

SOUTH AFRICA TO THE CARIBBEAN

Christopher Hamblin



ROYAL CRUISING CLUB
PILOTAGE FOUNDATION

Published by
The Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation
2019

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Cover Photo - Adina on passage between Ascension Island and Fernando do Noronha, *Vincent Chirié*

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South Africa to the Caribbean:

A passage planning guide

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Tidal data, where given, refer to the maximum tidal range reported for that location. This will in all cases be well in excess of Mean Spring Range.

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Spring = September - November

Summer = December - February

Autumn = March - May

Winter = June - August

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The Pilotage Foundation is privileged to have been given the copyrights to books written by a number of distinguished authors and yachtsmen. These are kept as up to date as possible. New publications are also produced by the Pilotage Foundation to cover a range of cruising areas. This is only made possible through the dedicated work of our authors and editors, all of whom are experienced sailors, who depend on a valuable supply of information from around the world by generous-minded yachtsmen and women.

Most of the management of the Pilotage Foundation is done on a voluntary basis. In line with its charitable status, the Pilotage Foundation distributes no profits. Any surpluses are used to finance new publications and to subsidise publications which cover some of the more remote areas of the world.

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FOREWORD

Driven by concerns over security along the Red Sea route, the cruising route from South Africa to the Caribbean has become increasingly popular in recent years.

This new Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation publication covers the principal routes from South Africa to the Caribbean. Author, Chris Hamblin, has brought together his own research with the cruising information and photos contributed to the Pilotage Foundation by yachtsmen and women who have sailed these routes in recent years, particularly Tom Partridge, Andy O'Grady, Pete Hill and David and Annette Ridout, with valuable input and photos also from Kit and Penny Power. The Pilotage Foundation is very grateful to Chris for this work which represents a valuable addition to the Pilotage Foundation's portfolio of pilot books and cruising guides covering areas worldwide.

The Pilotage Foundation is also grateful to the production team of Jenny Taylor-Jones and Jane Russell and to Navionics for allowing use of their chart images.

As changes and developments arise we will incorporate these into supplements or revised editions of this publication so that we can maintain an accurate and up to date cruising guide for this area. To this end we welcome reports from yachtsmen and women who are sailing or otherwise visiting this route.

Please contact us at info@rccpf.org.uk or via our website at www.rccpf.org.uk

Antony Wells

Director

Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation

August 2019

Acknowledgements

Sources of Information, either as personal communication or from their published works.

Martin Dixon-Tyrer
Pete Hill
Tom Morgan
Tom Partridge
Kit and Penny Power
David and Annette Ridout
Jeremy Clarke
David Caswell
'Spilly' Spilhaus
Roy McBride
Noonsite
Ocean Passages for the World
NGA Sailing Directions
NGA List of lights
RSMAS, University of Miami



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PREFACE

The Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation passage guide SA1 was a brief collection of notes about the sailing route from Cape Town to the Caribbean. More detailed information about sections of the route, and points along it, was available in other Pilotage Foundation publications, notably Pete Hill's works on *South West Africa*, *South Atlantic Islands*, and *Brazil*, Tom Morgan's books *South Atlantic Circuit* and *Havens and Anchorages* and Martin Dixon-Tyrer's *Cruising Guide to French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana*. The idea arose that SA1 could be usefully expanded, to provide in one document a comprehensive overview of the whole route from Cape Town to the Caribbean. It would complement rather than compete with the existing pilot books.

As the writer of this new guide I am indebted not only to the authors of all those Pilotage Foundation pilot books, but to RCC members Tom Partridge, Kit and Penny Power, and David and Annette Ridout, to Noonsite and its many contributors, to individual yachtsmen, port and marina staff living along this route, to authoritative publications such as *Ocean Passages for the World*, *Cornell's Ocean Atlas*, *NGA Sailing Directions*, and *NGA List of Lights*, to the oceanographers at RSMAS, University of Miami, for their detailed reports on ocean currents and to World Weather Online for its wealth of historical climate data.

Christopher Hamblin.

August 2019

NORTHBOUND YACHT ARRIVALS AT ST HELENA IN 2017

David Caswell and Jeremy Clarke, Deputy Harbour Master at Jamestown, St Helena, very kindly sent me a complete report of the shipping movements to and from the island in 2017 and part of 2018. I am most grateful for this intriguing record, which has allowed a detailed analysis of yacht traffic. Most of this was (unsurprisingly) in a generally northbound direction. In 2017, 171 yachts left St Helena northward. The following tables show the traffic pattern through that year, where these yachts had come from and where they intended to go next.

<i>Last Port</i>	<i>Jan</i>	<i>Feb</i>	<i>Mar</i>	<i>Apr</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>Jun</i>	<i>Jul</i>	<i>Aug</i>	<i>Sep</i>	<i>Oct</i>	<i>Nov</i>	<i>Dec</i>	<i>Total</i>
Cape Town	34	15	18	11	2	3	1	-	2	1	4	6	97
Walvis Bay	4	2	17	7	-	5	2	1	1	1	0	2	42
Luderitz	2	2	4	-	2	3	-	1	-	-	1	-	15
Saldanha Bay	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
Simon's Town	-	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Durban	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
East London	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Richards Bay	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Argentina	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Unrecorded	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Totals	41	22	48	20	5	11	3	2	3	2	5	9	171

The busiest months of the year are January to March, accounting for about 64% of northbound arrivals in St Helena. There are good meteorological reasons for this, as will be explained later in this document. If anything, it is rather surprising that about a third of the yacht traffic occurs outside this period.

Well over 50% of arrivals had sailed directly from Cape Town – and a few from Saldanha Bay, which is not an official Port of Entry or Exit. One third of arrivals had sailed from Namibia. It is most likely that all of these had entered Namibia from South Africa. Contributors to Noonsite have generally been enthusiastic about their experiences in Namibia and encourage the idea that this is a worthwhile diversion.

Most surprising, perhaps, are the two yachts whose last ports were in Argentina. The distance from Buenos Aires to St Helena, for example, is 3052M. One of these designated the Azores as next destination and the other, the Cape Verdes. Both were crewed by two people.

NORTHBOUND YACHTS AT ST HELENA IN 2017 - INTENDED DESTINATIONS

Ascension Island	48
<i>NE Brazil:-</i>	
Salvador	24
Cabadelo	5
Jacaré	5
Recife	4
Natal	4
João Pessoa	4
<i>NE Brazil Total</i>	46
Fernando de Noronha	14
<i>Nth Coast Sth America:-</i>	
Fortaleza	4
Cayenne/Fr. Guiana	4
Suriname	2
<i>Nth Coast Sth America Total</i>	10
Brazil unspecified	9
Rio/ S.Brazil	5
<i>Windward Islands:-</i>	
Trinidad	6
Grenada	1
Barbados	3
St Lucia	3
Martinique	3
<i>Windward Islands Total</i>	16
<i>Leeward Islands:-</i>	
Virgin Islands (unspec)	2
British Virgin Islands	2
<i>Virgin Islands Total</i>	4
St Martin	1
<i>Leeward Islands Total</i>	5
Bahamas	1
Curacao	1
<i>North Atlantic East:-</i>	
Cape Verdes	8
Azores	1
Tangier	1
Jersey	1
Sweden	1
<i>North Atlantic East Total</i>	12
Unknown Destination	4
Annual Total	171

Only 48 of the 171 yachts departing northwards (28%) were intending to call in at Ascension Island. According to the Ascension Island shipping records only 45 of them actually did so. At present we do not know where they were heading after Ascension Island.

A similar number (46) were heading for Northeast Brazil. Just over half of these (24) named Salvador as their next port. One might guess that a fair number of them were intending to complete a South Atlantic circuit, rather than heading for the Caribbean. For reasons discussed in this document, Salvador is a bit too far south on the Brazilian coast for a wholly favourable continuation to the Caribbean.

So how many yachts do we think made their way from South Africa to the Caribbean in 2017? We have to make assumptions and guesses:

Let us assume that only half of the yachts leaving Ascension, say 22, were on their way to the Caribbean.

Let us assume that none of the Salvador yachts was bound for the Caribbean, but that the 40 yachts calling in at more northerly Brazilian ports including Fernando de Noronha, all were.

Add in those yachts heading initially for French Guiana and Suriname (6) and those already declaring at St Helena that they were Caribbean bound (23).

This gives us a conservative estimate of 91 yachts making the voyage from South Africa to the Caribbean; conservative, because we have very probably under-represented the Ascension yachts and have no record of those which did not stop at either St Helena or Ascension Island.

It will be interesting to see how this pattern of activity develops over the next few years.

Introduction

The sea journey from South Africa's western cape to the Caribbean is a voyage through 45 degrees of latitude and 79 degrees of longitude. Cape Town lies at roughly 34°S, 18°E. Tobago, a favourite entry point to the Caribbean, lies at roughly 11°N, 61°W. Provided that it is undertaken early in the calendar year, the entire voyage should be blessed with favouring currents and winds aft of the beam.

There are four well-established choices of route for this journey:

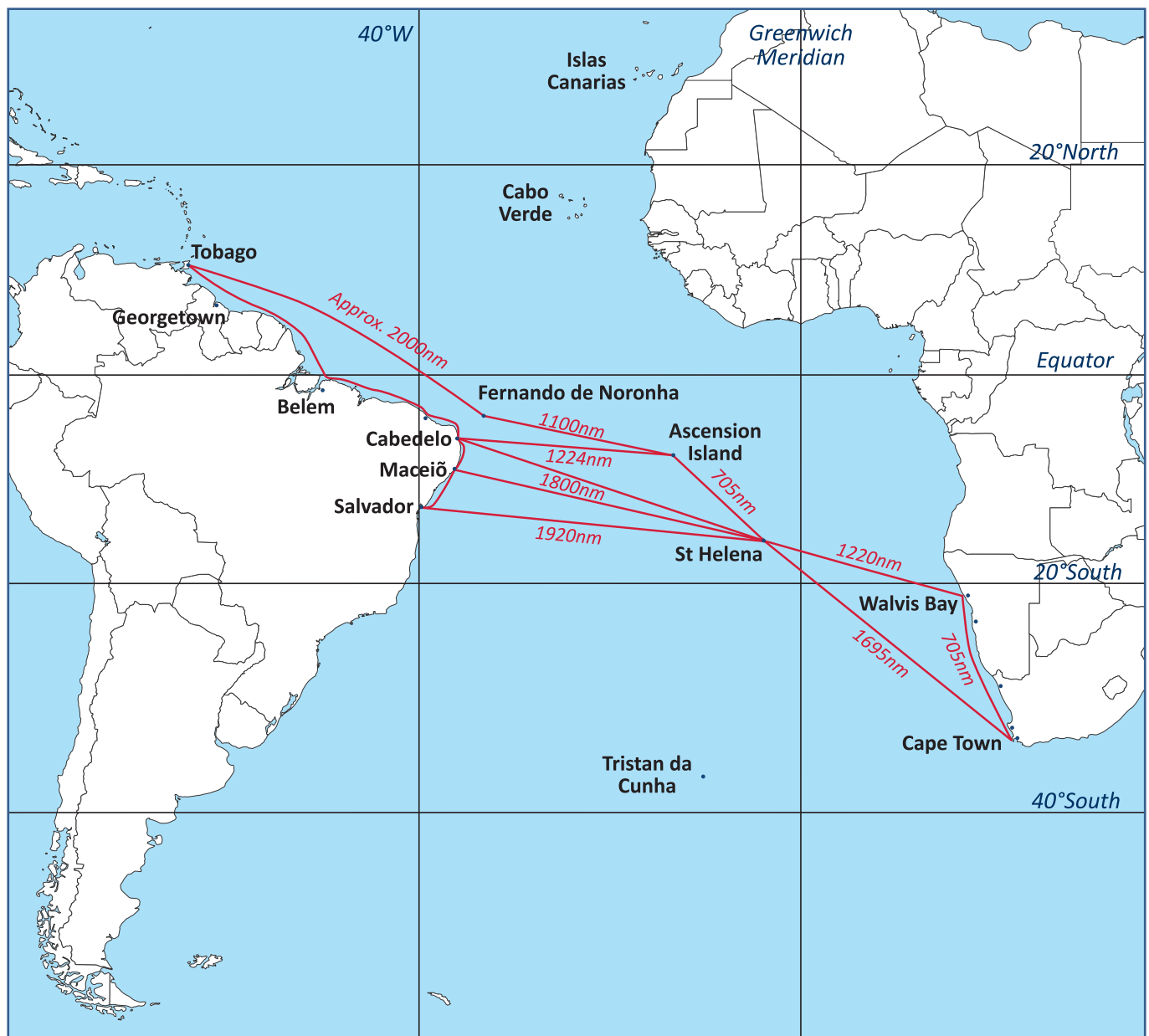
- the **'direct'** route from the Western Cape to the Caribbean, with stops in St Helena and sometimes Ascension Island too.

- the **Namibian route**, which initially favours the west coast of southern Africa but then rejoins the direct route at St Helena.

- the **Brazilian route**, which departs from the direct route at St Helena and crosses to NE Brazil, before following the coast round into the Caribbean.

- an **alternative Brazilian route**, which leaves the direct route at Ascension Island, rather than at St Helena.

A popular diversion which adds virtually nothing to the total distance covered, is a visit to the archipelago of Fernando de Noronha, off the NE corner of Brazil.



The direct route

This is made only slightly less direct by incorporating St Helena and perhaps Ascension Island as waypoints; it is the most commonly followed. The distance from Cape Town to St Helena is about 1,695M, from St Helena to Ascension Island a further 705M and from Ascension to Tobago another 3,000M: a total distance of about 5,400M.

The Namibian route

This route involves sailing northward from the Cape to Namibian ports such as Lüderitz and Walvis Bay, before heading for St Helena. The distance from Cape Town to St Helena will in this case be more like 1,970M, making the total voyage one of 5,630M.

The Brazilian route

A landfall in the northeast of Brazil gives this route the option of several interesting ports of call. The most southerly of these is Salvador (13°00'S). Further north are Maceió (09°41'S), Recife (08°03'S), Cabedelo (06°58'S) and Fortaleza (03°43'S). If you choose to make your landfall in Cabedelo, this will entail a passage of 1,800M from St Helena to Cabedelo and a further 1,995M from Cabedelo to Tobago. That would make the total distance from Cape Town 5,490M, which is very little longer than the direct route.

The alternative Brazilian route

Leaving from Ascension Island rather than St Helena, this route is 131M longer again, at 5,621M.



Sailing between Ascension Island and Fernando do Noronha – many cruisers report idyllic downwind sailing in these parts.
Vincent Chirié

Key weather systems

A few basic revision notes

- Wind is the horizontal movement of air in response to differences in atmospheric pressure.
- Horizontal differences in atmospheric pressure occur because of thermal factors and mechanical factors.
- Heated air rises, so reducing the local atmospheric pressure and creating a low pressure area.
- Equatorial areas receive more thermal energy from the sun than do areas of higher latitude.
- Hence the low pressure belt in the equatorial regions. (The Equatorial Low or Trough)
- In the Equatorial Low, the rising air is replaced by air flowing in from cooler (and therefore higher pressure) areas north and south of the equator. (The Subtropical Highs, centred at about 30° North and South)
- At high altitudes, the heated air which has risen from the Equatorial Low spreads polewards, cools and descends, mechanically adding to the pressure in the Subtropical Highs.
- Polewards of the Subtropical Highs are lower pressure belts which extend to about 60 - 65° of latitude in either hemisphere. (These are the Subpolar Lows.)
- Beyond the Subpolar Lows are the polar regions

themselves, characterised by high atmospheric pressures. (The Polar Highs.)

- Air flowing from one pressure belt to another is affected by the earth's rotation (the Coriolis Effect) which results in the direction of air flow being diverted to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern hemisphere. (Many people find this counter-intuitive, but that's the way it is!)

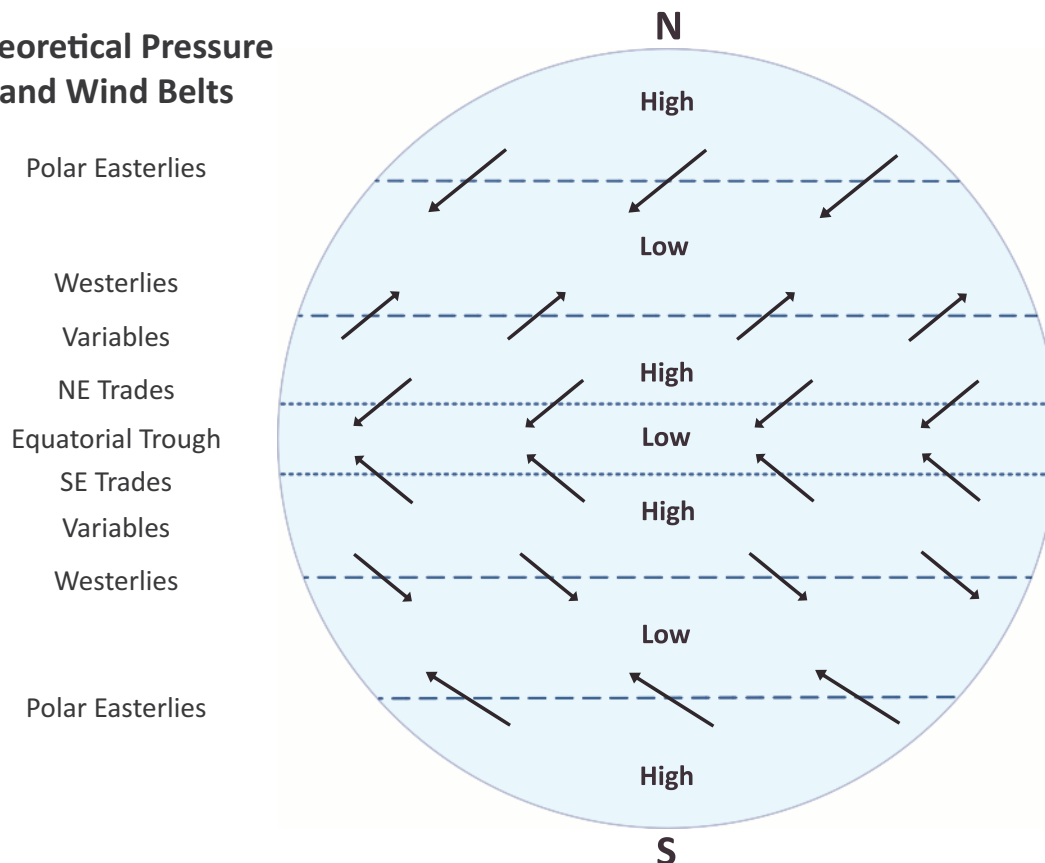
These notes are essentially theoretical and simplified. In the real world there are major complicating factors which affect the location of pressure areas and direction of winds, notably the geographical distribution of land and sea and the seasonal change in the sun's declination.

The meteorological systems with most effect on the weather along our routes of interest are:

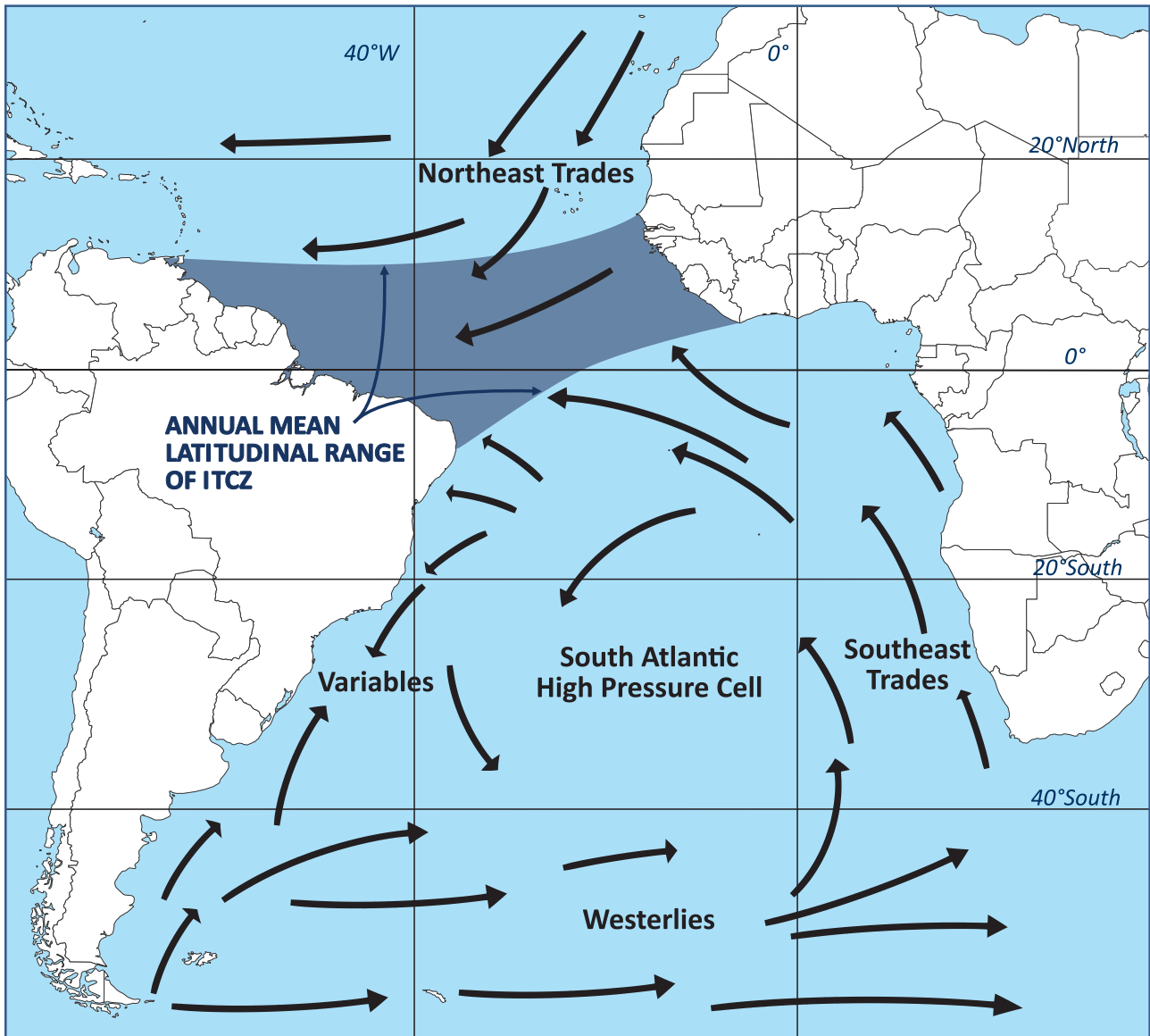
- the Intertropical Convergence Zone or ITCZ (traditionally called the doldrums)
- the South Atlantic High Pressure Cell (SAH)
- the Westerly Winds which prevail south of the SAH, as a belt of depressions
- the Southeast Trades which blow throughout the year, east and north of the SAH
- the Northeast Trades, which blow from the west coast of Africa to the Caribbean.

Less predictable factors are El Niño and La Niña.

Theoretical Pressure and Wind Belts



South and Mid-Atlantic Wind Systems



The ITCZ

Although it lies north of the equator, the ITCZ is an engine for both the Southeast Trades of the South Atlantic and the Northeast Trades of the North Atlantic. It is a low pressure belt into which airstreams from higher pressure areas, north and south of the equator, are drawn by convection. The earth's rotation deflects these airstreams (the Coriolis Effect). Airstreams in the northern hemisphere are deflected to the right, whereas airstreams in the southern hemisphere are deflected to the left. It follows that airstreams in either hemisphere that are flowing towards the equator are deflected to the west and those flowing away from the equator are deflected to the east. At the equator there is no deflection.

The typical weather of the ITCZ is light and variable winds alternating with squalls, heavy rain and thunderstorms. Where the trade winds are weak, the

ITCZ is characterised by isolated cumulus and cumulonimbus clouds. Where the trades are strong, solid lines of cumulonimbus may appear to the east, embedded in other cloud types. This is the sign of an approaching line squall. No indication of its approach will have been given by the barometer, though it could be seen on radar. The squall will arrive as a blast of E wind, generally at up to 25 - 30 knots and sometimes much more. These squalls are particularly common in latitudes below 20° and at the eastern end of the zone. They normally pass through in about half an hour.

The width of the ITCZ from north to south is variable but is usually between 200M and 300M. It tends to be wider at its eastern end than at its western end. Although winds within the ITCZ itself are often light or non-existent, they tend to be more reliable close to the Brazilian coast.



Approaching the equator, squalls are a constant problem and you need to reef well in advance. *Tom Partridge*

The ITCZ moves through about 4° of latitude with the seasons, following the declination of the sun with a time-lag of about 6-8 weeks. As it moves north or south, so too do the high and low pressure belts which lie north and south of it. The ITCZ lies at its furthest north in the southern winter months of July and August.

At that time the Southeast Trades may reach as far as 8°N, but because of the earth's rotation, they may become more southerly or even south westerly, north of the equator. This is most noticeable east of 35°W, because the orientation of the ITCZ tends to be roughly WSW - ENE. As its eastern end is much further north than its western end, that is where the Southeast Trades push furthest north. Although the movement of the ITCZ is seasonal, predicting its position is not easy. Unfortunately, GRIB files are best regarded as guidance for only 1-2 days ahead, in these latitudes.

The SAH

The circulation of winds around the SAH is anti-clockwise and it is reinforced by the prevailing low pressure systems lying over Brazil and Southern Africa. Since records began, it had been thought that Tropical Revolving storms would never occur in the South Atlantic, because there was insufficient fetch for them to develop. This is now known not to be the case: there

was a South Atlantic hurricane in 2004.

The geographical position of the SAH is not constant. Like the ITCZ, it travels further south during the summer (December to February). On average, the SAH is centred on about 28°S but it can move as far as 42°S. In the summer it is usually centred on about 30°S and 5°E. When the SAH moves south, the Westerlies air stream is pushed further south, so fewer fronts can reach the west coast of Africa. In consequence, the weather there will be warmer and drier. During the winter, the SAH moves northwards and this increases the number of fronts reaching the west coast of Africa, bringing NW gales.

The Westerlies

In their progress across the South Atlantic, the Westerlies spread out northwards and may reach north of 40°S. However, fully developed lows tend to stay below 40°S in the summer months and rarely exceed 35°S, even in winter. The South African coast commonly experiences NW winds ahead of the fronts and SW winds when the fronts have passed. In the winter months, these winds may be very strong.

The Southeast Trades

The Southeast Trades are a dominant feature of the eastern South Atlantic. From 30°S, as far north as the

ITCZ, they prevail across that stretch of the ocean, as a mass of cool maritime air. They are more constant than the Northeast Trades of the North Atlantic and have an average windspeed of 15 knots. In recent years, however, the steadiness of the Southeast Trades has reportedly declined on the route from South Africa to Saint Helena.

During the winter, the west coast of South Africa is subjected to a more NW/SW regimen of winds as low pressure weather dominates and the reliable southern boundary of the tradewind zone is nudged northward towards Namibia.

The Northeast Trades

The Northeast Trades blow for much of the year in a belt south of the Azores High. Their northern limit is about 25°N during the northern winter and about 30°N during the northern summer. Their southern limit is the northern edge of the ITCZ, which as already noted, moves with the seasons. From east to west across the ocean, there is an increasingly easterly component in the wind direction. Their reliability is less at the northern edge of their range than in the south. They blow on average at about Force 3 - 4 but during the January - March period episodes of Force 6 or 7 are not

unusual. When they are strong, these winds can create unpleasant cross swells from the north. These may extend as far south as Ascension Island and St Helena.

La Niña

An additional complicating factor in some years is La Niña. This phenomenon results in colder, wetter than normal conditions in Southern Africa and in an increased number of hurricanes forming in the tropical zone of the Atlantic and approaching the Caribbean. This is the opposite of what happens in El Niño episodes. Hurricanes were virtually unknown in the South Atlantic until 2004, when Hurricane Catarina developed off the coast of Brazil. Whether the warming of the oceans will lead to more South Atlantic hurricanes remains to be seen.

In fact, 2004 was an El Niño year but it was categorised as a weak one.

La Niña episodes typically begin in March - June and reach their peak during the following December - April period. Mostly they last for 9 - 12 months but they can persist for as long as 2 years. Although 'La Niña' occurs less frequently than 'El Niño', there is evidence that the frequency of both types of event is increasing.



A windless day David Ridout

Currents

Most surface currents are the direct result of wind action, modified to a greater or lesser extent by the effect of the earth's rotation, by the effects of any land masses they encounter and by the effects of any other currents they meet.

The diagram below shows eleven separate surface currents in the South and Mid-Atlantic Ocean, around a central gyre. Six of them are of immediate specific interest to the sailor planning a voyage from South Africa to the Caribbean. These are the *South Atlantic Current*, the *Benguela Current*, the *South Equatorial Current*, the *Brazil Current*, the *Guyana Current* and the *North Equatorial Counter Current*.

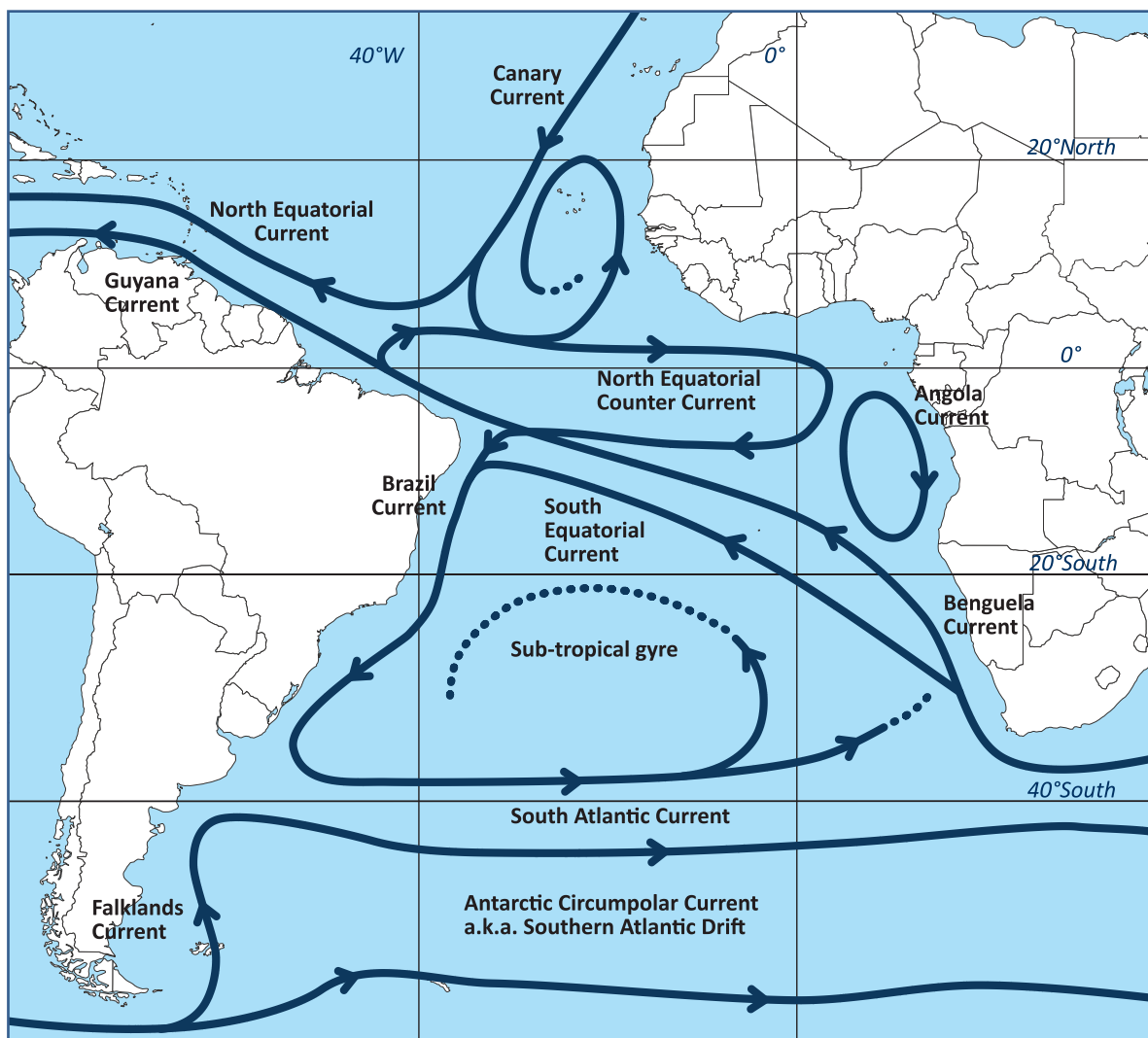
The South Atlantic Current (or SAC)

This begins in an area on the west side of the ocean where the warm south-going *Brazil Current* is beginning to flow east of south and the cold north-flowing *Falklands Current* is turning northeastward. The SAC

runs to the east at a variable rate toward South Africa, driven by the strong NW winds which prevail between 30°S and 60°S. It runs faster on its southern side, where it is bounded by the cold *Antarctic Circumpolar Current*. (This boundary is the *Sub-Antarctic Front* or *SAF*.) It runs more slowly on its northern side, where it merges with the relatively sluggish central gyre. In the Argentine basin, surface speeds of 0.39 knots have been observed at the *SAF*. Further east at the Greenwich meridian, the speed was only about 0.25 knots.

As the SAC approaches the coast of South Africa it becomes subject both to a pressure gradient caused by the upward slope of the sea floor and to a northerly deflection caused by the prevailing southeasterly winds. This northerly deflection is most marked in the surface layers of the sea, which are pushed away from the coast and replaced by an upwelling of cold water from the deeper layers. So the coast itself is bathed in

South and Mid-Atlantic Currents



cold water. This phenomenon occurs as far north as 20°S and that is why advection fog is a common problem along this coast. It can occur in NW winds before the passage of a front or in SW winds after its passage, and is most frequent in spring and autumn (September-November and March-May). The deflected warmer surface water moves northward and contributes to the *Benguela Current*.

The Benguela Current

Beginning as a northward flow off the Cape of Good Hope, this current runs up the west coast of Africa. By 30°S it has turned westerly to join the *South Equatorial Current*. It crosses the Greenwich meridian south of 20°S. The *Benguela Current* is fed in part by water from the *Agulhas Current* and the Indian Ocean, but its main contributor is the *South Atlantic Current*.

The western boundary of the *Benguela Current* is more clearly defined in the south than in the north, where it merges with the central gyre, and it is also variable with the seasons. In general, the current is about 100M wide in the south, increasing in width up to 400M in the north. The current flows fastest in the south in the summer and in the north during the winter. Speeds vary between 0.2 and 0.45 knots.

A small branch of the current continues along the coast to meet the south-flowing *Angola Current* at about 16°S to 14°S, creating the *Angola-Benguela front*. This front is characterised by both cold water and warm water eddies. It varies in width through the year, extending about 100M from the coast in the winter and 160M or more during the summer. Unless they are intending to visit Angola or other African countries further north, yachtsmen on their way to the Caribbean are unlikely to enter this stretch of ocean.

The South Equatorial Current (or SEC)

This warm current is driven in a generally northwesterly direction by the Southeast Trades. It changes its position during the year. Its northern boundary is on average about 4°N. It can be as high as 6°N in the March - May period, but is more like 2°N between June and October. Its southern boundary can be anywhere between 15° and 25°S, depending upon longitude and season, but is in any case less obvious, as it is closer to the mid-ocean gyre where there is less water movement.

At its southern end, the average surface velocity of the *SEC* is only about 0.3 knots. Further north, it may average about 0.6 knots. Reportedly, it runs fastest (over a knot) during June - August and may reach speeds of 2 knots as it approaches the Brazilian coast. It is generally very consistent in its direction, but may have more northing in it during September, October

and November than in the July - August period.

Where it reaches Cabo de São Roque, at about 5°30'S on the NW corner of Brazil, the current divides into a strong N-going stream which gives rise to the *Guyana Current* (but also branches NE to contribute to the E-going *North Equatorial Counter Current*) and a weaker S-going stream, which becomes the *Brazil Current*.

The Brazil Current

This results from the southward deflection of part of the *South Equatorial Current* as it approaches the Brazilian coast. It is a warm current (temperature range 18-28°C) up to 100M wide. The location of its inshore edge is somewhat variable but the current is pronounced off headlands. It separates slightly from the coast at about 12°S, where the continental shelf becomes wider.

The current is evident as far north as Recife (approx. 8°S) in the December - February period, where it will be encountered as an inshore set that turns south within about 5M of the coast. The location of this phenomenon moves south during the March - May period, sometimes reaching as far as 14°S. From November to April, the *Brazil Current* continues to flow south as far as the River Plate (about 35°S) but during the winter (June - August) it moves further offshore, allowing the *Brazil Inshore Counter Current*, an extension of the *Falklands Current*, to flow northward along the coast. The surface speed of the current increases to the south and speeds of up to 2 knots have been recorded.

The Guyana Current

Formed by the northward deflection of part of the *South Equatorial Current*, the *Guyana Current* (sometimes referred to as the *North Brazil Current*) flows across the equator into the northern hemisphere and towards the Caribbean as a broad stream of warm South Atlantic water, which may extend as far as 200M from the coast. It tends to follow the 1000m depth contour. The speed of this current is generally between 1.1 and 1.9 knots, though peak speeds of 2.1 knots have been recorded. There is sometimes a counter current very close inshore, which runs ESE. It occurs during NE winds and especially during the February - May period.

North Equatorial Counter Current

From June to January, the northern edge of the *Guyana Current* feeds into the generally E-going *North Equatorial Counter Current*, which may be apparent as far west as 50°W. During the northern spring however, the *NECC* may be absent or even flowing westward, beside the main *Guyana Current*. It is very variable.

Ocean currents: Information and Tactics

How you choose to make use of the existing information about ocean currents must be a personal decision. The descriptions given in the preceding section of this planning guide are based on long-term data, so they are analogous to climate. Just as the actual weather on a particular day may be at odds with the expected climatic pattern, so too can ocean currents behave in ways that seem anomalous.

It is now possible for yachts to obtain real-time ocean current data which can be used tactically. For example, Earth and Science Research (ESR) has a world-wide simulation of *Ocean Surface Currents in Real-Time (OSCAR)* which has been running since 1992, with sequential testing and modification. It used to be funded by NOAA but is now funded by NASA.

The data cover the world from 66°N to 66°S and span it from 180°W to 180°E. The resolution is in $\frac{1}{3}$ degree increments and each simulation covers a 5 day period. The simulation is updated once per day.

Accessing these data is easy using the Airmail programme <http://www.siriuscyber.net/sailmail>. The programme has an inbuilt tool for generating requests for GRIB files for a wide variety of ocean and meteorological data, including winds and currents. Airmail can be used with HAM, SSB, satellite and internet connections.

RTOFS (Real-time Ocean Forecast System) is based on a different computer model run by the Ocean Prediction Center at NOAA. It is a US Navy implementation of a model called Global Hycom. The

output is 4 day forecasts in 3 hour steps and it is updated daily. Its resolution is $\frac{1}{12}$ degree horizontally.

<https://www.passageweather.com> is a user-friendly free source of RTOFS. It provides world-wide information on surface wind, surface pressure, visibility, cloud cover, precipitation, wave height and direction and sea surface temperature. It uses a wide range of data sources.

<https://www.weathertrack.us> is a highly rated app which offers a little more than Passageweather (such as ocean currents) and is again free of charge. The website explains OSCARs and RTOFS.

<https://www.predictwind.com> is a pay-for service with output based at least in part on the Hycom model, in parallel with another model called the Mercator Ocean Current model. It offers the same range of output as PassageWeather plus extras such as ocean and tidal currents and live wind observations from a large number of locations around the world. The company claims that its output is at very high resolution with wind squares as small as 1km, but how much this benefits the long-distance cruiser is open to question.

From Cape Town to Fernando de Noronha you don't have any decisions to make about use of the prevailing ocean currents. They and the winds that drive them already have determined your logical route. The place where you need to exercise tactical judgement is in your approach to the ITCZ - deciding where to cross it and how to continue your voyage to the Caribbean. This issue is discussed further in the next section of this guide.



Tired terns will often hitch a ride – in this case a sooty tern. Tom Partridge

Part I. Overview of routes and stages



Western Cape directly to St Helena (1,695M)

For the first part of this passage, some assistance will be given by the Benguela Current, which flows northward up the coast before turning westerly, but the benefit will be less than half a knot. The southern boundary of the South Equatorial Current may be crossed during this passage but it will not have much effect at these latitudes - again half a knot or less.

The summer pattern of winds begins in the October - November period, so a departure from the Cape area at that time is worth considering. An early start like this will give the reward of a long cruising season in the Caribbean before the arrival of the hurricane season. However, many yachtsmen seem to favour a later start, spending Christmas in Cape town and departing in the January - March period.

It is not a good idea to delay the start until late March or April, because you are then likely to experience rainy, squally weather when you reach the north coast of Brazil. Also, as the season progresses, the winds along that coast lose their easterly component and become stronger and more northerly.

It is always important to find a suitable weather window for the departure. Weather on the Cape peninsula is very dependent on the positions of high pressure cells in the south Indian Ocean and the South Atlantic. At times the two highs will ridge together but at other times there will be a trough between the two, with the chance of a depression moving north to affect the area. It is sensible to leave the Cape immediately after a front has passed through, while the wind is still southwesterly, but it is advisable to check that the sea state has subsided to a tolerable level before you depart. This is likely to provide several days of pleasant sailing before the arrival of the next low. Fog is not uncommon around Cape Town, so shipping can present a special hazard.

During the summer the prevailing wind in the Cape area is southeasterly and it may blow strongly for several days at a time. In the Bay of Cape Town, it is often calm overnight and then the southeaster starts suddenly during the morning, blowing round the east side of Table Mountain.

Here, more than in most other parts of the world, it is essential to be aware of sea state before leaving harbour. A favourable wind is only one component of a good weather window and not waiting for the seas to quieten is a serious mistake. Real time ocean wave data and forecasts can be found on the website <http://wavenet.csir.co.za> which displays ocean wave height and period, sea surface temperature, wind speed and direction, atmospheric pressure and air temperature, for various sites around the coast of

South Africa. The website is maintained by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) which runs a continuous monitoring programme on behalf of Transnet, the national port authority.

Leaving from Saldanha, 60M northwest of Cape Town, has been recommended in the past, because the summer fronts do not usually reach that far north. Unfortunately, Saldanha is not a port of entry, so as the rules stand, you are not allowed to clear out from there for another country.

As your northing increases, your likelihood of encountering another front decreases. You are unlikely to encounter one north of 30°S. The likelihood also decreases as the season progresses and the SAH moves southward, so by December it is probable that this stage can be completed without your meeting any northerly winds. The likelihood is that you will experience constant southeast winds of 10-15 knots with slight windshifts occurring morning and evening. These windshifts are useful in that they lend themselves to tacking downwind, which is faster and less rolly. There is no danger of heavy weather, though there is a possibility of squalls further north.

Likely wind patterns for this passage:

Western Cape region

In January, the winds will be S4 for at least half of the time. Otherwise, they will most often be SW2 or SE5.

This pattern changes as summer progresses, with the southerlies decreasing in frequency and the southeasterlies becoming more frequent and lighter (about F4).

Further north along the route towards St Helena

At about 28°S, the prevalent wind in January (well over half of the time) is SE5. The F4 southerlies are still present for about a third of the time.

During the next two months the southerlies decline in frequency and during March, the wind is SE5 for about 70% of the time.

