**National Coastwatch Fleetwood**
**EYES ALONG THE COAST**

# NCI FLEETWOOD TRAINING MANUAL

# PART 13

# WRITTEN RECORDS

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## THE STATION LOGBOOK

### Introduction

The Station Logbook is an official document in which a record is kept of the weather, tides and noteworthy activity in and around the watchstation whilst it is operational. It is a legal record that can be called upon at any time as a source of evidence by relevant authorities such as the Courts, Police, Coastguard and UK Border Force. For this reason it must be as accurate a record as possible, and as neat and tidy as possible.

During an incident it can provide valuable information regarding the identity and position of those involved and those nearby who may be able to assist.

For these reasons it is important that the logbook is completed in accordance with the general instructions below.

### General Instructions

- Pages must not be removed from the log, which is to remain spirally bound and with pages numbered
- Entries must be legible within the allotted space
- Entries must be in black ink, except for those relating to accidents or incidents, which must be in red or underlined in red
- There must be entries clearly indicating when a watch starts and finishes
- A new page must be opened at the beginning of each day
- At the beginning of a watch watchkeepers must initial alongside their own name and do so every time their name is entered on a new page.
- Tidal information should be entered for all tides occurring on that day and the relevant box ticked for spring and neap tides

- Weather observations should be completed at the start and end of a watch and every two hours in between. Useful meteorological information is provided on the inside rear cover of the logbook. Observations must also be made at the time of any incident.
- Any major change of the weather conditions are to be entered in the log book; HMCG are to be advised of major weather changes, both deterioration and improvement.
- Each entry must start with the time and, in general, local time should be used.
- Narrative events should be recorded across the whole of the page, without regard to the columns provided
- The initials of the watchkeeper making an entry must be added at the end of the line of every entry made by him/her
- No entry should be erased. Any error should be crossed out with a single line leaving it legible and the deletion initialed
- The logbook must be completed at the time of the occurrence or as soon as practicable afterwards. Notes made away from the logbook that may have a bearing on the occurrence must be kept by being stapled to the appropriate log book page
- Entries regarding vessels should aim to provide sufficient detail for the vessels to be identified by SAR assets if necessary
- Codes are provided as an aid to recording types of vessel and should be used only where they are helpful. If a code is not provided, the 'type' should be written in full. Alternative codes should not be used
- Gale and Strong Wind Warnings must be logged, underlined in red and must include the time of origin and details of the time period covered
- All exercises and official visits to the station must be recorded in the logbook
- At the end of a watch a 'Z' line must be drawn after the last entry and the statistics block completed.
- Each watchkeeper must then sign the last page used, the 'senior' watchkeeper for that watch after his name on the last line used that day and other watchkeepers in the box at the bottom of the page.
- Old logbooks will be retained for at least 3 years.

**Logging Vessels**.

A record of vessels which are seen within eight miles of the station is kept in the station logbook. The distance is just a guide and it may be necessary to record vessels outside that limit if circumstances dictate.

A vessel that has been recorded may be involved in an incident at some time later, or the coast-guard may ask for information regarding the last sighting of a vessel that is missing or overdue.

The 'Pelorus' sighting equipment is used to provide a bearing of the vessel in relation to the watchstation.

All vessels are recorded in the log at the time they are observed. Generally, it is only necessary to record a vessel once, unless it carries out a notable occurrence such as anchors, or departs the sector and returns sometime later.

Information regarding vessels is gained, in the first instance, by observation and then further information may be obtained from the Automatic Identification System(AIS) and the internet.

**<u>The Log Entry for Vessels</u>**

The log entry for vessels should follow the marked columns in the log book:

**Time**
- The time the vessel is seen within the sector

**Type of Vessel**
- The first column under this heading is the 'Type' and the second the 'Category'.

- Each type of vessel has a 'type' code, such as 'FFS' for a fishing vessel. It is then categorized as 'Commercial'(C), 'Leisure'(L), 'Military'(M) 'Special' (S) or 'Other'(O).

- The inside front cover of the log book displays the type codes and which category they come under. No unauthorized codes should be used

**Name etc**.
- Generally, the name of the vessel is entered in this column. If the name is not known, it should be left blank

**Registration or Sail No**
- If a sail number of a yacht or the registration number of a fishing boat can be seen it should be entered here

**Position etc.**
- Normally the bearing of the vessel and its estimated distance from the watchstation is written in this column

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### Course, Heading

- Unless there is specific information, from the AIS for instance, a general heading such as 'North West' will suffice.
- If the vessel is not underway, then the initials 'NUW' should be entered or a drawing of an anchor

### VRA

- The appropriate initials should be entered 'V' Visual 'R' Radar 'A' AIS, depending on how the vessel can be seen.

### PV

- The number of 'Persons Visible' on the vessel should be recorded. Only those that can actually be seen should be counted

### Remarks Description

- The colour of the hull, superstructure, sails and any other description that assists identification can be entered.
- Colour codes can be found on the inside front cover of the logbook. Please note the letters for these codes are in lower case.

Whilst the logging of vessels is an important part of a Watchkeeper's duties, spotting priorities demand that vulnerable people and craft require the watchkeepers attention above the need for logging the less vulnerable. This more so during busy beach periods.

### **Log Book Entries**

These are just some of the occurrences which would justify a log book entry

- Shipping observations and movements
- Emergency VHF Radio messages -  Mayday — Mayday Relay — Pan Pan
- Persons injured
- Fire
- Lost and Found Children Livestock, animals or mammals in distress Loose large inflatables Lilos' air beds etc. (NOT beach balls)999 calls
- Pollution and Oil slicks etc.

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- Chemical Containers

- Deceased marine mammal carcasses on beach

- Official Visitors (E.g.: Coastguard, Police etc. -not public)

- Calls to utilities e.g.: Environment, Electric Etc.

- Single-man watch safety calls

- Equipment removed from station

- New operational equipment installed on station

## Unwelcome Entries

- Unprofessional comments

- Domestic messages

- Complaints

**INTENTIONALLY BLANK**