



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Protecting the North Atlantic right whale: Speed restriction measures in the Gulf of St. Lawrence

This bulletin **07/2019** has been replaced by Ship Safety Bulletin No. [11/2019](#)
 This bulletin **07/2019** replaces Ship Safety Bulletin No. [06/2018](#)

Purpose

This bulletin describes new seasonal speed restriction zones that vessels must follow in the western Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The Government of Canada has put these zones in place to lessen the risk of fatal strikes to North Atlantic right whales by transiting vessels.

Context

Due to changing migration of North Atlantic right whales and their increased presence in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Government of Canada has established seasonal speed restrictions in a specific zone. These restrictions combine “static zone” and “dynamic speed” sectors. [See the map below for details.](#)

Note: Navigational Warnings with these speed restrictions are considered to be Notices to Shipping, which vessels **must follow** under section 7 of the *Collision Regulations*.

Speed restrictions are described in monthly Notices to Mariners (NOTMARs). They are also broadcast through Navigational Warnings (NAVWARNs).

NOTMARs provide marine information. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, through the Canadian Coast Guard, publishes these notices monthly and annually.

NAVWARNs provide urgent information for vessels about marine facilities, services, procedures or navigational hazards. They are published by the Canadian Coast Guard.

Keywords:

1. North Atlantic right whales
2. 10.0 knots
3. speed restriction

Questions concerning this Bulletin should be addressed to:

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Contact us at: marinesafety-securitemaritime@tc.gc.ca or 1-855-859-3123 (Toll Free).



Changes to speed restriction zones

In response to consultations with industry, and based on scientific data, we have made two changes to the restriction zone this year:

- We removed the southeast corner of the speed restriction zone, around the Magdalen Islands.
- To help reduce impacts on the marine shipping industry, we are allowing vessels, in the absence of North Atlantic right whale sightings, to travel at safe speeds in a larger area north of Anticosti Island, extending to the mainland.

Static zone

Coordinates for the new large speed restriction zone (“static zone”):

- 47° 36’ N 062° 00’ W
- 47° 10’ N 062° 30’ W
- 47° 10’ N 065° 00’ W
- 50° 20’ N 065° 00’ W
- 50° 20’ N 063° 00’ W
- 49° 43’ N 063° 00’ W
- 49° 04’ N 062° 00’ W

In the static zone, **all** vessels of 20 m or more in length overall (LOA) must proceed at a speed of not more than 10.0 knots over the ground.

Dynamic sectors

The static zone has 4 “dynamic sectors”: A, B, C and D.

When the Government of Canada determines that North Atlantic right whales do not appear to be in these sectors, vessels may transit through them at a safe operational speed.

When we determine that North Atlantic right whales are present in a dynamic sector, vessels of 20 m or more in length (LOA)

- will be notified through a NAVWARN; and
- must proceed at a speed of not more than 10.0 knots over the ground within that sector.

Note: Only dynamic sector D has changed since we issued the last Ship Safety Bulletin on this subject (06/2018).

Dynamic sector coordinates

Sector A

- 49° 41’ N, 065° 00’ W

- 49° 20' N, 065° 00' W
- 49° 11' N, 064° 00' W
- 49° 22' N, 064° 00' W

Sector B

- 49° 22' N, 064° 00' W
- 49° 11' N, 064° 00' W
- 48° 48' N, 063° 00' W
- 49° 00' N, 063° 00' W

Sector C

- 49° 00' N, 063° 00' W
- 48° 48' N, 063° 00' W
- 48° 24' N, 062° 00' W
- 48° 35' N, 062° 00' W

Sector D

- 50° 16' N, 064° 00' W
- 50° 00' N, 064° 00' W
- 49° 56' N, 063° 00' W
- 50° 16' N, 063° 00' W

Speed restrictions in the dynamic sectors

These speed restrictions will be in effect for 15 days from the date we issue them. We may extend a restriction past the 15 days if North Atlantic right whales continue to be present. Speed restriction zones and sectors will be announced through NAVWARNs.