At about 23°S along the route

This is well into the Trade Wind belt. The southeast wind prevails for about 90% of the time during January, at about F4. When this is not the case, the wind is most often S3.

In February the frequency of the southeasterly winds may drop to about 85%, still at F4.

In March, the figure is likely to be back up to nearer 90%.

Nearer to St Helena at about 20°S

The January winds are SE4 for about 95% of the time. The figure is much the same for February and March.

Likely sea states for this passage:

The first part of this Stage, the Western Cape region, is the part where you are most likely to encounter heavy or moderate seas, though as previously pointed out, you should wait for the sea to die down after a blow and use available forecasts to help you determine a sensible time to set out. During January and February it should not be difficult to find a time window with waves averaging not more than 2m in height.

In the succeeding stages, you can reasonably expect to make your way to St Helena and beyond in consistently gentle following seas of 1-2m height. It is likely to be the most idyllic ocean passage you have ever experienced

Western Cape to St Helena via Namibia (1,925M)

Sailing up the west coast of South Africa to one of the Namibian ports, Lüderitz or Walvis Bay, adds variety to the voyage, particularly if time is allowed for a visit to the Etosha National Park. This indirect route to St Helena might also seem to offer the opportunity of looking in at some of the more northerly Cape ports on the way. Dassen Island, St Helena Bay and Lambert's Bay are all well worth visiting. Sadly, you cannot legally stop at any of these Cape ports once you have cleared from Cape Town.

For more information see:
South West Africa

by *Pete Hill*

Published by
**The Royal Cruising Club
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<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>



An extra degree of caution is required on this coastal passage. When the winds are very light, the warm air off the land frequently creates fog over the cold waters of the Benguela Current. Visibility can also be poor off the Namibian coast during coastal lows and sandstorms. A coastal low which seems to move to and fro between Lüderitz and Walvis Bay is often associated with strong southwesterly winds and very rough seas offshore. Several yachtsmen have reported that when approaching Diaz Point from the south, they seemed to enter a wind acceleration zone, with the wind speed leaping from 20 knots to 40 knots or more.

Staying offshore puts you in a better position to cope with any sudden windshifts to the west, which would make the coast a lee-shore. There is little shelter apart from Luderitz and Walvis Bay. In addition, it is advisable to stay in waters of more than 25m depth, apart from port approaches, because of the real danger of uncharted shoals close to the coast. In the coastal zone of depths between 100m and 200m, you are likely to encounter shipping, including some very large bulk carriers, so the use of radar or AIS is advisable if the visibility is poor.

At the outset of the passage up the coast to Namibia, the wind pattern will be the same as for the direct route to St Helena - more than half of the time S4 and otherwise mostly SW2 or SE5. The predominance of southerlies increases up the coast, so that at 28°S the wind will be S4 for roughly 70% of the time and at 23°S, roughly 90% of the time.

When leaving Namibia on course for St Helena, one can expect to be on a broad reach initially and then on a run all the way to the island.

St Helena to Ascension Island (705M)

The direct route between St Helena and the Caribbean involves passing close to Fernando da Noronha. On a direct passage, the distance between St Helena and that archipelago is about 1,720M. Ascension Island is about 705M from St Helena and about 1,100M from Fernando da Noronha, so a diversion to Ascension Island only adds about 85M and may provide a welcome break in a long voyage. If the next phase of the plan is to visit one or more ports on the NE corner of Brazil, such as Maceió, Recife or Cabadelo, the diversion is still a reasonable one, because from Ascension Island, wind and current will be favourable towards that part of the coast.

In the January - March period, the wind between St Helena and Ascension Island is SE4 for well over 90% of the time. Otherwise it is likely to be E4 or occasionally S3. Wave heights are likely to be in the 2-3m range for the whole distance. For the first part of the passage the waves are likely to be running in a northwesterly direction. As you near Ascension Island, you may encounter a different wave set, running in a northeasterly direction.

On this passage, the effects of the South Equatorial Current will be very slight (¼ knot or less) and of equivocal value, because this southern edge of the current flows south of west, along the northern margin of the central gyre.

St Helena to NE Brazil (1,800M - 1,920M)

This is a straightforward passage. The winds will almost certainly be favourable for the whole journey to Brazil, predominantly SE4 at the outset, but with F4 easterlies becoming dominant by half-distance.

The South Equatorial current will be flowing south of west at about ¼ knot. Nearing Brazil, the SEC gives way to the Brazil current, which will manifest itself as an inshore set that turns south within about 5M of the coast.

The most southerly port to be considered for one's landfall is probably Salvador (1,920M).

At least four interesting Brazilian ports could then be visited on a subsequent northward journey up the coast: Maceió, Recife, Cabedelo and Fortaleza. Salvador is an exciting city to visit - but it is about 280M south of Maceió and there are no obvious places of interest for the cruising yachtsman in between the two. If your first port of call is Salvador, you will have arrived close to the southern boundary of the SE Trades belt. As you make your way northward along the coast you are likely to have the wind forward of the beam all the way to 10°S, beyond which latitude the southeasterly and easterly winds should prevail. You will also have the south-going Brazil Current against you as far as Recife.

For many yachtsmen these are reasons enough to make their landfall no further south than Maceió (1,800M from St Helena).

Ascension Island to NE Brazil (1,224M - 1,277M)

In the longitude of Ascension Island, the South Equatorial Current flows steadily westward, but from about 20°W its direction becomes more southwesterly. During this part of the year its rate of flow is not likely to exceed ¼ knot.

In the January - March period, the predominant winds in mid-ocean are southeasterly for up to 95% of the time. This frequency decreases steadily as one travels westward, down to more like 40% as one approaches the coast. There is a corresponding increase in the frequency of easterly winds to over 50% near the coast.

Wave heights are generally in the 2-3m range and waves are likely to be running in a south-southwesterly direction.

If the plan is to head for a port such as Maceió, at 09°41'S, (1,277M from Ascension Island) wind and current will be favourable on the way there and hardly less favourable on a subsequent passage northward.

If the plan is to head for Cabedelo, which is slightly less of a diversion, (1,224M from Ascension island) there will again be easterly winds and as one nears the land, there will be a stronger current setting in a northwesterly direction along the coast.

Ascension Island towards Fernando de Noronha (1,100M)

Fernando de Noronha is a celebrated group of islands lying about 200M off the northeast corner of Brazil. One good reason for heading in that direction is that it is a beautiful (though expensive) archipelago to visit. Another is that it makes a convenient stop for yachts intending to visit the Brazilian north coast ports. As a bonus, it lies in a generally favourable direction in relation to the best crossing point for the ITCZ.

The distance from Ascension Island to Fernando de Noronha is about 1,100M. From St Helena directly, the distance is about 1,720M. In either case, the passage is almost certain to be a good one, with SE4 winds most of the time and a gradually increasing frequency of easterlies as one nears the archipelago. Wave height is most likely to be in the 1-2m range, with the waves running in a generally northwesterly direction. It is possible that the sea state will become more confused as you approach, because not far to the north and west the wave direction tends to be more southwesterly.

Crossing the ITCZ

Choosing the best crossing point is important, partly because it will affect the amount of time you spend in areas of little wind but also because it will determine the kinds of wind that you will subsequently experience on your onward passage towards the Caribbean. As a general rule, the ITCZ is widest at its eastern end and this is where the weather is most likely to be unsettled and squally. Even where the ITCZ is at its narrowest, however, a rapidly changing mix of calms, light winds, variables and 30 knot squalls with heavy rain is quite likely to be encountered. Once across the ITCZ, the winds should be northeasterly or easterly 4-5 for the passage to the Caribbean. It will be a rougher passage than the passage from Cape Town to Ascension island. As you travel further west, you are likely to find the wind turning NNE.

Fernando de Noronha to Tobago (Min. 1,930M)

A rhumb line course from Ascension Island to Tobago crosses the equator at about 32°W, much the same longitude as Fernando de Noronha.

After visiting Fernando de Noronha, you have to make a tactical decision. Should you:

- sail the most direct (i.e. shortest) course for Tobago
- aim to get into the favourable Guyana Current as soon as possible. This will mean a longer crossing of the ITCZ but less chance of no wind.
- head north, using whatever combination of sail and engine power is appropriate to making a rapid crossing of the ITCZ, and get into the NE Trades as soon as possible?

There is no consistently right answer to this question. It is difficult to predict what winds will be encountered in the ITCZ and GRIB files should be regarded as guidance for no more than the next two or three days.

Those who believe in making maximum use of favourable currents will be able to obtain real time information on what the currents are doing by downloading OSCAR or RTOFS files and may be able to check on the progress of other yachts by means of AIS.

Good general advice in any case is to be well-stocked with diesel.

a) Non-stop to Tobago

The rhumb line distance from Fernando de Noronha to Charlotteville in Tobago is about 1,930M. Sailing north to get through the ITCZ will add to this distance, but could prove faster than aiming directly for Tobago. On a slightly more direct route, valuable assistance will come from the strong Guyana Current flowing about 70M - 100M offshore, towards the Caribbean. This current broadly follows the 1,000m depth contour at a mean annual speed of 1.25 knots. Rates of up to 4 knots can occur at any time of year. This boost and the prevailing NE or E 4-5 winds should make for a fast passage, but the waves will be coming at you from starboard (NNE) rather than from astern and are likely to be 2 - 3m in height. The wind may back sufficiently to become uncomfortable.

b) With stops along the North Coast of South America

Not everyone will want to sail non-stop to the Caribbean, missing out so much of the north coast of the continent, because northern Brazil, French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana all have their attractions. The passage from Fernando de Noronha to Fortaleza, a logical first port of call on the north coast, is only 380M. There are, however, several disadvantages that will arise from sailing from Fernando de Noronha on a series of coastal passages along the north coast of Brazil:

- It will, in most years, involve a longer crossing of the ITCZ, which is likely to extend to about 40°W.
- It may also mean forfeiting much of the potential advantage of the Guyana Current, which usually runs well offshore.
- Moreover, the inshore counter current might well be flowing ESE during this passage, especially during strong northeasterly winds and especially during the February to May period.
- A further disadvantage of the coastal passage is that it is more likely to produce encounters with small unlit fishing boats and with semi-submerged logs and trees

coming out of the Amazon delta, where the waters are shallow and muddy. These potentially lethal timber hazards may be encountered up to 150M offshore.

- It is also worth noting that where the coast turns more to the north, west of the Amazon, the west-bound yacht which has been coasting will now have to come harder onto the wind.

For those who are not deterred by these cautions, valuable detailed information about ports and anchorages along the Brazilian coast can be found in the RCCPF publication, *Brazil (Part 2)* by Pete Hill, and on the Noonsite website.

A reasonable compromise would be not to close the coast before reaching the longitude of French Guiana, after a passage of say, 1,260M from Fernando de Noronha. From here, coastal passage-making may be helped by a west-going current of up to 2 knots.

For the onward passage to Tobago it would then be advisable to consult the RCCPF publication, *A Cruising Guide to French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana*, by Martin Dixon-Tyrer. Again, the Noonsite website contains valuable information on this coast and on Tobago.



For more information see: **Brazil by Pete Hill**

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For more information see:

A Cruising Guide to French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana

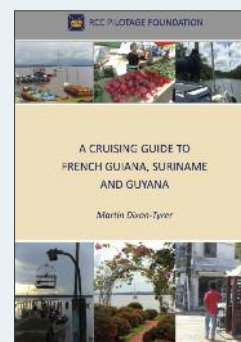
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Part 2. Staging points along the route

South Africa - an overview

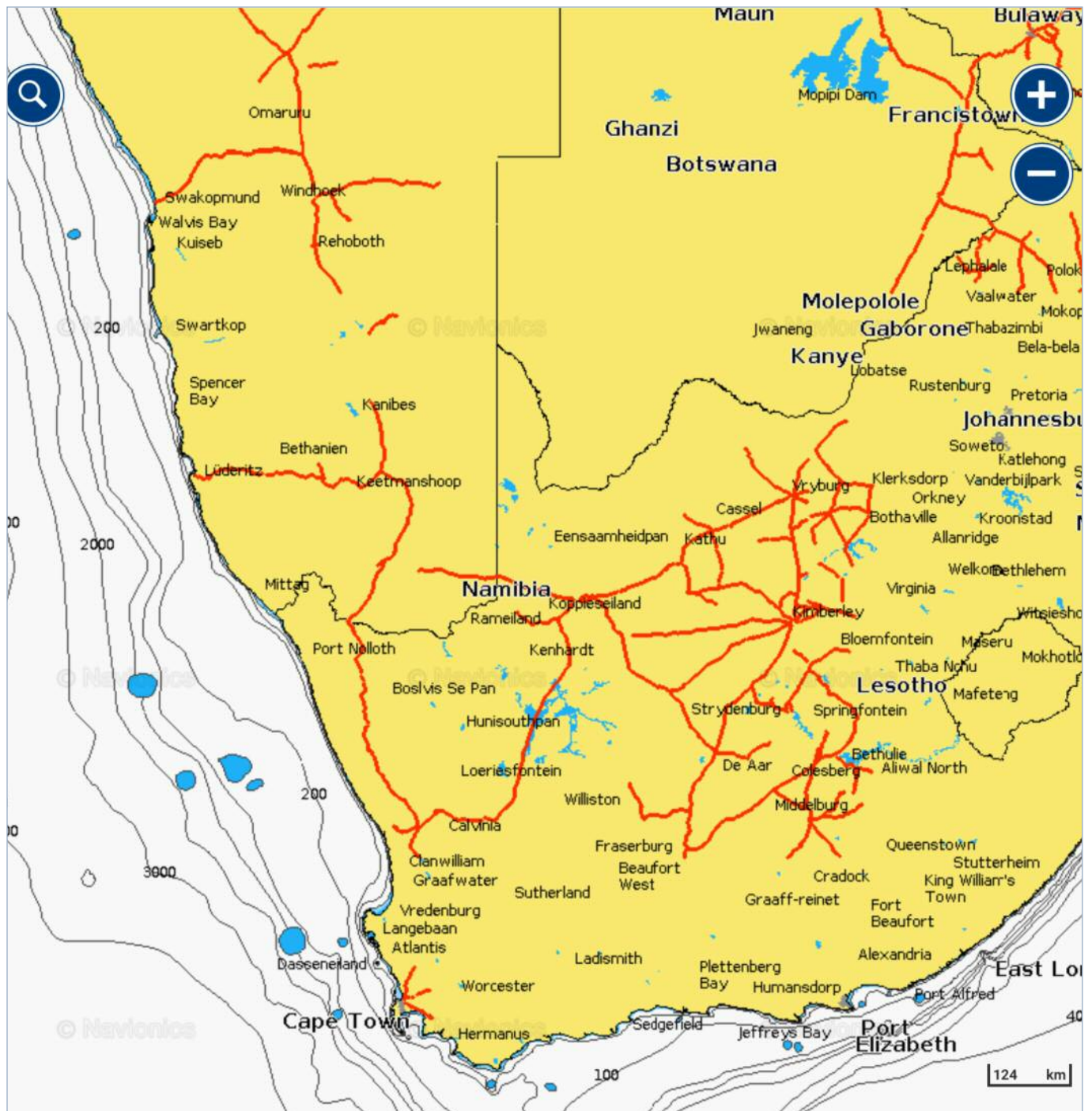
Time zone: UTC + 2Hrs

(Daylight Saving Time Changes are no longer made.)

Telephone country code: 0027

South Africa is a convenient stopover for circumnavigators, many of whom will be sailing from there to the Caribbean, but one should be aware of potential problems.

- Extreme winds and seas regularly occur off the southern end of Africa, so sailing anywhere along the coast merits close attention to weather forecasts.



PLAN I: South Africa Overview



- Bureaucracy attending the movements of yachts within the country can be exasperating because local officials may make their own interpretations of legal requirements.

- Security within the marinas is good, but if going outside the marinas, do apply common-sense. Visitors are advised not to carry valuables, not to walk about town at night and to avoid the back streets if possible.

Weather

South Africa takes the reporting and forecasting of marine weather very seriously

The South African Weather Service website (www.weathersa.co.za) provides marine forecasts for the country's coastal waters and surrounding high seas. Also provided are synoptic charts which cover the ocean almost up to 10°S and so show the whole northbound route as far as Ascension Island. Local forecasts can be obtained as VHF broadcasts or by telephone at most ports. Port authorities, marinas or yacht clubs will be able to advise. GRIB files have commonly been found to be very accurate in this region.

Here, more than in most other parts of the world, it is essential to be aware of sea state before leaving harbour. A favourable wind is only one component of a good weather window and not waiting for the seas to quieten is a serious mistake. Real time ocean wave data and forecasts can be found on the website www.wavenet.csir.co.za, which displays ocean wave height and period, sea surface temperature, wind speed and direction, atmospheric pressure and air temperature, for various sites around the coast of South Africa. The website is maintained by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) which runs a continuous monitoring programme on behalf of Transnet, the national port authority.

Formalities

In recent years there has been some confusion over the issue of whether all visiting yachts have to report to the Customs office in Cape Town.

In 2017, a senior member of the South African Revenue Service* judged the following statement to be correct:

'Any boat arriving in the republic of South Africa must do so at a 'Port of Entry.' (These are Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban and Richard's Bay.) Once checked in with Customs and Immigration at one of these ports, they are free to move along the coast unhindered on a DA4 form from port of entry. In order to leave the RSA for a foreign port they must check out at any 'Port of Entry' and get full clearance.'

**Petrus Mouers*

*Manager: Customs Specialised Unit W & EC
South African Revenue Service*

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This seems clear enough and it is in line with advice given by the Department of Home Affairs in 2012:

'Once a vessel has cleared into South Africa at any one of these Ports of Entry, that vessel may proceed anywhere to a harbour, club or marina in the republic without seeking clearance again. As such the vessel is considered to be 'coastal' rather than 'international'. Only when that vessel will leave South Africa to a foreign port, must she then be cleared out of South Africa only from any one of the listed designated Ports of Entry.'

In reality, if the authorities at any South African port choose to duplicate much of the check-in procedure that the yacht has already undergone at its port of entry, it would be prudent to comply without making a fuss.

Updated information may be found at:
<https://www.noonsite.com>.

In summary:

Clearance in and out

- Entry to South Africa must be made at one of the official Ports of Entry.

- The Q flag must be flown.

- On the approach, call the Port Authority on VHF Channel 12 or 16. Do not be surprised if there is no response.

- Inward Clearance should be made with the Port Authority/Harbour Police, Immigration and Customs within 24 hours of arrival. Failure to comply may result in a fine.

- If you intend to move from the Port of Entry to another port within South Africa, Transire form DA4 is required. A cruising itinerary (time of departure, intended destination and ETA) must be lodged with the Port Authority at the port of entry and with the Port Authorities at each successive port you visit in the country.

- Before departing from South Africa, a letter or form must be obtained from each of the marinas or yacht clubs you have visited, stating that you have paid all dues. (Note that in most ports there will be both a marina and a yacht club. You are required to obtain a letter from each, even if you have not used their facilities.) The Departure clearance procedure cannot begin without this confirmation.

Administration Fees

Clearance can be obtained at any time of day or night, every day of the year, but overtime may be charged after 1630 hrs on weekdays, and on public holidays and at weekends.

Immigration

- Most nationalities do not need to obtain a visa before entry but New Zealand passport holders do. A 90 day visa is normally granted on arrival. Some nationalities will be granted a 30 day stay.

The 90 day visa is not renewable during the 90 day period. You must leave the country on its expiry but can ask for another visa on subsequent re-entry, provided that you have gone at least two countries away in the interim. This situation could change with short notice, so it is advisable to check it on the South African Department of Home Affairs website.

- Passports must be valid for 6 months beyond your arrival date in the country and should have at least two blank pages available for use by the immigration authorities. If you intend to sail to Namibia before departure for St Helena, note that there is a similar requirement in Namibia, though for one blank page.

- Passports are usually (but not always) stamped on entry. If you intend to leave the yacht for a time and travel within South Africa, it is essential to have your passport stamped.

- If you leave the yacht in South Africa while you fly out of the country for a break, you will be losing some of your 90 day allowance, because the clock is still running on your visa while you are out of the country.

- Any crew leaving the country by other means than the yacht must inform Immigration and must have a valid air ticket to their own country or equivalent funds.

- Immigration must be told if a South African national joins the yacht for a cruise while in South African waters.

Customs

- Foreign yachts visiting South Africa can stay in the country indefinitely without the owner becoming liable for Duties or VAT.

- In theory, yacht crews should be able to reclaim VAT on goods bought in the country in the 3 months prior to departure, so a VAT invoice should be obtained at the time of purchase and given as evidence to Customs.

- Again in theory, yachts in transit may be able to buy yacht equipment VAT-free.

Neither of those theoretical rights seems to be any guarantee of success.

- Goods arriving for you from outside South Africa will need to be cleared through Customs. If the value of the goods is over R500 you must employ a clearing agent.

Seek advice at the local yacht club and avoid agents who deal with bulk carriers.

- All sealable goods must be declared. This includes tobacco, spirits, drugs and firearms. Firearms will be sealed on board by Customs, if possible. If this is not possible, they will be removed and bonded until departure.

Health

- It is recommended that all visitors be up-to-date on routine vaccines such as measles/mumps/rubella, diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis, varicella (chickenpox), polio and influenza.

- In addition, Hepatitis A and Typhoid vaccinations are strongly advised.

- Depending upon lifestyle and expected activity while in the country, Hepatitis B and rabies vaccines may be appropriate.

- Malaria transmission is not known to occur in the Cape area of South Africa but it is a risk along the border with Zimbabwe and Mozambique. If intending to travel in these parts, for example on a visit to the Kruger National Park, prophylaxis is strongly recommended. Currently effective agents are Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline and mefloquine.

Currency

The South African Rand, in April 2019, was worth about \$US 0.07, or about £0.05.

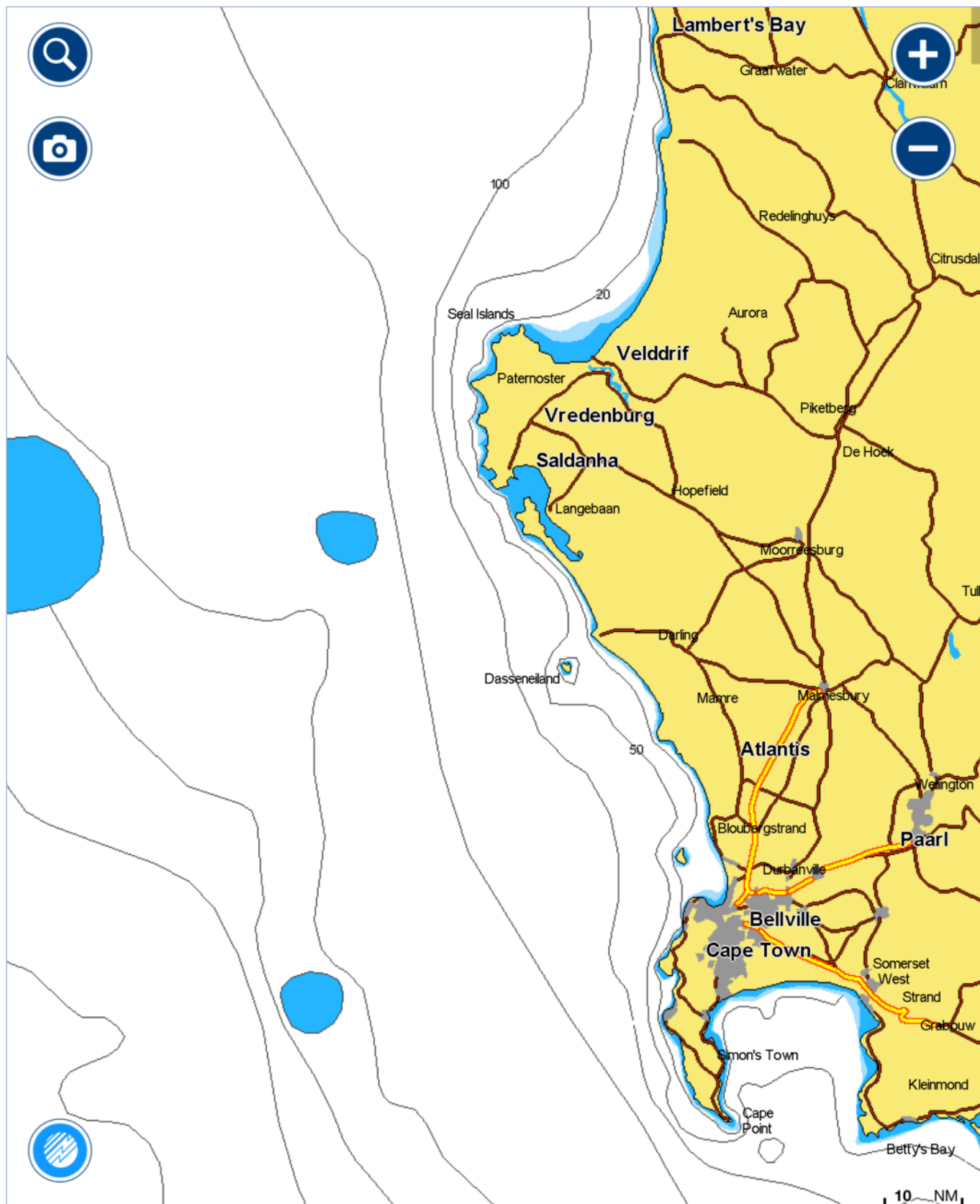
Visa credit cards are widely accepted and ATMs can be found in most shopping areas.

Facilities and services

There are yacht clubs in most ports in South Africa and they are usually the best source of information on local conditions and facilities. Most clubs have their own haul-out facilities or can arrange them. All kinds of repair and replacement work can be carried out in Cape Town, including sail repairs and sail-making. Yachtsmen preferring quieter ports such as Simonstown will find a similar range of services. Not everyone is impressed by the quality of engineering work they have had done in South Africa by supposedly reputable firms, so it is advisable to get advice from local yachtsmen when choosing where to place your business. In general, there are good chandleries, but some visiting yachtsmen have reported difficulties in sourcing spare parts.

Anyone planning a January departure for the Caribbean should note that many South African companies close for the Christmas holiday period from mid-December until about 4th January.

Provisioning should present no problems, with a very good range of foodstuffs and very reasonable prices.



PLAN 2: Cape Town to Lambert's Bay

Cape Town

An official Port of Entry

Harbour entrance: 33°54'S 18°26'E

Lights:

Slangkop Point Lt 34°09'S 18°19.2'E

Fl(4)W30s40m20M

Breakwater Head 33°53.9'S 18°26.1'E

FIG2s16m5M

Max tidal range: 1.6m

Approach

Approaching the harbour, listen on VHF Channel 14, stay east of the approach buoys, enter close to the east mole and stay on that side.

All **yacht** movement within the harbour is controlled by the Royal Cape Yacht Club, not by the port authority. *Contact the RCYC on VHF Channel 16 or, if not getting a reply, telephone 021 421 1354 or cellphone 082 490 7097.*

Movement of **shipping** within the harbour is controlled by the Port Captain and is signalled by a system of lights on the Port Control Tower, which faces you as you enter harbour. A red light relates to Ben Schoeman Dock, a green light to Duncan Dock and an orange light to Victoria Basin. A flashing light indicates a ship entering harbour and a steady light indicates a ship leaving harbour. Anchoring is forbidden within 'any channel of the harbour'.

Berthing and Clubs

Berths may be found at the Royal Cape Yacht Club, which is in Duncan Dock at the southeastern end of the harbour, or at the Victoria and Alfred (V&A) Waterfront Marina, which is in the V&A New Basin at the western end.

Royal Cape Yacht Club

Duncan Road

Table Bay Harbour

Foreshore, Cape Town 8000

Tel: 021 421 1354

Website: www.rcyc.co.za

Email: contact-us@rcyc.co.za

The club offers a good range of services and facilities, including water, electricity, fuel, showers, toilets, laundry, chandlery on site (somewhat limited stocks), lift-out for small craft, slip (up to 50 tons), crane (up to 15 tons), repairs, secretarial services, restaurant, Wi-Fi at the bar, reasonably quiet surroundings and full security. Visitors are offered one month's free membership of the club.

At the RCYC, the visitors' berths are the first 2 berths inside the first pontoon. The visitors' berths and the haul-out facilities are both limited and should be booked well in advance. It is advisable to phone the marina manager shortly before arriving, to confirm their availability or to call on VHF Channel 16. Owners of large multihulls may find berthing difficult, especially in the sudden strong winds, which occur especially in the afternoon. *All yachts need strong shore lines.*

Chandlery: *Action Yachting Tel: 021 419 4835*

V&A Waterfront Marina:

Yacht Office

Ground Floor

Marina Centre

West Quay Road

Waterfront, Cape Town 8001

Marina Manager Tel: 021 408 7579 or 7833

Website: www.waterfront.co.za

Office hours 0800 - 1700 Monday - Friday only.

This is the only marina in Cape Town, and it has the most sheltered berths in the city. Reservations for berths here should be made well in advance. The marina is used by the World ARC and Oyster Rally and becomes very full. Services and facilities include water, electricity, fuel, showers and toilets, laundry and Wi-Fi. There is no chandlery on site, nor a marina restaurant - but the marina is situated in a bustling part of town with shops and restaurants close by.

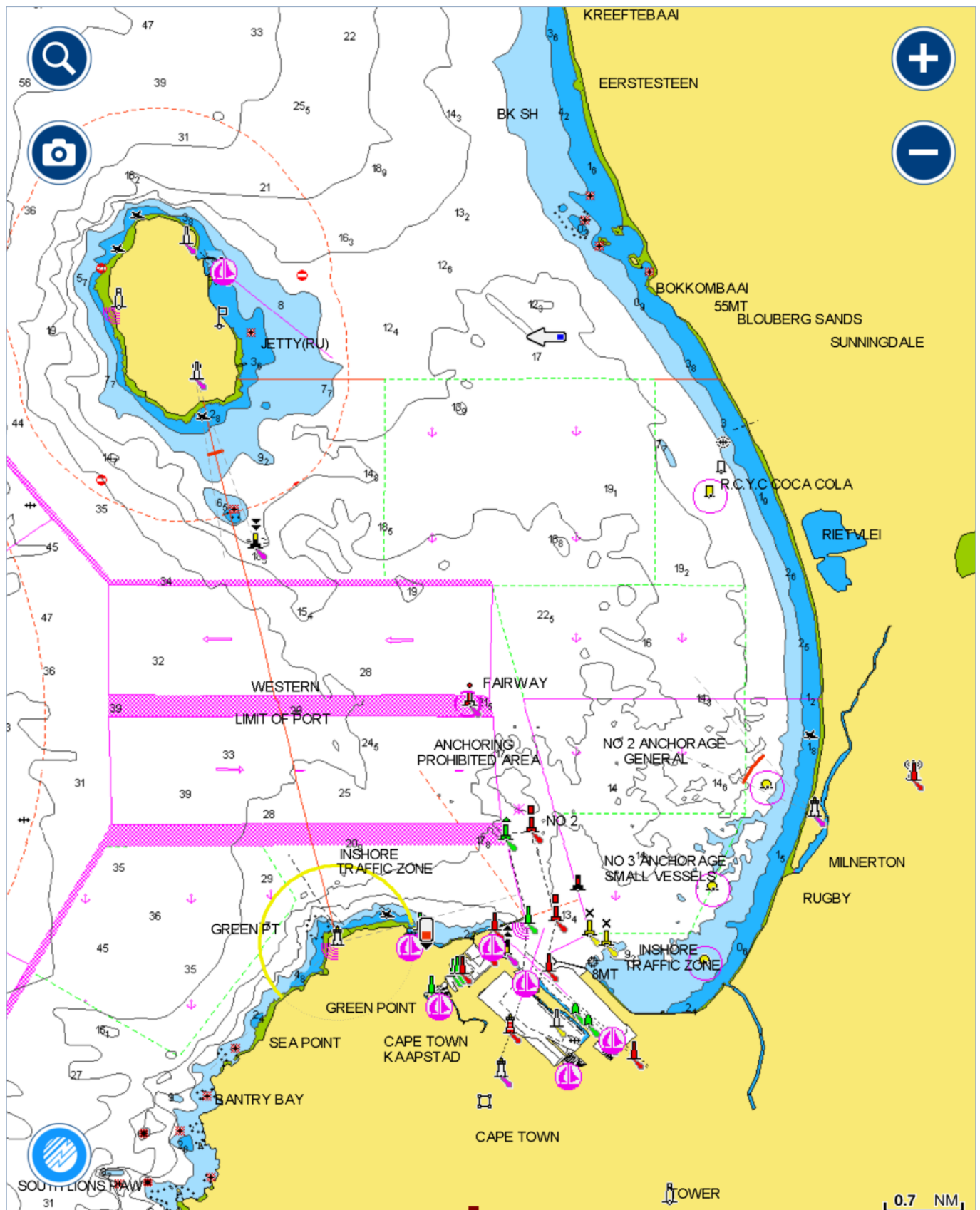
If you have a reserved berth in the V&A marina, ask permission on Channel 14 before crossing the channel to head for the Waterfront. Access to the V&A marina is through a swing bridge and a bascule bridge. Bridge opening times are either a quarter to or a quarter past the hour and openings must be requested. *(Tel: 021 408 7700 or VHF Channel 71 'Swing Bridge')*

Check-in at the V&A Marina Yacht Office on the ground floor within the Marina Centre.

Formalities

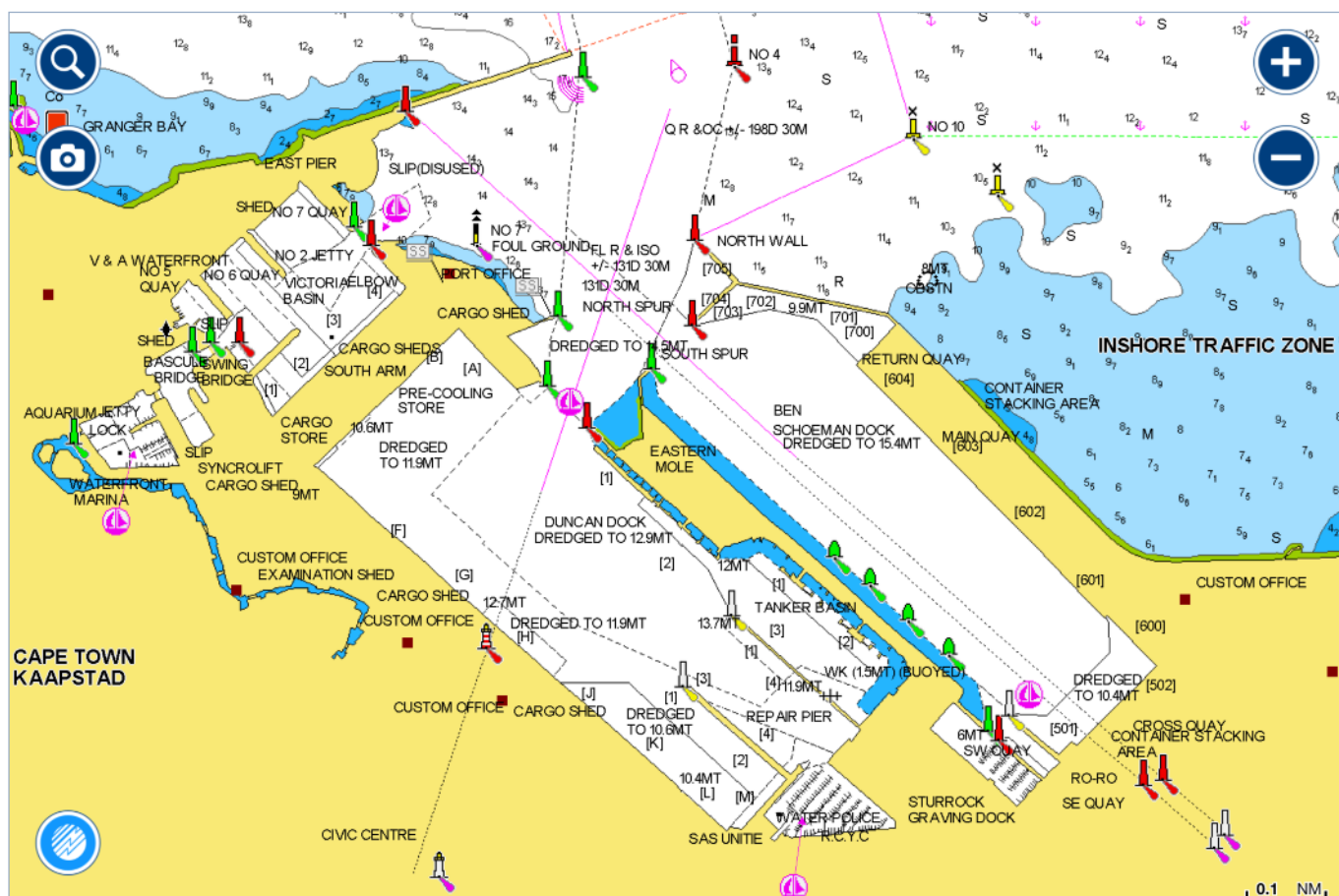
If Cape Town is your port of entry to South Africa, checking-in at either the RCYC or the V&A Waterfront Marina will involve completing a maritime and health form (clearance certificate) which you must take first to Immigration (Passport Control) together with your entire crew and their passports, the ship's papers and your clearance papers from your last port. The Immigration Office is open 24/7, and can be found on the ground floor of Cowrie Place.

Next you must visit the Harbour Revenue Office, and finally the Customs Office, both at Cowrie Place.



PLAN 3: Cape Town Approach





PLAN 4: Cape Town Detail



Cape Town is the northernmost Port of Entry on the west coast of South Africa, so most yachts departing for the Caribbean will be clearing outward from here. The Royal Cape Yacht Club is the place where outward clearance is arranged. Until fairly recently, this meant that yachts berthed at the V&A had to move to the RCYC for clearance.

(The RCYC has 2 berths specifically for yachts undergoing clearance but it is essential to reserve one in advance. The maximum length of stay permitted on these berths is 24 hours.)

More recently, arrangements have been made between the RCYC and the V&A, allowing check out from the V&A. in certain circumstances. The V&A marina manager can advise you on this. If you are taking part in one of the cruising rallies, the rally organisers will make arrangements. There is a fee payable to the RCYC for their role in your clearance.

After clearance outward has been obtained, yachts should leave within 48 hours.

Weather

Local forecasts are transmitted on VHF Channel 25 at 1015, 1333, and 1815 UT and can also be obtained by telephoning 021 934 0450.

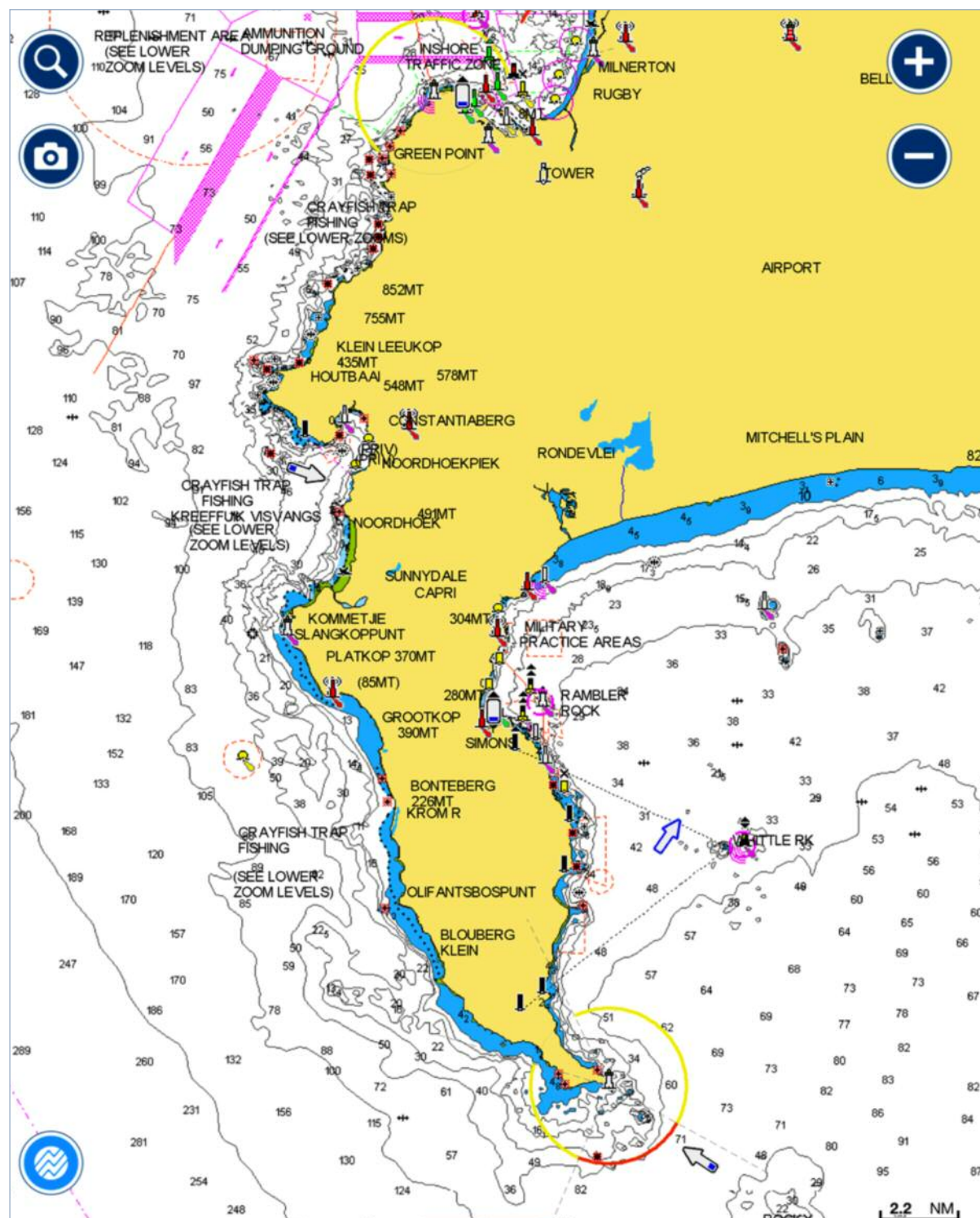
Forecasts and reports for the entire South African coastline are broadcast on Cape Town Radio (SSB) on 4375, 8740 and 13146 Khz USB at 1015, 1330 and 1815 UT.

The South African Weather Service website www.weathersa.co.za provides marine forecasts for the country's coastal waters and surrounding high seas. Also provided are synoptic charts which cover the ocean almost up to 10°S and so show the whole northbound route as far as Ascension Island. Real time ocean wave data and forecasts can be found on the website www.wavenet.csir.co.za, which displays ocean wave height and period, sea surface temperature, wind speed and direction, atmospheric pressure and air temperature, for various sites around the coast of South Africa.

Alternatives to Cape Town

There are two ports quite close to Cape Town which cater for visiting yachts: Simon's Town and Hout Bay. Neither of these is a Port of Entry but yachts can be moored there while the skipper and crew go overland to Cape Town to clear in or out of the country.

Simon's Town in Simon's Bay is on the east side of the Cape Peninsula. Hout Bay is on the west side of the Cape Peninsula, about 15M south of Cape Town harbour.



PLAN 5: Cape Peninsula: Cape Town, Hout Bay and Simon's Bay



Simon's Town

Lights:

Roman Rock Lighthouse 34°10.9'S 18°27.7'E
FIW6s17m20M

N.Spur breakwater head 34°11.1'S 18°26.3'E
Fl(3)W7s

Max tidal range: 1.60m

Simon's Town is an attractive little town of great historical significance. Its maritime importance dates from 1743, when the Dutch East India Company established a small dockyard there. This was taken over by the British Royal Navy in the 1790s and the facility was further developed by the RN during the next century and a half. A major new dockyard was built early in the 20th Century and the whole naval base was handed over to the South African Navy in 1957. It is the country's largest naval base.

