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## 12.2 Station Logbooks

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## 12.2 Station Logbooks

### INTRODUCTION

1. The primary function of all NCI Watchkeepers is to spot any vessel or person in difficulty or at risk, whether on land or at sea, and immediately report the essential facts to HMCG. These facts are deemed '*entries*' to be recorded in Station Logbooks.
2. Our Logbooks are centrally procured, printed to a standard pattern, contain useful/standardised information (such as nationally recognised weather codes, wind speeds, sea states) and issued to all Stations as required – no other type of logbook/record is to be used.
3. All NCI Logbooks are official documents. They may be called upon at any time to provide evidence – by the courts; coroners; police; HMCG; UK Border Force and other official agencies. It is imperative they are always complete, accurate, legible, up-to-date, factual and meet the criteria set out in this document.
4. **Completeness** is essential, for example a vessel that has been recorded may be involved in an incident elsewhere/at some other time; or HMCG may ask for information regarding the last sighting of a vessel that is missing or overdue. **Accuracy** means recording only what you see and hear; and **factual** means you must not put in any assumptions, guesswork or opinions.
5. Information held in Logbooks can provide valuable and rapidly available intelligence regarding the identity and position of personnel and targets during incidents, which is then available to relay to others nearby who may be able to assist. The reliability of such details underpins NCI's professionalism.

### SUPPLEMENTARY READING

6. To ensure that Logbooks maintain the standards required, it will be helpful to understand the following:
  - ✓ Data Protection – Sections 8.1, 8.3 and 8.4
  - ✓ Watchkeeping – Section 12.1
  - ✓ Incident Reporting – Sections 12.3A and 12.3B
  - ✓ Signs and Signals – Section 12.9

### WHAT CONSTITUTES AN 'ENTRY'?

7. An entry in a Logbook is anything of note that has involved NCI in its day-to-day operations. It is a record of what has been seen and what has happened during a Watch. The items below are some commonly occurring events – and are the compulsory minimum to be noted down, but they are not exhaustive and you may decide that other events also need to be recorded.
  - emergency / distress signals seen or heard
  - vessel observations and movements in general, where practical to do so, but not at the expense of keeping Watch
  - activities in and around your Station
  - injured persons
  - lost / found children
  - livestock, other animals or sea creatures in distress



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- fire within your purview
  - identities and details of particular craft observed
  - loose large inflatables such as airbeds or dinghies (but not beach balls)
  - pollution and oil slicks
  - chemical containers
  - actual weather conditions
  - gale and strong wind warnings
  - deceased marine mammal carcasses on beach
  - incoming / outgoing telephone calls
  - radio traffic
  - all exercises, official visits
  - other visitors such as police, HMCG, station management
  - solo Watchkeeper calls to a nominated person on a local 'buddy' safety system
  - equipment removed from the Station
8. Details required of these entries must be sufficient to identify them precisely – names; purpose of visit; arrival and departure times; vessel identification (see below); colours; shapes; species. NCI expectations are that vessels are described in Logbooks in sufficient detail that SAR assets are able to identify them if needed.

### BASIC RULES OF KEEPING AN NCI LOG

9. All our Station Logbooks must:
- be (and remain), spirally bound, with sequentially numbered pages
  - have all entries made in black ink, except those entries relating to incidents, which are to be in red ink or underlined in red
  - have no entries erased – any error is to be crossed through with a single line leaving it legible, and with the deletion initialled
  - have no missing pages
  - record entries legibly using capitals show the local time that each entry is made in 24-hour format whether BST or UTC
  - record narrative entries across the whole page without regard to the columns set out
  - detail weather observations every two hours
  - show the time of origin and details of the time period covered for gale and strong wind warnings
  - show daily tidal information and the relevant box ticked for spring or neap tides
  - note weather conditions at the time of any incident



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- be completed at the time of the occurrence or as soon as practicable thereafter
  - any rough notes made away from the Logbook that may have a bearing on occurrences must be kept safely by the Station Secretary
  - any paper Incident Form completed, must be destroyed immediately after details are entered onto NCI's electronic Incident Reporting system
- be kept / archived in secure and locked cabinets for at least three years, when full