These restrictions will be in effect from **April 28 to November 15, 2019**. These dates may change, depending on when whales are present.

During this period, vessels of 20 m or more in length (LOA) must reduce their speed so as not to exceed 10.0 knots over the ground in the presence of North Atlantic right whales.

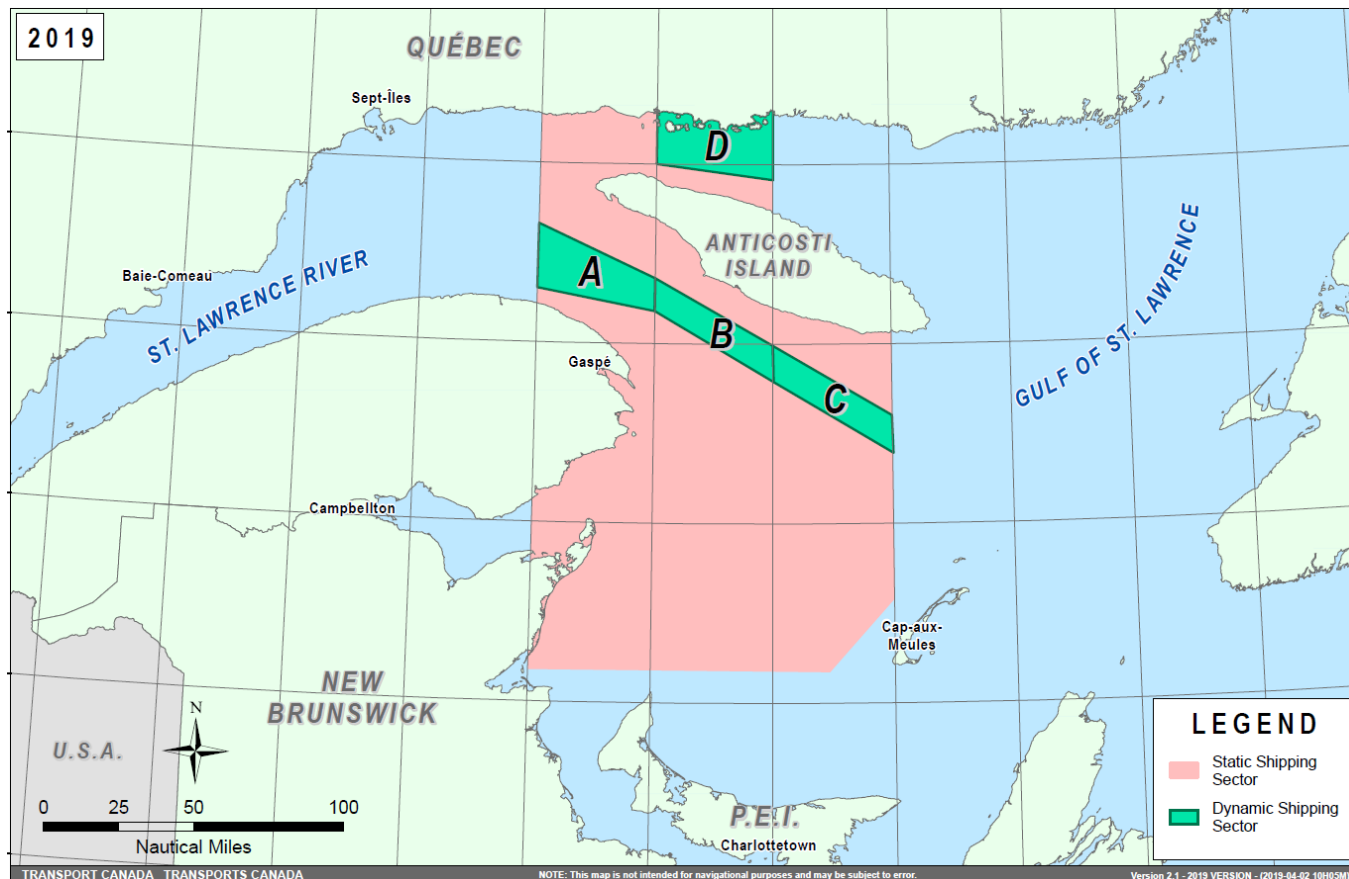
Outside the restriction period, once the mandatory speed restriction is lifted, we ask vessels to reduce their speed voluntarily so as not to exceed 10.0 knots over the ground