The Simon's Town Marina Company and the False Bay Yacht Club are located immediately south and west of the dockyard.

Approach and Entry

First Approach Waypoint: 34°10.080'S, 18°27.720'E

Final Approach Waypoint: 34°11.250'S, 18°26.000'E

This final waypoint will position you just off the Bullnose, outside the marina.

The middle of the marina entrance is at: 34°11.343'S, 18°26.029'E

On arrival within Simon's Bay, you should call the South African Navy on VHF Channel 17 (Call Sign 'Bullnose') to inform them of your intentions. Your options are to anchor, to take a swinging mooring or to go to a marina pontoon berth.

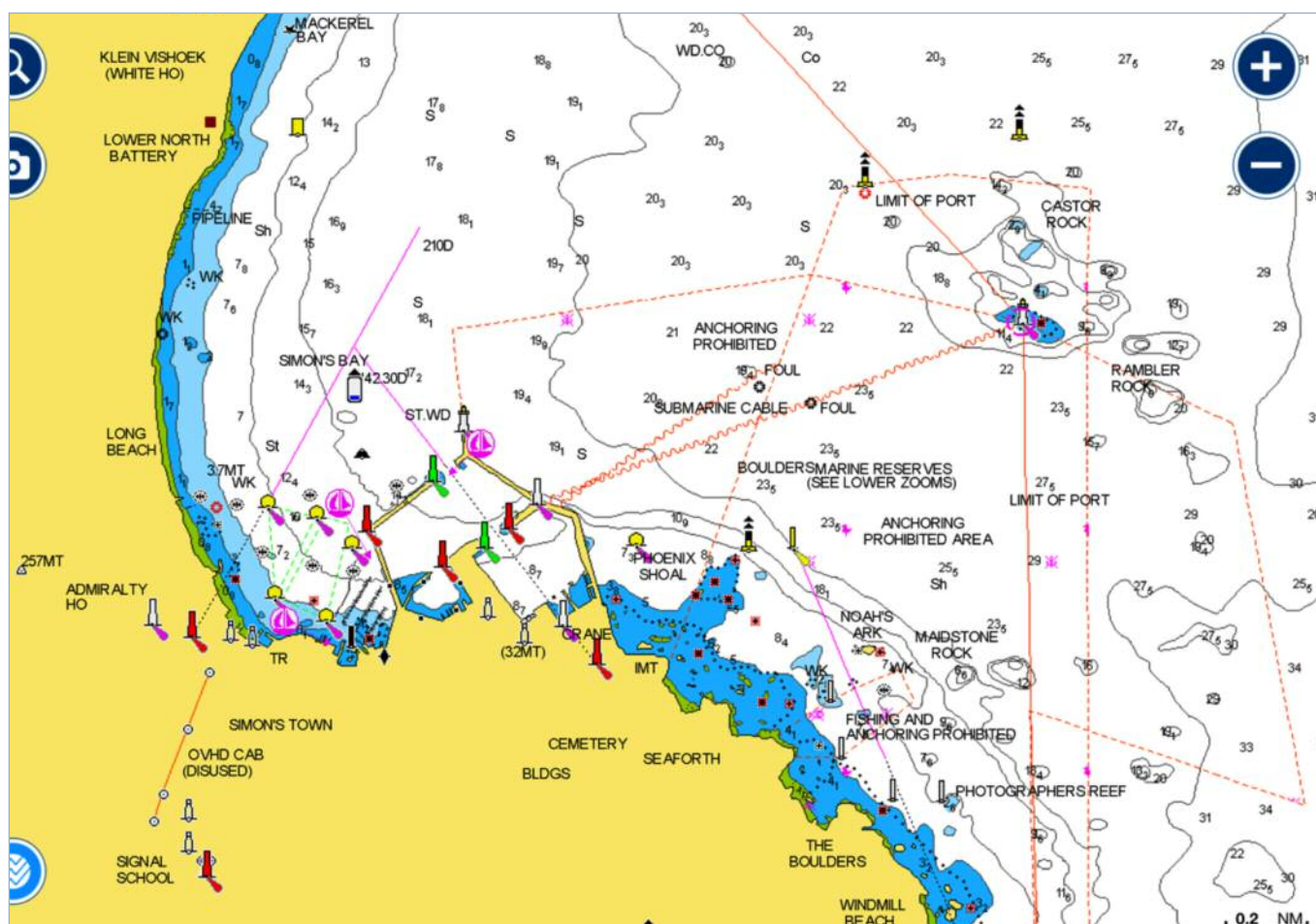
To speak to marina staff you can call the yacht club on VHF Channel 71 (Call Sign 'Dolphin') or call the marina manager, 'Spilly' Spilhaus, on 071 383 1863 at any time.

Anchoring and mooring

Note that the anchorage is very exposed. Simon's Bay is subject to very heavy winds from southeast and northwest, which can switch direction overnight. Yachts have reported being subjected to winds of over 30 knots for weeks on end and 50 knot winds are



Simon's Town David Ridout



PLAN 6: Simon's Town Approach



commonplace. (When the south-easters have set in, leaving Simon's Bay to exit False Bay could be a bit of an ordeal.) Yachts are required by the Navy to set an anchor watch 24/7.

Anchoring is permitted only within the triangle defined by these co-ordinates:

34°10.92'S, 18°25.67'E

34°11.23'S, 18°25.67'E

34°11.23'S, 18°25.87'E

Emergency Mooring Buoy

There is an orange mooring buoy marked EMERGENCY, at position 34°11.276'S, 18°25.938'E. Haul up the pick-up buoy on its light line to find the heavy rope mooring strop with its eye splice. Do back this up with another warp for security.

If in difficulty, yachts can call the NSRI (National Sea Rescue Institute) Station 10 emergency number: 082 990 5965. The station commander is Darren Zimmerman. (Note: the NSRI is funded entirely by public donation, so anyone using its services might feel it appropriate to make a donation.)

Whether anchored or lying to the emergency buoy, you are answerable to the yacht club and must report to the club and marina offices.

You will be required to take out temporary membership of the club and will then be able to use all of the club facilities. Note, however, that neither the club nor the Simon's Town Marina Company will accept any responsibility for damage or disaster resulting from anchoring (or mooring) in Simon's Bay.

Berthing and Club

False Bay Yacht Club

King George Way, Simon's Town,
Western Cape, South Africa

PO Box 45, Simon's Town, 7995

Tel +27 21 786 1703

Fax +27 21 786 3925

<http://fbyc.co.za>

Simon's Town Marina Company

King George Way

Simon's Town

<http://www.stmc.co.za>



Simon's Town Marina 'Spilly' Spilhaus

The marina is the home of the False Bay Yacht Club. Its moorings and slipping facilities are controlled and managed by the Simon's Town Marina Company, a not-for-profit company whose members are all members of the yacht club.

The marina has 263 pontoon moorings and a number of swinging moorings. Most of these are members' moorings but there are 12 reserved for visitors and some of the privately owned moorings may be available for rent by arrangement with the marina company. If you are on a swinging mooring you can use a free water taxi service between 0830 and 1630. All marina berths are provided with un-metered water and electricity. The Marina Company has a sling lift for taking yachts out of the water (capacity 20 tons) and has hard standing for up to 13 yachts of up to 15m LOA and 4m beam. A detailed zoomable plan of the marina can be found at <http://www.stmc.co.za/maps/>

Uncharted rocks inside the marina have been reported by visiting yachts, though they were marked by buoys.

Simon's Town is a popular destination, so it is advisable to reserve a mooring as far in advance as possible. If you have arrived with no advance allocation, you should moor temporarily alongside the Working Dock, W6 to W8, (Max draught 1.8m). Visitors' Dock V6 and V7 can also be used, (Draught up to 4m).



Simon's Town Marina Slipway 'Spilly' Spilhaus



Simon's Town Marina 'Spilly' Spilhaus

Booking in

The skipper should report to the marina office during business hours (weekdays 0830 – 1700, weekends from 1200 in the bar) taking all boat papers and crew passports. The crew need not attend.

Facilities/Services

The marina staff are reportedly very welcoming and helpful. The town centre has plenty of eating and drinking places but rather limited provisioning facilities. However, there are convenience stores which seem to get favourable reviews. Marine trades people will readily come from Cape Town (about 35 km by road) to work on yachts and good advice in this respect can be obtained from the marina company/yacht club.

Hout Bay

Harbour Entrance 34°03.07'S, 18°20.98'E

Lights:

North Mole 34°03.05'S, 18°20.86'E Fl(G)2s

South Mole 34°03.08'S, 18°21.02'E Fl3s

NOTE:

- It has been known for these lights to stop working because of cable theft. They have now been fitted with solar panels but as their reliability must remain open to question, it is strongly advised that visitors follow the waypoints. (See 'Approach' below).
- When the lights are working there should be no difficulty in seeing the south mole light, but the north mole light is sometimes obscured by trawlers and their support vehicles parked next to it. Once you have sailed past the harbour entrance, the northern mole light should become apparent.

Max. tidal range: 1.9m.

A small fishing fleet operates out of this harbour. The Hout Bay Yacht Club marina, in the NW of the harbour has about 100 pontoon moorings. In addition there are the pontoons of the Atlantic Boat Club (ABC).



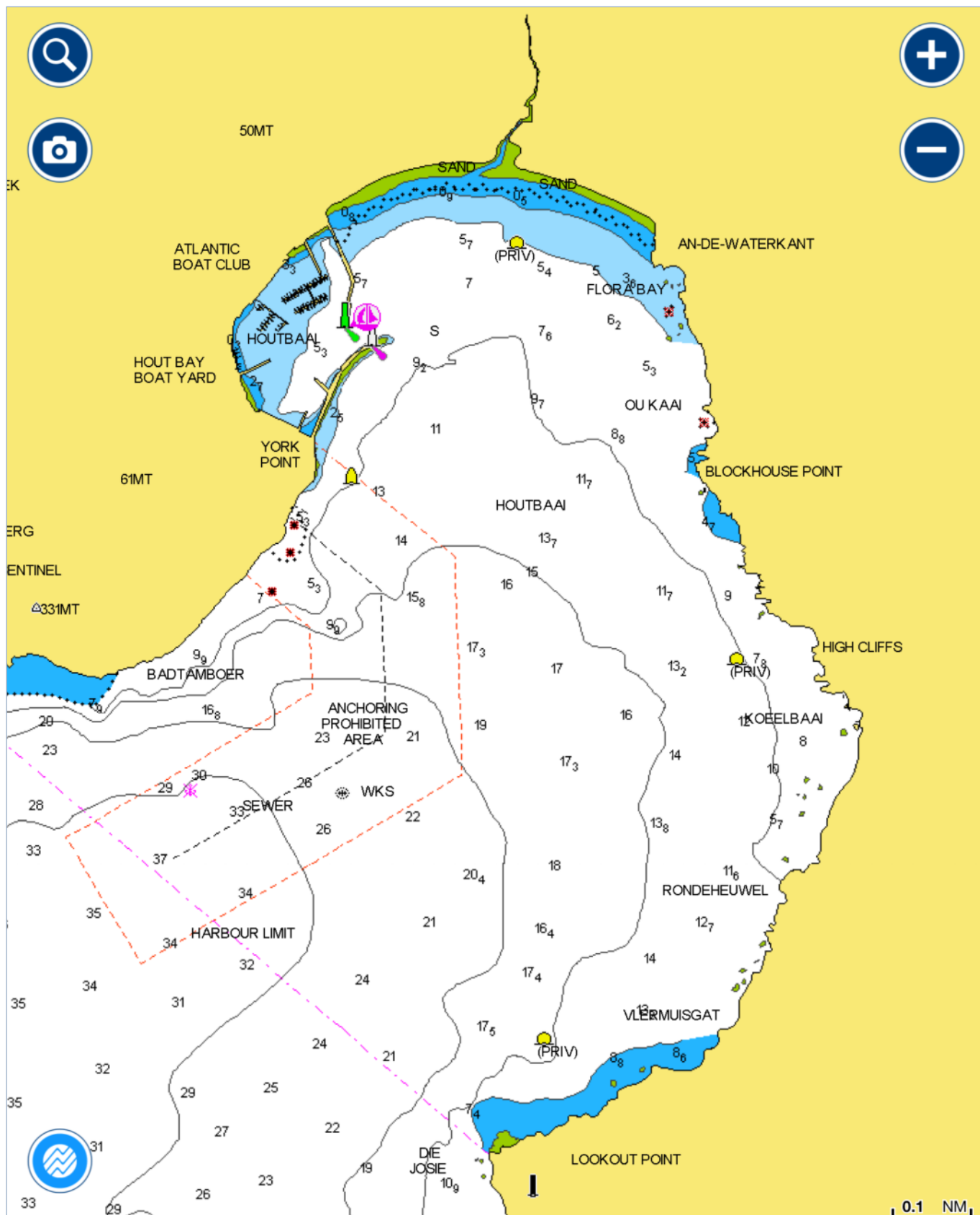
Hout Bay Roy McBride

Approach and Entry

Hout Bay is surrounded by spectacular mountains and is subject to fierce katabatic winds from the east. However, local opinion is that even in winds of over 50 knots, entry into the harbour can be said to be safe and that once inside, there is room enough for a well-handled yacht to hand all sails before proceeding under power to her berth. Yachts with no engine, or a dysfunctional engine, should not anchor outside but should ask for help.



A pontoon in the marina, Hout Bay Roy McBride



PLAN 7: Hout Bay Approach



North Mole light in Hout Bay Harbour, Hout Bay Roy McBride

If in difficulty, yachts can call the NSRI (National Sea Rescue Institute) Station 8 emergency number: 082 990 5964. The station commander is Lyle Pringle. (Note: the NSRI is funded entirely by public donation, so anyone using its services might feel it appropriate to make a donation.)

There are no leading lights or marks, so the following waypoints are useful:

HB3 (entrance to the bay): 34°04.106'S, 18°21.016'E

HB2 (centre of the bay): 34°03.207'S, 18°21.332'E

HB1 (port turn to harbour approach):

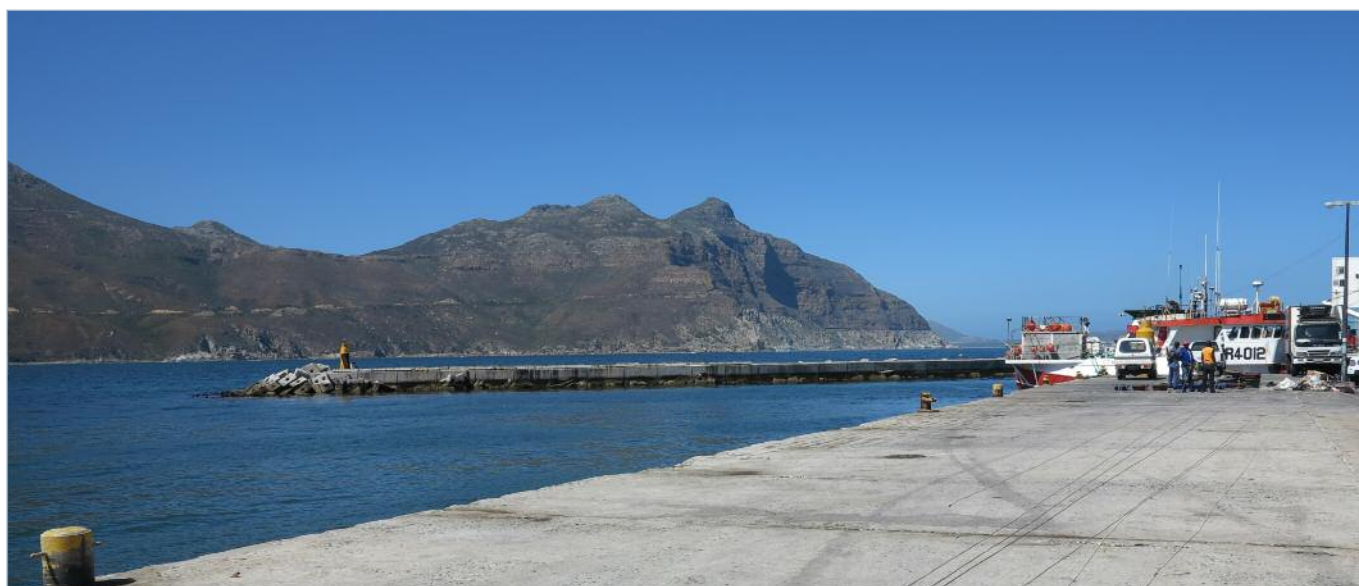
34°02.973' S, 18° 21.198'E

HBentrance (harbour entrance):

34°03.070'S, 18° 20.983'E

Cautions

1. Vessels approaching from the north should give the mainland a wide berth past 'Oude Schip', because of the presence of many submerged rocks in the area.
2. All vessels should be aware of the location of 'Vulcan Rock', a large semi-submerged rock in the northern approach, which cannot always be seen. Its position is 34°03.967'S, 1818.582'E.
3. Vessels approaching from the south should give 'Kommetjie' a wide berth, because there can be large waves in that area.



Hout Bay Harbour Entry lights positions, Hout Bay Roy McBride

Two tips from local sailor, Roy McBride:

1. If you are sailing from the Cape Town direction at night and intending to enter Hout Bay, hold a course towards the Slangkop lighthouse until you can see the loom of the Vishoek town street lights on the False Bay side of the peninsula. It will then be safe to make a turn to port, with good clearance from the unmarked Vulcan Rock in Chapman's Bay.

2. If you are sailing from Hout Bay to Cape Town and are caught out in a SE gale, which would make entry into Cape Town very difficult, a safe and peaceful anchorage in sand can be found at Clifton Beach, which is before Sea Point. (Avoid the obvious dangers plus the unmarked Little Lion's Head).

Berthing and Club

Hout Bay Yacht Club

Hout Bay Harbour, Cape Town, South Africa.

P.O. Box 26173, Hout Bay 7872

Club: +27 21 790 3110

Marina: (emergency number only) 073 587 0469

Fax: +27 21 790 2585

<https://hbyc.co.za>

Arrival at HBYC Marina

Proceed to your allocated marina berth. If in doubt, or if you have not pre-arranged a berth, moor in a vacant berth on the south side of the southern walk-on jetty. (There are no emergency buoys.) You should then contact the marina manager, Alan Batley, as soon as possible. (Marina office number: 021 790 7095 or 021 790 3110. Alan's cell number 082 337 2208. The harbour does not maintain a dedicated radio watch but may be contactable on VHF Channel 71 (Call Sign: 'Hout Bay Marina'). VHF may be in operation from 0900 to 1300 hours but not on Wednesdays or Sundays.)

The HBYC Marina can accommodate yachts up to 54 feet (16.4 m) LOA. There is a plan of the marina layout on the website; <https://hbyc.co.za/info-for-visiting-yachts/>

The marina has all the usual facilities including electricity (pay extra) and water supplied to the pontoons, showers, toilets, secretarial services, free wifi etc. There is a mobile crane on site, owned, manned and charged for by non-marina people. It can certainly lift up to 3 tons. Visitors pay a small fee for temporary membership of the club, which entitles them to rent a berth and use all the club facilities.

Alternatives to the HBYC Marina:

Atlantic Boat Club

Harbour Road, Hout Bay, Cape Town, 7806

Email: info@atlanticboatclub.co.za

This is more expensive than the HBYC Marina but can accommodate yachts over 60 feet LOA. It offers good security, water and electricity on the dock, but has no showers.

Contact Garth on +27 (0) 21 790 2930

or via the website <https://www.atlanticboatclub.co.za>

Commercial Port

A cheap but noisy alternative. No security gates or showers. Raft up to a fishing boat or lie against the big rubber tyres covering the dock wall, with a fender board. Share electricity and water with commercial boats.

Contact the Port Captain on VHF Channel 16

or by telephone: +27 (0) 21 790 5624.

Hout Bay Boat Yard

Harbour Road, Hout Bay, 7872

<http://www.houtbayboatyard.co.za>

This yard has a small slipway and a boat lift capable of handling yachts up to 18 m LOA and 40 tons. It is primarily a facility for trailable yachts but may help bring ashore larger craft for short term work such as antifouling.

Contact: hbby@mweb.co.za

or tel. +27 (0)21 790 5624.

A valuable source of independent advice:

Local yachtsman Roy McBride, who runs a kit-boat company, CKD Boats, can be contacted for all kinds of marine-related and other advice.

Email address: roy@ckdboats.co.za.

Land line number: +27 (0)21 790 3859.

While he is in his office, VHF Ch 16 is always on. He does not monitor it at night but would do if there were a prior arrangement.

Hout Bay village

A short walk from the marina, you can find general stores, hardware stores, a pharmacy, laundry services, tool hire, car rental and many restaurants. There are larger supermarkets within 20 minutes driving time. From the village it is an easy 30-minute drive to central Cape Town. During the week there are buses to and from Cape Town, running along the main road by the marina. There is a frequent service until mid-morning and again after mid-afternoon, but there are few buses in the middle of the day.

Marine trades people will readily come from Cape Town to work on yachts and good advice in this respect can be obtained from the marina company/yacht club.

Saldanha Bay

This is not a port of entry, so clearance out of the country is not possible from here.

Harbour entrance: South Head 33°02'S 17°58'E

Lights:

North Head 33°03'S 17°54.7'E

Fl(3)W20s34m23M

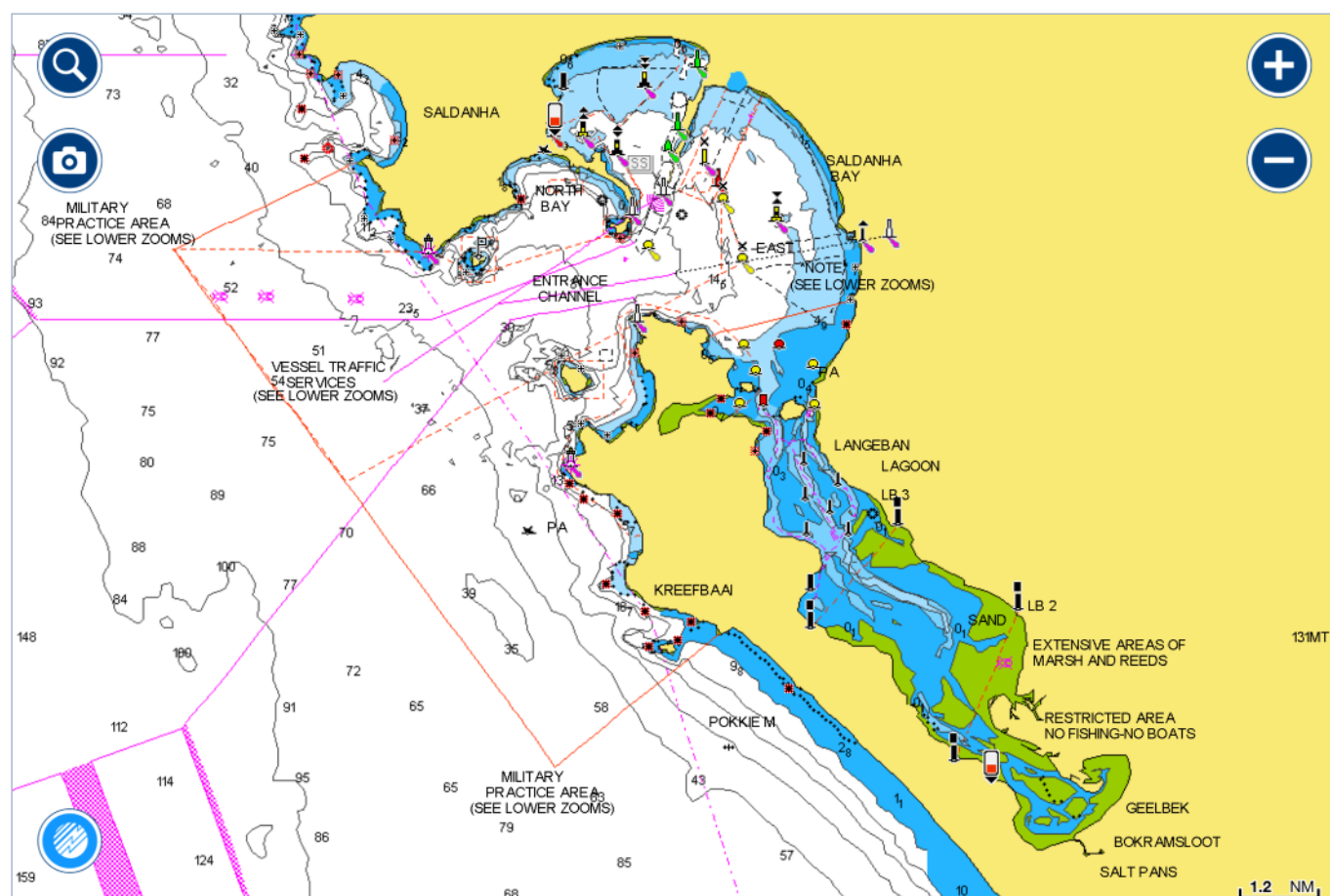
Max tidal range: 1.49m

Saldanha Bay is a very large natural harbour, about 60M northwest of Cape Town. The main deep-water harbour has a long, shallow lagoon extending from it in a southeasterly direction. This is the Langebaan Lagoon,

which is a nature reserve.

Saldanha Bay is far enough north to escape the heavy winter rainfall experienced in the Cape and misses many of its winter storms. In the spring and summer the prevailing south to southeast winds may not be as strong as those felt in Cape Town but it can still blow hard, particularly in the afternoons. Overnight, the wind normally drops.

It is a busy commercial harbour, catering for large ships (up to 200,000 tons) engaged in the export of iron ore. Contact Port Control on VHF Channel 16 or 14 for permission to enter or leave harbour, or when needing to cross the east-west shipping channel between Saldanha and Langebaan.



PLAN 8: Saldanha Bay Approach

NAVIONICS



South Head Light, Saldanha Pete Hill



PLAN 9: Saldanha Bay Detail

NAVIONICS

Approach and Entry

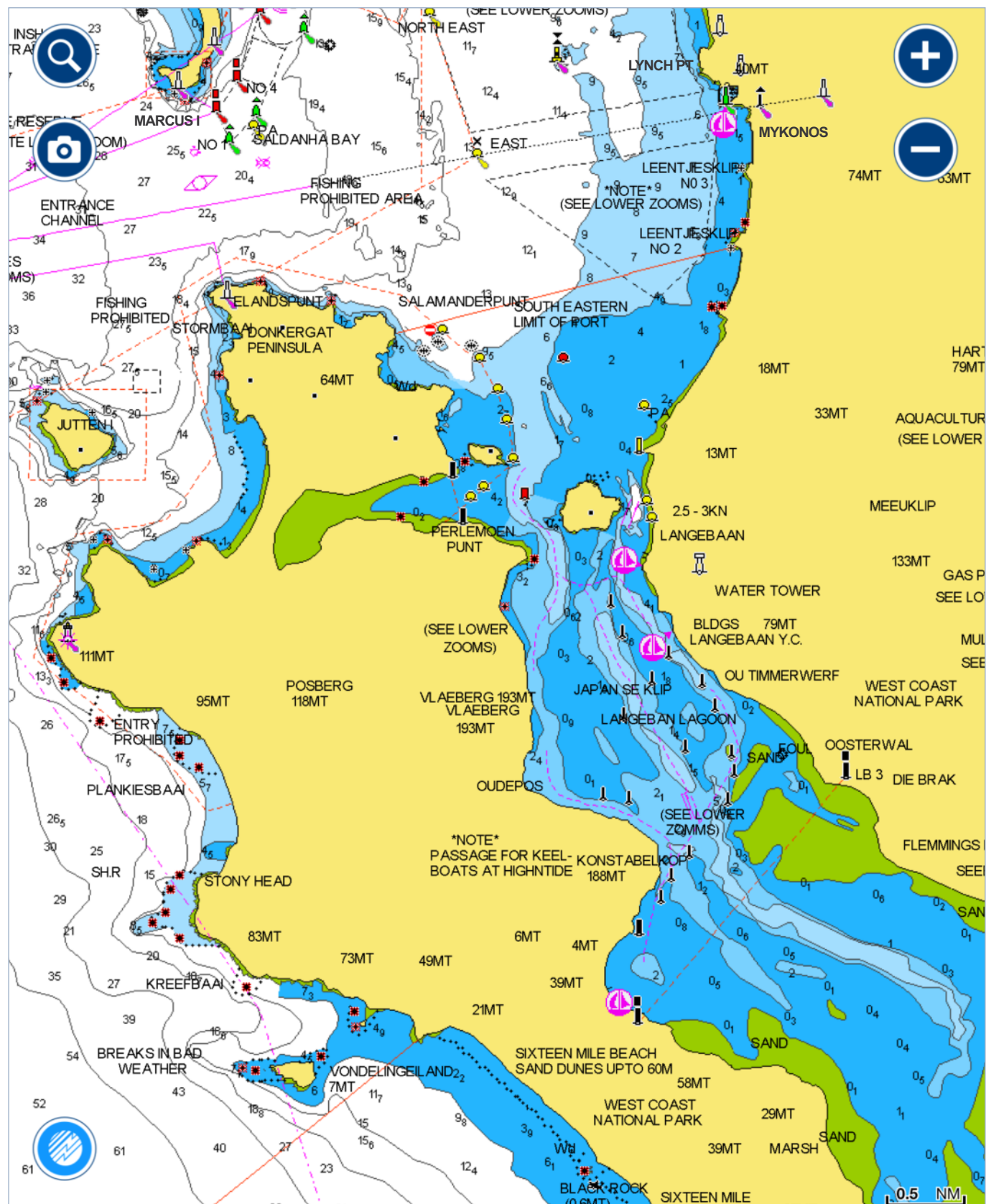
Approaching from the south, pass South Head and then go either side of Jutten Island, unless there is a strong onshore wind, in which case pass north of it.

Approaching from the north, pass between Malgas Island and Jutten Island.

Leading lights on the Iron Ore Jetty and Marcus Island come into line on 056° across Outer Bay. This leading

line intersects with the Lynch Point leading line of 080° at 33°03.85'S, 17°54.0'E. Enter on this line and pick up the buoyed channel.

Continue on this bearing if bound for Mykonos. Alternatively, clear Marcus Island and its mussel farms and follow round to port to enter the inner harbour, commonly referred to as Small Bay.



PLAN 10: Langebaan Lagoon, Saldanha Bay





Saldanha Mussel Farms *Pete Hill*

Clubs and Facilities/Services

There is a sheltered haven in the northwest of the bay for fishing boats and yachts. This is the location of the Saldanha Bay Yacht Club, which lies on the northern side of the President Jetty.

Saldanha Bay Yacht Club

Tel: 022 714 0884 during office hours, i.e. 0800 -1600, but closed Tuesdays.

Club Manager: Ivy Baxendale, Mobile No: 082 7602412
VHF Channel 12

Website: www.sbyc.co.za

Visitors' moorings are available but advance booking is advisable. Allocation of moorings is made only by the Moorings Manager. Foreign yachts are allowed moorings free of charge and (usually) temporary membership of the club for the first 10 days. Yachts are allowed to anchor free of charge outside the moorings but will be close to a lot of fishing boat traffic. After the initial ten day period, crews of all visiting yachts will be subject to a per person charge for the use of club facilities. The club does not run a ferry service.

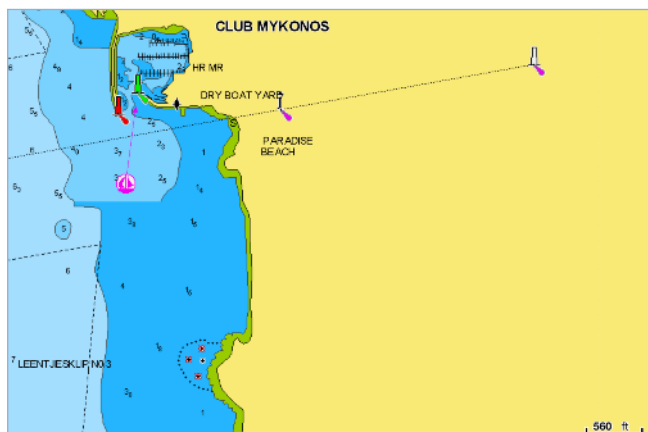


Saldanha Bay YC *Pete Hill*

There is a slipping cradle (max. 10 tons). Diesel is available at the fishing jetty. Water and electricity (220V) are available on the fixed jetty. Gas, paraffin and food supplies can all be purchased in the town, about 1km from the club. Local facilities include engine repairs, electrical and electronic repairs, a general marine dealer, post office, banks, supermarkets, restaurants, hotels and a Wi-Fi hub.



Saldanha YC Moorings *Pete Hill*



**PLAN 11: Mykonos,
Saldanha Bay**



Mykonos is a resort on the east side of Saldanha Bay, opposite the inner bay entrance.

It has holiday accommodation and a casino but few other facilities to offer, apart from bars and restaurants. The nearest settlement for supplies is Langebaan, about 4 - 5 km to the south.

The Club Mykonos Marina

Tel: 022 772 0020

VHF Channel 71

Website: www.clubmykonos.co.za

The marina has 188 walk-on berths and can accommodate yachts up to 45 feet LOA and catamarans up to 26 feet in beam. The marina entrance has a least depth of 2m and depths within the marina range from 3m - 5m. Services and facilities include fuel, water, electricity, sewage and bilge outlet services, showers, toilets, restaurant, bar and shop. The fuel berth is open from 0800 to 1700 hrs. There is a large hard standing area and there is a travel lift. It is possible to anchor south of the marina, in 3m.

Langebaan Yacht Club describes itself as a family club and does not cater specifically for visiting yachtsmen, but is said to be welcoming.

Langebaan Yacht Club

Tel: 022 772 2466

Email: admin@langebaanyc.co.za

Website: www.langebaanyc.co.za

The club has a few moorings and it is possible to anchor outside these, but at spring tides the current is very strong. The lagoon itself has some beautiful quiet anchorages and is a nature reserve. No boats are permitted to enter its southern end.



Saldanha Fishing Jetty Pete Hill



Saldanha Iron Ore Terminal Pete Hill

Namibia - an overview

Time zone: UTC + 2Hrs

(In August 2017 the National Council approved a bill to abandon Daylight Saving. When this takes effect the country will be on UTC + 2 Hrs year round.)

Telephone country code: 00264

The Namib Desert extends for the whole length of Namibia, from its border with South Africa to its border with Angola. It has an average east-west width of about 60 miles but at its widest, extends inland for over 90 miles.

The entire coast used to be called the Skeleton Coast, because it is littered with whale skeletons and wrecked ships, but nowadays this name usually refers to the northernmost 300 miles, the Skeleton Coast National Park. The interior of the country has some dramatic scenery, with mountains and gorges. In the east, it gives way to the Kalahari. About 18% of Namibia is designated park land. Some parks are famous for their wildlife, notably the Etosha National Park, others for their scenery, such as the Fish River Canyon, which is the second largest canyon in the world.

There are two ports, Luderitz and Walvis Bay. Other western settlements of interest include Swakopmund, which is also a coastal town but is no longer involved in sea trade, and ghost towns such as Kolmanskop, once home to hundreds of German miners seeking diamonds but now deserted and increasingly buried in wind-driven sand. The country needs tourism for its income and there are many tours which can be taken from the two port towns. The capital and administrative centre of the country, Windhoek, is centrally placed in the highlands about 165 miles from Walvis Bay. Most of the light engineering and construction is based there. The backbone of the economy however, is mining and quarrying, fishing and fish processing.

Much of the Namibian coast is of restricted access. The Sperrgebiet or Forbidden Area was established because of diamond mining and is fiercely guarded, so it is important for the coastal passage-maker to ascertain in advance just where one is allowed to go ashore.

Navionics and C-Map electronic charts for the Namibian coast are reportedly very accurate. This is good news, because it is a dangerous coast when the prevailing southeasterlies give way to strong or gale-force onshore winds; there are few places of refuge.

Namibia has a reputation for its friendly and

welcoming behaviour towards visitors. In general crime levels are low, especially in the port towns, which are said to be safe both by day and by night. Extra care should be taken elsewhere. Daylight mugging occurs in Windhoek and hailing a taxi in the street is risky. Pickpockets gather where groups of tourists are to be found. Okakuejo Lodge in Etosha National Park appears to be a hotspot for credit card skimming.

Weather

This is a hot, dry country, but it is milder on the coast. Less than an inch of rain falls in the average year. Winds are mostly from the south. The strongest winds of the year occur between late October and the end of January, with periods of up to a week of 25 - 35 knot winds. The offshore wind often increases during the morning and afternoon to 40 knots or more, then dies away in the evening, as the land cools down. Coastal fog is common, with near-zero visibility.

Formalities

Visas are not required by most visitors, but all should have a passport valid for at least a further six months. The passport must have at least one blank page for use by the Namibian authorities. Visitors are normally allowed to stay for up to 90 days as tourists. If you are expecting to sail to a Namibian port from South Africa it could be useful to visit the Namibian Tourist Office in Cape Town before setting out, to check on the situation.

Health

Visitors are advised to make sure that their 'standard' vaccinations are up to date. These are MMR (mumps, measles, rubella), diphtheria, tetanus and polio.

In addition, vaccination against Hepatitis A and typhoid is strongly recommended. There is virtually no risk of yellow fever in Namibia but visitors who have been in affected countries are required to have been vaccinated against this disease.

Anyone whose lifestyle increases their risk of contracting HIV or Hepatitis B infection should note that about 2% of the population is infected with hepatitis B and about 17% with HIV. Over 30% of women aged 35 - 44 are HIV positive. Among the young (15 - 24) about two thirds of all new cases of HIV are in females.

There is always a risk of contracting schistosomiasis (bilharzia), cholera or typhoid if inappropriate water supplies are used for washing or drinking. Even the showers in some safari lodges have been incriminated in recent years.

Malaria is a constant risk but not all over the country. The traveller should consult up-to-date official maps of

risk areas. As always, the first priority is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. The second line of defence is pharmacological agents. Currently effective agents are Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline and mefloquine.

Currency

The currency is the Namibian dollar (NAD), which is tied to the South African Rand in value on a 1:1 basis.

In practice, you can use NAD or SAR at any retail location in Namibia, but you cannot use NAD in South Africa. Credit cards (Visa and MasterCard) are accepted by major retailers and local banks have ATMs.

Luderitz

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Diaz Point Lt 26°38'S 15°05.6'E

FIW10s53m22M

Max tidal range: 1.42m

Luderitz is the first port in Namibia for yachts sailing north from South Africa. It is a pretty little town, with many well-preserved, brightly painted Germanic buildings dating from the beginning of the 20th Century. The area was a German protectorate and subsequently part of German Southwest Africa from 1884, until after the start of the first world war. Action by South African troops and the Royal Navy in 1915 brought German control to an end. Diamonds had been discovered locally in 1908 and the town flourished because of the diamond trade until 1943, when the Consolidated Diamond Mines company moved its headquarters to Oranjemund, close to the Namibian/South African border. Now, it is largely

dependent on fishing and tourism, though the harbour still provides facilities to the diamond industry dredgers. Luderitz is almost invariably well-liked by visitors, who find the town and its inhabitants relaxed and welcoming. It has a population of about 20,000, which is smaller than it was when mining was still carried out locally.

Please note that it has not been possible so far to obtain up-to-date (i.e.2019) information on any of the mooring and other fees or charges applicable in Luderitz.

Approach

Approaching from the south, beware of the serious wind acceleration zone in the approaches to Luderitz. Stay clear of Halifax Reef and when Diaz Point bears SSE, head to pass north of the North Cardinal buoy off Angra Point. Then steer 120°, (there are leading marks) to pass between the buoys off Penguin Island and Shark Island for entry to Robert Harbour.

Before entering Robert Harbour, call Harbour Control on VHF Channel 16 to be advised about shipping movements. This is especially important when visibility is poor.

At this point you are likely to be asked a series of questions:

- Name of vessel
- Gross tonnage
- Overall length
- Name of master
- Number of crew on board
- Nationalities of all on board
- Last port of call.

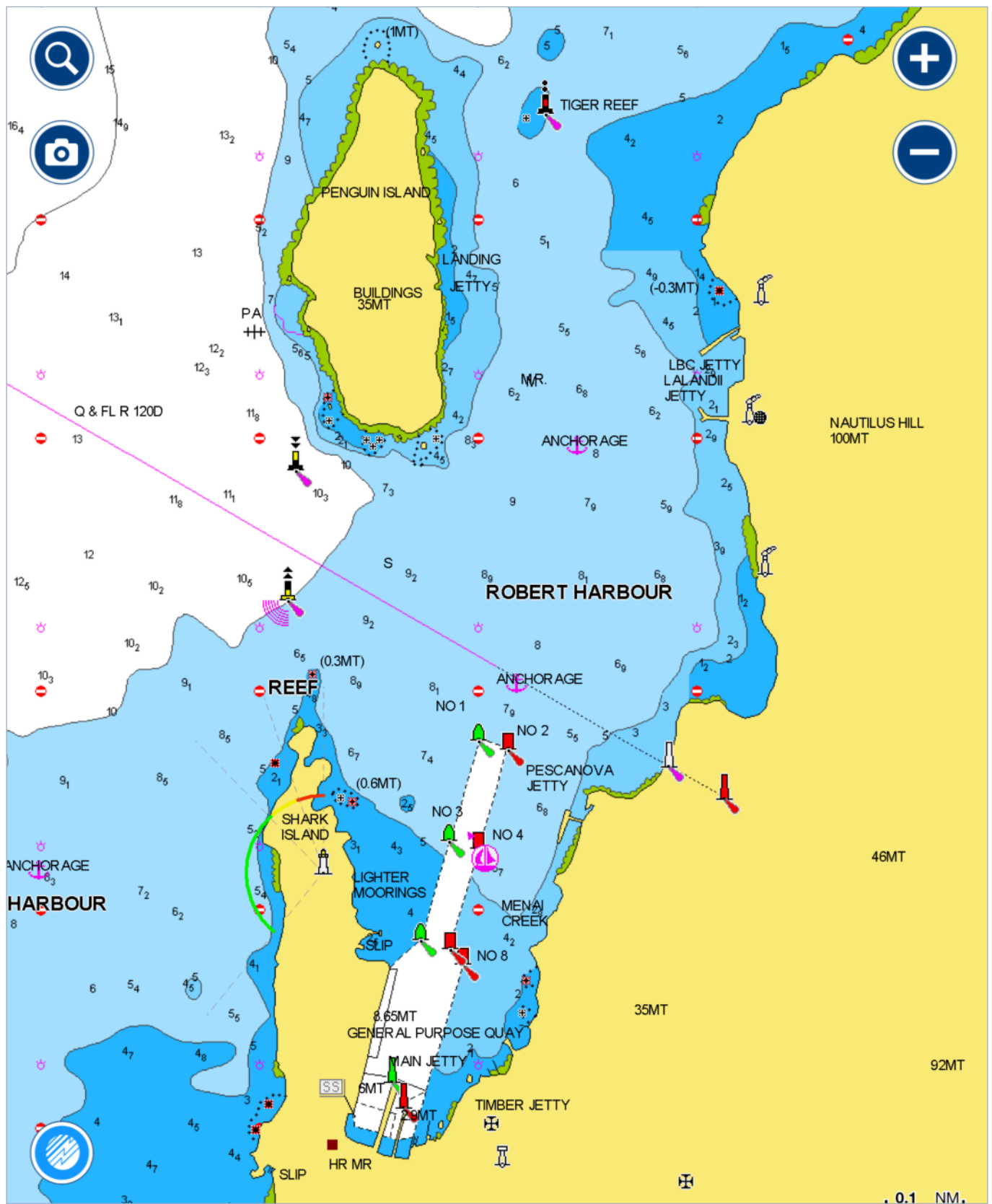
Port control will then usually assign you an anchoring location or mooring on the east side of the port channel and turning basin in Menai Creek.

