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General

The Netherlands is located in Western Europe, bordering the North Sea, between Belgium and Germany.

The climate is temperate, marine, cool summers with mild winters.

The terrain is mostly coastal lowland and reclaimed land area with some hills in the SE. Several thousand square miles of the western part of the country lie below sea level and must be protected by an elaborate system of dikes.

Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

Cautions

High speed craft operate between the coast of the Netherlands and the coast of the United Kingdom. For further information on high speed craft, see United Kingdom.

Currency

The official unit of currency is the Netherlands guilders, or guilden, or florins, consisting of 100 cents.

Firing Areas

Petten

Firing practice with artillery takes place at the following areas:

1. A danger sector between 254° and 327°, or between 327° and 000°, over a distance of 9 miles, from the position 52°47.1'N, 4°40.3'E.
2. A danger sector between 225° and 345°, over maximum distances of 14 miles, from a line joining the positions 52°47.7'N, 4°40.3'E and 52°47.8'N, 4°41.0'E.

Red flags will be displayed on the shore when firing is to take place. It should be noted that it is not always possible to make timely announcements in the Dutch Notice to Mariners.

Zeegat van Texel

Firing with anti-aircraft artillery takes place on the North Sea coast between Den Helder and Callantsoog, from the following firing ranges:

Falga

A danger sector between 205° and 335°, with a radius of 8 miles, from position 52°55'10"N, 4°43'06"E.

Botgat

A danger sector between 220° and 330°, with a radius of 8 miles, from the position 52°52'32"N, 4°42'45"E.

The two danger sectors above are included in one unsafe circular area centered at 52°55'10"N, 4°43'06"E, with a radius of 11.25 miles, and bounded by:

1. On the N side by the bearing 335°.
2. On the W side by the arc of the circle.
3. On the S side by the bearing 182°.
4. On the E side by the North Sea coast.

Dates and times of firings will be announced as early as possible in the Dutch Notice to Mariners.

At each of the firing ranges, warning signals will be given, as follows:

1. By day—A red flag from 1 hour before commencement of the exercises to their completion.
2. By night—Three lights, green, red, green, vertically disposed.

West of Haaksgronden

An anti-aircraft firing practice range bounded by 53°05'N and 53°13'N, and 3°45'E and 4°10'E.

Zeegat van Texel W of Kaap Hoofd

Firing practice involving artillery and machine guns at air and sea targets takes place at the following areas:

1. A danger sector with a radius of 10 miles centered on 52°57.8'N, 4°44.3'E, between the bearings 265° and 337°.
2. A danger sector with a radius of 1.6 miles centered on 52°57.8'N, 4°44'.3'E, between the bearings 260° and 010°.

Ijsselmeer-Breezanddijk

Artillery firing takes place within the area bounded by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 53°01'07"N, 5°12'33"E.
- b. 52°53'45"N, 5°16'00"E.
- c. 52°53'28"N, 5°11'11"E.
- d. 52°48'39"N, 5°10'16"E.
- e. 52°48'47"N, 5°07'33"E.
- f. 52°50'53"N, 5°07'49"E.
- g. 52°56'00"N, 5°03'33"E.

The firing dates will be announced by Scheveningen Radio.

Vlieland Vliehors

Firing practice from aircraft at ground targets takes place in a sector area centered at 53°14.4'N, 4°55.3'E, with a radius of 4 miles, between the bearings 285° and 355°.

Waddenzee SE of Vlieland

Firing practice with armor-piercing and high explosive shells, and automatic firearms, takes place in an area bounded by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 53°14'09"N, 4°55'18"E.
- b. 53°07'39"N, 4°55'18"E.
- c. 53°10'15"N, 5°06'18"E.
- d. 53°15'00"N, 4°58'55"E.

Warning signals are shown, as follows:

1. One black ball—Firing will occur that day.
2. Two black balls—Firing will commence immediately.

Terschelling Noordvarder

Firing practice from aircraft at a ground target takes place in a sector area centered 53°22.1'N, 5°10.3'E with a radius of 4 miles, between the bearings 280° and 000°.

Terschelling Ameland

Firing practice from aircraft at targets towed from other aircraft takes place in the area bounded by a line joining the following positions:

1. North of Terschelling

- a. North coast of Terschelling at 53°23'28"N, 5°11'40"E.
- b. 53°26'30"N, 5°10'30"E.
- c. 53°29'30"N, 5°31'30"E.
- d. N coast of Terschelling at 53°27'14"N, 5°32'22"E.
- e. From there along the N coast to the origin above.

2. North of Ameland

- a. West coast of Ameland at 53°27'00"N.
- b. 53°28'35"N, 5°34'15"E.
- c. 53°30'00"N, 5°34'00"E.
- d. 53°31'25"N, 5°55'25"E.
- e. North coast of Ameland at 5°56'E.
- f. From there along the N coast to the origin above.

The possibility of exercises being conducted in these areas should be considered when weather conditions are good.

Lauwersmeer Marnewaard

Firing practice takes place in an area bounded by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 53°25'10"N, 6°14'33"E.
- b. 53°25'31"N, 6°15'07"E.
- c. 53°25'36"N, 6°15'56"E.
- d. 53°25'43"N, 6°16'50"E.
- e. 53°25'48"N, 6°17'39"E.
- f. 53°25'49"N, 6°18'28"E.
- g. 53°25'55"N, 6°19'07"E.
- h. 53°26'02"N, 6°19'48"E.
- i. 53°25'27"N, 6°19'59"E.
- j. 53°25'02"N, 6°20'03"E.

