

KPI Information Update IU-33-2013 **(Revised shipping routes in the North Sea region)**

Extensive changes have been announced to the routing system in the Dutch North Sea. The North Sea is one of the world's most densely trafficked sea areas and the changes are made in order to ensure the future safety of shipping and improve access to the main Dutch ports. The changes will come into force on 1 August 2013 at 00:00 UTC (02:00 local time) and include:

- Introduction of a new Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) in the approaches to IJmuiden. Vessels sailing in opposite directions will have separate sea lanes.
- Routes are located further from the coast.
- Reduced number of route intersections.
- Relocation of anchorage areas.
- Areas around objects such as platforms have been reconfigured.

- Introduction of 'areas to be avoided' and 'precautionary areas'. Vessels will not be allowed to sail in 'areas to be avoided', while vessels sailing in 'precautionary areas' will be requested to navigate with care.

From April 2013 onwards, maritime traffic will regularly receive messages focusing on the revised routes and owners and managers are recommended to advise their Masters operating in the area to monitor the messages through the usual channels. Notices to Mariners will be published on the websites of the Netherlands Hydrographic Office and the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO). Updated nautical charts must be available on board before the changes take effect. New nautical charts and ENCs are due to be released in mid-June 2013.