Luderitz town and harbour *Pete Hill*





45



PLAN 13: Robert Harbour, Luderitz

NAVIONICS

Anchoring and Mooring

The buoyed, dredged channel into Menai Creek runs south from Robert Harbour. You may find a vacant mooring. Those nearest the floating dinghy dock (at the

wooden jetty in the southeast of the creek) are owned by locals who will often be happy to rent you a mooring. In 2016, the going rate seemed to be about

\$3 USD per day. The moorings owned by the diamond dredging companies and the fishermen are a bit further north of the dinghy dock.

These moorings may be free for use while their holders are at sea and it is usually possible to get advice on how soon the usual occupant of the mooring is likely to return.



Luderitz moorings *Pete Hill*

If you are anchoring, make sure that the anchor is well dug in, because the wind can get up quickly and blow very strongly.

Going ashore by dinghy, you can land on the beach or on the dinghy dock. If you want to use the dinghy dock, moor your dinghy on the north or west sides of the dock, because the commercial tourist boat often uses the east side during the morning for pick-up and drop-off. The dinghy dock and wooden jetty are watched over by full-time guards. In theory there is a daily charge for use of the dock, (in 2016, \$50 NAD, about \$3.5 USD) payable at the Luderitz Waterfront Development Corporation office, just north and east of the plaza. This sum also entitles you to use the water taps in the waterfront plaza area.

Shark Island with Penguin Island in the background *Pete Hill*



In emergencies you can moor your yacht at the dinghy dock, subject to prior arrangement with the Development Corporation and subject to your draft and the height of tide. In such cases, the daily fee is reported to be the same as the dinghy fee, which is remarkably cheap.

Formalities

Immigration, Customs and Port Control offices are all a short walk from the shore end of the wooden jetty.

Immigration: Tel: 063 203440

Opening hours: 0800 - 1300 and 1400 - 1700, Monday to Friday.

Customs: Tel: 063 203116

Opening hours: as Immigration.

Weekend arrivals should be reported in advance. Overtime is charged for weekend clearances at the rate of \$50 NAD/hour and two officials must attend.

Port Control: VHF Channel 16, 12. Opening hours 24/7/365

Clearance In -

All officials reportedly make the clearance process very quick and painless.

- Immigration will look at your ship's papers, ask you to complete a couple of forms and then stamp your passports.

- Customs will ask you to complete another couple of forms and will stamp your clearance-out document from your last foreign port of departure, with the date you cleared in to Namibia. This stamped document, officially called Report Inwards/Outwards For Ships, will be your only proof of having cleared in with Namibean Customs. You will need it when clearing out of Luderitz, even if you are only going up to Walvis Bay.

- Port Control will want to see your ship's papers, your crew list and your newly stamped Report Inwards/Outwards For Ships. You will be asked to complete one more form.

Clearance Out -

If your next port of call is Walvis Bay you must clear out of Luderitz officially, by handing in your entry document (your last foreign port exit document stamped by Namibian Customs when you arrived) and receiving a new transfer form, nominating Walvis Bay as your next destination. In theory, you are then supposed to leave within three hours, but you can ask for your departure time to be agreed for outside working hours or days. Just before departure, contact Port Control on VHF Channel 16 to ask for permission to leave and to tell the controller your destination.

If your next destination is outside Namibia you will have to re-contact Customs, Immigration and Port Control. The procedure here is to show Customs your ship's papers, your crew list and your Namibian Report Inwards/Outwards For Ships form .

You will be asked to complete a new Report Inwards/Outwards For Ships form, which will then be stamped and returned to you.

At Immigration, you will need to complete an Immigration Arrival/Departure form and to hand in your passports, which will be stamped and returned to you. Again, just before departure, contact the Port Captain to ask for permission to leave and to declare your intended next port.

Club

Luderitz Yacht Club

Tel: 063 312754

Email: luderitzyachtclub@gmail.com

This is a small, largely social club, with Wi-Fi, bar, restaurant and showers. Visitors are welcomed. The club opens at 1600 daily except on Mondays. A cleaner is there on other mornings until 1100. With prior booking, so that the water heating is switched on, you can get a shower during that first part of the morning. Your first shower will be free of charge but after that showers will cost you \$15NAD. Water at the club is potable. Visitors are allowed to fill one 20 litre container at no charge but thereafter will be charged \$5NAD per container. Members get free showers, free drinking water and discounts on meals, so temporary club membership might be worth considering. (2016 information).

Facilities/Services

The town is small, so everything you are likely to need will be within walking distance:

There are several cafés on or near the waterfront. The Sea Breeze Bistro is frequently recommended.

Provisioning can be carried out at either of two good grocery stores (Spar and OK)

There is a laundry (Joyce Laundry) behind the OK store.

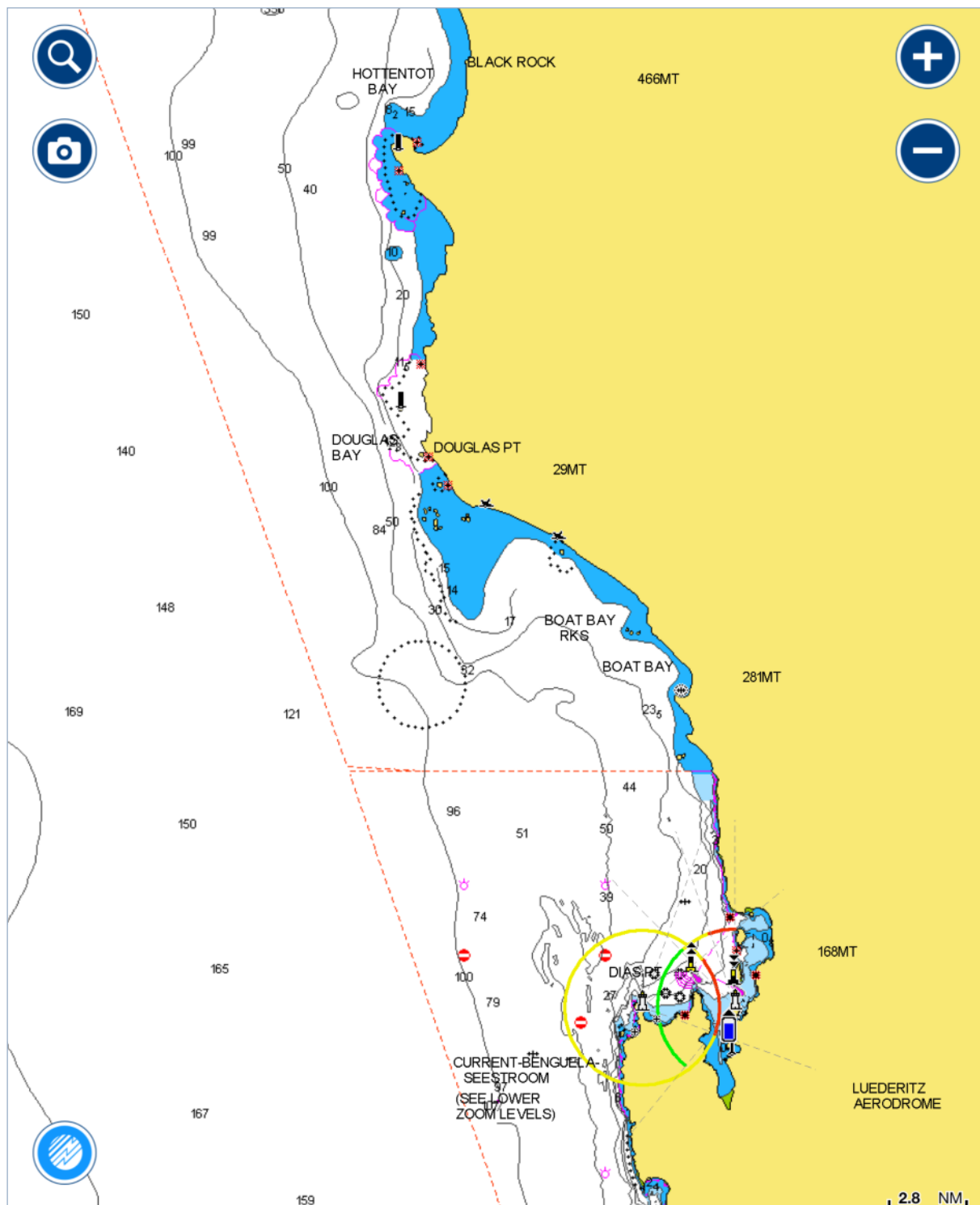
Fuel cans can be filled at a garage close to the yacht club.

There is a hardware store but not a chandlery.

Business hours are generally 0800 - 1700, Monday to Friday and many businesses close between 1300 and 1400. A few businesses open on Saturday mornings but on Saturday afternoons and on Sundays, only the bars and some of the cafes are likely to be open.

Repairs needing spares can be time-consuming, because the parts will probably have to be imported from South Africa.

Anchorage between Luderitz and Walvis Bay giving shelter from SE wind



PLAN 14: Luderitz to Hottentot Bay



Boat Bay

11M north of Luderitz, provides good shelter from the north through east to south.
Anchor in 7-8m, NNW of the wreck position, in sand.
No facilities ashore.

Hottentot Bay

30M north of Luderitz, gives good shelter from the east to the southwest. It is wide open to the northwest.
Anchor in 7m, good holding. No facilities ashore.

Walvis Bay

An official Port of Entry

Harbour entrance: Pelican Point

Lights:

Pelican Point Lt 22°53.5'S 14°26'E

Fl(3)W20s35m22M

Max tidal range: 1.63m

Walvis Bay, about 265M north of Luderitz, is a large, deep-water natural harbour and is the major port in Namibia. It hosts one of the largest domestic fishing fleets in the world and is a hub for the import and export of cargo for Namibia, Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Botswana. In 2016, 370,000 cargo containers passed through the port, and there are plans to increase the port's handling capacity to one million containers per year by 2019.

Walvis Bay was invaded by German troops early in the first world war but was freed in 1915. It was never part of German South West Africa, so the local architecture in no way matches that of Luderitz. The town itself may be less interesting than Luderitz, but it is a good place from which to visit the game parks, deserts, canyons and mountains. The coast is home to thousands of fur seals and pelicans, and along the lagoon you can see vast numbers of flamingoes. The impressive Dune 7 is well worth visiting, as is the old German town of Swakopmund, which has some fascinating architecture and several museums.

Please note that it has not been possible so far to obtain up-to-date (i.e.2019) information on any of the mooring and other fees or charges applicable in Walvis Bay but anchoring was free in 2017.

Approach

If approaching from the south, keep outside the 50m depth line to avoid a dangerous wreck 8M south of Pelican Point. Pass north of the North Cardinal buoy off Pelican Point on an easterly course and call Port Control on VHF Channel 12 or 16 for permission to enter harbour. There will usually be many anchored ships in the bay and visibility is often poor. Port Control will expect you to take the direct route to the small boat anchorage near the Walvis Bay Yacht Club. Do not use

Walvis Bay looking ESE *Pete Hill*



the dredged channels; leave them to port and the fish farm buoys to starboard. You should have at least 3m depth all the way.

Anchoring and Mooring

The location of the yacht club is not readily apparent, but the appearance of yacht masts will be a clue. The anchorage area is just past the southern end of the commercial harbour. There may be room to anchor amongst the moored boats.

Space for anchoring is now quite restricted but the holding is good. If anchoring, you are required to display an anchor ball or light and you must not leave the yacht unmanned.

Alternatively, one can pick up a buoy. If it is one of the yacht club moorings you will be asked to pay. The rate in 2016 was \$150 NAD per day. Moorings used by the tourist catamarans may be available free of charge if the normal occupier is away for a few days.

The harbour gives good shelter from northwest through south to east, but is wide open to northerly winds. With strong northeasterlies there is a long fetch. This may result in a big swell in the harbour, with breaking waves. It is a good idea to tuck in as far as possible behind the reclamation works, as they will give some protection.

Formalities

The Immigration, Customs and the Harbour Master's offices are all by the northern dock gates. All are open every day of the week.

Customs: Tel: 064 204036

Opening hours: 0800 - 1300 and 1400 -1700.

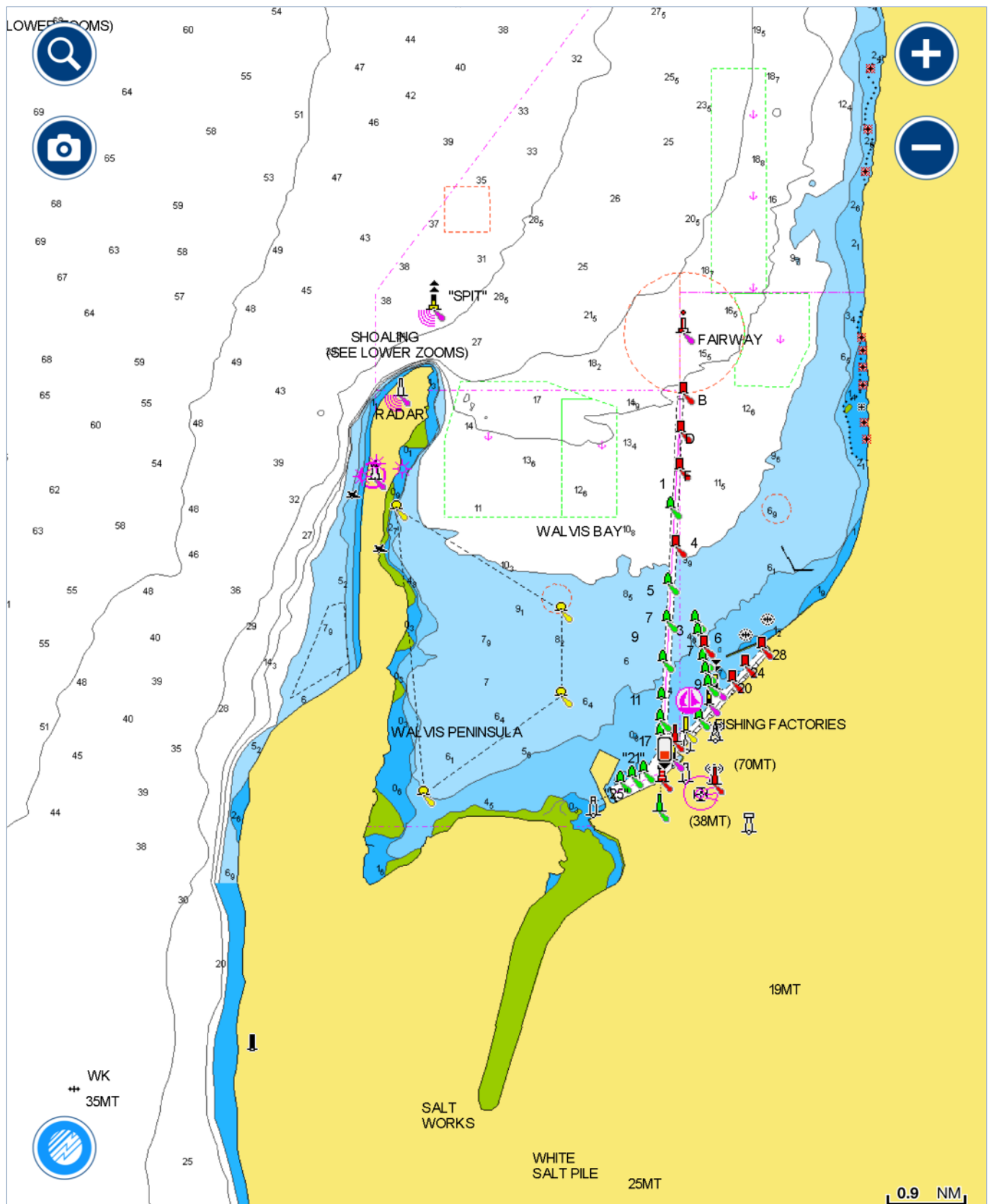
Clearance In -

As far as inward clearance is concerned, the general experience seems to be that if you have arrived from Luderitz, Customs are not interested in you. Visit the Port Office with your ship's papers, passports and clearance document from your last port.

Clearance Out -

For outward clearance the procedure is to visit Customs and then Immigration and finally, to call Port Control for permission to leave.

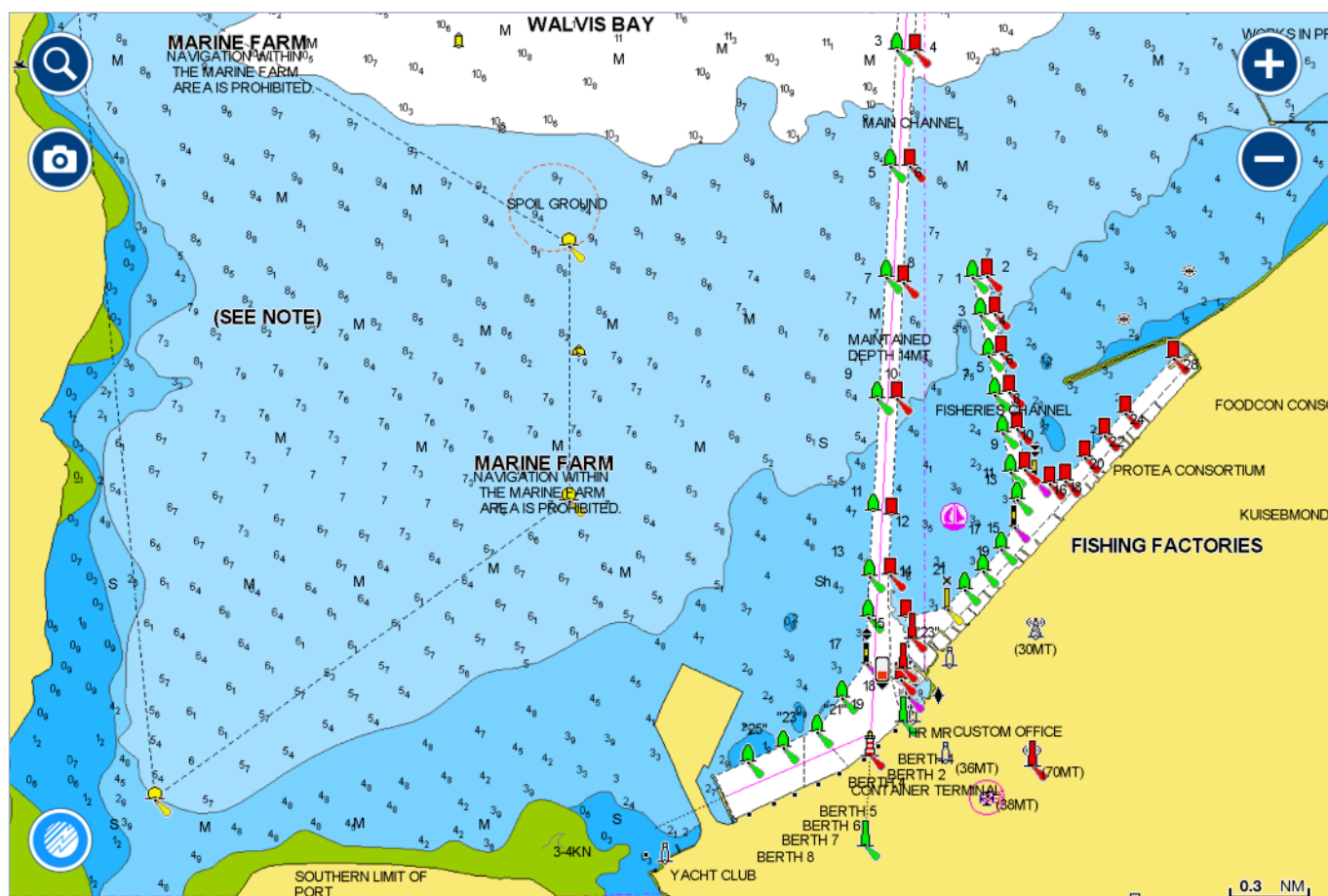
There are two Customs offices near the northern gates. You need the one without a sign, which is located



PLAN 15: Walvis Bay Approach

NAVIONICS

The yacht anchorage and yacht club are in the SE corner of the bay.



PLAN 16: Walvis Bay Harbour

NAVIONICS

at the dock security checkpoint, where trucks enter and leave the port. Immigration is located about 100m west of Customs. The Customs staff will give you directions.

Customs will need to see your ship's papers, crew list and Namibian Report Inwards/Outwards for Ships form. You will be asked to complete a new Inwards/Outwards form, which will be stamped. Immigration will want you to complete a new Arrival/Departure form and to hand in your passports so that they can be checked against the computer records and exit-stamped.

Club

Walvis Bay Yacht Club

Atlantic Street , Walvis Bay

Tel: 064 203676.

The club welcomes visitors. Water is available, but ask which tap to use. (The most obvious one is for grey water.) The club facilities include restaurant, bar, laundry, mail, Wi-Fi and the dinghy dock Temporary club membership is available and this entitles you to free fresh water, showers and Wi-Fi In 2016, this temporary membership cost \$300 NAD per boat per week.

From the club, it is a long dusty walk into town, but



Walvis Bay Yacht Club *Pete Hill*

the club can arrange a taxi for you and will advise on taxi fares, or can help with car hire.

Facilities/Services

The town offers the visiting yachtsman good provisioning with a choice of supermarkets. There are hardware shops but seemingly no chandleries. There are good repair facilities, perhaps with a higher standard of engineering skills than in Luderitz, but again, spare parts may have to be imported from South Africa

St Helena

Time zone: UTC (No daylight saving)

Telephone country code: 0029

James Bay anchorage: 15°55'S 05°43'W

Lights: No lighthouse

Max tidal range: 1.11m

St Helena is a small island of volcanic origin in the middle of the South Atlantic, 1,695M from Cape Town and 705M from Ascension Island. The island, which has its own government, is part of the British Overseas Territory collectively called St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. The climate is moderate with warm summers and cool winters. The lower coastal part of the island is dry, but the upper plateau is very green and the many roads and paths make for pleasant walking. Jamestown is the main settlement and home to the island's Port Control, Customs and Immigration offices. It is a long narrow town, sandwiched between steep cliffs.

Jamestown, St Helena *Tom Partridge*



Main Street, Jamestown, St Helena *Kit & Penny Power*



St James' Church, Main Street, St Helena. The oldest Anglican church in the southern hemisphere *Kit & Penny Power*



Jamestown and Harbour *Pete Hill*

For those seeking a physical challenge, there is a 924 foot flight of 699 steps up the valley side called Jacob's Ladder. It is the remains of an inclined plane built in 1829, up which carts of manure were hauled from the garrison stables for use on the upland farms. The remaining stairway has become the course for annual time trials with runners coming from many countries to compete.



Snorkelling with the Whale Sharks that visit St Helena and abound in numbers in January and February *Tom Partridge*

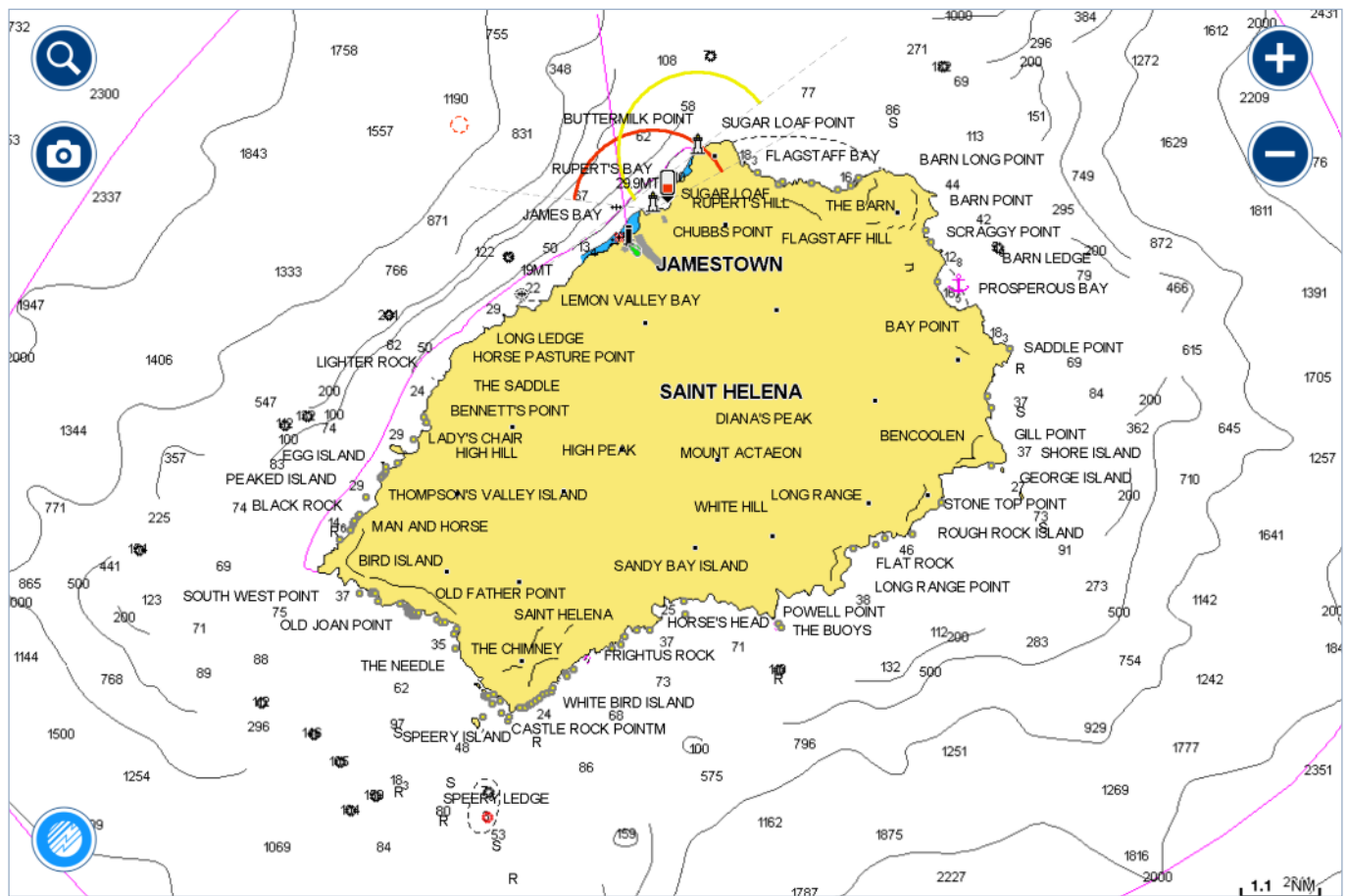
Jacobs ladder in St Helena consists of 699 steps and many a cruiser tackles the ascent for fun! *Tom Partridge*



The sea around the island is rich in wildlife and is one of the best places in the world for seeing (and swimming with) whale sharks. It is famous as Napoleon's prison island, where he died. St Helena makes an ideal stop when sailing to the Americas or to Europe. As well as being a good re-provisioning stop, the island is delightful and well worth a visit for its own sake. The website <http://sthelenatourism.com> is a useful source of information on the island.

Boat trips, especially to see local wildlife, are a fun activity in St Helena *Tom Partridge*





PLAN 17: St Helena



Approach

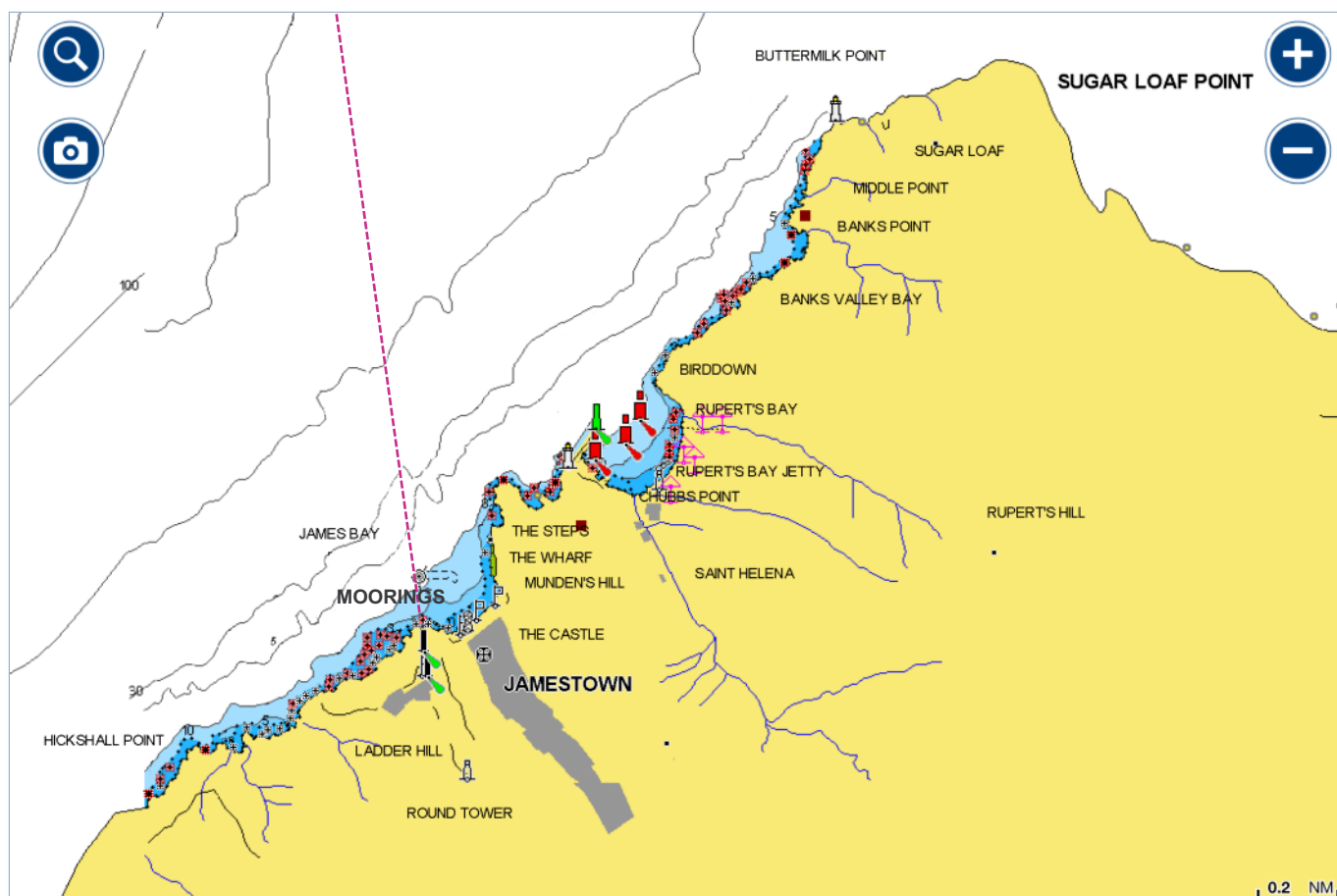
St Helena can be seen up to 50M away, but usually the top of the island is hidden in cloud and, in the days before satellite navigation, finding the island was a test of the navigator's skill (some failed). From the SE you have the choice of passing either north or south of the island to get to James Bay, but generally, passing north of the island is the shorter and faster route, with a steadier breeze. Give the north coast a reasonable berth to avoid accelerated winds along this stretch.

After passing the northern tip at Sugar Loaf Point head directly to the anchorage off James Town. Along this shore the wind is usually quite gusty.

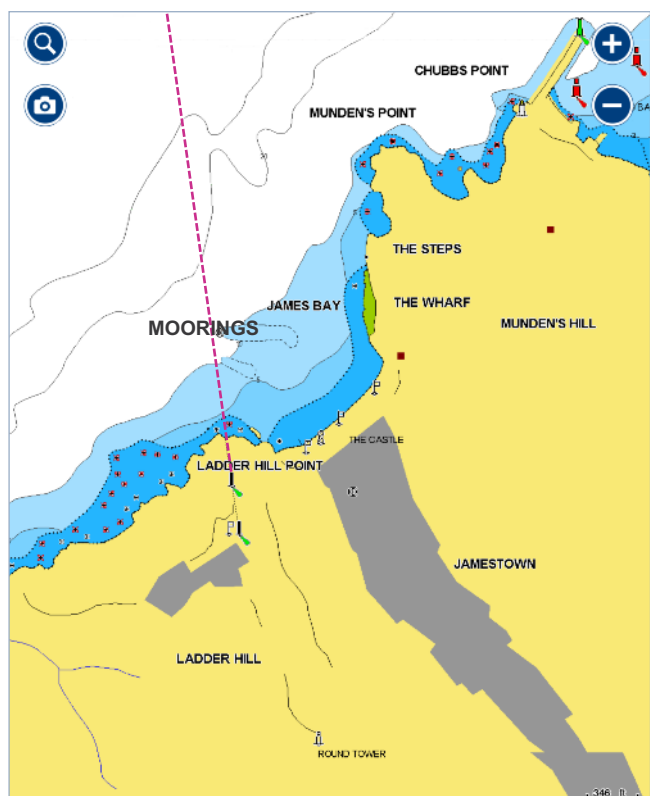
If passing south of the island, keep south of Sperry Ledge, which lies 2M south of Castle Rock Point before heading for West Point and up the NW coast. The wind is usually gusty along this shore as it accelerates down the valleys.



St Helena mooring field - visiting yachts shown on the left *Tom Partridge*



PLAN 18: Jamestown Approach, St Helena



PLAN 19: Jamestown, St Helena

Anchorage

There is a mooring field, at 15°55.4'S, 05°43.5'W, in the southwest part of James Bay. Visiting yachts of under 50 tons displacement are expected to use it. 23 of a planned 25 mooring buoys have been laid there, with a grid of inter-connected ground tackle and 20 large anchors round the periphery.

There are many private small craft and lighter moorings in the shallower parts of James Bay, and this



The yacht moorings, Jamestown, St Helena Kit & Penny Power

area should be avoided because it is littered with floating lines, wrecks and small moorings. Be sure to approach the mooring field from the north or northwest, to avoid these potential hazards.



One of the solid moorings in St Helena Tom Partridge

The buoys in the mooring field are all flat and round, about a metre in diameter and are made of a foam material which will not scratch your hull. You cannot lift these buoys. Eighteen of them are yellow and they are for yachts of not more than 20 tonnes displacement and up to 50 feet LOA. The 5 red buoys in the middle of the mooring field are for yachts of not more than 50 tonnes displacement and up to 60 feet LOA. All of these buoys are numbered so that the harbour master can easily direct you to a particular buoy. The buoys have a large galvanised iron ring lying flat on their top surface and you will need to thread your mooring lines through it. This may present problems with a high-sided yacht. Reported methods of tackling the problem include:

a) putting a crew member on the buoy to feed the lines through the ring. **THIS IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND NOT ADVISABLE.**

b) if the yacht has a scoop stern, leading both port and starboard bowlines down one side of the yacht, approaching the buoy up-current to bring it next to your stern on the same side as the free ends of your bowlines, passing the free ends through the rings and taking them forward to be made off, as the yacht drifts astern on the current;

c) lassoing the buoy with a bight of line which has been led from one deck cleat, round the forestay to a cleat on the other side of the bow, and then working out what to do next, such as launching a dinghy.

The harbour authority asks that mooring lines should allow a distance of 4 - 6m between the yacht and the buoy. The mooring rings are fairly rough, so beware of chafe.

Larger yachts will be told where to anchor by the harbour authorities. This will typically be off Munson's

Point, east of the small local boats, in 17 - 21m in the vicinity of GPS 15°55.98'S, 05°43.17'W. When there is a cruise ship in harbour, there is frequent lighter traffic. Tidal current does flow along the NW shore, and together with gusty winds, this can make yachts veer about at times. Allowance for this should be made when anchoring next to another yacht. There is usually some swell in the anchorage.



The mooring field at St Helena Tom Partridge

There is an hourly ferry service from 0600 to 1800, charging £2.00 per person per round trip. There will be a higher charge after 1900. Call the launch on VHF Channel 16, (call sign 'Ferry Service'), 15 minutes in advance. The ferry does not have fenders, so make sure that you are well-fendered on the side nearer the quay. If you need the ferry later than this, it can usually be arranged with the ferryman for a small fee. If using your own dinghy, you can land at the steps and haul the dinghy ashore, but there is often a swell which makes this difficult, so it is strongly recommended that you use the ferry.



The local taxi ferry at St Helena is not just helpful but friendly too Tom Partridge

Occasionally, particularly in the summer months, James Bay experiences the 'Rollers', which are caused by storms in the North Atlantic. These swells break over the wharf and make landing impossible.

Formalities

Fly the Q flag and call the harbour radio on Channel 14 when 10 - 20M off. They will advise you which mooring buoy to use, according to tonnage, and will tell you whether the authorities will visit the yacht or will require you to go ashore at an appointed time. *You should not go ashore without permission.* Usually, the Harbour Master and Customs Officer will come out to the yacht. They will arrive on the un-fendered ferry. At the time of checking in April 2019, harbour dues were £35 per visit with a free mooring for the first night. Thereafter, the mooring charges were £2 per night for the yellow buoys and £3 per night for the red buoys - but these prices were noted as being under review.

You will have to report to Immigration on your first trip ashore. The Immigration Office is on the Grand Parade, behind St James Church. Office hours are 0800 - 1600 hrs.

An entry permit is required for each crew member over the age of 12, but the entry fee is waived if the yacht is staying for less than 72 hours. Thereafter, a fee of £17 per person is payable, entitling the person to stay for up to 183 days. (There is a 6% surcharge if this fee is paid by VISA or Mastercard.) For stays of over 2 days, health insurance is mandatory. This must cover the individual for up to at least £250,000, and must include cover for aeromedical evacuation. In April 2019 the premium for a crew of two, for seven days cover up to the £250,000 limit, was £27.02. If you cannot show proof of cover, insurance can be purchased from Solomon's Insurance Brokers (opposite the Post Office) on a daily basis at approx £2 per day (2017).

The Harbour Master's Office and the Customs Office are in the main white building (with a clocktower) on the wharf. To clear out from the island, you must visit all three offices.

Facilities

Fresh water is available from the tap by the landing steps.

Toilets and solar-heated showers are located further down the wharf next to the blue yacht club building. On sunny days, in the afternoon, the water in the pipes is warmed by the sun and provides a hot shower. There are also large clothes washing sinks here, but bring your own plug. The code for this facility is available from the Harbour Office. The yacht club is usually closed, except when the ARC is in town, and provides no facilities for visitors. There are two laundries on the island, one at Ladder Hill and one in Jamestown.

Petrol, diesel and bottled gas are available from Solomon's Fuel Station, Back Way, in town.

If you require large quantities, diesel can be delivered

to your vessel. (Contact Craig Yon, who runs the diving company, Into the Blue. Tel: 00290 23978/23459. Email: craigyon@helanta.sh)

Craig can also help in organising engine repairs. For stainless steel welding contact Adrian Duncan of AMD's Engineering Construction.

Currently, yachts can be lifted out in an emergency and for small repairs, if space is available. A short-term haul-out facility is planned for either Jamestown wharf or Rupert's Pier, once the commercial and industrial centre moves away from Jamestown.

Sail repairs can be carried out by Bennett Upholsterers, Alarm Forrest, Tel: 00290 4766 or by Abiwans in Market Street, Jamestown, Tel: 00290 2082.

There are several supermarkets in town with a good, but expensive selection of South African and UK products. They also have South African fruit and vegetables, but these sell out after their arrival on the island, leaving a poor selection until the next shipment. Fresh bread is available from the bakery, but often sells out by late morning. The bakery will take orders and this is essential if a large quantity is required prior to departure. They will also double-bake to order. The market hall has a butcher, a fishmonger and a fruit and vegetable stall with a limited amount of local produce. In general, it is advisable to provision for dry goods before leaving South Africa. Alcoholic beverages are highly taxed and again, it would be prudent to stock up in South Africa. Anne's Place (in the park next to the library) has become the yachtsmen's hang-out, with a restaurant, bar and internet access as well as a laundry service. Other eating places in town that offer WiFi include the Consulate Hotel, the Inkwell and the Sandwich Bar. There are several pubs in town.



Anne's Place - the yachtsman's hangout! Pete Hill

The Tourist Office, near the Post Office, provides maps and leaflets and arranges visits to Longwood and The Briars (Napoleon's residences). A combined ticket,



Longwood House, St Helena, where Napoleon lived in exile.
Pete Hill

which covers as many visits as you like to Napoleon's residences and his tomb, can be bought at either residence, but you must make your own way there. The Tourist Office can arrange hire cars and taxis.

Health and medical care

There is a 42-bed General Hospital in Jamestown, and there are 6 out-patient clinics.

Currency

The St Helena pound is kept on par with the pound sterling, but it is only accepted on St Helena and Ascension Island. UK notes and coins are accepted everywhere in St Helena in lieu of local currency, so it is sensible to obtain an adequate supply of UK notes in South Africa. The St Helena Bank is next door to the Post Office. It can give cash advances on certain credit or debit cards (Visa, MasterCard, Maestro and Delta) but only if the telephone connection is available. It will exchange US dollars, Euros and SA Rand. Several of the shops take credit cards. Any St Helena money should be exchanged at the bank before leaving, as it cannot be changed anywhere else (except Ascension). There are no ATMs on the island.

Transport on the island

The island bus service is geared towards commuters travelling into and out of Jamestown to work and is of little use for visitors. Taxis and unofficial cars can provide tours of the island. Cars can also be hired. Hitch hiking is also a fairly reliable way to get around the island; people are very friendly.

Travel to and from the island

RMS St Helena was the latest of a number of ships which have provided a scheduled service linking Ascension Island, St Helena and South Africa since 1900. This service ended in February 2018, after an airfield had been built on St Helena. Unfortunately, this



Napoleon Bonaparte died on St Helena and was buried here before his remains were later returned to France *Tom Partridge*

airfield suffers from serious problems of turbulence and wind shear. Only small airliners can use it and there are days when it is unusable. A weekly air service between St Helena and Windhoek began on 14th October 2017, with connections from Windhoek to Johannesburg and Cape Town. A once a month extension to this service provides a St Helena - Ascension Island link. This began on 19th November 2017.

Wideawake airfield on Ascension Island, which was used by heavy British and American transports, is now in need of major renovation and large planes can no longer use it. It is unlikely to be restored to its former condition before 2020 or 2021. The transport of cargo to St Helena is now carried out by Andrew Weir Ship Management with MV Helena. She runs between Cape Town and St Helena on a monthly basis, with 4 voyage extensions per year from St Helena to Ascension Island and back.

Communications

Cable and Wireless run the island's telephone system with a satellite link. They provide Internet access at their office opposite the Post Office and at Anne's Place. International calls and fax service also available at the office. The payphones can be used for international calls with a local phone card or credit card. 'Collect' calls are also possible.

At the time of writing, the St Helena Post Office can only send and receive mail from overseas via Ascension Island, using the once per month air link between these two islands. From Ascension Island there used to be a twice per week flight to the UK. At present (March 2018) the mail is instead being taken on once or twice per month flights from Ascension Island to the Cape Verde Islands for onward transport to the UK. (It really is as vague as that.)