- in the presence of North Atlantic right whales; and
- only if maritime conditions permit safe operation of their vessel at that speed.

Map of the Gulf of St. Lawrence

The following map shows

- the speed restriction zone, in red (static sector); and
- the dynamic shipping sectors, in green.



Map showing the static restriction area and the four dynamic sectors (A, B, C and D).

NAVWARN broadcasts

The Canadian Coast Guard sends out NAVWARNs:

- by radio broadcast; and
- on line at [Canada's Maritime Information Portal](#) and its [Navigational Warnings](#) site.

Mariners must ensure they have accurate and up-to-date information about the protection of the North Atlantic right whale, as in all applicable NOTMARs and NAVWARNs.

For the North Atlantic right whale speed restriction, we will provide the NAVWARN in effect for the following:

Outbound vessels

- at Calling-in-Point (CIP) 11; or
- upon a departure downstream from the Quebec pilot station (including the Saguenay River, Chaleur Bay, Miramichi Bay, etc.)

Inbound vessels

- when a clearance to enter Canadian waters is granted

Vessels in transit

- at the last reporting point prior to entering the speed restriction area; and/or
- at 10 NM prior to entering the speed restriction zone

Aids to navigation

The Canadian Coast Guard now uses virtual Automatic Identification System (AIS) aids to navigation (AIS AtoN). These aids will notify mariners of a dynamic sector subject to a speed restriction, per NOTMAR 819(T)/2016.

Each dynamic sector will be delimited by four virtual AIS AtoN, which can be displayed on a ship's navigation equipment, such as

- Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS);
- Electronic Chart System (ECS);
- RADAR;
- Minimum Keyboard Display (MKD); and
- Electronic Nautical Chart (ENC).

The Canadian Coast Guard will broadcast the virtual AIS AtoN only when a speed restriction is in effect in one or more sectors.

Mariners must select the virtual AIS AtoN symbol to view a message such as "SectA1 Spd Lim 10 kt." This message refers to a speed restriction in effect for a specific sector.

Note: This system is not the primary way we communicate this information.

Compliance and enforcement

NAVWARNs are enforced in the same way as Notices to Shipping. You must comply with these warnings under section 7 of the *Collision Regulations*.

If you do not comply with any instructions in the NAVWARNs, you could face

- administrative monetary penalties ranging from CAN \$6,000 to CAN \$25,000; and/or
- penal sanctions under the *Canada Shipping Act, 2001*.

If your vessel appears to have violated the speed restriction, Transport Canada Marine Safety inspectors will review all information provided through AIS and seek information from the master.

We will not grant exemptions to the speed restriction in advance. However, Transport Canada will review and consider reasons such as

- navigating to ensure vessel safety;
- weather conditions;
- force majeure (unforeseeable circumstances); and
- responding to emergencies.

Report a North Atlantic right whale sighting

If you see a North Atlantic right whale that is entangled, dead or injured, please report it to your nearest Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centre, or as follows:

Southern part of the Gulf of St. Lawrence

Marine Animal Response Society

Telephone: 1-866-567-6277

Newfoundland and Labrador

Whale Release and Strandings

Telephone: 1-888-895-3003

For the Québec Sector

Marine Mammal Emergencies

Telephone: 1-877-722-5346

If you see live, free-swimming whales

- Call 1-902-440-8611 (local) or 1-844-800-8568 (toll free)
- Email: XMARWhalesightings@dfo-mpo.gc.ca