this waterway should be taken conning by the captain on presence of the bridge, maintain a high watchkeeping arrangement, and efficiently perform bridge resource management to ensure safe navigation.

Source: Wusong Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

For more information, please contact Managers of the Association.