Why St Helena's post cannot be sent and received via the air link to Namibia or South Africa is a question which many in St Helena are asking. The Post Office will hold mail *Poste Restante*.

Ascension Island

Time zone: UTC

Telephone country code: 00247

Georgetown anchorage: 07°55'S 14°24.8'W

Lights: No lighthouse

Max tidal range: 1.18m

Ascension Island is a small island, 705M northwest of St Helena.

It is part of the British Overseas Territory nowadays called St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. If you are coming from St Helena, the island is on the route to Europe, and only a short detour is required if you are heading for NE Brazil or the Caribbean. The island is well worth a visit.

Georgetown in Clarence Bay is the administrative centre of the island, where Customs Department, Port Authority and the Police /Immigration Department are based.

Most of the island is a volcanic 'moonscape' of extinct cinder craters. Green Mountain, the highest peak at 859m, manages to catch moisture from the trade wind clouds and is an oasis of green. Apart from the dramatic scenery, there are several sandy beaches and crystal clear water with good diving and snorkelling.



The rugged coast of Ascension Island Tom Partridge



In the background, yachts at anchor, in the foreground the landing station Tom Partridge



Green turtles can be seen nesting on Ascension Island *Tom Partridge*

Note, however, that on most beaches there is an extremely dangerous undertow and that swimming from the shore is prohibited. The exceptions are the beaches at Comfortless Cove and English Bay. *However, 2017 saw a big increase in the local shark population and there were two shark attacks that year on swimmers at English Bay. The Ascension Island government is now strongly advising against sea swimming there.*

Between January and May green turtles come ashore to lay their eggs at night. The island is said to be the

second biggest green turtle nesting site in the world. Clarence Bay, near Georgetown, is one of the best places for seeing them. The island had no indigenous land mammals, reptiles or amphibians, but man has contrived to introduce rats and cats. Both of these have had serious ill-effects on the bird population. Ascension is still a major breeding site for seabirds, though most of the larger species are now nesting on the predator-free stack of Boatswainbird Island, rather than the main island.

Turtle eggs on Long Beach, Clarence Bay, Ascension Island. Extremely dangerous undertow. Swimming forbidden.
Kit & Penny Power



Green turtle on Ascension Island *Kit & Penny Power*





An appropriate warning on
Ascension Island
Tom Partridge



Ascension Island land crab *Kit & Penny Power*

Terns exist in abundance at Ascension Island *Tom Partridge*





English Bay, Ascension Island, with BBC World Service aerials. This was regarded as one of only two safe swimming beaches until recent shark attacks *Kit & Penny Power*

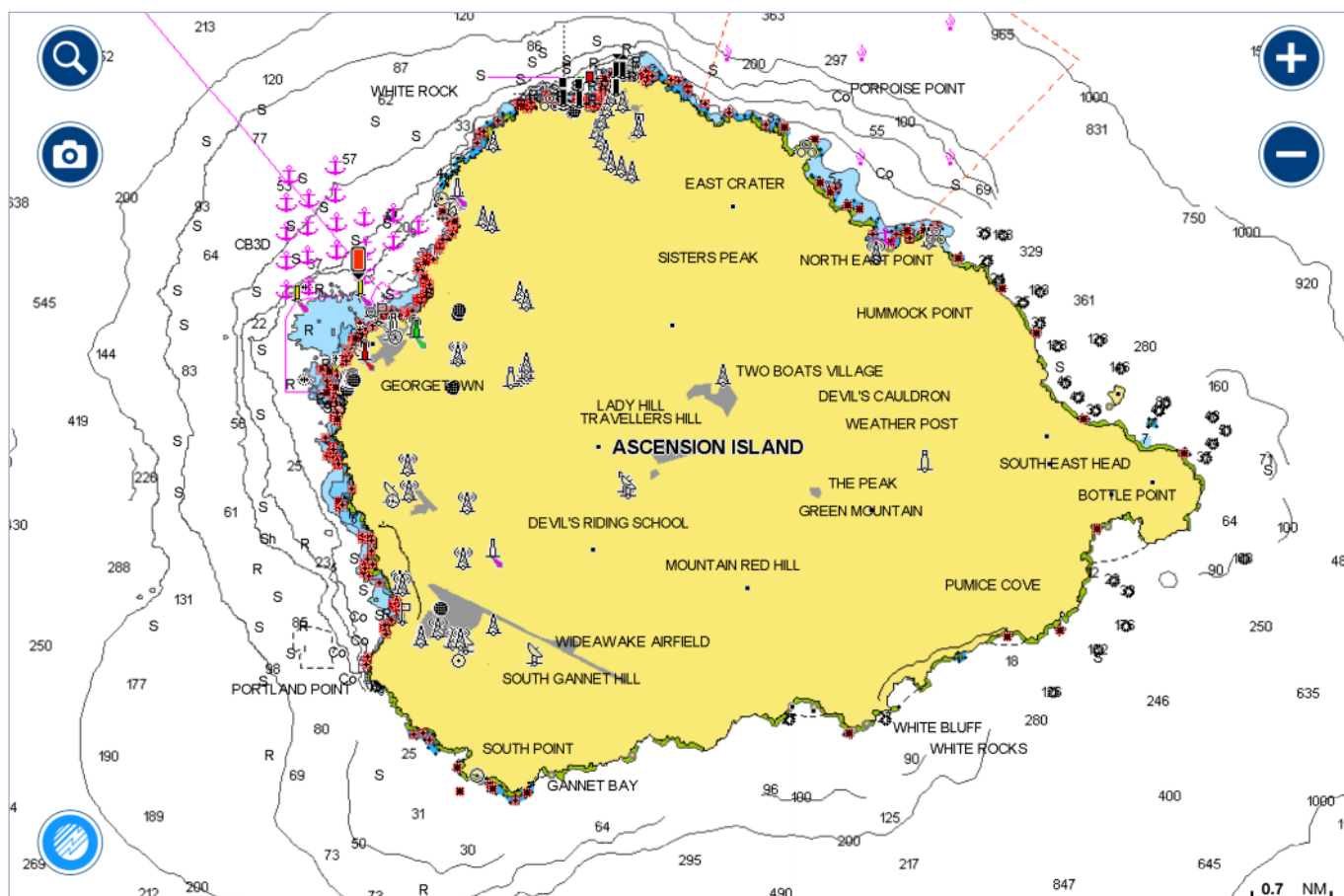
The human population of the island is almost entirely temporary workers and their families, mainly from St Helena, who service the military and communications facilities. Ascension Island is a communications hub for

Cable & Wireless, the BBC, the RAF, the USAF and the European *Ariane* project.



Both US and UK military bases can be found at Ascension Island

Tom Partridge



PLAN 20: Ascension Island

NAVIONICS

Approach

Approaching from the SE there is little to choose between passing N or S of the island to get to the anchorage in Clarence Bay, off George Town.

Passing south of the island there are no dangers, except close inshore, until George Town is approached. A large shoal patch extends west of George Town for half a mile out to sea. While there is sufficient water for a yacht, this shoal can break if the swell is high. Very dimly lit buoys mark this shoal. By keeping outside the 50m line all dangers are avoided.

Georgetown Harbour, Ascension Island Kit & Penny Power

Passing north of the island there are no dangers off the NE shore, except close in. After rounding North Point the desalination plant will be seen behind English Bay. Clarence Bay opens out south of the conspicuous golf ball antenna (lit at night).

Fixed green leading lights bearing 140° lead into Clarence Bay. The tanker *Rapier* occasionally moors and refills tanks ashore via the floating pipeline.

Navionics and C-Map electronic charts of Ascension Island are both reportedly very accurate.





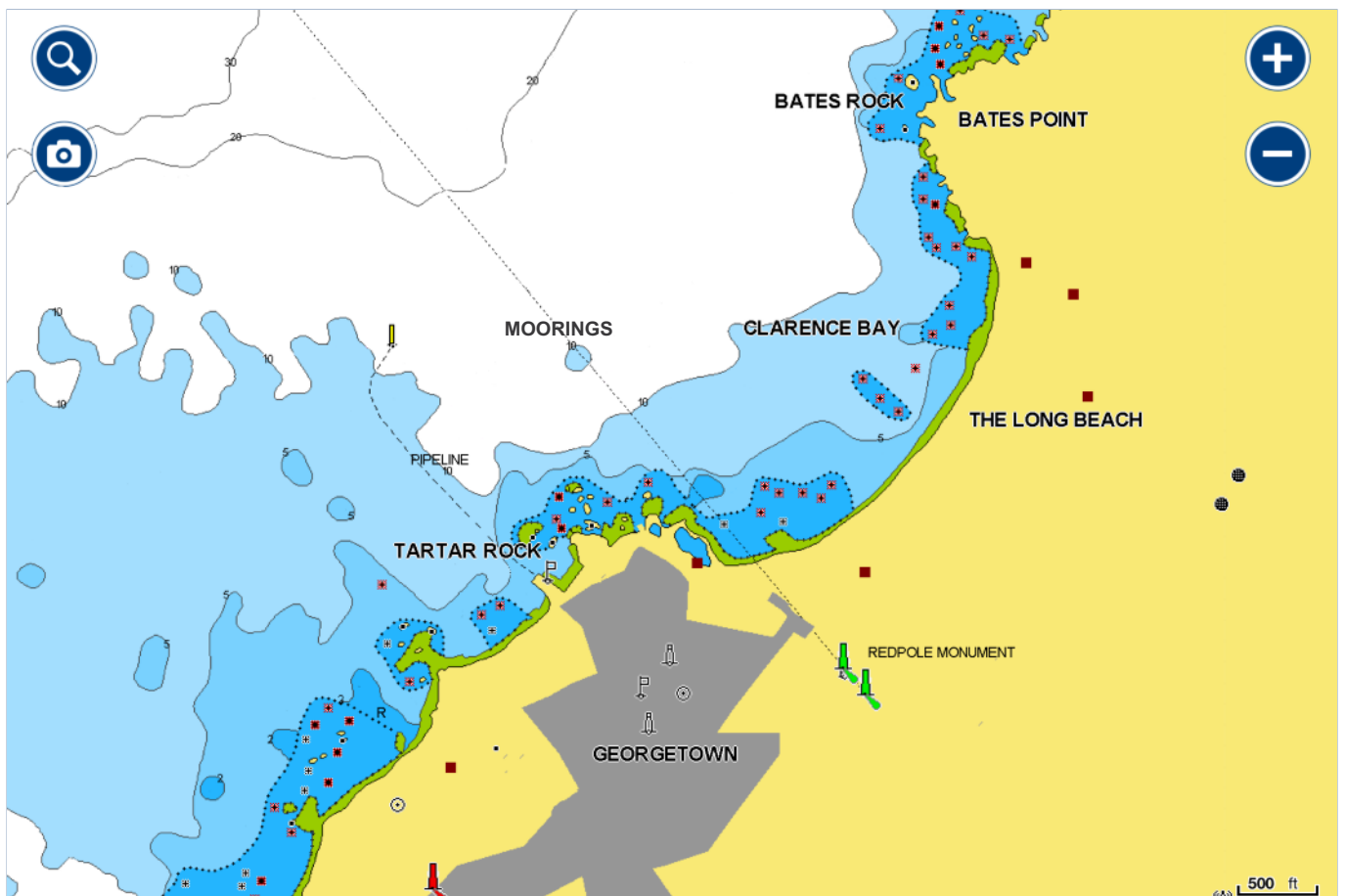
The anchorage at Ascension Island – swell is a constant problem but this means only the determined few visit *Tom Partridge*

Anchorage

Clarence Bay is the only allowed anchorage. At the NE side of the bay there is a large flagged, black, floating pipeline, which is used by the tanker to refuel the airport and island. It moves with wind and tide, so stay clear of it. SW of this there are small craft moorings.

(Do not attempt to use any of these moorings.)

One option is to anchor between the pipeline and the moorings, but it is a long row to the landing at the pier (landing on the beach is not allowed, quite apart from the surf there). A better anchorage is W of the



PLAN 21: Georgetown and Clarence Bay, Ascension Island



Clarence Bay from the anchorage *Pete Hill*

moorings in about 12 to 15m, sand with good holding. Do not be tempted to anchor in the much shallower water close to the pier as the sea often breaks in this area, when the swell is from the north.

There is usually some swell in the anchorage and it can be severe.

Getting ashore can be tricky and your dinghy should be tied as to be well away from the landing site *Tom Partridge*



Landing

The only place where landing is permitted is at the steps on the pier. Landing is not easy with the usual swell and is much more difficult than at St Helena. Be prepared to get wet. There are vertical ropes suspended to help you get ashore. If your dinghy is light enough then take it up the steps and leave on the pier. Otherwise it must be tied off, with the other dinghies, to the rope running out from the pier to keep it clear of the pier. It should not be tied to the steps. In 2017, it was common to see sharks near the steps.

When a cruise liner is in the bay, there will be a ferry shuttle service operating. Yacht crews can ask to use this service by calling the operator on VHF Channel 8.

Formalities

You should report your arrival to Ascension Radio on VHF Channel 16 and no-one should go ashore without permission from the authorities or until office hours. Office hours are 0800 - 1230 and 1330 - 1600, Monday to Friday. You will need to report to the Assistant Harbour Master at the pier head and to the Police Station, which is in the Town Square.

You should present the ship's papers, a crew list and crew passports.

If you can not produce official exit papers from your last port of call, you will not be allowed to clear in to the island.

Visitors are required to obtain an entry permit before arriving, either from aigenquiries@ascension.gov.ac or from the Customs/Port Office in St Helena. An entry permit fee must be paid at the Ascension Island Port Office. In 2019 this was £20 per adult, £5 per child under the age of 12. Lights Dues of £15 per vessel are payable at the Assistant Harbour Master's office. If staying for more than 2 days then medical insurance is needed. Proof of cover must be shown including name of insurer, policy number, date of issue and date of expiry. Cover can be arranged by fax with Solomon's Insurance, or in St Helena beforehand. Cover must be sufficient for any medical treatment and for possible medical evacuation from the island. The level of cover officially advised is £1 million.

The landing of animals is strictly prohibited, because of the island's nature conservation concerns.



Royal Marine Barracks, Georgetown *Pete Hill*

Clarence Bay *Pete Hill*



Facilities

Water is from the metered tap on the pier, by the fish-cleaning table. It is coin-operated and will dispense 45 litres for £1. Free use can be made of the salt-water swimming pool, behind the public works building at the head of the pier. There are also toilets, cold showers and a fresh water tap here. There is a laundry and shower room halfway between the fish cleaning station and the Tourist/Customs office. In 2017, a hot shower cost £1. The washing machine instructions should apparently be read very carefully to avoid a lock-up of your laundry inside the machine.

There is a waste skip at the base of the pier.

The supermarket is reasonably well stocked, but expensive. Fresh food availability depends on how recently supplies have been brought to the island.

The Volcano Club, near the baseball field at the USAF base, is open to the public from 1700 daily, offering drinks and a wide range of fast foods. The Saints Club has a bar and yacht crews tend to gather there. It is open for lunch and dinner, which must be pre-booked.

Diesel and petrol is available from the filling station at One Boat, 2 km out of town.

A fuel barge is available for delivery of diesel to yachts. However, it would be a good idea to check on the availability of diesel in Ascension Island before leaving St Helena. The supply is run by Solomons, but in 2017 there were reports that Solomons were thinking of closing down their fuel operations on Ascension Island.

No gas bottles of any kind are available on the island and it is forbidden to dump empty gas bottles ashore.

Currency

As on St Helena, the local currency is the St Helena pound, but the pound sterling is readily accepted. The Bank of St Helena in Georgetown is open 0900 - 1500, on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursday and Saturday it is open 0800 - 1300.



Tours or hiring of cars can be arranged on Ascension Island
Tom Partridge

Transport on the island

The Ascension Island Tourist Office runs tours and can also help with car hire (tourism@ascension.gov.ac).

Hitchhiking works well on the island, but you may have to wait awhile for a car to pass. There is a shuttle bus driving between the island's three bars on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Green Mountain *Pete Hill*



Sheep walk freely on Ascension Island *Tom Partridge*

Tourist excursions

A highly recommended excursion is a walk to the top of Green Mountain, where the altitude is responsible for a lush microclimate. Bamboo grows there, there is a pond and you can see the remains of the original water collecting system which made inhabitation of the island possible.





Pond at the top of Green Mountain *David Ridout*



Bonetta Cemetery in Comfortless Bay, Ascension Island. Sick ship crew would be looked after here but some did not make it out
Tom Partridge



Empty beaches a plenty on Ascension Island *Tom Partridge*

Travel to and from the island

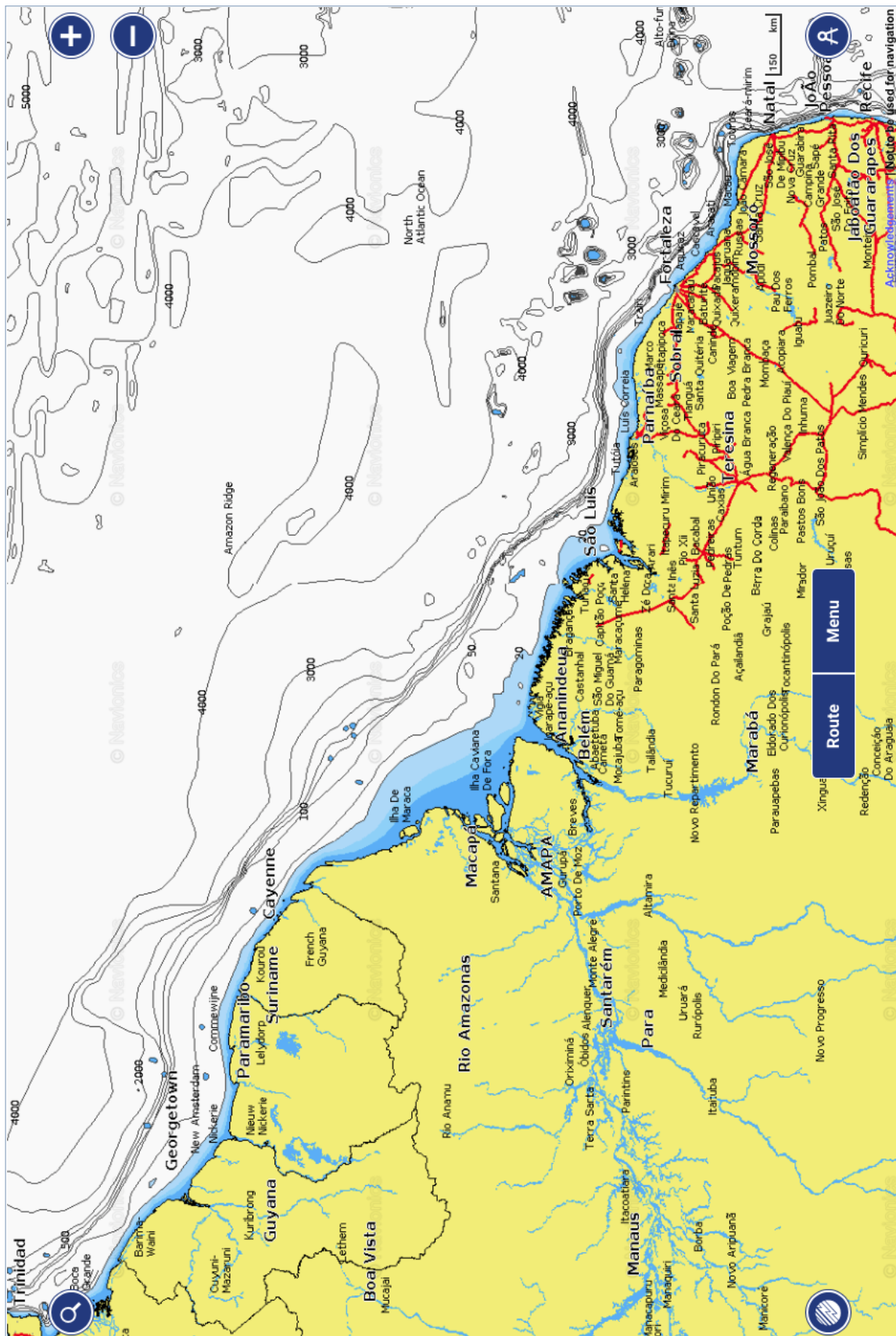
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Communications

Cable and Wireless provide telephone, fax and Internet access, but it is expensive. The post office provides a once or twice per month airmail service to the UK via the Cape Verde islands. The post office will hold mail Poste Restante.

Overview of North East Coast of South America



PLAN 22: The North East Coast of South America



Brazil - an overview

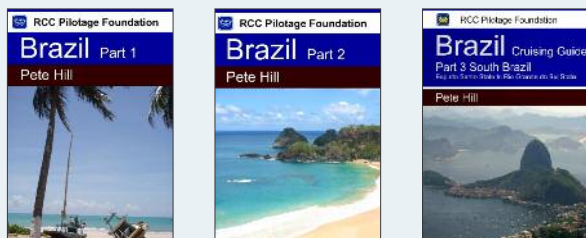
Time zone:

East coast and North coast: UTC - 3Hrs

Fernando de Noronha: UTC - 2Hrs

Telephone country code : 0055

Brazil is the largest country in South America and has a population of approximately 208 million. The population is concentrated largely within coastal areas, so deserted beaches are unusual - but they can be found. Brazil is often regarded as a country suffering from extreme bureaucracy and high levels of crime. Many yachtsmen, while not denying these attributes, claim that the many attractions of the country outweigh the downside.



For more information see: **Brazil by Pete Hill**

Published by

The Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation

Available from:

<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>

Weather

Brazil has a nearly hurricane-free record and it is possible to cruise the entire coast all year-round. The north coast of Brazil is predominantly in the Southeast Trade wind belt, but the area north and south of the Amazon mouth is affected by the annual migration of the ITCZ. In March the ITCZ moves south as far as São Luis and in September it moves north of the Amazon. North of the ITCZ lie the Northeast Trade winds. Along the north coast temperatures remain constant throughout the year at about 30°C by day and 23°C at night. The driest months are in spring (September - November) with little rain, but autumn (March - May) is characterised by heavy rain.

The northeast coast of Brazil, as far as 20°S, also lies in the Southeast Trade wind belt, but in the summer months (December - February) the winds tend to be SE off Cabo Branco (7°S) and then progressively more E and NE as one travels south. During the winter (June - August) the winds tend to be more SSE to SE over the whole area. Along this coast there is some seasonal variation in temperature. Summer temperatures in

Salvador average 29°C by day and 23°C at night. During the winter the averages are 26°C by day and 21°C at night.

Navigational aids

The buoyage system in Brazil is IALA-B (Red Right Returning) The lighthouse system is generally good near the main ports, but the range of the less powerful lights is sometimes overstated and sometimes they have been extinguished. The area around ports is usually well marked with lit buoys but these are sometimes extinguished or missing. Away from ports, there are few buoys.

Brazilian charts are generally excellent, though not all inshore areas have good coverage. Most of these charts can be downloaded free of charge from the Brazilian Navy website. This can be reached through the following link:

<https://www.marinha.mil.br/chm/chm/dados-do-segnav-cartas-nauticas/cartas-nauticas>

These charts can be used on most computer navigational programs. Two recommended freely downloadable programs are :

OpenCPN (<https://opencpn.org>)

and

Seaclear II (<http://www.sping.com/seaclear/>)

BSB converter (<https://bsb-converter.apponic.com>) is also free and allows the charts to be viewed as jpg files.

It has been reported by yachtsmen that C-Map charts, while useful around the major ports, are not generally adequate for inshore coastal navigation elsewhere. They are often on too small a scale and can show coasts and islands hundreds of metres out of position. Garmin Bluecharts similarly show much of the coast in inadequate detail.

Navionics charts, based on the Brazilian hydrographic charts, provide good detailed coverage of the coast.

Formalities

1. Dress:

All manner of public offices in Brazil demand a certain standard of dress and you may be turned away if you do not conform to it. For men it is necessary to wear long trousers, a shirt (not a T-shirt) and enclosed shoes (not flip-flops or open-toed sandals). The dress code for women is more flexible but a comparable degree of formality is recommended.

2. Clearing in:

Entry to the country must be made at an official Port of Entry. (*See the individual port notes following this section.*) Officials are generally friendly and helpful, but few of them speak languages other than Portuguese,

so it is advisable - and polite - to learn a few relevant words and phrases in their language before entering the country.

Some yachtsmen have reported that on entry into Brazil they were told to use officially approved agents (*despachantes*) to collect crew passports and ship's papers and organise all entry formalities. In 2016 a *despachante's* fee was of the order of 500 - 1000 Reals (equivalent to about £113 - £226 at December 2017 exchange rates).

This pressure is most likely to be felt in commercial ports like Natal. It is better to enter the country at ports like Salvador, Recife, Cabedelo or Fernando de Noronha, where officialdom is accustomed to dealing with visiting yachts.

Entry clearance can be very time-consuming, so it is advisable to begin the clearance process as early as possible in the day. Government offices usually close for lunch from 1130 - 1400. Normally, yachts are not boarded; it is the skipper's responsibility to locate and visit the relevant offices.

The required documents are the Ship's Registration certificate, a valid passport for each member of the crew (with a visa if required), and the clearance document from your last port. Anyone arriving from an area where yellow fever is endemic must produce a yellow fever vaccination certificate, or will have to be vaccinated in Brazil.

Passports must be valid for not less than six months from your arrival date. (This does not apply to Argentinians or Uruguayans, who only require a national identity card.)

Citizens of many countries do not require a visa for stays of up to 90 days in a 180 day period.

Others, including Australian, United States and Canadian citizens are required to obtain a visa before arriving. As regulations change, it is advisable to check the visa situation with the Brazilian Consulate General's office in your own country before setting out for Brazil.

If there is any doubt, obtain a visa in advance - but note that you must then enter Brazil within 90 days of the issue date. A 90 day visa *may* be renewable for another 90 days on request, from the Federal Police (immigration authority) subject to payment of a fee.

It is also a good idea to carry a copy of the resolution which exempts non-commercial private yachts from needing a Health Certificate. (See the Noonsite website Brazil - Formalities and follow the link to Brazilian Health Controls.) Not all officials are inclined to accept that document, so it is possible you will be told to visit the *Vigilância Sanitária* (Health Authorities). In that event, all crew members may be required to produce their vaccination records.

It is essential to visit the various offices in the correct order, as certain forms need to be taken from one office to another. The first office to visit is Immigration (*Policia Federal*), where every member of the crew must attend in person. Each has to complete a 2-page immigration form (*Cartão de Entrada e Saída*). Copies of these are then issued to each person together with their visa documents, and their passports will be stamped with the number of days for which their visas are valid. Should they later want to apply for a visa renewal, they will need to produce their original visa document. They will also need to have it to hand back, on departure from Brazil. Depending upon the judgement of the officer on duty, they may be asked for proof that they have sufficient funds for their stay. This may affect the number of days allowed on their visa.

Immigration will also issue your yacht's entry pass (*Passe de Entrada de embarcação*). This document must be handed in when you leave that port.

The next office to visit is Customs (*Receita Federal*). Some yachts report that all crew members must be present at this visit too - and at the visit to the Port Captain's office. There appears to be some inconsistency between ports in this respect.

At the Customs Office you should present your ship's papers, passports, last port of call clearance, yacht's entry pass and an e-DBV (declaration of goods) form.

You can generate and print this form in advance, or find a local internet shop at which to do it.

Go to the websites listed for:

<http://receita.economia.gov.br/orientacao/aduaneira/viagens-internacionais/guia-do-viajante/guia-do-viajante-versao-ingles/e-dbv>

and find one which gives step by step instructions for completion of this form.

Translations are available on Google.

On receipt of these documents you will be given temporary import papers for your yacht: the TECAT or *Termo de concessão de admission temporaria*.

The TECAT gives you the right to bring your yacht into the country without having to pay tax, as you are in transit and not running a business there. It is valid for as long as your visa remains valid. If you renew your visa you will need to renew your TECAT. Although the *Receita Federal* need only be visited on first entry and on exit from the country, in practice you may be asked to produce this document at intermediate ports. Non-Brazilian yachts in transit which are flying a Mercosul flag, i.e. those from Argentina, Paraguay or Uruguay, do not need a TECAT.

Your third visit is to the Port Captain's office, where after presenting your papers, you will receive a signed,

dated and stamped Statement of Port Entry/Departure of Foreign Boat form (*Declaração de Entrada/Sida de Embarcação Estrangeira*).

3. Clearing out:

Once again, you may find that all crew members must attend all meetings with the authorities for outward clearance.

Your first call is Immigration, where you will need to present the ship's papers, the passports, the *Carteo de Entrada e Saida* forms and the *Passe de Entrada de Embarcação*. In return, you will receive the ship's papers, the stamped passports and a *Passe de Saida de Embarcação*.

Next go to Customs and present the ship's papers, your passports and the *Passe de Saida de Embarcação*. You will receive all of these documents back plus an exit stamped *Tempo de Concessão de Admissão Temporária* form (TECAT).

Finally, go to the Port Captain's Office, present the ship's papers, passports, the TECAT form, the *Passe de Saida de Embarcação* and the *Declaração de Entrada/Saida de Embarcação Estrangeira* form. These will be reviewed and returned to you. The exit section of the *Declaração* should be completed, stamped and signed by the official and will then be your official exit clearance document.

If you are calling in at other ports in Brazil after leaving your port of entry, you need to obtain clearance to your next port. If you ask for clearance *con escala* (with stops) you are entitled to cruise and stop along the way. At every major port you visit while in Brazil, you must visit Immigration and the Port Captain's Office. This is particularly important when you are entering a new state. Failure to comply can lead to heavy fines.

4. Leaving your yacht in Brazil while you travel outside the country:

This is permitted, but responsibility for the yacht must be assumed by a marina or boatyard acceptable to the *Receita Federal*.

The required form must be stamped by the *Policia Federal*, the *Receita Federal* and the Port Captain. All three must be revisited when you wish to take back responsibility for the yacht.

Note that the TECAT allows only a temporary import of the vessel. It is not possible to import a second-hand yacht legally into Brazil, so you should not expect to keep your yacht there indefinitely. A foreign yacht can remain in the country for up to two years but must then be exported.

Importing parts

Brazil has a 60% import duty and while it is possible to

import duty free for a yacht in transit, it has to be done in the right way. Once the duty has been paid it is almost impossible to have it refunded. If ordering through an agent, obtain a written assurance that the parts will be duty free. If you are ordering parts yourself, do not involve parcel services such as DHL or Fedex. They will pay the duty and customs charges before delivery and will not release the items to you unless you pay them those charges. Instead, have the parts sent to you by post, care of a yacht club or marina. When the parcel arrives, take along your ship's papers and your passport and you should be able to collect the parcel without having to pay. It would, however, be a good idea to have a Portuguese speaker with you!

Fuel

1. Diesel

Alongside refuelling is not widely available, so fill your tanks when you can. Seek advice, though, because diesel containing water is quite a common problem on fuel pontoons.

The diesel at filling stations has a fairly high bio-fuel content and apparently the slightly more expensive 'S10' diesel is better for older engines.

2. Petrol

Petrol and 2-stroke oil are readily available at filling stations and fuel docks.

3. Paraffin (kerosene)

This is difficult to find and very expensive.

4. Ethanol

This is usually available at filling stations.

5. Butane gas

Butane is a popular cooking fuel and most gas depots will refill bottles for you if you have the right adaptors - but they will often charge you twice the price for the gas.

Currency

In April 2019, the Brazilian real was worth about £0.197 or US \$0.254.

Security

Brazil has a very high level of crime but the likelihood of one's becoming a victim can be reduced by sensible behaviour, such as avoiding back streets, trying not to walk alone and avoiding unnecessary displays of cash, jewellery, watches, cameras and mobile phones. After dark, use taxis rather than walking. It is also a good idea *not* to carry one's passport except on official visits. (See ID below.)

Dinghies and outboard motors are particularly at risk of being stolen, so they should be brought aboard and locked at night.

By day, a locked dinghy and outboard on a public beach are likely to be safe.

It would be prudent to lock cabin hatches before going to sleep at night.

ID

It is mandatory to carry ID at all times when in Brazil, but this does not have to be your passport. A driving licence with your photograph will usually be acceptable. You can make your own official-looking ID card from colour copies of the front cover and the photo page of your passport, reduced to about one third-size and laminated back to back. To lose this in a robbery would not be a great problem.

Health

All visitors should ascertain the health risks to be encountered in the areas they intend to visit and act upon this information. These risks may include malaria, dengue fever, cholera, typhoid, hepatitis, yellow fever, rabies and ZIKA virus.

Paths near beaches may be infested with *bicho de pé*, a type of jigger (chigoe flea) that enters the sole of your foot through the skin and then grows within your flesh. Always wear shoes until you are properly on the beach!

Private health care in Brazil is good but expensive, so medical insurance may be advisable. Pharmacies can be found everywhere and pharmacists are accustomed to advising upon minor medical issues and dispensing drugs which would require a doctor's prescription elsewhere. Dentistry is generally good and available at European prices.



Jangadas at Praia Pajucara, Maceio Pete Hill

Maceió

09°42.2'S 35°40'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Maceió Lt 09°39.8'S 35°43.56'W

Al.FI.WR.20s68m43/36M

Ponte Verde Lt 09°40.0'S 35°41.5'W

Fl10s13m13M

Max tidal range: 2.5m

This is a major city and a popular holiday resort, with white sandy beaches. It began as a sugar-milling town and is still in an area of sugar cane plantations, but it has grown to become the capital city of Alagoas State.

There is an anchorage but there are no pontoon facilities or alongside berths. The anchorage is about 2km from the city centre.

Approach and entry

There are reefs to the east and southeast of the city, but keeping outside the 20m line clears all offshore dangers.

Two useful waypoints are:

WP1: 09°42.20'S, 35°40.50'W

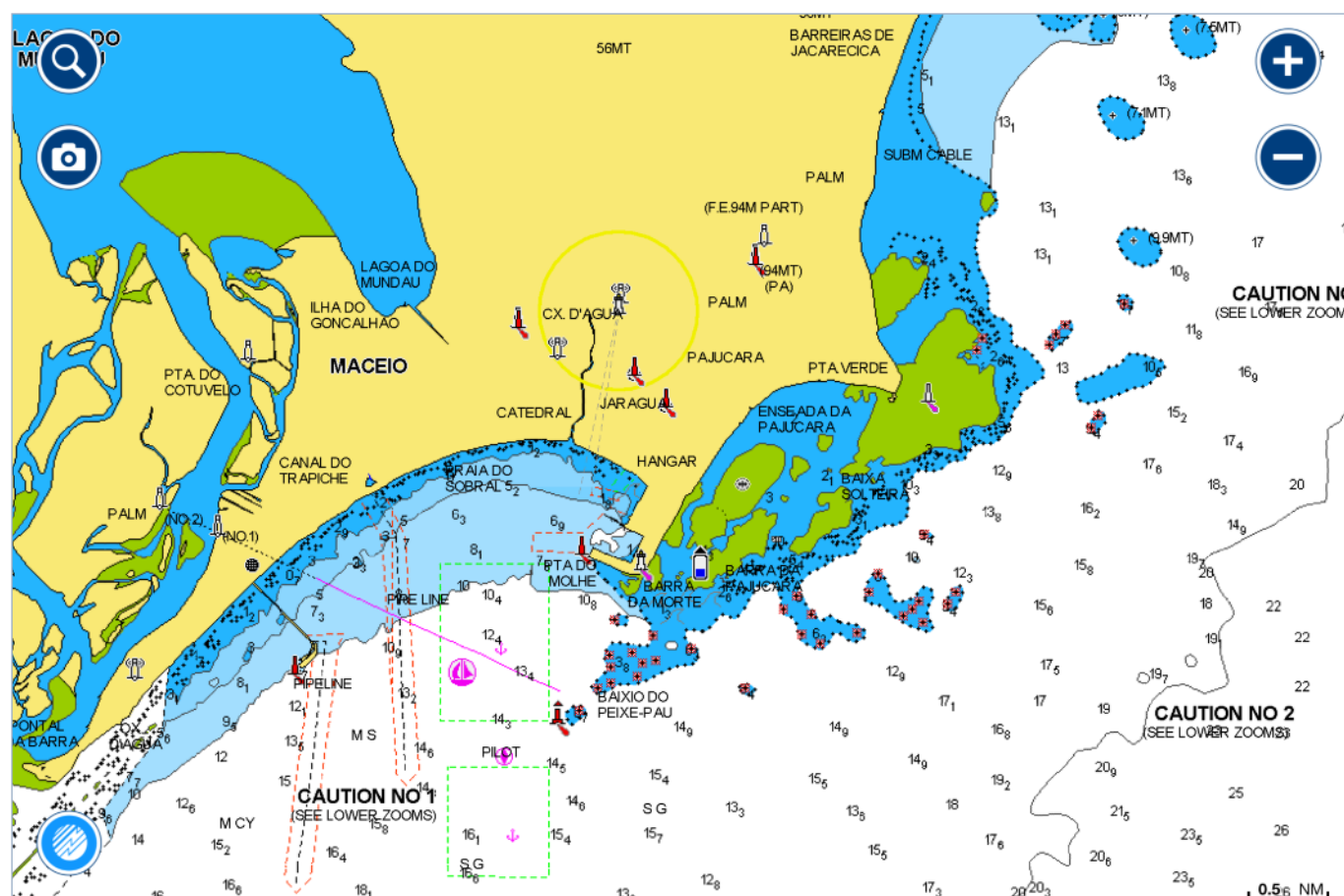
WP2: 09°42.10'S, 35°44.00'W

Approaching from the north: head for **WP1** and thence to **WP2**.

Approaching from the south: head directly to **WP2**

From **WP2**, head north towards the city, leaving the Fl3s red buoy to starboard and passing west of the port area, with its conspicuous sugar warehouses.

Anchor outside the fishing boat moorings, in 2.5 - 3m. Going ashore, land on the beach at the yacht club (see below) and take your dinghy inside the club gates.

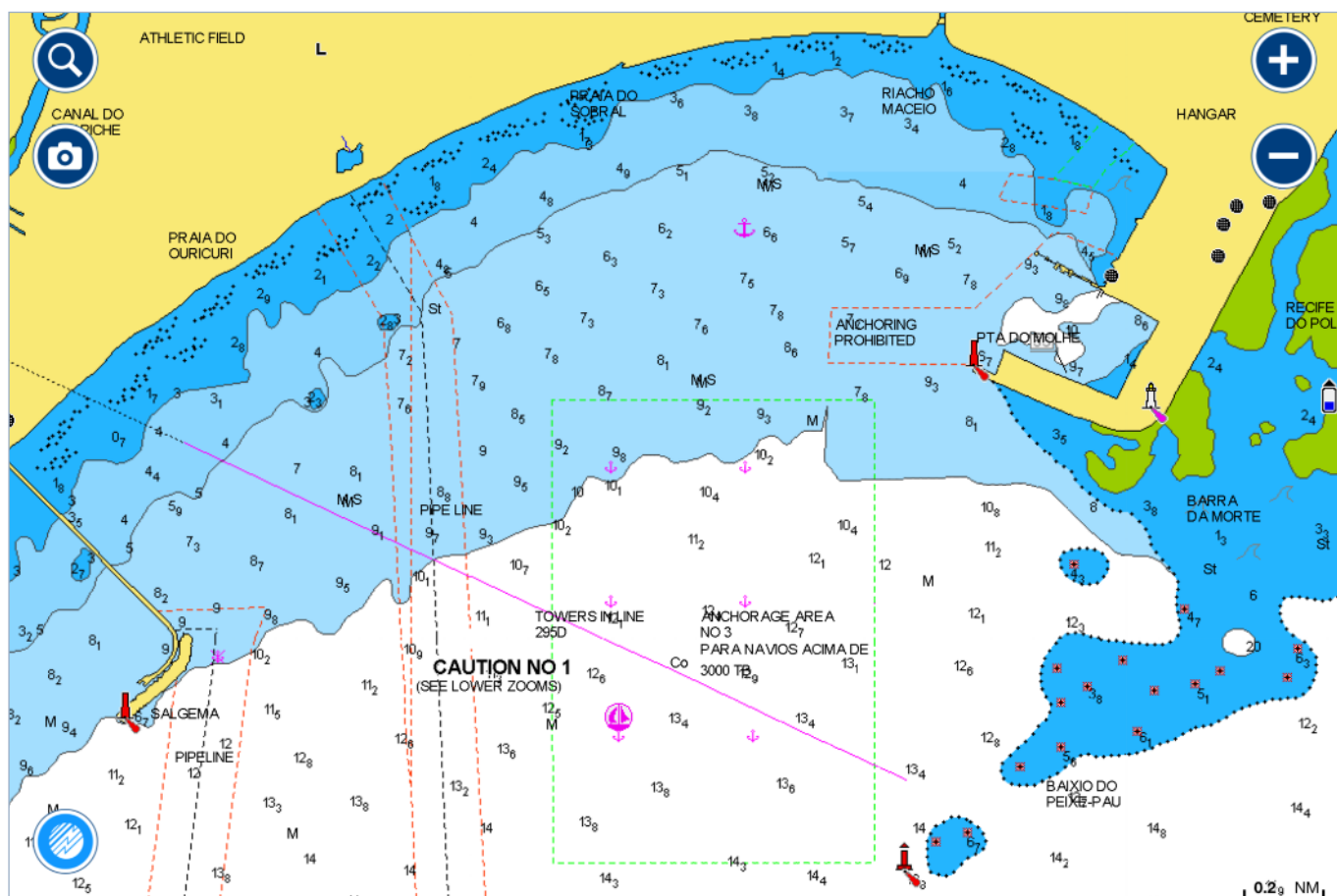


PLAN 23: Maceio Approach

NAVIONICS



Maceio Harbour Pete Hill



PLAN 24: Maceio Detail

Club

Federação Alageana de Vela e Motor,
Avenida Cicero Toledo, 333 Jaraguá
Caixa Postal 1003 Maceió-Al-Brazil
Tel: (0)82 3223 - 4334

The club is very welcoming and allows visiting yachtsmen free use of its facilities. These include showers, toilets, a bar and a snack bar, and the supply

of drinking water. There is no fuel on site but for a fee, one of the club staff will collect jerricans of fuel for you and bring them to the club in a wheelbarrow.

Engine repairs and other engineering jobs, including stainless steel fabrication, can be arranged on site.

Provisions

The two big Bom Precio supermarkets are equidistant from the club and a good half-hour walk away. One is in the city centre on the Ave. Maceió and the other is in the Padjucara district east of the club, on the road one block in from the beach.

Formalities

See the Formalities section in *Brazil - an overview*, above.

If Maceió is your port of entry you must go through the full entry procedure. If you have arrived from another Brazilian port, you must nonetheless visit the *Policia Federal* (Immigration) and the Port Captain's office. The *Policia Federal* office is at Ave. Walter Ananias 705 Jaraguá, Maceió. *Receita Federal* is at Rua S'a e Albuquerque 541 Jaraguá and the *Capitania dos Portos* is at Rua S'a e Albuquerque Bairro s/n Jaraguá.



