



U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland-NCR

2401 HAWKINS POINT ROAD, BLDG 70

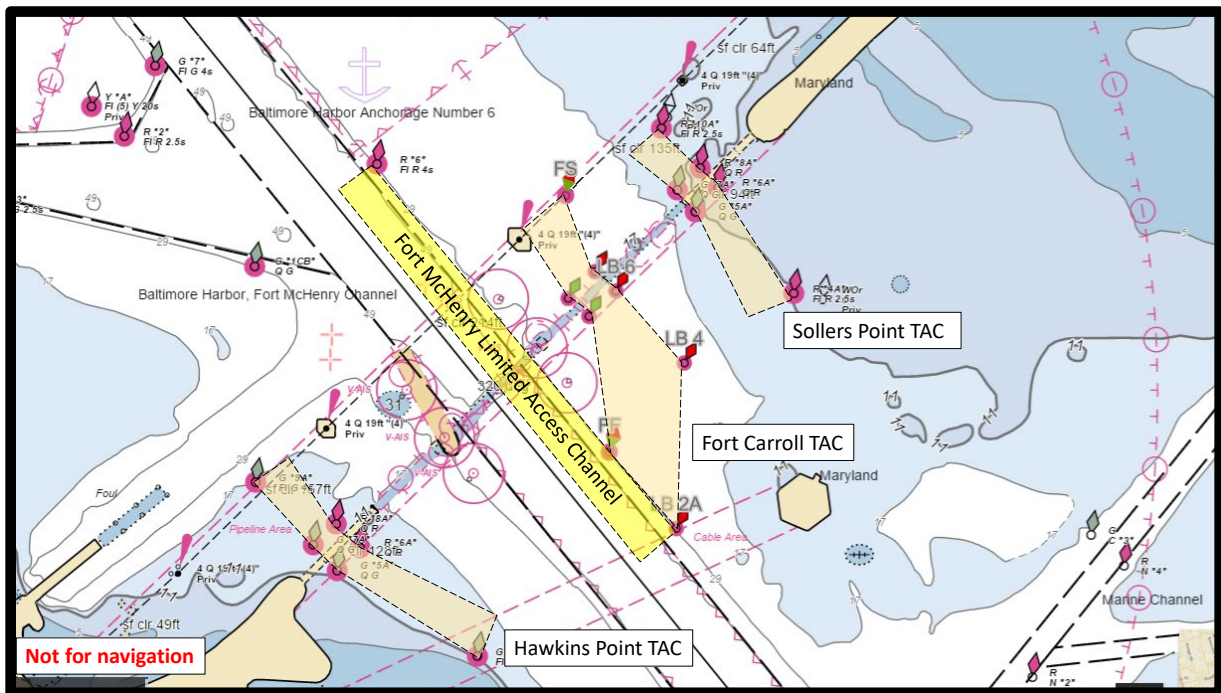
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MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION BULLETIN 043-24

April 22, 2024

Port of Baltimore Safety Zone – Key Bridge Response 2024
Fort McHenry Limited Access Channel



The Captain of the Port (COTP) plans to establish the Fort McHenry Limited Access Channel for commercially essential vessels on Thursday, April 25th until 6 a.m. Monday, April 29th or Tuesday, April 30th if weather adversely impacts vessel transits. As with the other temporary channels, this new channel will be marked with lighted aids to navigation and will be limited to transit at the discretion of the COTP and based on the prevailing weather conditions.

The Fort McHenry Limited Access Channel will have a controlling depth of 35 feet, a 300-foot horizontal clearance, and vertical clearance of 214 feet due to the adjacent BG&E powerlines. The controlling depth and available width may increase based on pending survey analysis. Deep draft vessels utilizing this channel will require a Maryland State pilot and two escort tugs, ahead and astern on centerline. The Maryland Pilots will impose a 3 foot under keel clearance (UKC) requirement for all vessels and limit transits to winds being less than 15 knots [Weather Forecast for 39.22N 76.54W \(Elev. 3 ft\)](#).

Due to this channel's proximity to the grounded M/V DALI and effects of a passing vessel, all transits must be at or below 5 knots. Additionally, each vessel requesting to transit this channel must provide their length, breadth, drafts (fore and aft), and total displacement to be assessed for potential impacts to the M/V DALI. For planning purposes, vessels greater than 60,000 long tons of displacement will most likely not be allowed to transit. Vessels less than 50,000 long tons of displacement will likely be allowed to transit, and vessels between 50,000 and 60,000 long tons of displacement will be closely evaluated by the Unified Command's Marine Transportation System (MTS) Recovery Branch.

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Due to critical and highly dynamic salvage operations to advance efforts to fully clear the channel commencing on Monday or Tuesday, April 29th or 30th, this channel will not be available again until approximately May 10th. Any changes to this timeline will be advertised to the public by updates to this MSIB.

Depicted in the above graphic, the Fort Carroll Temporary Alternate Channel with a controlling depth of 20 feet, a 300-foot horizontal clearance, and vertical clearance of 135 feet will remain available (see [MSIB 042-24](#)). Additionally, the Sollers Point Temporary Alternate Channel with a controlling depth of 11 feet, a 264-foot horizontal clearance, and vertical clearance of 95 feet; as well as the Hawkins Point Temporary Alternate Channel with a controlling depth of 14 feet, a 280-foot horizontal clearance, and vertical clearance of 124 feet will remain (see [MSIB 039-24](#)). Commercial traffic able to utilize these alternate channels should plan to do so, as to not impact traffic that is limited to the 35-foot draft channel.

The 2,000-yard safety zone around the Francis Scott Key Bridge (see [MSIB 036-24](#)) remains in effect and is intended to protect personnel, vessels, and the marine environment. No vessel or person will be permitted to enter the safety zone without first obtaining permission from the COTP or a designated representative. The COTP is currently issuing a Broadcast Notice to Mariners (BNM) via VHF-FM marine channel 16. Mariners are requested to monitor the VHF channel 16 for the latest information.

You may not enter the safety zone described above unless authorized by the COTP or the COTP's designated representative. To obtain permission to enter the safety zone and transit through any of the established temporary alternate channels, you must, **as early as possible but no less than 4 hours prior to getting underway**, contact the Marine Transportation System Recovery Branch at (505) 203-8141 and MTSrecoveryMDNCR@uscg.mil. These requests must be received between the hours of 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Movement requests before 10 a.m. must be received prior to 6 p.m. the previous day. **All movements are subject to the prevailing weather conditions, response and recovery efforts.**

As you approach the safety zone and prior to entry, contact the on-scene Patrol Commander on VHF channel 81A (157.075 MHz). Those in the safety zone must comply with all lawful orders or directions given to them by the COTP or the COTP's designated representative. The U.S. Coast Guard may be assisted in the patrol and enforcement of the safety zone by Federal, State, and local agencies.

Baxter B. Smoak

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