### ***At first Watch or Watch handover***

- a new page opened at the beginning of every day
- each new Watch legibly signing in and recording the time of doing so
- each Watchkeeper's initials against their own name
- subsequent Watches as above, but separated from previous Watch entries by a black ruled line or by starting a new page
- weather observations entered

### ***End of Watch or day***

- weather observations entered
- log closed, a line drawn after the last entry, any spare space on the page crossed out with a single diagonal black line and recording the time of doing so and the statistics block completed
- record logging-off with HMCG
- each Watchkeeper signing the last page used

### ***Logbook entries for vessels***

10. Whilst the logging of vessels is an important part of a Watchkeeper's duties, NCI spotting priorities demand that vulnerable people and craft require the Watchkeeper's attention above the need for logging the less vulnerable categories. Large vessels will always be a lower priority for Watchkeepers.
11. All vessels are recorded in the Logbook at the time they are observed. Generally, it is only necessary to record a vessel once, unless it carries out a notable occurrence such as anchors or departs the sector and returns sometime later.
12. Information regarding vessels is gained, in the first instance, by observation and then further information may be obtained from the Automatic Identification System (AIS).

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13. The log entry for vessels should follow the designated boxes in the Logbook:

<b>Time</b>	The time the vessel is seen within the sector
<b>Type of vessel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The first column under this heading is the 'Type' and the second the 'Category'</li> <li>▪ Each type of vessel has a 'type' code, such as 'FFS' for a fishing vessel. It is then categorised as 'Commercial'(C), 'Leisure'(L), 'Military'(M) or 'Special'(S)</li> <li>▪ The inside front cover of your Logbook displays the type codes and which category they come under.</li> <li>▪ Use of codes is not mandatory and should be used only where they are helpful. If a code is not provided, the 'type' should be written in full. Alternative codes must not be used</li> </ul>
<b>Name</b>	Generally, the name of the vessel is entered in this column. If the name is not known, it should be left blank
<b>Registration or sail number</b>	If a sail number of a yacht or the registration number of a fishing boat can be seen it must be entered here
<b>Position</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Normally the bearing of the vessel and its estimated distance from the Station is written in this column</li> <li>▪ The 'Pelorus' sighting equipment is used to provide a bearing of the vessel in relation to the Station</li> </ul>
<b>Course, heading</b>	Unless there is specific information, from the AIS for instance, a general heading such as 'North West' will suffice
<b>Speed</b>	Unless the speed is known this column should be left blank unless 'very fast' or 'very slow' is appropriate
<b>VRA</b>	<p>The appropriate initials should be entered:</p> <p>'V' Visual</p> <p>'R' Radar</p> <p>'A' AIS, depending on how the vessel can be seen</p>
<b>PV</b>	The number of 'Persons Visible' on the vessel should be recorded. Only those that can actually be seen should be counted. Do not assume the presence of persons you cannot see
<b>Remarks description</b>	If the vessel has no previous record in the area and its name is unknown the colour of the hull, superstructure, sails and any other description that assists identification can be entered



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### DISCLOSURE OF LOGBOOK CONTENTS

14. The contents of Logbooks are confidential and must not normally be disclosed to any agency. Where there is a request for a disclosure, you must obtain your Station Manager's (or Deputy's) permission before complying.
15. Your Station Manager will ascertain:
  - whether it is a legitimate agency making a legitimate request
  - why the information is being requested
  - what specific elements are being requested – entire Logbooks will not usually be authorised for access / removal
  - confirmation of the contact details of the agency / person making the request

### VESSEL RECOGNITION

16. Vessel recognition charts are available in Reeds Nautical Almanac. There are also vessel type abbreviations set out inside the cover of your Station Logbook, which can be used as a guide when entering vessel descriptions in the Logbook.
17. It is better to enter a simple visual description of what you see if you are unsure about the actual vessel type, than to spend time analysing various detailed definitions from books.
18. **Vulnerable craft** – Watchkeepers should attempt to log all potentially vulnerable craft passing or working within your Station's purview. NCI's Hierarchy of Vulnerability lists the priority of crafts as follows:
  - small inflatables
  - Paddle Boarders
  - canoes / kayaks
  - RIBs, small open boats
  - rowing boats
  - leisure craft for example yachts, motor cruisers, day boats
  - dive boats and associated activity
  - any craft acting strangely
  - commercial fishing vessels and wind farm work boats
  - large merchant and naval vessels