Anchorage at Maceio Pete Hill

Recife

08°02.7'S 34°54.3'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Olinda Lt 08°00.7'S 34°50.8'W

Fl(2)35s90m46M

Recife Al. 08°03.3'S 34°51.9'W

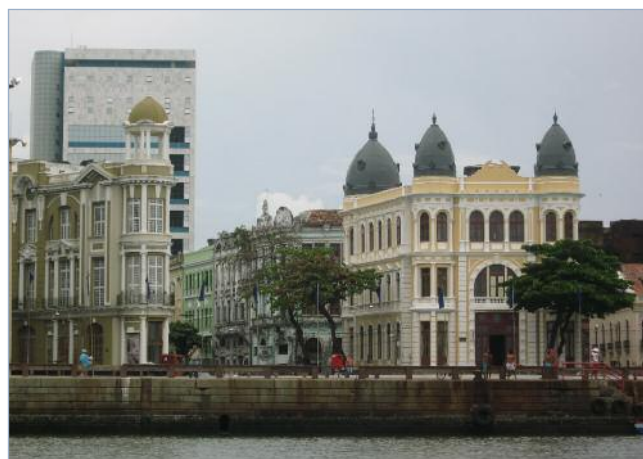
FIWR12s20mW17M,R13M

Max tidal range: 2.53m

This major port is the capital of Pernambuco State and is one of the largest cities in Brazil. Recife has been undergoing major renovation in recent years and with improving security, is now a much safer and more attractive place to visit. The city is threaded with rivers and dotted with numerous bridges. Three miles to the north is the old colonial town of Olinda, which is another attraction.

Entry

Recife harbour is safe to enter in all weathers. It is guarded by a 2 mile long sea wall built on a reef, which runs parallel and close to the shore. The harbour entrance is at the north end of the reef and is sheltered by another sea wall built on the Banco Ingles, just outside it. Entry can be made passing either north or south of the Banco Ingles, but the southern channel



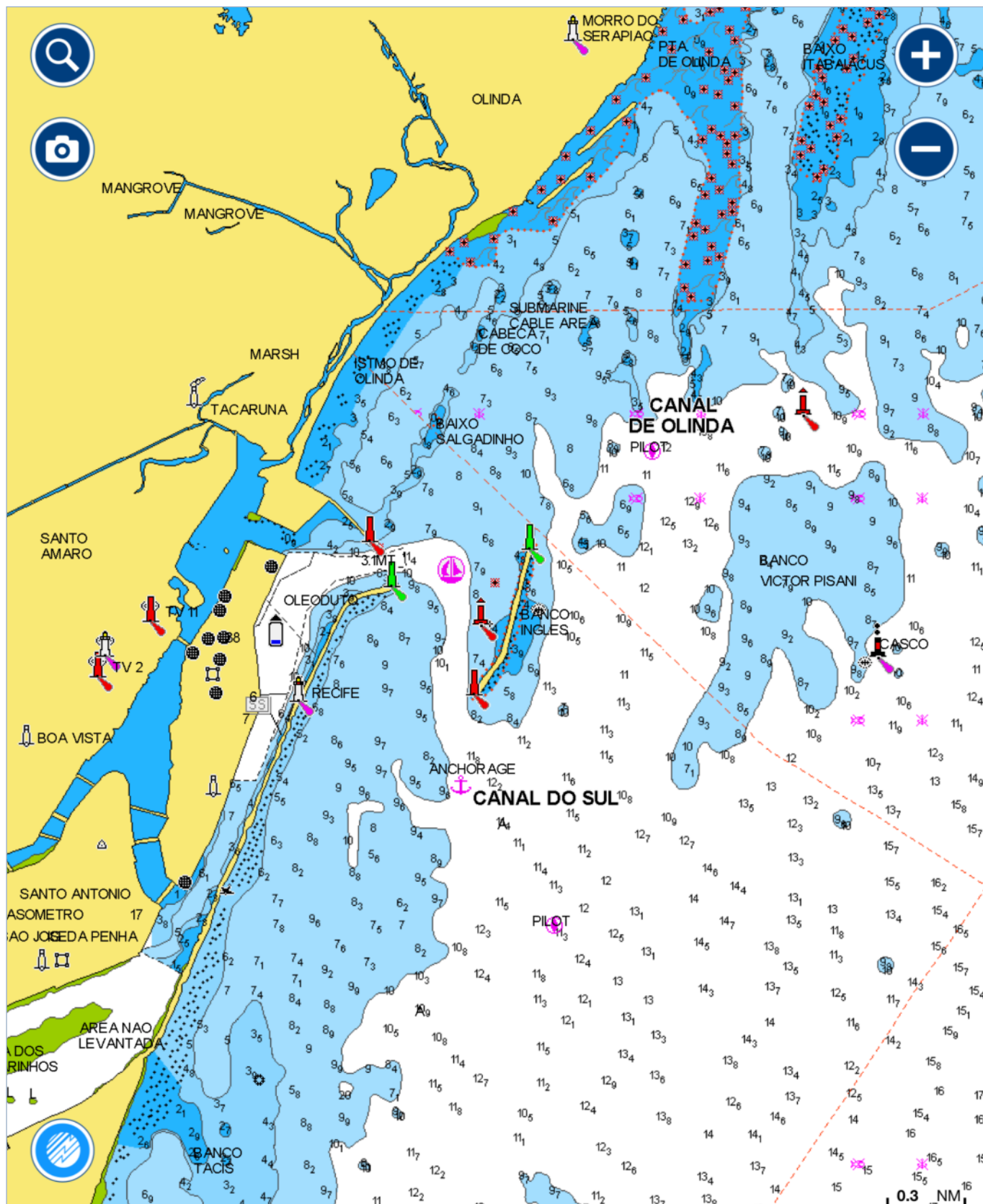
Old Recife at ferry landing *Pete Hill*

(Canal Sul) is the safer. It is straightforward and clear of dangers as long as you pass S of the Banco Victor Pisani, which lies east of the Banco Ingles. From offshore, the location of the entrance can usually be recognised from the presence of cargo ships anchored outside.

Once through the entrance, turn to port and follow the breakwater. In about 1.5M you will come to Pernambuco late Clube (Pernambuco Yacht Club), lying to port. This club has now closed. Half a mile further on is the late Clube de Recife, also to port, up an unmarked channel. On the city (starboard) side of the harbour by the bridge at the south end of the harbour, is the Cabanga late Clube.



Recife harbour from Olinda *Pete Hill*



PLAN 25: Recife Approach

NAVIONICS



Recife Pete Hill

Anchoring, mooring and berthing

The only permitted area for anchoring in Recife harbour is the area in front of the Pernambuco Yacht Club. The bottom is mud. The current can be strong, the holding is poor and the water is often full of rubbish.

Clubs

Pernambuco late Clube

Muro de Pedras do Porto do Recife

s/n - Brasília Teimosa

Recife PE, 50030-230, Brazil

Although Pernambuco late Clube has closed, it is possible to anchor next to the jetty in 9m, mud, with reportedly good holding. It is only a short dinghy ride across the river to Old Recife, but it is difficult to find a safe place to leave a dinghy once you have arrived. A better option is to moor your dinghy on the yacht club pontoons and then to cross the river using the dinghy ferry service which runs from the new monument on the breakwater road north of the club.

For a late return, it is advisable to take a taxi, because walking back via the road bridge south of the club leads you through a favela at the south end of the breakwater and this is considered dangerous.

late Clube de Recife

R.Badejo, 4 Brasília Teimosa

Recife PE, 51010-040, Brazil

Tel: (0)81 3326 2017

This is Recife's powerboat club. The channel up to the club is unmarked but reportedly has 3m at high water. Visitor buoys and berths are available. The club has a fuel dock (cash only) and water is available by hose at the adjacent fire station (*Bombeiros*).

Security is good, but the club is next to the favela at the south end of the breakwater. Going ashore here on foot outside the club is risky, especially after dark.

Cabanga late Clube

s/n Ave. Ang José Estelita - Cabanga

Recife PE, 53427-660, Brazil

Tel: (0)81 3428-4272

This is a luxurious, upmarket yacht and social club, with a swimming pool and two restaurants. The club is reached by following the city side of the channel and entering the final dredged approach which is marked by small buoys. When it has been recently dredged there should be 2m of water but at times only 1.6m



Moorings at PIC Recife Pete Hill

have been reported. It is advisable to wait for a daylight high water for entry or departure from the club basin. Mooring in the club basin is bows-to with a stern line to a buoy. Opposite the basin entrance there is a floating pontoon, where you should lie while waiting to be assigned a berth.

Walking into the city is not practicable, because of the number of railway lines and road bridges, but it is only a 10 minute bus ride and there are frequent buses from a stop just outside the club.

Information and provisions

The Tourist Office in Praça de Arsenal has English speaking staff and useful maps.

The supermarkets are not in the centre but in Boa Viagem, a suburb south of the city. There is a fairly large supermarket in a shopping mall not far from the airport, which can be reached by use of the 'Aeroporto' buses.

Formalities

See the Formalities section in *Brazil - an overview*, above.

If Recife is your port of entry, you must go through the full entry procedure. If you have arrived from another Brazilian port, you must nonetheless visit the *Policia Federal* (Immigration) and the Port Captain's office. The Port Captain's office is at the north end of the Praça de Arsenal, in the centre of Recife, a short walk from the ferry landing place if you are coming from the Pernambuco Yacht Club. Customs and Immigration are in the dock area, just over half a mile north of the Port Captain's office and due west of the north end of the breakwater.

Cabedelo and Jacaré

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Pedra Seca Lt 06°57.4'S 34°49.4'W

FI(3)W10s16m16M

Cabedelo breakwater Lt 06°57.7'S 34°50.8'W

FIG6s8m7M

Cabo Branco Lt 07°09'S 34°47.78'W

FIW10s46m27M

Jacaré 07°02.9'S 34°51.5'W

Max tidal range (Cabedelo): 2.62m

Cabedelo is a small port at the mouth of the Rio Paraíba, at the NE corner of Brazil. It is a popular entry port for yachts arriving in Brazil after crossing the North or South Atlantic, but has no facilities for yachtsmen. Jacaré, a riverside village 5 miles upstream (i.e. south) of Cabedelo, is a yachting centre with several marinas and an anchorage.



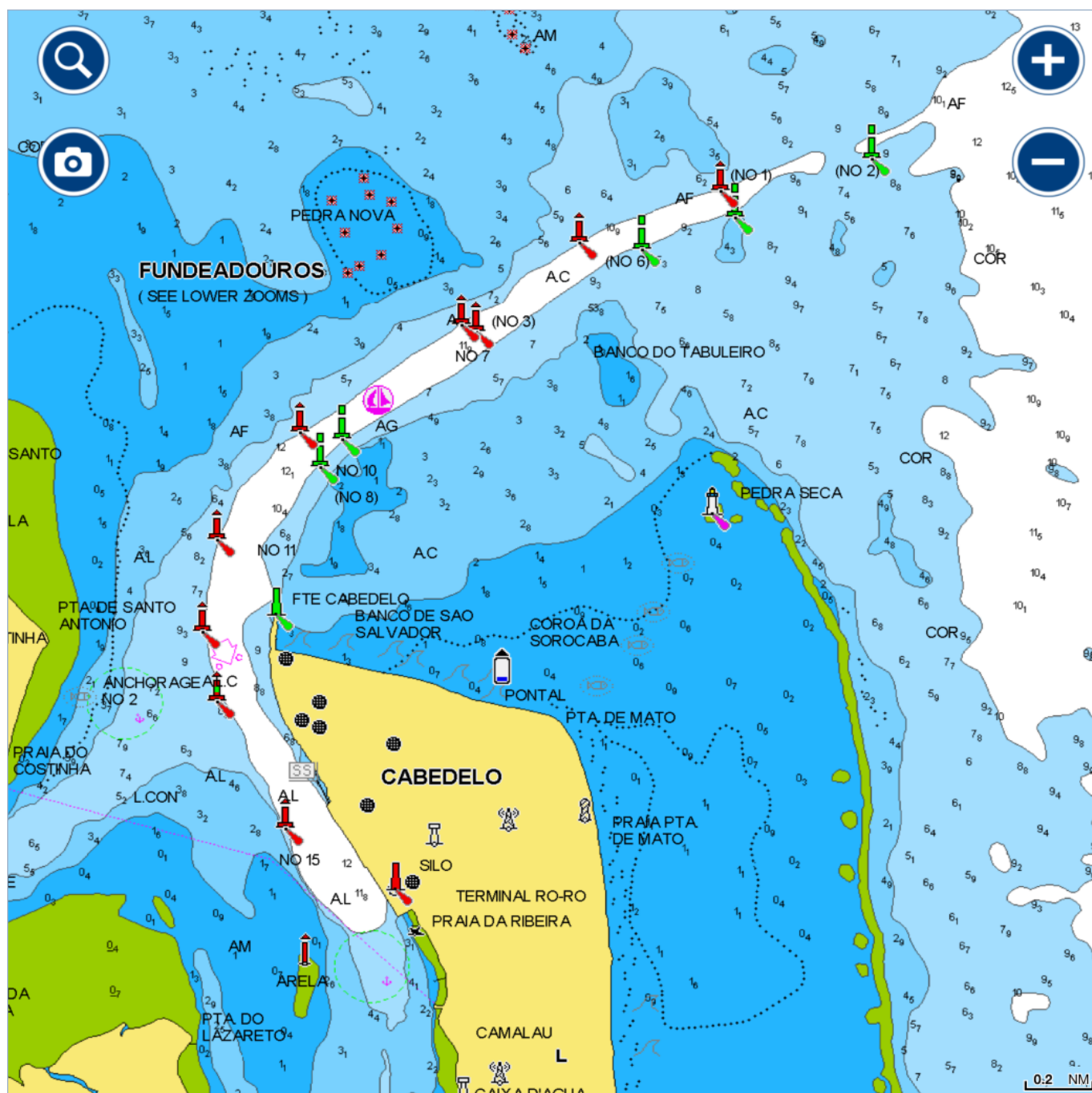
Igreja de São Francisco, João Pessoa Pete Hill

Entry

There are no off-lying dangers outside the 20m line. If approaching from offshore, make adequate allowance for the strong north-flowing current.

Approaching from the south: the high rise apartments of João Pessoa and its suburbs (5 miles south of Jacaré) will be seen starting close north of Cabo Branco. Do not cross the 20m line until you are east of the fairway buoy. The Pedra Seca light marks the northern end of a long reef running parallel to the coast. The buoyed entry channel starts half a mile north of this light. The

PLAN 26: Cabedelo and Jacaré Approach



PLAN 27: Cabedelo



buoys are lit but light failures are not unknown. The buoyage stops at the port of Cabedelo, just inside the river. Keep a lookout for car and passenger ferries running between Cabedelo and Costinha during daylight hours and early evening.

Approaching from the north: there are low red cliffs but the first high rise constructions you will see are the tall silos and factory at the north end of the harbour. There is a 4m unmarked channel from Cabedelo up to Jacaré, best taken in daylight.

At night, it would be prudent to anchor off Cabedelo and wait for daylight before going upriver. The local fishermen string submerged nets across the river day



Building, conspic. Cabedelo Pete Hill



PLAN 28: Cabedelo to Jacaré



and night, buoyed at each end, but they tend to keep watch and to retrieve their nets when they see oncoming traffic.

Anchoring, mooring and berthing

You can anchor at Cabedelo, south of the port facilities and outside the moorings, in 4m. This anchorage is rarely used other than for an overnight stop, as there is nowhere suitable to leave a dinghy ashore.

At Jacaré, you can anchor, pick up a mooring or take a marina berth.

The main marinas in Jacaré (listed from north to south) are:

Big Toys Marine (*mostly motor yachts*)

Jacaré Marina (*mostly motor boats*)

Marina Jacaré Village

(*Philippe Fessard, a Frenchman who speaks excellent English, has established very comprehensive facilities to cater for cruising yachts.*)

Centro Nautico do Jacaré / Peter's Pier Marina

(*Peter von Buldring speaks excellent English and German.*)

Jacaré Yacht Club

Jacaré Marine

(*Brian Stevens, an English boat-builder and long-term resident here, is very knowledgeable and helpful. He has one or two moorings*)



Peter's Pier Marina, Jacaré *Pete Hill*

The most expensive marina berths are those offered by Marina Jacaré Village, which has two floating jetties with berths for 40 visiting yachts, moored bow or stern to the jetties. Facilities include water, electricity, Wi-Fi, laundry, toilets, showers, library/book exchange, lounge area, swimming pool and café/bar. This marina also has four moorings available for hire.

The anchorage near Marina Jacaré Village can hold dozens of yachts. If you anchor there you can use the Marina Jacaré Village facilities for a fee, which in October 2016 was 100 Real per week. The bottom is mud and sand and the holding is good, but it is important to have good ground tackle and to allow generous scope, as the river can flow at 4 - 6 knots at springs.

It is not advisable to anchor close to the waterside bars and restaurants at the south end of the village, as it will be noisy and there will be a lot of small motor boat activity.

Other marina docks can be used free of charge, by prior arrangement with the relevant marina manager.

Jacaré Yacht Club facilities have been particularly recommended by some visiting yachtsmen.

Jacaré Marine has one or more moorings.

Security

Jacaré has generally been regarded as one of the safer places for yachts to visit in Brazil, but in July 2017, four armed bandits came into the bar of the Jacaré Marina and robbed at gunpoint a group of visiting yachtsmen. This incident showed that yachts on the pontoon moorings were very vulnerable as access to the pontoons was unrestricted.

The marina owners are reported to have tightened their security arrangements.

Provisions

There are three large grocery stores in Intermares, a short walk or bus ride from the marina area, but there are also several mini-markets in the area. There are numerous grocery stores in Cabedelo and João Pessoa. Virtually all of these stores accept Visa or Mastercard and are open seven days per week. The biggest local market for fruit, vegetables, fish and meat is in Cabedelo.

Formalities

See the Formalities section in *Brazil - an overview*, above.

If Cabedelo/Jacaré is your port of entry, you must go through the full entry procedure. If you have arrived from another Brazilian port, you must nonetheless visit the *Polícia Federal* (Immigration) and the Port Captain's office.

All the authorities you need to visit are located by the docks in Cabedelo, close to the big yellow and white church (*Paroquia Sagrado Coração de Jesus*), on Rua Presidente João Pessoa.



Jacaré Yacht Village Marina *Pete Hill*

Natal

05°45'S, 35°12'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Pta. Mae Luise 5°47'S 35°11.1'W

Fl(5)5s87m9M (Conspic white tower)

Max tidal range: 2.62m

Natal is the capital of the state of Rio Grande do Norte, situated on the Rio Potengi. It is a popular tourist destination with no special attractions for the cruising yachtsman, but there are good anchorages, good general repair facilities and good supermarkets.



Natal City *Pete Hill*

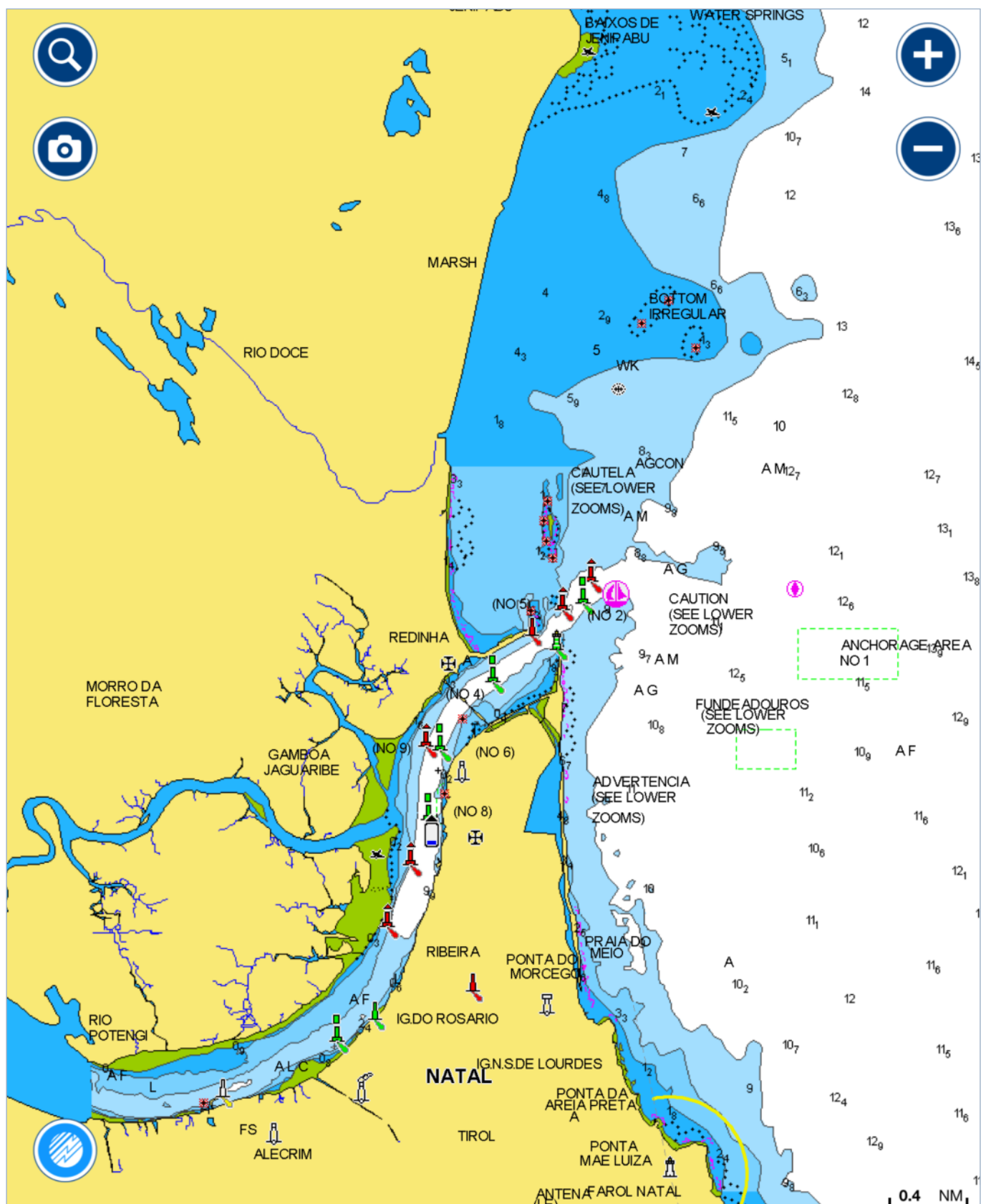
Entry

The approach is straightforward with no off-lying dangers outside the 10m line. Locate the port and starboard-hand entry buoys and after passing between them, head into the river between the breakwaters. Note that north and east of the entrance there are reefs and shallows. As the entrance is narrow, tidal

streams can be strong and there may be overfalls on the ebb. Keep to the buoyed channel which leads under the high level bridge, but when there are large ships on the move, stay on the northwest side of the channel. There is a 1.9m shoal (Banco das Velhas) on the southeast side.



Natal Harbour Entrance *Pete Hill*



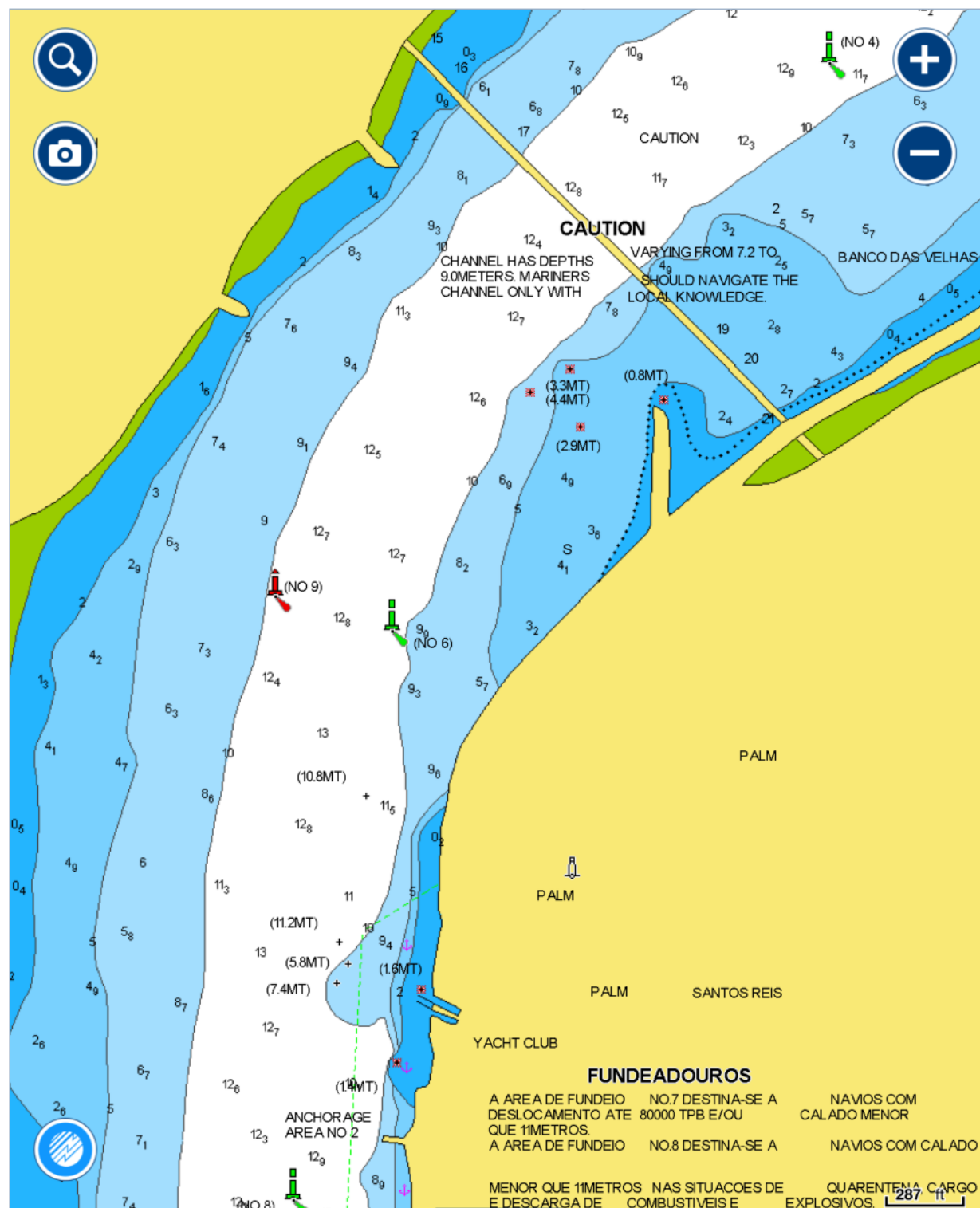
PLAN 29: Natal Approach



The usual yacht anchorage is south or southeast of the green buoy which lies south of the bridge and north of the yacht club. Anchor in 8-12m, well inshore to keep clear of the fairway. (The deeper water is closer to the yacht club.) Be warned that on the ebb, wind against current often causes anchored yachts to sheer about. Show an anchor light.

The yacht club (late Clube do Natal) has a very small floating dock and some mooring buoys. These may be available for use by visiting yachts for a fee. Going ashore, land at the beach by the club or at the floating dock.

If you do not want to make use of the yacht club, it may be possible to anchor on the northwest side of the river, south of the bridge in about 8m, and to land ashore on the beach there.



PLAN 30: Natal Anchorage



Natal Yacht Club Marina and Anchorage *Pete Hill*

Club

late Clube do Natal

Rua Cal Flaminho,s/n,Santos Reis - Natal RN, Cep 59010-500 Brazil

Tel: (0) 84-3202 4402

The club makes visitors very welcome and gives three days' free temporary membership, after which a charge of R\$35.00 per day is made. The club office is open 0830 - 1130 and 1330 - 1730, every day except Mondays. Water, showers (cold), bar, restaurant, laundry and Wi-Fi are available. Good general repair facilities.

Provisions

There are no supermarkets near the yacht club but there are several in the city. The nearest is in the city centre: Supermarket Nordestão, Rua Trairi, 342. It is a long walk, but fortunately there is a frequent bus service (#47) from near the club.

Formalities

See the Formalities section in *Brazil - an overview*, above.



Bridge at Natal *Pete Hill*

If Natal is your port of entry, you must go through the full entry procedure.

If you have arrived from another Brazilian port, you must nonetheless visit the *Polícia Federal* (Immigration), half an hour away by car in Natal, and the Port Captain's office, which is in the nearby port area.

If Natal is to be your final port in Brazil, you will additionally need to visit the *Receita Federal*.

The club can help with formalities, if necessary.



Fort dos Reis Magos *Pete Hill*

Fortaleza (aka Mucuripé)

03°43'S 38°30'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Farol Mucuripe 03°43.56'S 38°28.32'W

Fl(2)10s85m43M

Max tidal range: 2.92m

This city has a population of over 2½ million and is the capital of the state of Ceará. It is at the centre of a popular holiday coast. The interesting historic city centre, which had been allowed to decline for many decades, is now greatly improved, with many of the old colonial buildings carefully renovated. Close by the Port Captain's office is the cultural centre of the city and the waterfront area is popular with tourists. There are many bars and restaurants, and frequent festivals. Fortaleza has all the facilities you would expect to find in a big city.

Unfortunately, the city has a well-deserved reputation for street crime and yachts moored anywhere other than in the marina at the Marina Park Hotel are at

serious risk of being boarded and robbed by armed gangs.

Approach

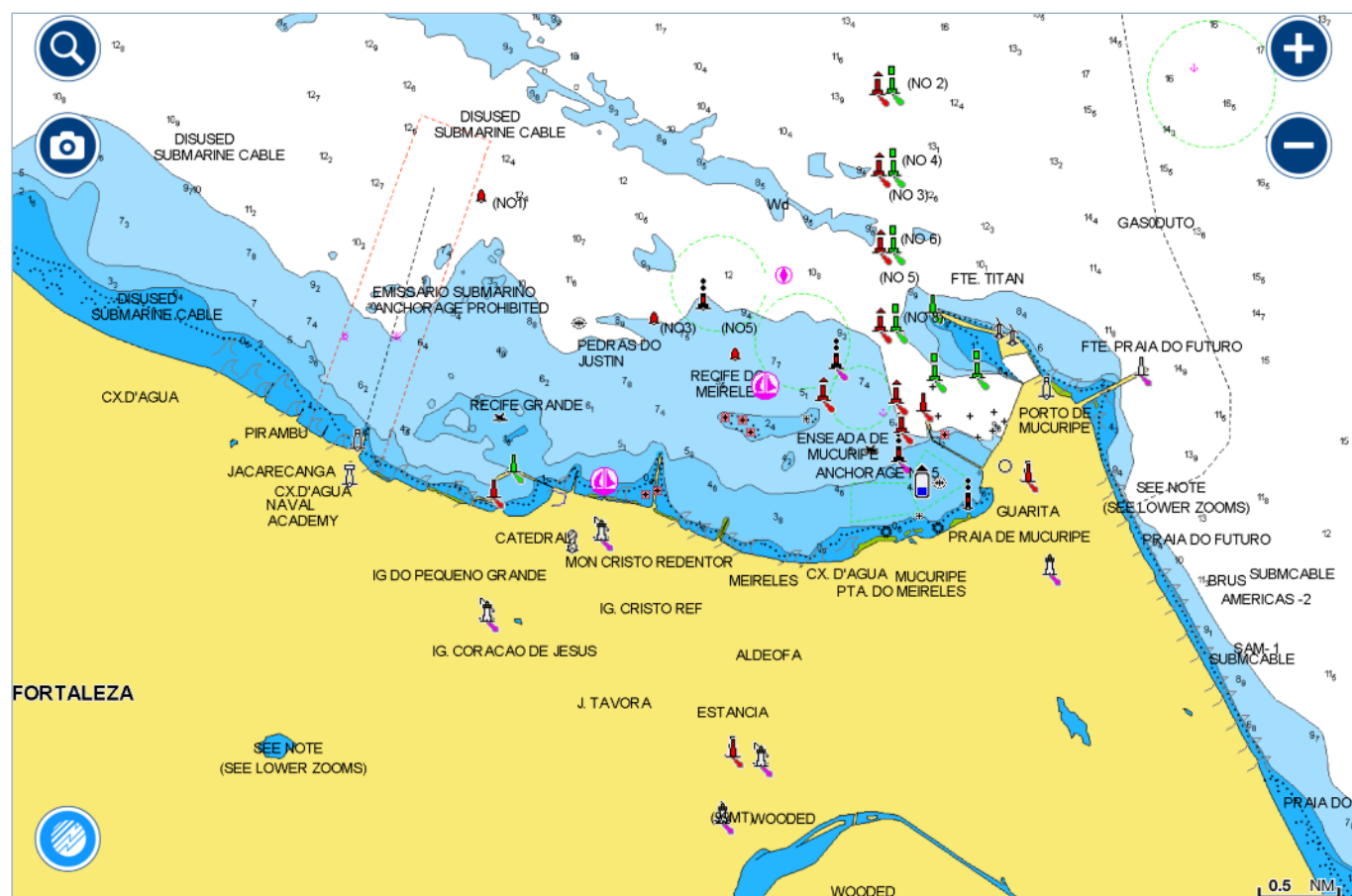
A daylight approach is strongly recommended, because the fishing grounds outside the port are busy with many fishing vessels of various sizes, some of which mark their traps with a pole and a flag (often black) stuck into a lump of polystyrene.

There are no off-lying dangers and the coast can be approached from any seaward direction.

This is an open bay with a breakwater providing shelter from the prevailing easterlies. However, the bay itself is strewn with wrecks. Those which are not buoyed show above water. Those which are buoyed are difficult to see at night because they are poorly lit.

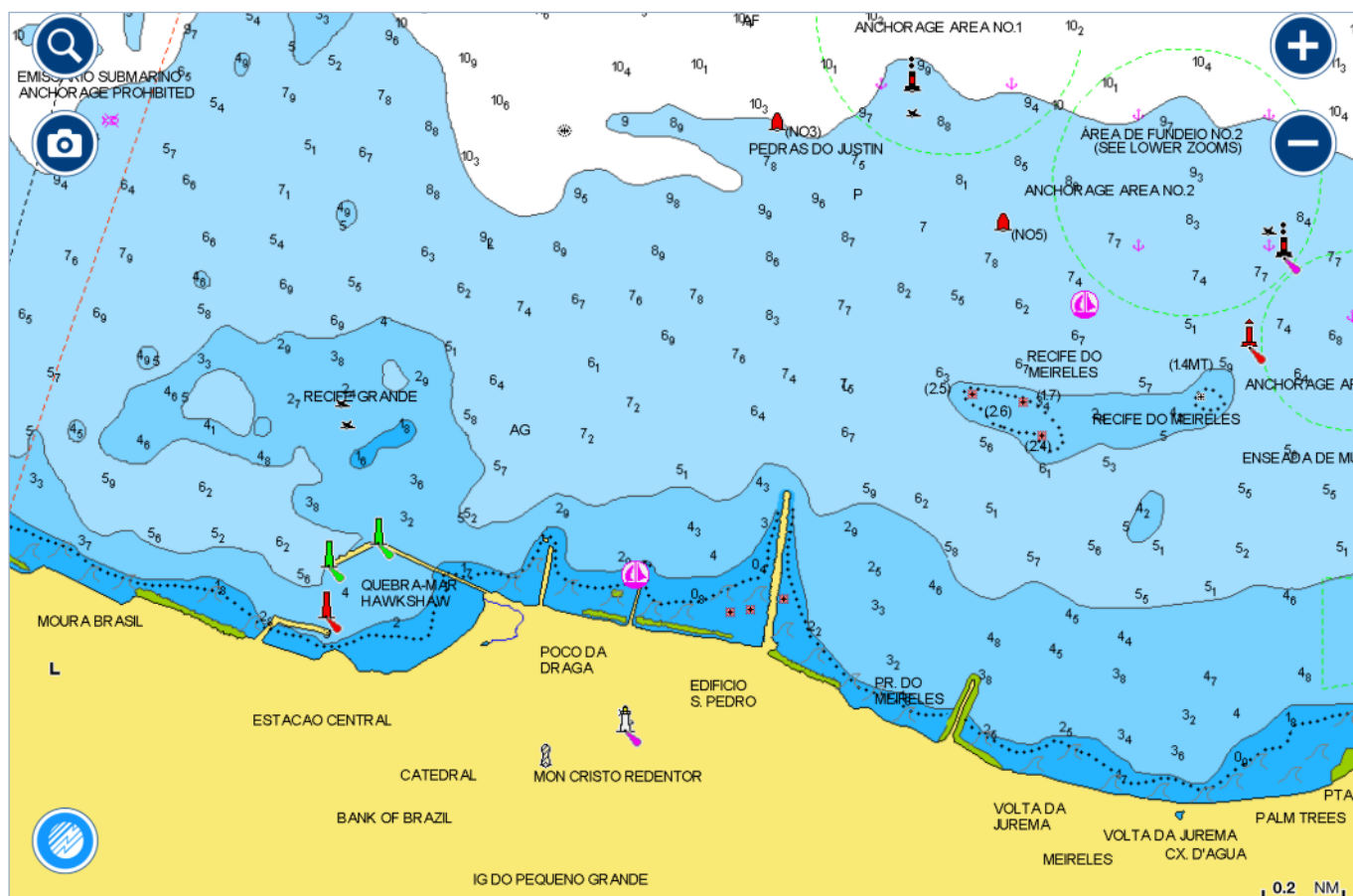
From the south: keeping outside the 10m line clears all dangers, but it is probably advantageous to stay further offshore and have the benefit of the stronger favourable current.

From the northwest: keeping outside the 10m line clears all dangers except the port facilities at Pecem, 20M northwest of Fortaleza., but these are conspicuous by day and lit at night.



PLAN 31: Fortaleza Approach

NAVIONICS



PLAN 32: Fortaleza Detail



Entry

The entrance to the marina is at 03°43.0'S, 38°31.7'W, to the north of the conspicuous Fortaleza Cathedral.

From the south: pass the breakwater at Pta Mucuripé and then round the breakwater to the north of the port. Then head west to pass north of the Recife Meireles and north of the large conspicuous wreck on the Recife Grande. Once past the wreck, head for the marina entrance.

From the northwest: head to pass west of the conspicuous wreck on Recife Grande and then head for the marina entrance.

Anchoring / berthing

The marina is sheltered behind two breakwaters, but the wind does tend to freshen in the afternoons. There can be some surge and the holding is not very good. The depth in the marina is about 2.4m. On the south

side, in front of the hotel, there is a long string of floating steel pontoons.

On entry, get close behind the inner breakwater and drop your anchor, then secure stern-to one of the pontoons. The aim is to lie to a generous scope without getting too close to the pontoons. (So use your dinghy to get ashore.) Many yachts have suffered damage from these pontoons when anchors have dragged or lines have stretched unexpectedly far.

Keep an eye open for any lines strung unhelpfully across the marina, which might foul your prop or sterngear.

The marina office is under the ramp, opposite the east walkway onto the pontoons. It is open from 0900 - 1700. It is advisable to pay for the minimum intended stay as the manager is often away from his office, which makes refunds difficult to obtain.



Marina Park Hotel Entrance Pete Hill



Fishing Harbour, Fortaleza *Pete Hill*

Clubs

The Fortaleza Yacht Club is strictly a members-only club, but visiting yachtsman are made welcome in the bar/restaurant.

Formalities

It is quite a long walk from the marina to the dock area, where all formalities are carried out, but you can get there by bus. The Port Captain's office is in the building next to the yacht club, close south of the docks in Murucipé. The Policia Federal office is in the main port building, at the dock entrance. The *Receita Federal* office is at the next gate entrance to the port, to the north.



Janagada off Fortaleza *Pete Hill*

Facilities

The Marina Park Hotel is 5-star, with many sporting facilities and an excellent swimming pool. The toilets and showers are next to the swimming pool

Provisions

Fortaleza is a big city with an abundance of stores and supermarkets.

Fuel

There is a filling station next to the Marina Park Hotel, but if large amounts are needed (over 200 litres), the marina manager can arrange a tanker.

Supplies and repairs

The marina manager can arrange for most services.



Fortaleza Theatre *Pete Hill*

Baia de São Marcos: São Luis and Alcantara

02°30'S 44°19'W

An official Port of Entry (São Luis)

São Luis is a city situated on the Ilha de São Luis at the head of Baia de São Marcos, where two rivers (Mearim and Itapicuru) meet the sea. It has a population of over one million and is the capital of Maranhão State. The port has silted up and is used mainly by fishing boats and pleasure craft. There are no anchorages in São Luis that can be described as safe at all states of the tide and safe from criminal gangs.

A deep water port, Porto Itaqui, has been built about 6 miles to the southwest of São Luis.



Colonial São Luis *Pete Hill*

For more information see:

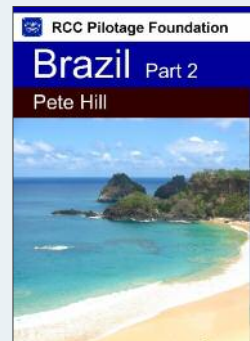
Brazil Part 2

by *Pete Hill*

Published by
**The Royal Cruising Club
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<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>



An alternative place to stay is Alcantara, which is 7 miles northwest of São Luis. As São Luis is the official port of entry, you will need to go there to visit the Port Captain's office, even if you have anchored at Porto Itaqui or Alcantara.

At present São Luis has an unsavoury reputation among yachtsmen. In recent years several yachts have been boarded and robbed by armed gangs and in 2015 a yachtsman was murdered on his yacht.



Alcantara Waterfront *Pete Hill*



Catamarans off Yacht Club at São Luis *Pete Hill*

Fernando de Noronha

An official Port of Entry

Time zone : UTC - 2Hrs

Lights:

Ilha Rata Lt 03°48.8'S 32°23.2'W
Fl(I)W15s62m16M

Morro do Pico 03°50.7'S 32°25.3'W
FlALT(I)WG15s328m17M

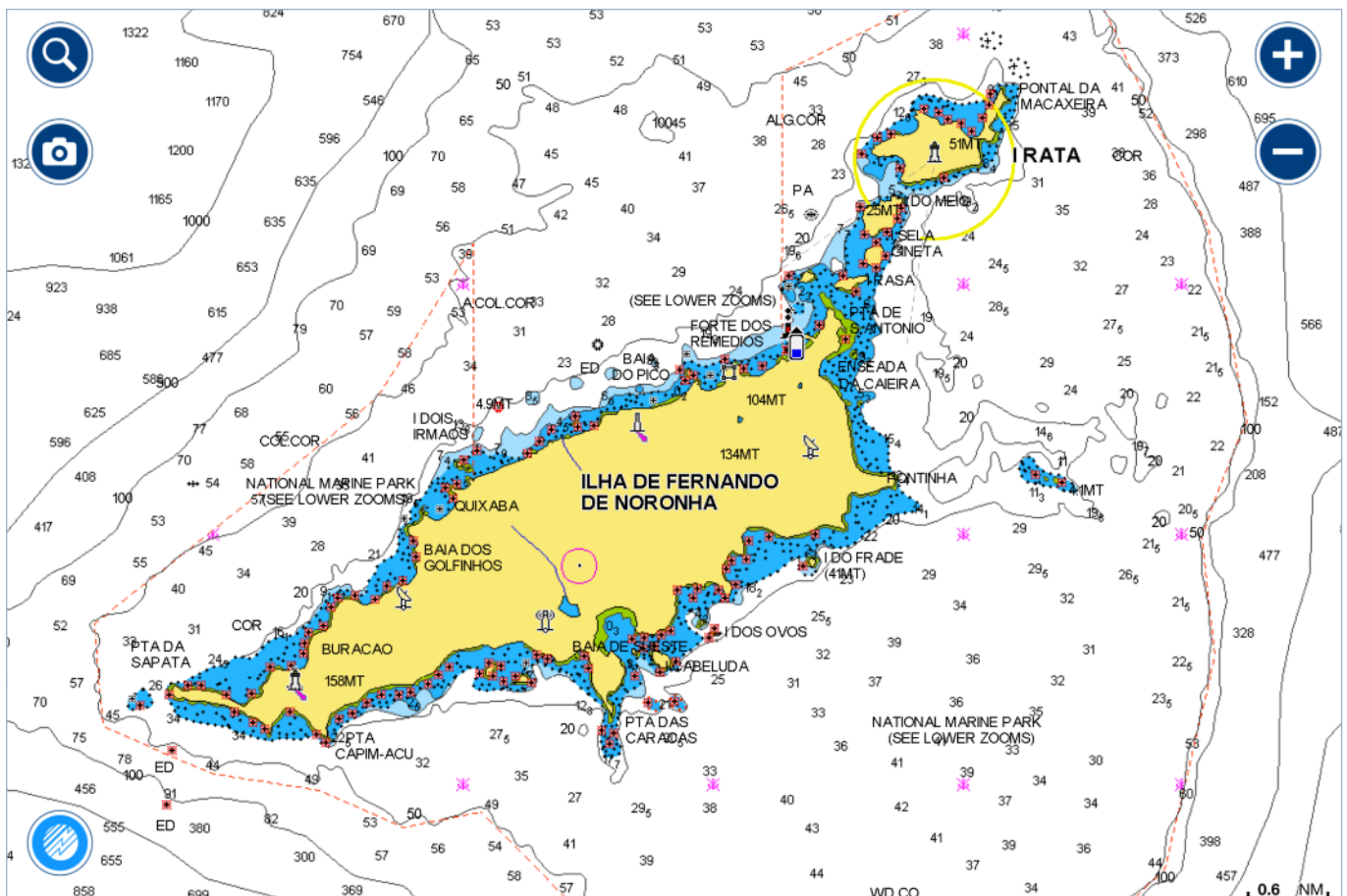
Max tidal range: 2.31m

Max tidal range: 2.31 m

In 1988, much of the main island and all the outliers became a national marine park. All coastal waters of less than 50m depth are part of this park, with the exception of the north coast between Praia S. Antonio



and the Ilhas Dois Irmaos. Anchoring in the national park is forbidden. The northeastern end of the island, about 30% of the total area, has been reserved for civil use but it is designated as an Environmental Protection Area. In 2001, UNESCO named the archipelago a World Heritage Site. This has encouraged a steady growth in eco-tourism and a manifest commitment from the inhabitants to care for the environment. The number of visitors to the island is limited to 400 per day, though visiting yachts are not included in the count.



