

Navigation sounds and signals

The International Regulations for Preventing Accidents at Sea lay down a series of sound signals to be used by the Masters of craft when about to change direction. There are also light and other signs used to indicate temporary or other hazards in the navigation channels.

Set out below, with their meanings, is a selection of those signs and signals most likely to be encountered by rowers and scullers.

Sound signals

- one - I am altering my course to Starboard
- two - I am altering my course to Port
- three - My engines are going Astern
- five - I am doubtful if you are taking sufficient avoiding action

There are other signals and for more information, reference should be made to more extensive literature on the subject.

Bridge signals

When an arch or span of a bridge is closed to navigation the following signals will be suspended from the centre of the arch:

- by night - 3 red lights in an equilateral triangular configuration.
- by day - 3 red discs in place of the lights, each 0.6 metres in diameter.

When the headroom of an arch or span is reduced, but still open to traffic, the following signals shall be suspended from the centre of that arch:

- by night - 1 white light
- by day - a bundle of straw large enough to be easily visible