Fora in succession, at least half a mile to port. Once past the Ilha de Fora, head south towards the moorings. Anchor outside the moored vessels in about 15m, where there is good holding in sand.

Approaching from the southwest is reasonable in light southeasterlies. Leave Ponta da Sapata at least half a mile to starboard and continue on a northerly course until the twin steep-sided islands of Ilha Dois Irmãos appear in the northeast. Steer in a generally northeasterly direction, keeping in at least 25m depth, and leave the twin islands at least 800 yards to starboard. Stay on this course up to 03°50.4'S and then steer for the anchorage. (This avoids the shoal patch north of Ilha da Conceição.) If entering at night, watch out for unlit local boats (and yachts).

If there is an anchored cruise ship nearby, watch out for a possible stern anchor, which some ships lay to align themselves with the swell. They often use floating lines of considerable length.

Anchoring

Anchoring is the only option. There are no visitors' moorings or pontoons.

The anchorage is roly and a stop is not recommended when there is a large swell from the NE to N and even more so from the NW. At these times breaking waves come into the harbour making dinghy rides challenging.



Walking around Fernando do Noronha reveals stunning views
Tom Partridge

Major storms in the North Atlantic can produce swells which make landing impossible. The officials have been known to close the port in a NW swell. Even with a SE swell you can expect some roll. The effect of the swell is worst close inshore. There is less swell around LW, when the reef to the east dries.

Going ashore by dinghy, you can land on the beach in the harbour. Be prepared for surf. Alternatively, tie up to the pontoon, but note that when cruise ships are in, there will be lots of vedette traffic to and from the pontoon.

This beach on Fernando do Noronha was voted the world's most beautiful beach by Trip Advisor *Tom Partridge*



Formalities

The Port Captain's office is the first building on the right, as you walk up from the harbour. Office hours are 0800 - 1200 and 1400 - 1800, every day. The Port Captain will notify you of anchorage fees payable and will coordinate your dealings with the *Policia Militar* and the Park Administration officials, either by asking them to see you at his office or by driving you to their offices. The *Policia Militar* will deal with immigration matters (Brazil's visa rulings are strictly enforced) and the Park officials will notify you of the environmental fee payable. There are no Customs officials on the island.

In 2019, charges were as follows:

Daily environmental fee, per person R73.52

Daily anchorage fee (for a yacht >10m LOA) R226.40

If you say you will be departing before 0700, the anchorage fee for that day may be waived.

To access the Marine park you will need to buy a Marine National Park card. (It cost R198 in 2017 and was valid for ten days.) This gives you access to the best beaches.

All these fees must be paid in Brazilian Reals. (The island has two ATMs, one of which is close to the *Policia Militar* office.)



There are several trails which hikers can enjoy on Fernando do Noronha Tom Partridge

Information

The tourist information office is at the top of the hill up from the harbour, on the right.

Provisions

There are two well-stocked stores in the village of Vila do Trinta, about 1.5km from the harbour.

Fuel

There is a filling station close to the harbour, selling petrol and diesel.

Supplies and repairs

There are no official facilities on the island.



Surfers consider Fernando do Noronha one of the world's best places to surf Tom Partridge

Services

There are many good bars and restaurants scattered over the island.

At Vila dos Remedios there is an (expensive) internet café.

Health

There is a small hospital on the island.

Travel and transport

There is an airport with daily flights to Recife and Natal.

A half-hourly bus service runs between the harbour and the beach at Baia do Sueste, via the airport. There are many beach buggy taxis and several beach buggy rental agencies.

Hiring a buggy is not only a great way to see the island but can be recommended as fun.



One of the most fun and favoured ways to get around on Fernando do Noronha is by hiring a jeep. Tom Partridge

French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana - an introduction

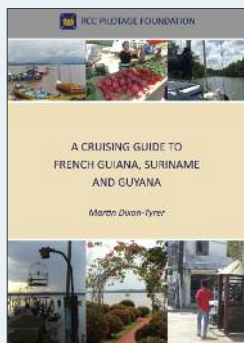
For more information see:

A Cruising Guide to French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana

by *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*

Published by
**The Royal Cruising Club
Pilotage Foundation**

Available from:
<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>



Geography

These countries have a combined Atlantic coastline of about 600 miles, punctuated by many navigable rivers which run to the sea through pristine rainforest. They constitute a little visited and generally undeveloped cruising ground for yachtsmen.

Coastal waters are generally shallow and gently shelving, except in river entrances, and one cannot rely upon charts being up to date in their depiction of the constantly shifting sand banks.

Climate

This is a hot and humid region throughout the year. July - November is the hottest period, but temperatures do not change much from month to month, with highs of 27 - 33°C (81 - 91°F) and lows of 22 - 24°C (72 - 75°F).

There is a long rainy season from December to the end of July, with peak rainfall in May and June. The annual rainfall is high in French Guiana (Cayenne 1709mm), higher in Suriname (Paramaribo 1763mm) and highest in Guyana (Georgetown 1916mm). Less than 10% of the annual rainfall occurs during the period August to the end of November.

Sea state and Wind

The prevailing swell results in there being virtually no coastal anchorages.

The exceptions are a few small islands in French Guiana. Heavy rollers occur along this coast from December to February, and particularly in December and January, when the Northeast Trades are strongest. When there is a heavy groundswell from the northeast (typically from distant Atlantic weather systems) this can result in dangerous breaking seas in coastal waters around 10m deep.

From November to July the prevailing winds are from

east to northeast. From August to October they are from east to southeast. Wind strength is typically F3 - 5, occasionally F6. In the rivers, the wind commonly dies overnight and starts up again late morning. Before the breeze sets in, mornings are often uncomfortably hot, but the afternoons are manageable and the evenings delightful.

Weather forecasts

There are few marine forecasts available for this area. Although GRIB files based on NOAA's GFS model are easy to obtain, they are not regarded as being very reliable in equatorial zones. A useful wave/swell forecast can be obtained from zyGrib. <http://www.buoyweather.com/map/guyana-to-brazil> provides maritime forecasts for Cayenne (*French Guiana*), Paramaribo (*Suriname*) and Georgetown (*Guyana*).

Navigation

Buoyage throughout this area is IALA-B (Red Right Returning).

As far as possible, it is a good idea to avoid night passages along the coast. Navigational hazards you may encounter include faulty or missing navigational aids, unlit or incorrectly lit fishing boats, poorly marked fishing nets and relict or new fishing stakes. In general, navigational aids are well maintained in French Guiana and Suriname. In Guyana, broken or obsolete buoys are sometimes left in position, unlit and unmaintained. Fishing boats are a hazard all along the coast and the incidence of unlit fishing boats increases as you travel northward, particularly north of the Suriname River. Fishing boats with nets attached normally have a black flag at the outer end of the net. The flag is anchored so the boat is effectively lying to a net warp. When nets are left unattended they are usually marked by a black flag on a small buoy but it is often inconspicuous. Fishing stakes are usually planted either as a straight line of stakes or in a V pattern. They are not lit, so are a hazard at night.

By day, a gap in a line of stakes should *not* be regarded as a clear passage, because there may well be broken stakes in the gap.

Spares and Repairs

You should aim at being self-reliant in terms of spares and repairs. Yacht gear and equipment is practically non-existent in any of these countries and trying to import it for yourself would be time-consuming and expensive. The marine engineering skills here are geared to the fishing boat market, with a 'repair rather than replace' mind-set. The nearest place where you can expect to find yacht-related services is Chaguaramas, in Trinidad.

Fuel

Diesel and petrol are widely available in all three countries, but you will have to bring it aboard in your own jerry cans.

The usual gas in South America is propane. Refilling gas bottles is not possible everywhere in French Guiana and it is customary to exchange an empty bottle for a full one. The situation is different in Suriname and Guyana, where refilling is the norm. It is a good idea to have a set of GasBoat adapters, (www.whayward.com), which will allow you to use any type of gas bottle on board.

Water

Water is available alongside in a few places in French Guiana and Suriname but generally you will need to collect it from elsewhere in jerry cans. Bottled water is widely available in all three countries. In Guyana, the tap water is not safe to drink. Use of a Watermaker is likely to be fraught with problems of filter blockage, because of the high silt and sediment content of the river and coastal water.

Health

Mosquitoes will be ever-present all along this coast and in the interior. The risk of contracting malaria or dengue fever should not be under-estimated, particularly if you are going to travel inland. You should have an informed strategy worked out, and the appropriate drugs and equipment, before arriving here.

Yellow fever has occurred in all three countries. For entry into French Guiana and Suriname you must have a valid vaccination certificate.

There is a danger of infection with the Zika virus in all three countries. The only way to protect against it is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes - which you should be doing anyway.

Gastrointestinal upsets are quite likely if you eat some of the attractive street food.

It is a good idea to have some antidiarrhoeal and anti-emetic remedies in your medicine chest.

French Guiana

Time zone : UTC - 3Hrs

Telephone country code : 00594

For more information see:

**A Cruising Guide to
French Guiana, Suriname
and Guyana**

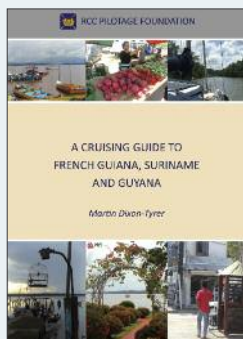
by *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*

Published by

**The Royal Cruising Club
Pilotage Foundation**

Available from:

<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>



French Guiana is a mostly low-lying country with occasional hills. Far inland, the hills reach an elevation of about 850m. The interior of the country is mainly rainforest and is very sparsely populated. In the 17th century, France established a permanent settlement at Cayenne and remained largely unchallenged in its colonising activities until the Portuguese took temporary control for a period of 5 years (1809 - 1814).

The total population of the country is about 250,000. About 60 - 70% of the population is Creole, about 15% European, about 4 - 6% Asian and 3-4% Amerindian. The rest are of diverse ethnicity and include various immigrant groups. After withdrawing from Vietnam in the 1950s, France settled Hmong refugees from Laos in French Guiana.

Roughly half of the population lives in the Cayenne metropolitan area, including about 61,500 in Cayenne itself. Most of the others live along the coast and the rivers.

The only other towns in the country with populations over 20,000 are Matoury (26,550) which is a southern suburb of Cayenne, St Laurent-du-Maroni (24,287) and Kourou (24,029).

French Guiana is one of France's overseas departments and is part of the European Union, but it is not part of the Schengen Area. Its currency is the Euro and its official language is French. However, many different local languages exist and are spoken in particular communities. French Guiana has the highest per capita GDP of any country in South America, but there are great disparities in wealth in the population, and unemployment is high. French direct and indirect subsidies are vital to the economy. The main exporting industry is gold mining.

After withdrawing from Algeria, France decided to build a Space Centre near Kourou. (*The boost given to a space craft launch by the earth's rotation is potentially greatest at the equator, as that is where the earth's rotational speed is highest.*) This Guiana Space Centre is the European Space Agency's primary launch site. Apart from its scientific importance it is very important for the local economy. It also has a relevance for yachtsmen. When a rocket launch is due to take place, all craft are required to move from the area of the Îles du Salut (05°17.35'N, 52°35.2'W). It therefore makes sense for visiting yachts to check the launch programme before planning a visit to these attractive islands. (<http://www.arianespace.com/missions/>)

Weather

Temperatures average 80°F (27°C) all year, but the hottest spells occur in the August - November period.

The rainiest months of the year are April to July and the driest, August to November. Rainfall can be very heavy.

River charts

Charts are available only for the main rivers leading to Degrad des Cannes, Kourou and St Laurent du Maroni, but these have buoyed channels in any case.

Formalities

French Guiana is very relaxed about the formalities and there are no fees payable for the clearance of yachts or people. However, all visitors, including French citizens, must have a passport valid for 6 months. For citizens of the EU/EEA no visa is required regardless of length of stay. Citizens of the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and many other countries may enter the country and stay for up to 90 days without a visa. A Yellow Fever vaccination certificate is a compulsory requirement for entry.

Clearance for yachts is handled by the *Douane* (Customs) and can be completed at St Georges, Dégrad des Cannes, Kourou or St Laurent du Maroni. No clearance from a previous port is required. Immigration formalities are necessary only if a visa is required, in which case the *Police aux Frontières* should be visited at Cayenne airport, St Georges or Saint Laurent when convenient.

EU and non-EU yachts can remain in the country for up to 6 months with no charge. After that they will incur a local tax of 17.5% plus another tax of 2.5%. Fortunately, it is permissible to arrange outward clearance, go to Suriname or Brazil for a few days and then return, asking for inward clearance again. This avoids the tax and gives you another 6 months time allowance.

Animals brought into the country must be microchipped and must have a valid health certificate and rabies vaccination.

Firearms and ammunition must be declared, but it seems that personal defence weapons, once declared may be retained on board.

Officially, meat, meat products, and dairy products require an import licence, but in practice, an exception is likely to be made in the case of normal yacht provisions.

Provisioning

Modest provisioning can be carried out in St Georges but larger scale provisioning is best carried out in the big supermarkets in Cayenne, Kourou or St Laurent du Maroni. Prices are comparable to those found in the French Caribbean islands - slightly higher than in mainland France. The food quality is good.

Spare parts

No customs duty is payable on parts imported from Martinique or Guadeloupe but if imported from anywhere else, including EU states, the parts will incur a 20% tax.

Security

Crime levels in French Guiana are generally low, but it would be unwise not to take the normal precautions of avoiding back street areas when alone or at night, and avoiding conspicuous displays of wealth, such as expensive-looking jewellery, watches or cameras.

Dinghies and outboards are quite likely to disappear if not securely locked and chained while ashore and lifted on deck and similarly secured at night, when you are at anchor.

Communications

SIM cards for mobile phones are available from three operators (Orange, Digicel and Only).

Coverage is good in all towns and most villages of any size and in the Îles du Salut. Outside the populated areas, coverage is very limited. Internet access is available from SIM cards and one or more Wi-Fi points can be found in St Georges, Cayenne, Kourou and St Laurent du Maroni.

Transport

From the main airport just south of Cayenne you can fly to Paris, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Suriname and Guyana.

There is a paved road from Brazil, which enters French Guiana by a bridge over the Oyapock River and runs across the country to the Suriname border, where you can cross the Maroni River by ferry into Suriname.

Car rental is possible: *Budget* has an office in Cayenne.

Taxis in French Guiana are expensive. Buses and minibuses are not.

St Georges

An official Port of Entry

Anchorage: 03°53.00'N 51°48.00'W

St Georges is a pleasant small town, approached via the Oyapock River, which forms the boundary between Brazil and French Guiana. The river is navigable to St Georges, with a controlling depth of 1.4m + tide. 1.3M beyond the town is the Oyapock River Bridge with 15m clearance.



Oyapock River Bridge Martin Dixon-Tyrer

Entrance to the river is in the Baie d'Oyapock, north of the Cabo Orange lighthouse at 04°25.91'N, 51°32.53'W. This is an uncharted river and there are no navigational aids. Fishing nets may be encountered in the entrance and in the river itself, unlit but marked with black flags. There are many possible anchorages in the river.

The Customs office is on the waterfront. Clearance is possible here but only when the relevant Customs official is in town. Immigration, if needed, is in the *Police des Frontières* building on the edge of town. (Open 0800 - 1200 hrs and 1400 - 1800 hrs, 7 days a week.)

For yachtsmen not inclined to loiter, it makes more sense to clear in at Dégrad des Cannes.

There is a small grocery store on the main square and there is a small fish and vegetable/fruit market at the north end of the waterfront. Free Wi-Fi is available to customers at the hotel/restaurant Chez Modestine, on Elijah Elfort Street.



St Georges Anchorage Martin Dixon-Tyrer

Dégrad des Cannes

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Safe Water 04°57.0'N 52°10.0'W

(RW, pillar, topmark)

LFI.W10s

If you are coming from the east, this port on the estuary of the Mahoury River is probably the most convenient place to clear in. It is, however, a commercial port with an unattractive marina and few facilities ashore. On the plus side it is the nearest place to clear in for the Îles du Salut (see later).

Approach and entrance

From the offshore waypoint 04°57.86'N, 52°09.36'W, travel 2M on 213°, passing either side of the Safe Water buoy and continuing between the East and West cardinal buoys to the channel entrance at waypoint 04°56.18'N, 52°10.45'W. Follow the buoyed channel into port. The depth is officially maintained at 3.4m but it is less towards the red buoys.

There is a small marina at 04°51.14'N, 52°10.45'W. Water and 220V electricity are available on the pontoons. Unfortunately, the marina is normally full but it may be possible to berth alongside a boat on the outer jetty for a short time, to take on water.

While clearing in you can anchor a little upstream of the marina in 4.5m, with good holding in stiff mud. A suggested location is about 300m beyond the marina, about 150m off the north shore. The tidal stream in the river can reach 4 knots and there is sometimes a swell from seaward. Yachts have reported a risk of dragging in local squalls and have advised that a dredger will be at work in the harbour most days.

There is no public transport from the marina to the main port, which is about 15 minutes walk away.

Formalities

The *Douane* (customs) building is immediately outside the dock gates in the main port. Opening hours are 0700 - 1300, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 0700 - 1300 and 1500 - 1800, Tuesday and Thursday.

The *Police aux Frontières* office (if needed) is at Cayenne airport.

Facilities

There are no shoreside facilities at the marina apart from toilets and showers. There is a small bar/restaurant in Dégrad des Cannes, about 200m from the port gates. In Remire-Montjoly, 6km away, there is a well-stocked Carrefour supermarket. In Cayenne,

14km away, there are all the usual services you would expect to find in a small city. A taxi ride to Cayenne cost €45 to €50 in 2016. Minibuses run between the main port and Cayenne and charge €2. They are supposed to run every 30 minutes but only go to the main port by request, which adds an element of uncertainty to your travel from the marina to Cayenne.

Kourou

An official Port of Entry

River entrance: 05°09'N 52°37.5'W

Kourou lies about 20M northwest of Cayenne. It is an uninspiring town, but it is a port of entry and maybe because of the nearby space centre, it does offer very adequate provisioning.

Approach, entry and anchoring or mooring

The waypoint for the start of the entrance channel is 05°12.52'N, 52°36.38'W.

From there you follow the marked channel into the river. The deepest water seems to be on the east side of the channel. For boats that can take the ground, there is the option of anchoring off the now defunct Club Maritime Kourou at 05°09.49'N, 52°37.68'W. Dinghies can be tied up to a metal ring by the steps on the river entrance breakwater. Nearby is the large Hotel des Roches, with bar, restaurant and usual hotel services.

If you can not take the ground, you should follow the marked channel to Buoy No. 21, near the marina jetty at 05°08.82'N, 52°38.57'W and anchor outside the channel in 3 - 5m, heavy sticky mud. Make sure that you leave the South Cardinal mark before the marina to starboard on entry. The marina is essentially always full. Leave sufficient swinging room when you anchor as boats may swing in different directions during squalls. The river current (up to 3 or 4 knots) is likely to dominate the way you lie most of the time.

Facilities

Water is available at the marina jetty. Going ashore here you can tie up your dinghy either at the marina dock or at the fishermen's jetty - but some dinghy and outboard thefts have been reported from the latter.

A road from the fishermen's jetty leads into town. On the left at the start of the road there is a fish market. Further along are a vegetable market, a small supermarket and several restaurants. At the crossroads before the Mairie if you turn left you will find a fuel station. The walk back to the marina with full jerry cans could be hot work as it is about 900m. It would be a

good idea to come armed with a lightweight trolley. The main town is another kilometre from the crossroads. There you will find banks, supermarkets, laundry services, restaurants and bars. Bar 'le 13' has free but slow Wi-Fi. Bar des Sports (opposite La Poste) has faster Wi-Fi but charges for it.

Formalities

The Customs office is not easy to find and it would be best to consult a good street map.

The map may not show the Customs office itself. On the street map look northward from the marina and find Rue Seraphin which runs east/west.

Follow it west for a good 3km (noting that it becomes Avenue Pariacabo, at some point).

Look for a street on the left called Rue Denis Papin.

Down Rue Denis Papin about 200m, take the first turn right on the right.

A further 200m along this street is Kinder-Nautic, on your left.

Immediately after Kinder-Nautic, turn left and follow the track for about 250m.

The Customs office is then on your right-hand side.

Having identified the location of the office on your map, you may choose to travel to it by an easier route:

Go by dinghy to the Customs, Coastguard etc. quay on the north bank of the river, just before the road bridge (about 1.5km from the Buoy No 21 anchorage).

Go ashore here and walk up the road ahead of you with the commercial port on your right.

In about 300 - 400m is the first turn on your right. Take it and walk another 400 - 500m, past the port entrance, until you reach Kinder-Nautic. Turn right down the track just before it .

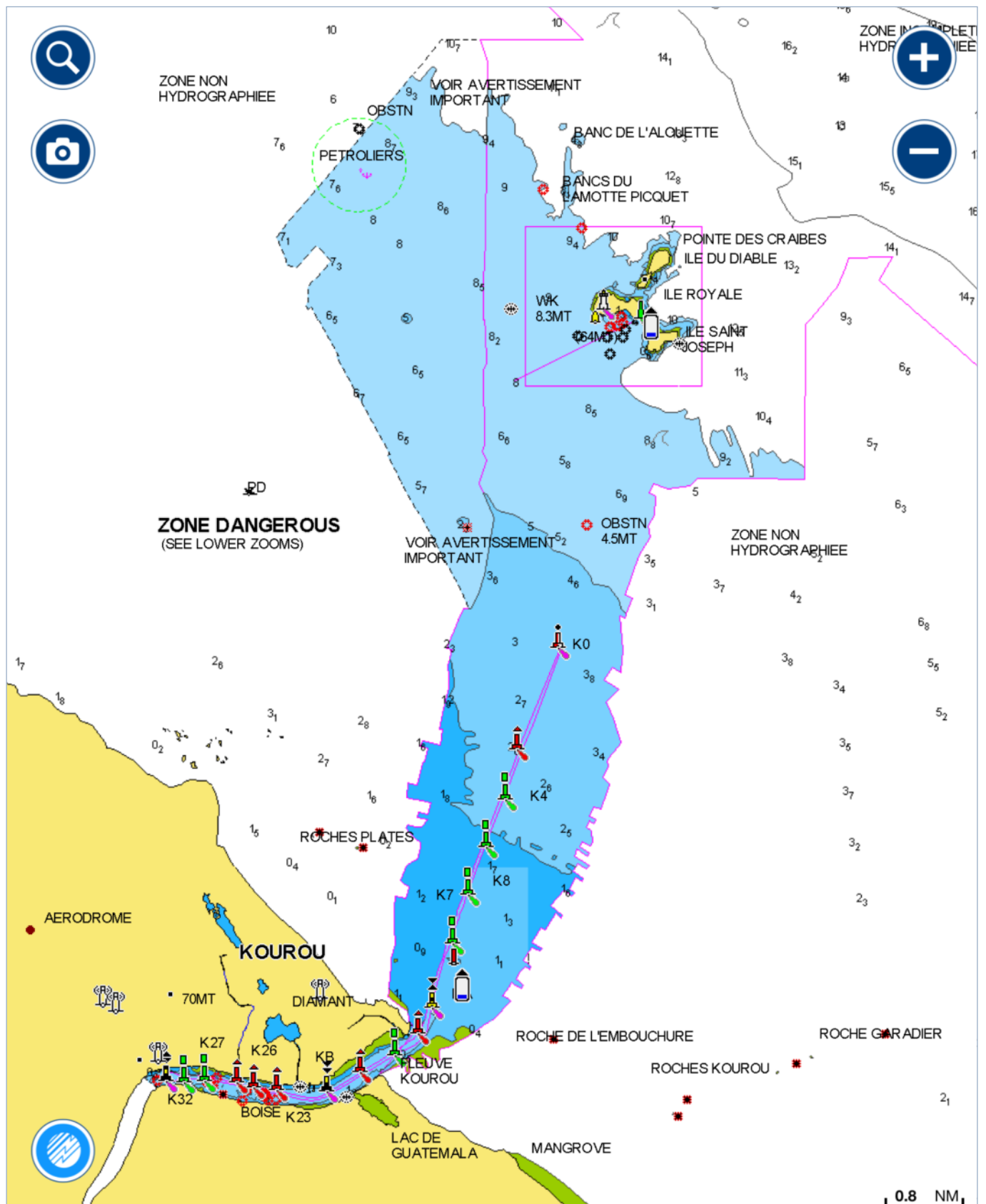
The Customs office is on the right hand side after about 250m. It is best to go there before 1200, Monday to Friday.

Departure

Be aware of the west-setting current at the river entrance.

Kourou *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*





PLAN 35: Kourou and Îles du Salut

Îles du Salut

05°17'N 52°35'W

Lights:

Île Royale 05°17.2'N 52°35.5'W

Fl(2)W 10s 65m (Red Tower) 25M

Max tidal range: 2.61m

This is a delightful group of three small, low-lying volcanic islands, situated close together, 7M off the coast, slightly E of N of Kourou.

Today they are a popular stop for yachts cruising along this coast and a hotel has been built on Île Royale, the largest of the islands. You should not go ashore here before you have officially cleared into the country at a Port of Entry.

Between 1852 and 1953 the islands were notorious as a French penal settlement, where prisoners were kept in inhumane conditions. The most northerly of the group, Île du Diable, was used for political prisoners, including the grievously wronged Alfred Dreyfus. The most westerly one, Île Royale, was the main prison island. Île St Joseph was reserved for prisoners to be kept in solitary confinement with enforced silence. They were fed meagre rations through a hatch in the cell door and had no communication with the warders. Present day visitors can wander among the old prison buildings and try to imagine how they would have coped with incarceration here. The hotel on Île Royale was built as a conversion of prison buildings.

Anchoring and Mooring

The waters around the islands are relatively shallow (<12m), so it is possible to anchor almost anywhere, but because of the prevailing winds, the northwest to southwest sides of the islands are usually preferable. It is not easy to escape the swell and you must expect to

roll a lot at anchor. On Île Royale the preferred anchorage is in the Baie des Cocotiers on the south side of the island, in 1.5 - 4m over soft mud, with moderate holding. There are 4 large mooring buoys which may be available for an overnight stop but which are for the use of tourist boats during the day. There is a floating dock where dinghies can be tied up if you go ashore. There are footpaths around the island and up the central hill, which has a pleasant bar/restaurant at the top. There is a shop which sells tourist goods but no provisions. You may see monkeys, agoutis, iguanas, macaws and wild chickens.

The best anchorage on Île St Joseph is on the west side of the island where there is moderate protection from the easterly swell, but there is still some swell which curves around the island. There is reasonable holding in 3 - 8m over mud and gravel. There are several privately owned moorings which could be used in the owner's absence. There is a floating pontoon ashore where you can land and secure your dinghy. There is a footpath you can follow to explore the island and its prison ruins. The inhabited buildings are a military post with restricted access. The fauna include wild chickens.

There is no good anchorage off Île du Diable, but the Baie de Bora-Bora on the west side would offer the best chance in light conditions, especially if the swell is from the southeast rather than the northeast. Landing would not be easy. Strictly speaking, anchoring off and landing on this island are both forbidden.

When a rocket launch is due to take place from the space centre near Kourou, all craft are required to move from the area of the Îles du Salut (05°17.35'N, 52°35.2'W). It therefore makes sense for visiting yachts to check the launch programme before planning a visit to these islands.

(<http://www.arianespace.com/missions/>)

Looking to Île Royale from Île St Joseph *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*





Saint Laurent du Maroni

An official Port of Entry

Marina: 05°30.2'N 54°1.5'W

Max tidal range: 2.6m

Saint Laurent is a pleasant town situated on the Maroni River, 14M up from the river entrance at Pointes des Hattes. The Maroni is the country's biggest river and it marks the border with Suriname. The town contains many restored buildings dating from the period when it was a major reception port for the French penal colonies in French Guiana.

The marina development began to take shape in 2015. The marina offers secure moorings, a secure dinghy dock, a club house/café, assistance with checking in and out, water, ice, laundry, an extensive electronic library and small book exchange, transport to the supermarket, assistance with repairs and spare parts, mail order chandlery, fuel bunkering, airport pick up and drop off and commercial diving. Showers are available close by for a small payment. The marina website gives access to the up-to-date positions of the river buoys.

Saint Laurent Ferry Wharf *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Saint Laurent Approach *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Suriname

Time zone : UTC - 3Hrs

Telephone country code : 00597

For more information see:

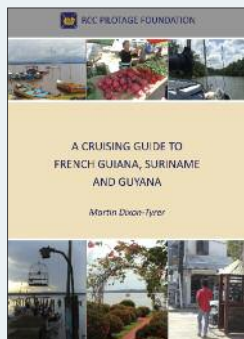
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Geography and Economy

Suriname, once known as Dutch Guiana, is one of South America's smallest countries. It has a low coast 386km in length, indented by 6 rivers, some of which are navigable for a considerable distance inland. The population of about half a million people, and most of the country's infrastructure, are concentrated along the coastal strip. The southern 80% of the country is practically virgin rain forest.

Uplands rise from the coastal plain and these are a source of mineral wealth for the country. Bauxite mining was carried out by the American company Alcoa for about a hundred years and was a major element in the country's economy, helping to pay for electricity, education, new housing and healthcare.

Alcoa has now closed down most of its operations here, because of a depressed world market for aluminium and because the most easily accessible deposits of bauxite have been depleted. Gold mining still goes on, much of it illegal. There is potential for a highly profitable oil industry and its development is being managed by a state-owned company, which is involved in all aspects of the business. Agriculture is important as a basis for employment and as a source of exports: Surinamese rice is a highly regarded commodity. Overall, the country's economy is in steep decline and although there has been talk for several years about boosting the tourism industry, there is little evidence of any concerted, constructive attempt to do this. The official currency is the Surinamese dollar.

History

The first attempts at colonisation in this region were in the early 1600s. Present day Suriname came under the

undisputed control of the States of Zeeland (now part of the Netherlands) in 1674 after some rivalry with the British during the Anglo-Dutch wars of 1665-7 and 1672-4. The early population included a large number of Sephardic Jews who had been expelled from Brazil by the Portuguese, after having been welcomed in Brazil by the Dutch population there. The population was greatly increased by the import of African slaves, but there have been in addition many other immigrant groups, including indentured labourers from India and Java.

Suriname achieved independence from the Netherlands in 1975, but since then has endured coups and a civil war. The current president, elected in 2010, was also leader of the country during the socialist dictatorship of 1980 - 1991.

People

This is now a truly multicultural country. The principal ethnic groups are East Indian, Maroon, Creole, Javanese and Mixed race. There are many others, including Dutch, Chinese and the original indigenous Amerindians. About half of the population lives in the capital, Paramaribo, which is the only sizeable metropolitan area in the country. Paramaribo is situated on the Suriname River, which is the major river in the country. The official language is Dutch but English is quite widely spoken, especially in the urban areas.

Visiting Suriname

Suriname is a worthwhile place to stop en route to the Caribbean, or to stay in for the duration of the hurricane season. Travel in the country is generally trouble-free and exploring the interior is a rewarding experience. Throughout the country, prices are noticeably lower than in French Guiana. Most visitors find the Surinamese people very friendly and helpful. There are few reports of crime directed against yachts. In 2014 there were reports of piracy in and around the Corentyne (or Corantijn) River, which forms the boundary between Suriname and Guyana, but these incidents all concerned fishermen. Anchors and fishing gear were being stolen, but fish glue and fish glue products were said to be the main targets for the robbers.

Inland travel by yacht

Paper charts for all the rivers in Suriname are available from MAS (Maritime Authority Suriname) at Cornelia Jongbauwstraat 2, in Paramaribo.

<http://www.mas.sr/en/HOME>

The very helpful staff are happy to discuss possible inland routes and to give advice on places to stop.

Spare parts

Duty of 30% must be paid on all spares imported into Suriname and the import process is variable in its degree of complexity. For spares of any significant value, it may prove cheaper and easier to fly to Trinidad and bring them back with you.

Communications

Local SIM cards are inexpensive and mobile phone coverage is good in Paramaribo and other towns. It is limited in rural areas. Wi-Fi is available in cafés and restaurants and is generally fast.

Transport

The international airport is the Paramaribo-Zanderij International Airport (PBM), which is located in Zanderij, 45km south of Paramaribo. There are flights to and from Amsterdam, Aruba, Curaçao, Georgetown (Guyana), Cayenne (French Guiana), Miami, and Port of Spain (Trinidad).

Car rental is available and not expensive. Driving is on the left, as in Guyana. In all other South American countries driving is on the right. There is a road link with French Guiana via a car ferry across the Maroni River between Albina and Saint Laurent, and to Guyana via a car ferry near the mouth of the Corentyne River, between Nieuw-Nickerie and Corriverton.

Formalities in Suriname

Clearance procedure is relaxed, in as much as you can visit the authorities next working day after your arrival. Offices are open Monday to Friday but only in the mornings.

You should dress appropriately, which means for men, long trousers, collared shirts and shoes, not sandals. Passports must be valid for not less than 6 months from the day of entry

For Nationals of Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, France, Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela arriving by private yacht there is a tourist card, which is a kind of visa waiver. No photographs are needed for this card. It costs €30 and is valid for 3 months, but you must visit the *Vreemdeligen Politie* (Immigration Police) every 30 days to get another stamp in your passport. All other nationalities need a visa which requires passport-sized photographs. The visa fee depends on the nationality of the applicant.

It will be valid for 3 months, and again, must be presented to Immigration every 30 days.

Visa regulations for people arriving by yacht are not necessarily the same as for people arriving by air or overland, so if you have crew joining you in Suriname you should check the situation in advance.

Inward Clearance procedure in Paramaribo

Paramaribo can be reached from Domburg by bus in the morning but an early start is advised as the clearance procedures will take up to 4 hours. If you are going to travel in by bus or hire car you will need a good street map or very clear instructions to help you get from one office to another as quickly as possible. An alternative approach is to do a deal with a taxi driver who will take you to each office and wait for you there. The staff at either marina will advise you on what kind of deal you should expect.

1. Skipper and all crew need to visit the *Vreemdeligen Politie* (Immigration) at Jaggernath Lachmonstraat (*Monday - Friday, 0800 - 1300*) with 4 copies of a crew list (name, nationality, passport number). The crew lists will be stamped.

2. Skipper takes outward clearance and 2 copies of the crew list to the *Douane* (Customs) in the long low building on Abatoirweg, near the main port. (*Monday - Friday, 0700 -1300*) *Douane* will keep your outward clearance form and one crew list. The other crew list will be returned with a stamped hand-written note on it that you are cleared in. There is no separate clearance document.

Douane will submit the other copy of your crew list to MAS (Maritime Authority Suriname). Firearms must be declared and may either be kept on board in a secure location or may be surrendered on arrival and collected on departure. Officially, meat and fish, meat and fish products, fruit and vegetables and most other foodstuffs require an import licence, but in practice an exception is likely to be made in the case of normal yacht provisions. Animals must have a valid health certificate and rabies vaccination certificate.

3. Skipper and all crew visit *Consulaire Zaken* (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) (*Monday - Friday, 0900 - 1300*) at the corner of Lim A Po Straat and Watermolenstraat, to get tourist cards and/or visas. You will need to take passports, crew list and boat documents, fees in euros and if visas are required, photographs.

4. Skipper and all crew now visit Immigration again with passports, tourist cards/visas and a crew list. Passports will now be stamped.

Outward Clearance procedure in Paramaribo

1. Skipper and all crew visit Immigration to get exit stamps.

2. Skipper visits Customs to get Outward Clearance.

Paramaribo

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Paramaribo Aviation Lt: 05°49.8'N 55°09.2'W

Occ.R77m23M

Max tidal range: 2.77m

Paramaribo is considered to be a jewel of Caribbean architecture. The old plantation houses and historic centre of the city were placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2002 and renovation has continued since then, but the waterfront is disappointingly unattractive.

Paramaribo is a good place for provisioning. There are several large supermarkets and there is an excellent fresh food market near the water front.

The country's main hospital is the Academisch Ziekenhuis, in Flustraet, Paramaribo. (Tel: 00597 442 222.)

For yachts entering the country at the Suriname River, all formalities must be completed in Paramaribo, but there is a government ruling forbidding yachts to anchor near the town without special permission. Yachts are allowed to anchor near the river entrance while waiting for a tide but otherwise all yachts are expected to go 10M upstream to Domburg and find a mooring or anchor there, or a bit further up-river to Marina & Resort Waterland. It will then be necessary to travel on land into Paramaribo to perform the formalities. (See later)

Approach, entry and anchoring or mooring

Lights: Approach light for the Suriname River: White beacon at 05°57.4'N, 56°13.0'W FL(2)W15s7m10M

A daytime entry is best, because the shore lights can be confusing. You should enter under power, in case there is a need to manoeuvre to avoid commercial traffic in the river.

From the safe water buoy (Y.Mo(A)8s) at 06°04.81'N, 55°12.83'W, follow the marked channel south (181°) for 5.75M, keeping the green channel buoys 2,4,6 and 8 close to port. (These buoys are over 1M apart and not

easy to see in overcast conditions against the greenery on shore.) At Buoy No.8, do not continue toward the tower which lies dead ahead. but turn to port and head 145° for 1.75M to the next green buoy (No.10). Then alter to 123° and continue for 3M past more green buoys.

East of the second of these buoys is a headland, upriver of which is the village of Visserskampen. If you want to wait for a favourable tide to help you up the river, this is a good place to anchor in daylight, out of the channel and fairly close to the shore. It is practical to enter the river at night but it is important to stay in the marked channel, because there are many fishing stakes outside it. From here your course upriver takes you 4M past the red can buoy (R1) which you leave to starboard, to the West Cardinal mark at the confluence of the Suriname and Commewijne rivers. There may be as much as 3.5 knots of tidal stream here at springs.

Commercial traffic on these rivers includes large barges which are pushed or pulled by tugs. They have limited manoeuvrability and you should keep well clear of them. If anchoring in the river do so close to the shore and make sure the yacht is well-lit.

From the cardinal mark, it is 8M up the marked channel to the city of Paramaribo. The buoyage is a succession of un-numbered red buoys near the *eastern* shore, but if you keep close to the *western* shore, about 200m off, you will have plenty of water. When you are within a couple of miles of Paramaribo, call MAS on VHF Channel 12 or 16 to announce your presence, but if they do not reply just continue up to Domburg. It is possible that you will be approached by the Harbour Police. They may want to board you and note your details, but their primary interest is likely to be firearms and pets.

From Paramaribo to Domburg it is a further 8M up the marked channel. At Paramaribo the river is spanned by a road bridge (vertical clearance of centre span 41m). Beyond the bridge the deep-water channel is on the east side of the river but there is ample depth for yachts up the middle. About 2M before you reach Domburg, the deep-water channel moves over to the centre of the river and passes between a red and a green buoy.

Jules Wijdenbosch Bridge *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Domburg

Domburg is on the west bank of the river. The best anchorage is off the village in about 10m. Allow plenty of scope and swinging room. Unfortunately the anchorage is reportedly littered with nets, ropes and small logs. If you anchor here and are going ashore do not moor your dinghy at the jetty; this is for ferries and official boats only. You can leave your dinghy at the wooden steps in the stone wall or at the new floating dinghy pontoon at Harbour Resort Domburg. 05°42.22'N, 055°04.90'W

Harbour Resort Domburg

Sir Winston Churchillweg 833a

Domburg, Suriname.

<http://marinasuriname.com/en/home.html>

Email: info@marinasuriname.com

Tel: 00597 87 26 198 or 00597 71 10 257.

Harbour Resort Domburg started operating in late 2013. It currently owns 8 moorings (more are planned), a floating pontoon, a club house/restaurant, a bathroom and shower block, laundry facilities, and a swimming pool. Wi-Fi is available. Potable water can be collected by jerry can at the Harbour Resort or you can go alongside the Holsu fishing pier in Domburg, a short distance downriver, and fill up there. *(The water there is free, but a thank you gift of wine or beer would be appropriate.)*

The Harbour Resort site is fenced and guarded and the staff lives on the complex, keeping an eye on the moored dinghies and yachts. Within 300m of the harbour complex are three supermarkets with daily fresh produce, an ATM, a police station, a doctor and outpatient clinic, a fuel station (diesel and petrol), taxis, engine repair facilities and a post office. Most types of gas bottle can be refilled in 1-2 days via the Harbour Resort bar in Domburg.

Buses to Paramaribo stop at the supermarket just beyond the fuel station.

About 7M upstream is the Marina Waterland Resort 05°39.50'N, 55°03.83'

Marina Waterland Resort

Muurvarensweg 52

District Para, Suriname.

<http://www.waterlandsuriname.com/marina/overview>

Email: info@waterlandsuriname.com

Tel: (office hours 0800 - 1700) 00597 878 6938.

This is a small-scale private marina complex, with seven bungalows available for rent and a well-constructed floating jetty with finger pontoons that provide berths for 12 - 15 yachts (maximum length 24m, maximum draught 4m). There is 24 hour surveillance of the site.

The berths are equipped with electricity, drinking water and lighting. Facilities include a restaurant and bar, toilets, laundry facilities, waste disposal, Wi-Fi, Telephone, bicycles and canoes for hire, a beach and a slip. Car rental and taxis can be arranged for you.

Harbour Resort, Domburg *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Guyana

Time zone: UTC - 4Hrs

Telephone Country Code: 00592

For more information see:

**A Cruising Guide to
French Guiana, Suriname
and Guyana**

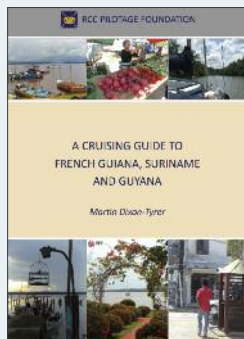
by *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*

Published by

**The Royal Cruising Club
Pilotage Foundation**

Available from:

<https://rccpf.org.uk/Publications-Catalogue>



Geography

Guyana is the third smallest country in South America. It has a coastline of about 280M and it extends inland for about 450M. Some 35% of the area lies within the Amazon basin. More than 80% of its area is covered by forests, which are home to over 1,000 species of tree. There are about 8,000 plant species in Guyana, half of which are found nowhere else. It has about 1,600 species of birds and has one of the highest levels of biodiversity of any country in the world.

The country has five natural regions:

- a low-lying, narrow, fertile marshy coastal plain (which is where 90% of the population lives)
- a white sand belt inland of the coastal plain (source of most of Guyana's minerals)
- dense rain forest in the south of the country (populated sparsely by indigenous peoples)
- desert savannah in the southwest
- the interior savannah with mountains gradually rising to the Brazilian border

The mountains include *tepui*, the steep-sided, table-top mountains thought to have been the inspiration for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novel '*The Lost World*'. There are also many volcanic escarpments with impressive waterfalls such as the Kaieteur Falls, with a sheer drop of 226m (about five times as high as the Niagara falls).

Economy

The country's main industries are based on its sugarcane plantations, rice fields, timber and bauxite and gold reserves. Despite these assets, Guyana remains one of the poorest countries in South America. One reason for this is the woefully inadequate

transportation system. There are roughly 8,000km of roads, of which 7% is paved. There are 187km of rail network, which is dedicated exclusively to the transport of ore. There are roughly 1,600km of navigable waterway, but the number of river cargo boats servicing the interior has dwindled and farmers are increasingly unable to send their produce to market. An estimated 35 - 40% of the population is living in poverty.

All of this could change over the next few years, because of recent major oil finds in the Guyana basin. The country's wealth and status might or might not be transformed. Already there have been protests that the government has allowed the oil industry too generous a deal.

History

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Dutch colonised various parts of the landmass between the Amazon River and the Orinoco River, a region originally known as Guiana but which today includes Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana and parts of Brazil and Venezuela. In 1616 they established Essequibo, in 1627 Berbice and in 1752, Demerara. The British took control of them in the late 18th century and the Dutch formally ceded them to Britain in 1814. In 1831, the three separate colonies became a single British colony known as British Guiana. In 1966 British Guiana achieved independence and became Guyana. Guyana became a republic in 1970 but remains a member of the Commonwealth. English is the official language. Its currency is the Guyanese dollar, which in 2018 was worth about £0.0035.

In the 19th century Venezuela laid claim to all of British Guiana west of the Essequibo River. An international arbitration tribunal decreed that about 94% of the total disputed area belonged to British Guiana. The opposing sides both accepted the ruling but when Guyana became independent in 1966, Venezuela re-opened the issue and still continues to claim all of Guyana west of the Essequibo River. Guyana also has a territorial dispute with Suriname, which lays claim to an area lying between two tributaries of the Corentyne River.

People

The population of Guyana is about 780,000, of whom nearly 44% are descendants of immigrants from India, 30% are of African heritage, nearly 17% are of mixed race and 9% are members of the various indigenous peoples. There are about 1,600 Europeans and about 1,400 Chinese. About 240,000 people live in the capital city, Georgetown.

Transport

Air transport is central to the domestic economy, but it is affordable only by the few. There are about 100 airports scattered across the country, of which 10 are properly surfaced. The country's primary airport, the Cheddi Jagan International Airport, is 40km south of the capital city, Georgetown, in the town of Timehri. Flights operate regularly to Port of Spain (Trinidad), Kingston (Jamaica) and New York. There are less frequent flights to Miami, Toronto, Santiago (Chile) and Paramaribo (Suriname).

Health

Medical care for minor conditions is available in Guyana but emergency care and care of major conditions is limited in scope in Georgetown and extremely limited in the rest of the country. There are small hospitals in New Amsterdam and Bartica. For more serious medical problems, the nearest centre of medical excellence is a short flight away in Trinidad.

Although a yellow fever vaccination is not obligatory it is highly recommended. Malaria is rare but not unheard of in Georgetown, New Amsterdam and the Essequibo as far as Bartica. Further inland, malaria is endemic. You should not enter the country without having a plan for avoidance of mosquito bites and the medical prophylaxis of malaria. Such a plan will also protect you against dengue fever and infection with the Zika virus.

Guyana as a Cruising Destination

Guyana has very little in the way of facilities for visiting yachts but for some, that is part of its attraction. If you voyage up any of its rivers, you will be one of a select company rather than one of thousands. Inevitably this will change and a cruise into the rain forest will become less of an adventure than it is today.

The adventure starts out at sea, as you approach a low lying coast, some of it below sea level and sheltering behind sea walls. As far as 15M out to sea there are thick wooden piles, sunk into the sea bed and with semi-permanent fish nets strung between them. They are unmarked and unlit. It is essential to stand off at least 20M if you arrive in darkness. The sea bed shelves so gently that, in anything but heavy seas, you will be able to anchor that far out!

When you close the land, you will be navigating between sandbanks, pilings, shrimping trawlers, and smacks that are putting out several hundred metres of fishing nets, with only a little flag marking the end. You need daylight for this and you need daylight for the journey upriver. You also need a rising tide. The river journey will be especially interesting because of a virtually complete absence of buoyage.

The four longest rivers are the **Essequibo** (628M), the **Corentyne** (450M), the **Berbice** (370M) and the **Demarara** (215M). They all reach the sea along the eastern half of the coast. Their estuaries are cluttered with islands and sandbanks, including the 90M long Shell Beach, which during March and April is a major breeding area for four species of turtle, *Leatherback*, *Green*, *Hawksbill* and *Olive Ridley*.

The Corentyne River

The easternmost of these rivers is the Corentyne, which is the border between Suriname and Guyana. *Springlands* is a pleasant town on this river and is a port of entry.

The Berbice River

The Berbice is the next big river to the west. *New Amsterdam* is a port near its mouth and is the commercial and manufacturing centre for the agricultural and pastoral coastal lowlands, where rice and cattle are raised. The river is navigable by small vessels for about 100M into the interior. It is the deepest river in Guyana and there are deep water berths at its mouth for vessels up to 55,000 DWT. There are two main negatives associated with the Berbice River as a place to visit by yacht. One is the presence of several hazards in the approach (unlit pilings, unlit broken channel markers), the other is the river bridge at 06°16.7' North. All vessels must submit their details 24 hours in advance for passage through the opening spans of this bridge and must pay a hefty toll each way (Guyana \$55,000 in 2018, equivalent to USD \$266 or £192).

The Demarara River

Further west again is the Demarara River, with the country's capital, *Georgetown*, at its mouth. Georgetown is a dirty, bustling port with no facilities for yachts and a reputation for violent crime. (All other river ports in the country are regarded as pretty safe to visit by yacht, as long as you take the normal precautions.) It is not advisable to clear in at Georgetown, as berthing and anchoring facilities are unsuitable. If you do go there, you should not leave your vessel or your dinghy unattended.

The Essequibo River

The longest river, and the one which is being most actively promoted as a destination for yachts, is the Essequibo River. *Bartica* is a mining services town in the rain forest, at the confluence of the Cuyuni and Mazaruni rivers with the Essequibo river, approximately 45M in from the sea. It has a population variously claimed to be in the order of 11,000, 15,000 and 20,000 and has been described as lively if slightly edgy.



Parika *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Roeden Rust *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*



Bartica *Martin Dixon-Tyrer*

Bartica is the generally favoured Port of Entry for yachts visiting the country. Much nearer the mouth of the river is the small town of Parika, which is also a Port of Entry, but it is less convenient than Bartica in terms of access and officials are not always present.

The key promoter of this river as a yachting destination is a PR consultant and ex-government minister called Kit Nascimento. He is very much engaged in making the river attractive and welcoming to yachtsmen and he is the man to turn to when advice

or recommendations are needed. Kit and his wife Gem run the Hurakabra Resort, a couple of miles downstream of Bartica and can organise pilotage on the river if required.

Kit Nascimento: Tel: (00592)225 3557

Mob: (00592) 624 8694

Email: kitnasc@gmail.com

Kit may put you in contact with a pilot called Dominic. There is another pilot called Malcom, who is contactable on (00592)670 9575

Charts

There are three British Admiralty charts, which might on the face of it seem helpful:

BA527 (*Approaches to Demerara and Essequibo Rivers* 1:150,000. 1966)

BA2782 (*Essequibo River to Mamarikuru Island* 1:50,000. 1963)

BA 2783 (*Mamarikuru Island to Bartica* 1:25,000. 1972)

Unfortunately they are materially outdated, still showing buoyage that no longer exists and depicting depths and sandbank positions that do not always correspond to reality.

The route from seaward upriver to Bartica is clearly illustrated with Navionics chartlets and copious waypoints in Martin Dixon-Tyrer's book '*A Cruising Guide to French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana*' (Published by Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation).

Another very useful pilotage document for the river is called '*Cruising Guide to Guyana*'. It is available as a free download from the website:

<https://www.guyanatourism.com>

This document also contains very clear river charts with waypoints and a wealth of information about anchorages and services along the Essequibo River. It was produced in collaboration with Chris Doyle.

Yachts have reported that both the C-Map and Navionics charts are in error by 50-100m and should not be trusted for depth or position purposes in the Essequibo River. If you are using the Doyle waypoints, these electronic charts may show your position as being on land.

Approach, entry and anchorages

There are no off-lying navigational lights.

It is advisable not to approach the coast more closely than 20M in the hours of darkness, because of unlit hazards. Try to time your arrival to carry an early morning flood tide as far as Parika and aim for an overnight anchorage at Roed-en-Rust a few miles beyond Parika. Then take the next daylight flood tide upriver to Bartica. Currents at the river mouth run at up to 3 knots and the tidal range at springs is 2.7m.

There are two recommended entry channels, the South Channel and the West Channel. They converge at Lau Lau Island. Both pass through areas of fishing stakes and fishing nets. Approaching from the south it is quicker and shorter to take the South Channel. This channel has a least depth of 2.1m + tide, which is encountered over the bar between the approach waypoint 07°00.99'N, 58°11.36'W and the first islands in the river.

Waypoints have been published for the route from sea to Bartica.

There is no alongside berthing at Parika and it is necessary to anchor some way out into the river, to avoid the sandbanks and the local ferry traffic. It is not an attractive anchorage and there is normally enough chop to make things uncomfortable from midday until well into the evening. Land by dinghy next to the water taxis in the inner harbour, which dries out almost completely at low water.

If you choose to clear in here, you will find the Immigration office close to the main ferry pier. The officers there will direct you to Customs, which is nearby. Banks, supermarkets, Immigration and Customs are all within a short walking distance of the town's main crossroads. The Scotia Bank takes VISA, Mastercard and other debit cards and may still be the only bank in town which will give you Guyanese dollars against them. There is an excellent street market on Saturday nights right through to Sunday midday.

At Bartica, you can anchor off the town in 3 - 8m with good holding in mud. Avoid anchoring near the *Stelling* (ferry terminal) or obstructing the ferry paths. Ensure that the yacht is well-lit at night, as barges and commercial traffic pass through by day and night and there are many fast-moving water taxis.

Going ashore

You can tie up your dinghy in various places. There are landing places on the shoreside wall and there are steps on a jetty between the *Stelling* and the market hall. (This is the jetty with a green-roofed shack on it, which used to be the Kool Breezes bar. If you tether your dinghy there, avoid blocking the water taxis.) Alternatively, you could leave your dinghy at Sunil's Boat House, 200m upriver. This is a small red building with a blue roof, upstream of two fuel pontoons. It is run by a man called Winston, is staffed 24/7, has video security and friendly, trustworthy staff. They will look after your dinghy for a beer or a small tip. You can buy propane, petrol, diesel and soft drinks here, but at higher prices than elsewhere in town.

Fuel

There are two waterside filling stations close together near to the market building. Diesel and petrol (gasoline) are both available by hose at the ends of their piers. Unfortunately, the pilings and piers are rather high for yachts and awkward to lie alongside. Also, the diameter of the fuel nozzles is much greater than that of normal filling station nozzles, so you will need a large funnel.

Provisions

The town has a good market with fruit, vegetables, fish and meat. There are several small supermarkets.

Miscellaneous supplies including gas

There are several hardware stores in Bartica.

They can arrange to get your propane bottles refilled within a few days.

Cash

Scotiabank on Second Avenue has an ATM that works with foreign cards.

Entertainment

There are plenty of bars and restaurants in town including several Brazilian ones. Things can get lively when the gold miners come into town at weekends. If you want to go somewhere quieter there are the nearby Hurakabra resort just downstream or at the slightly more formal Baganara resort just upstream. These are both places where you could safely leave your boat unattended for some time. Trips into the interior can be arranged from here.

Formalities

The documentation required by individual officers is variable across Guyana, but is simplest in Bartica, because the government is keen to attract visiting foreign yachts to the area. The officials there do not treat yachts the same as cargo ships.

1. Immigration:

This is carried out by the Police. The Police Station is on First Avenue next to the *Stelling*. All crew members are required to be present with their passports.

Passports must be valid for 6 months. No visa is required for nationals of many countries, including the UK, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden. Evidence of funds might be requested. Entry to the country is granted for 3 months, but there is not likely to be any difficulty in obtaining an extension.

2. Clearance:

Clearance of the yacht is carried out by Customs. The Customs Office Permission is granted for 6 months and it is easy to renew this for a further 6 months. Beyond this the yacht must either leave the country or be formally imported. Customs will levy a small charge for clearing the yacht in (and again for clearing the yacht out)

Firearms and significant amounts of foreign currency must be declared.

Animals must have the usual health and vaccination certificates plus an Import Permit from the local Ministry of Agriculture. These documents will allow entry for animals from the UK, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and some Caribbean countries. Animals from all other countries must be quarantined for 90 days.

The dress code may be displayed on the doors of the offices. The usual decorum is required; long trousers and long-sleeved collared shirts for men and equivalent formality for women.

Trinidad & Tobago

Time zone: UTC - 4Hrs

Telephone country code: 001

The Republic of Trinidad & Tobago is part of the Commonwealth. Its economy depends upon oil, petrochemicals, natural gas and tourism. Together with Grenada and Venezuela it has a potentially valuable role to play in the sailing world, because it lies south of Latitude 12°40'N. Most yacht insurers work on the assumption that south of this line there is not too much risk of hurricanes. Up to 1,000 yachts come to Trinidad for storage during the hurricane season and there is a concentration of boatyards and other marine services here, especially at Chaguaramas.

Tobago, which lies about 20M northeast of Trinidad, is the quieter of the two islands and has few facilities. It is small (116 square miles), mountainous and relatively unspoilt. Tobago has some of the oldest protected rain forest in the Caribbean, some wonderful marine life, beautiful waterfalls and delightful beaches. There are 18 good anchorages around its coast. Most of the bays on the north coast offer good daytime

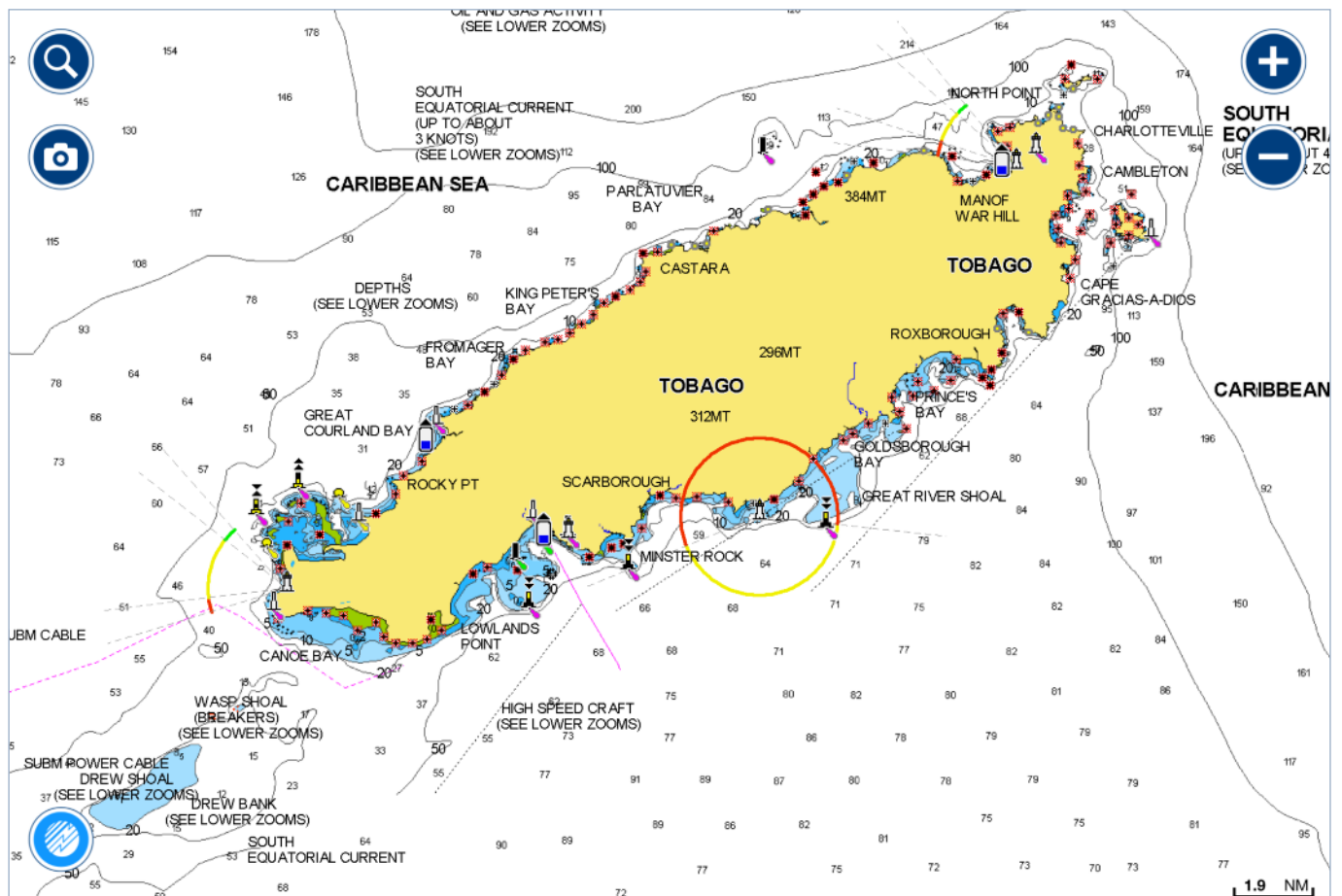
anchorages. A particularly beautiful one is Englishman's Bay, where the rain forest comes right down to the water's edge. All of these north coast anchorages can become untenable when a northerly swell comes in. The most suitable overnight anchorages would then be Store Bay or Mt Irvine bay.

For many yachts making the journey from Cape Town, Tobago will be chosen as the first Caribbean island to visit, and that choice is assumed in this document.

Weather

In the hottest months, April to October, the mean temperature is about 28°C but it often reaches 31°C or more. In the coolest months, January and February, it is about 23°C.

There is about 540mm of rain each year, over 100mm of which falls in November and over 60mm per month from June to October. March and April are pretty dry with only about 8mm per month. Humidity ranges from a mean of 74% during February to April, up to 80% in the July - November period. The mean annual windspeed is only about 7 knots but it is higher in the April - June period (about 9 knots) and it frequently gusts to 19 knots.



PLAN 37: Tobago

NAVIONICS

History

The human history of Trinidad & Tobago begins with the settlement of the islands by Carib and Arawak peoples. The first European visit to the islands was by Columbus in 1498, on his third voyage. From the early 1500s, the two islands became the focus of Spanish slaving raids. Trinidad remained effectively under Spanish control until 1797 but was largely settled by French colonists. In that year a British force invaded Trinidad and it remained under British control until the Trinidad and Tobago Independence Act of 1962. During that time, in 1888, Tobago was merged with Trinidad for administrative purposes. The country became a republic in 1976.

Tobago had a more complex history than Trinidad. A Dutch colony founded in 1628 was followed by other settlements by French, Courlandish (Latvian) and British parties. One does not think of Latvia as a great colonising nation but the Duke of Courland, then part of Latvia, had been given Tobago as a birthday present by his godfather, King Charles II of England. Ownership of the island changed so many times during the 17th and 18th centuries that it is difficult to establish who was really in control at any one time. Estimates of the number of changes in ownership range from 24 to 31.

By 1771 English colonists were growing and harvesting sugarcane using slave labour, but the industry was destroyed by an infestation of ants, after which the settlers tried to grow cotton instead. In 1781 the French wrested control from them and tried to grow both sugarcane and cotton. The British regained control in 1793 and then remained in charge almost without interruption until the Trinidad and Tobago Independence Act of 1962.

Formalities

All yachts entering the Republic's territorial waters should call Coastguard Control on VHF Channel 16 to advise of the yacht's arrival, Port of Entry and ETA. The Ports of Entry in Tobago are Scarborough and Charlotteville. Once the yacht is in territorial waters, the captain and crew must check in within 24 hours.

When you arrive at your Port of Entry you must contact Customs immediately, even if Immigration is closed. The Customs Office is open 24/7 but normal working hours are 0800 - 1200 and 1300 - 1600. If you arrive and make your obligatory contact outside these hours you will be charged overtime fees, so it is advisable to time your arrival (and departure) to be as early as possible during normal working hours.

Immigration

Visiting yachts will normally be granted an initial period of 6 months stay in the Republic. After that, you are welcome to ask for an extension to this period, if you have an acceptable reason (e.g. work on the boat, shelter during hurricane season).

The captain should produce or complete for Customs the ship's certificate of registration, clearance from the last port of call, Form 11 (a crew list) and Form 10, which is a General Declaration/ Arrival report.

All passports should be valid for 6 months beyond the intended stay (3 months for citizens of the Commonwealth, the EU or the USA.)

Visas for visits of up to 90 days are not required by citizens of the Commonwealth, the EU, the Caricom countries (except Haiti), or the USA, except for:

Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Australia, Cameroon, India, Mozambique, New Zealand, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Uganda. (Australian crew on yachts do not need a visa but Australian tourists arriving by plane or ferry do.)

Health

A yellow fever inoculation certificate is required if you have come from a country in South America where the disease is present.

Anyone wishing to stay in Trinidad & Tobago for a period of more than a year must go before an Examining Medical Officer and obtain a Medical Certificate.

Customs

Firearms and ammunition must be declared and will be held in the Police Station for the duration of your stay, unless you are issued with a licence by the Commissioner of Police. Requests for their return prior to your departure must be made at least 48 hours before you are going to clear out.

Fruits, plants and other plant materials must not be landed without being inspected by a plant quarantine officer.

Honey from other islands must be declared and so must all alcohol.

If a yacht is to be left unattended, it will be necessary to complete formalities for its temporary importation.

Pets

The regulations about bringing pets such as cats and dogs into the country are so rigorous that most of us would not even consider the matter. If you really want to do this, you would be well advised to get up-to-date information about the requirements from:

Veterinary Services Division
Ministry of Agriculture
Land and Marine Resources
St Clair Circle, St Clair.
Tel: (00868) 622 1221
Email: aphmalmr@tsstt.net.tt

Fees in March 2018 (In April 2019, \$TT 1.0 was worth £ 0.11 or \$US 0.15.)

1. Immigration

Visas and visa waivers both attract a fee of \$TT400 per person

2. Customs

After completion of immigration formalities on arrival, the customs officer will collect \$TT50 for the first 30 days of Navigation dues. The balance of these dues will be collected when the boat clears out.

3. Harbour fees

Harbour fees are \$TT50 for every 30 days, up to a maximum of \$TT500 in any one year.

4. Departure tax

\$TT100 per person

5. Overtime charges

OT for yachts arriving or departing is charged outside working hours on weekdays and all day on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.

Examination of imported goods: \$TT91.20

Arrival boarding: \$TT136.79

Departure clearance: \$TT117.26

Immigration overtime: \$TT100

Outward Clearance

You must visit Customs, Immigration and the Port Authority to obtain clearance out. Immigration will allow you 24 hours to depart but Customs will only allow 4 hours.

Moving round Tobago

Sailing from port to port around the island is referred to as 'bay-hopping'. You *must* get permission to do this. Customs will require a 'float plan' (passage plan), complete with the dates on which you will be at various destinations. If your port of entry was Charlotteville and you have sailed round to Scarborough on the south coast, you will need to check in and out there, because it is under a different jurisdiction.

Sailing from Tobago to Trinidad

You must gain clearance from both Immigration and Customs with endorsements allowing the vessel to sail to the port of Chaguaramas. (Port of Spain is a commercial port and yachts may stop there only in an emergency.) You are then obligated to proceed directly to Chaguaramas and must not stop anywhere en route without permission. On arrival, you must report to the Chaguaramas Immigration and Customs. Anchoring anywhere en route is prohibited for security reasons.

Security

A few years ago there was a serious problem with dinghy and outboard thefts, especially in Trinidad, but security patrols have been instituted and things seem to have improved. It would be foolish, however, not to take the normal precautions:

Lock and chain your dinghy wherever you leave it ashore and on deck overnight.

Do not walk around by day or night making any obvious display of wealth, such as cash, jewellery or cameras. Try not to be on your own with expensive items such as fishing tackle or surfboards. There always seems to be an increase in crime in general, over the carnival period (February).

The CSSN (Caribbean Safety and Security Net)

The CSSN provides information by anchorage or by island about reported incidents of crime affecting yachts and their crews. This means that you can look up a prospective destination to check on its safety record. All yachts are asked to report to CSSN any boarding, robbery or other aggressive or criminal behaviour that they have experienced or have information about in Caribbean waters. The CSSN website is:

<https://safetyandsecuritynet.org>

and you can send an email message from there.

Restrictions

It is an offence for anyone, including children, to dress in camouflage clothing.

Scarborough

11°11'N 60°45'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Fort King George Lt. Tr.: 011°10.65'N 60°43.16'W

Fl(2)20s141m20M

Rear Ldg Lt.: 011°11.04'N 60°44.45'W

Oc.5s20m11M

Front Ldg Lt.: 011°10.945'N 60°44.39'W

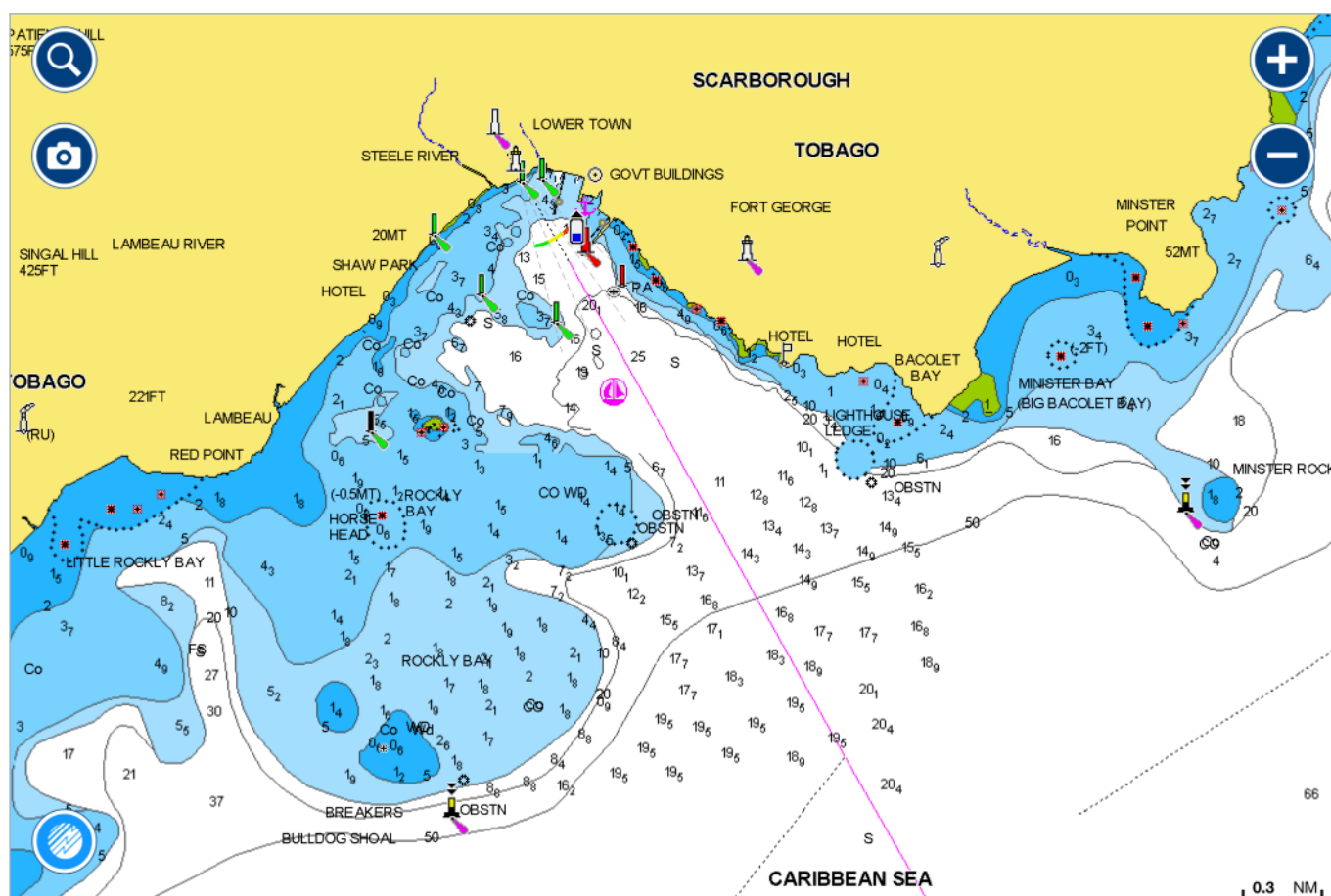
IsoWRG2s15m7-5M

Breakwater Lt: 011°10.675'N 60°44.16'W

QR5M

Max tidal range: 0.6m

Scarborough lies towards the western end of the south coast of Tobago and is the principal town on the island. Its population is about 17,500. This is a busy port with ferries running to and from Trinidad. Harbour facilities for yachts are minimal.



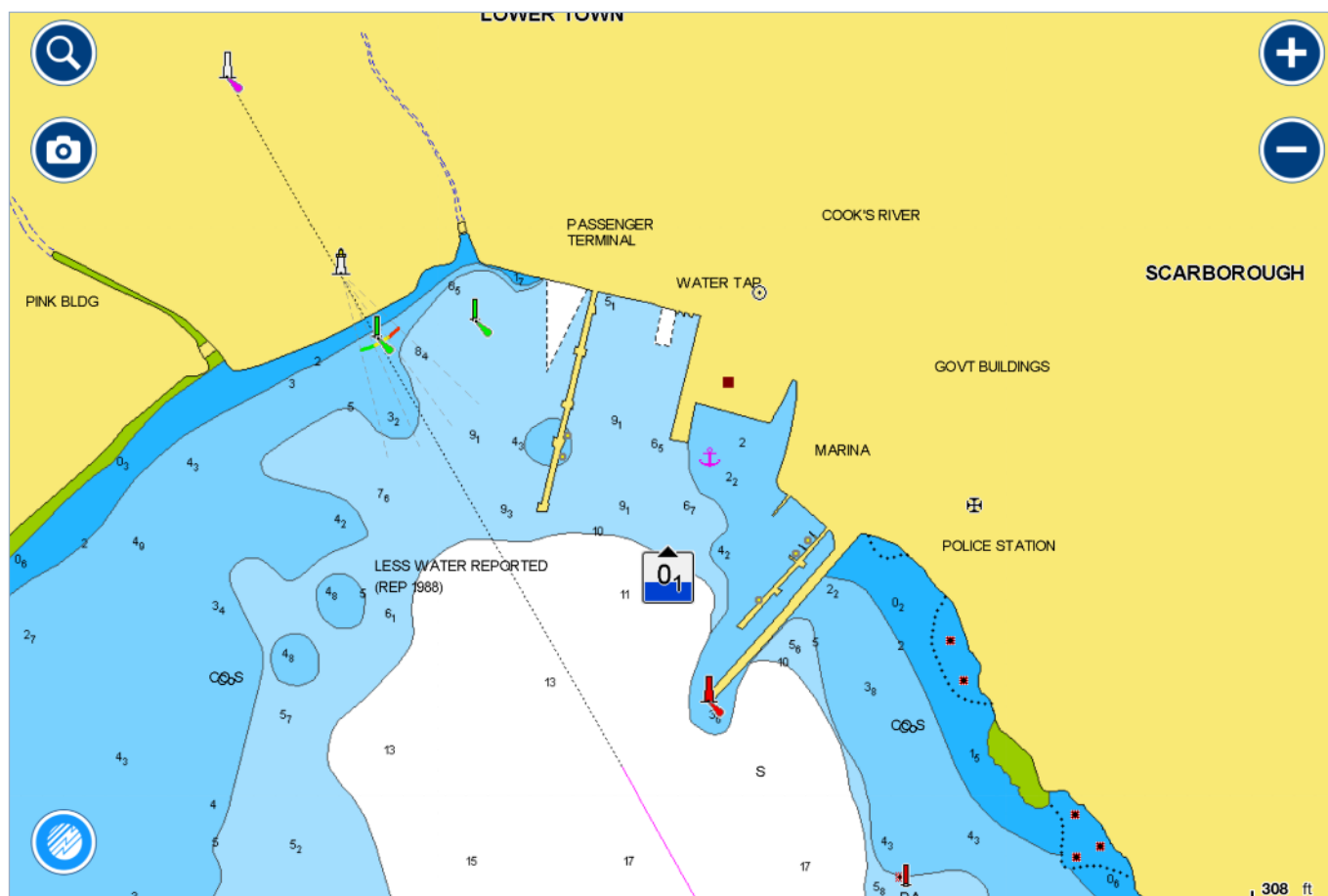
PLAN 38: Scarborough, Tobago

NAVIONICS

Approach, anchoring and formalities.

Coming from the east, aim for the waypoint 11°09.00'N, 60°43.3'W (which is in the white sector of the Iso WRG shore light at the head of the bay) then proceed on a bearing of 330°. You will pass clear of the Middle Shoal to port (sometimes but not always marked by a light Fl.G 3s. on a beacon) and will find the southwest end of the breakwater coming up to starboard (marked with a Q.R.light).

Anchoring space in the harbour here is extremely limited and holding is poor. Try to anchor in the designated area when going ashore for clearance. This is northwest of the breakwater, which is on the east side of the bay. Anchor fairly close inshore, so that you will not interfere with ferry traffic using the ferry pier to the north, and anchor sufficiently far north to be clear of the commercial pier which runs parallel to and north of the breakwater. If this anchorage is too crowded, you may be able to anchor southeast of the



PLAN 39: Scarborough Detail, Tobago



breakwater. A Bahamian moor is recommended, to reduce your swinging circle and the risk of dragging. Alternatively, it might be possible to berth at the Government Dock. It is also possible to anchor in Store Bay, on the southwest corner of Tobago, and go into Scarborough by bus or taxi to clear in. You should obtain permission in advance from Customs in Trinidad, if you wish to do this.

The Immigration Office is at the cruise ship terminal.
Tel: (001) 868 639 2681

The Customs Office is in Customs Street.
Tel: (001) 868 639 2415

The Port Authority office is in Milford Road.
Tel: (001) 868 623 2901-5

Facilities

There is a water tap on the pier in town and if local boats are out, it may be possible to go alongside. Use of a water filter is advisable. The town does not offer many facilities. It does have a supermarket (a branch of Penny Savers) but there are bigger and better ones out of town. (See under Charlotteville.)

Charlotteville

11°19' N 60°33'W

An official Port of Entry

Lights:

Charlotteville Lt.: 011°19.39'N 60°32.82'W

QWRG25m5-4M

Max tidal range: 1.0m

Charlotteville is a quiet, attractive fishing village on the northeast corner of the island. It lies in a bay flanked on each side by steep, wooded hills. The centre of activity in the village is the road that runs along the shore, with its little shops, bars and restaurants. Right in the middle, appropriately enough, is the Fishermen's Co-operative. The streets that lead inland and up the hillside are mostly residential. Moves have been made to develop part of the waterfront to cater for tourists and visitors from Trinidad. Many locals are strongly opposed to the idea.

Approach, anchoring and getting ashore

Aim for the waypoint 011°22.0'N, 60°34.0'W. From there, sail south to open up Man of War Bay and then head for Charlotteville. By night, sail south from the

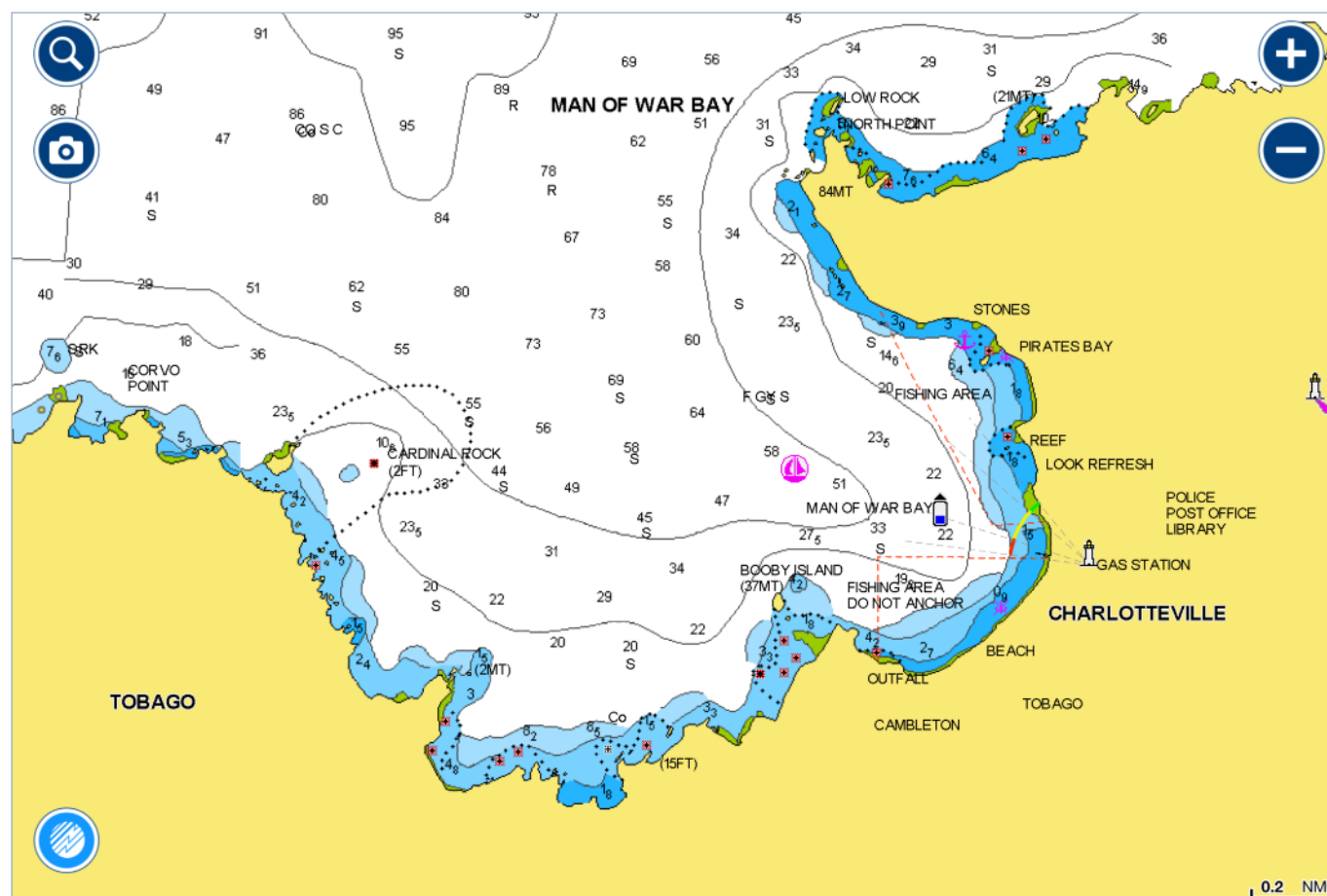
waypoint until you enter the white sector of the Charlotteville light and then follow it inshore.

Charlotteville has a good but deep protected anchorage with a resident community of cruisers.

Anchor north of the imaginary line extending from the end of the jetty to the northern point of Pirates Bay. You should be able to find a spot in which to anchor in about 14 - 18m on sand. Take care not to anchor on, and therefore damage, any coral. If you anchor inside this imaginary line you are more likely to be anchoring in coral and more likely to be in range of insects coming from the shore. You can anchor in lesser depth by going nearer to the town beach, but you will be more exposed to any swell. If you try to anchor in the cove in Pirates Bay, the fishermen will ask you to move. The anchoring ground is on a steep slope, so a stern anchor is recommended.

It is forbidden to discharge 'black' water into the bay or into any swimming areas.

When going ashore, pull your dinghy up onto the beach on the inside of the town jetty. Dinghies tied to the lower dock can get sucked under it and capsize and there have also been problems with youths vandalising dinghies moored there by jumping into them from a height.



PLAN 40: Charlotteville, Tobago

NAVIONICS

An alternative recommendation is to secure the dinghy at Workshop Seatours.

Formalities

Obtaining inward clearance here is not always straightforward, because opening hours at Immigration are very unreliable.

If you are attempting to do this, *officially* you should go alongside the Immigration jetty for clearance by Customs and Immigration (in that order) and the captain and all crew should present themselves ashore for that purpose before the yacht is moved to a suitable anchorage or mooring. The problem here is that the dock is unsuitable for yachts and you will be in the way of the fishing boats.

Facilities

There is a grocery store conveniently close to Workshop Seatours and there are several small markets and vegetable stalls nearby, but Charlotteville is not a good place for a major re-provisioning exercise. There are 4 sizeable supermarkets on Tobago and they are all at the southwestern end of the island. Three of them are branches of Penny Savers. The largest of these is at Canaan and it is the largest supermarket on Tobago. The second largest is at Cambee, where there is an excellent pharmacy in front of it and a fruit and vegetable stall beside it. The Penny Savers in Scarborough is much smaller and can be crowded. The other supermarket is R.T.Morshead in Mount Pleasant, which some regard as more up-market.

Potable fresh water is available from taps on the town jetty and from a spring in Pirates Bay.

There is a filling station not far from the beach, but it does sometimes run out of diesel for a few days.

The Police Station, the Health Centre and the First Citizens Bank are all on the inland side of the playing field in the town centre, opposite the library.

The bank does have an ATM, which apparently runs out of cash from time to time but is restocked once a week.

There is a tourism office on the sea front, at the back of the car park adjacent to the pavilion. The staff in the tourism office are very helpful and informative. Office hours are Monday - Friday, 0800 - 1615.

There is a bus service between Charlotteville and Scarborough and the bus stop is on the front, opposite the Fishermen's Co-operative. The distance between the two settlements is 40km, but buses do not adhere at all closely to a timetable and the road surfaces are poor, so travel is slow. Officially licensed taxis are quite expensive and unofficial taxis are the subject of many negative reports. Car hire is possible but it is a good idea to get independent advice on hire firms.