North Sea N of Wadden Islands

Firing practice from aircraft at airborne targets takes place in an area bounded by a line joining the following positions:

- a. 54°00'00"N, 4°46'00"E.
- b. 54°00'00"N, 6°06'26"E.
- c. 53°51'06"N, 6°13'58"E.
- d. 53°37'38"N, 5°06'00"E.
- e. 53°36'00"N, 4°46'00"E.

These firing practices may constitute a danger for vessel traffic.

Government

The Netherlands is a constitutional monarchy. The central executive power of the state is vested in the crown.

The capital is Amsterdam, but the government resides at The Hague.

Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

Jan. 1, New Year's Day; Easter Monday; April 30, Queen's Birthday; Ascension Day; Whit Monday; Dec. 25, Christmas Day; and Dec. 26, Boxing Day.

Industries

The main industries include agricultural industries, metal and engineering products, electrical machinery, chemicals, petroleum, fishing, construction, and microelectronics.

Languages

The official language is Dutch.

Mined Areas

Practice mines are laid off the Belgium and Netherlands coasts in a number of fixed Mine Exercise Areas:

NB1 (West Hinder)

Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 51°29'55"N, 02°45'00"E.
- 51°26'48"N, 02°45'00"E.
- 51°26'48"N, 02°35'36"E.
- 51°28'55"N, 02°35'36"E.

NB4 (Schouwenbank)

A circular area with a radius of 2 miles centered 51°49.5'N, 3°08.5'E.

NB6 (Westgat)

A circular area with a radius of 1.5 miles centered 51°40'N, 3°35'E.

NB7 (Everingen)

Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 51°24.4'N, 03°44.9'E.
- 51°23.7'N, 03°46.8'E.
- 51°23.1'N, 03°46.2'E.
- 51°23.8'N, 03°44.3'E.

NB8 (Molengat)

A circular area with a radius of 1.5 miles centered 53°06.0'N, 4°36.5'E.

NB9 (Goeree)

A circular area with a radius of 1 mile centered 51°54'30"N, 3°43'40"E.

NB10 (Wenduinebank)

Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 51°20'35"N, 2°55'30"E.
- 51°18'35"N, 2°55'12"E.
- 51°18'42"N, 2°53'36"E.
- 51°20'41"N, 2°53'55"E.

The above area is used only for mine hunting exercises.

NB11 (S of Dogger Bank)

A depth charge exercise area is established S of Dogger Bank at approximately 85 miles NW of Den Melder. The area is enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 53°59'N, 02°53'E.
- 53°59'N, 02°59'E.
- 53°56'N, 02°59'E.
- 53°56'N, 02°54'E.

NB12 (Callantsoog)

Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 52 54.0'N, 04 23.0'E
- 52 54.0'N, 04 30.0'E.
- 52 50.0'N, 04 30.0'E.
- 52 50.0'N, 04 23.0'E.

NB13 (Egmond)

Area enclosed by a line joining the following positions:

- 52 38.0'N, 04 23.0'E.
- 52 38.0'N, 04 30.0'E.
- 52 34.0'N, 04 30.0'E.
- 52 34.0'N, 04 23.0'E.

Mined Areas

The only danger area remaining due to mines laid during the Second World War is bound by the N shore of the Wadden Islands and a line joining the following positions:

- 54°10'N, 07°39'E.
- 54°10'N, 04°58'E.
- 54°00'N, 04°46'E.
- 53°30'N, 04°46'E.
- 53°30'N, 04°30'E.
- The coast of Vlieland at 53°17.7'N, 05°01.3'E.

Pilotage

Pilotage is compulsory for all vessels over 40m in length and all fully or partially loaded with oil, gas, or chemicals.

Send request for pilots to the appropriate pilot station at least 6 hours in advance including the following information:

- Vessel's name, call sign, and flag.
- Date and time (state difference from UTC).
- Port of destination.
- Request for pilot and ETA boarding position.
- Draft (in meters and centimeters).
- Cargo—including description of any dangerous cargo
- Name of agent or owner.
- Length, beam (in meters and centimeters), and grt.
- Any other information.

If the original ETA becomes more than 1 hour 30 minutes in error, the message should be repeated with revised ETA.

The ETD should be sent 1 hour in advance.

Interruption or resumption of the Netherlands Pilotage Service will be announced in the navigational warnings broadcast by Scheveningen (PCH) Radio.

Vessels requiring a licensed deep sea pilot for the English Channel, North Sea or Baltic should send a request to Dirkzwager's Coastal Pilotage.

Regulations

Under certain conditions in the interests of national security, or for other causes, it may be necessary to prohibit navigation within the Netherlands zeegeats or harbors, or to allow vessels to enter only under certain conditions. In such cases the following signals will be shown in a conspicuous position:

1. By day—Three red balls, vertically disposed; or two cones, points together, over a ball.

2. By night—Three red lights, vertically disposed; or three lights vertically disposed; green over red over white.

If an incoming vessel approaching a zeegeat should observe such a signal as above, the master must, unless wind and sea prevent it, proceed toward the examination vessel, which displays the same signal.

The examination vessel will give further instructions and in certain cases the vessel will be allowed to enter; the entering vessel must have a pilot onboard or be preceded by a pilot vessel or warship.

Should a warning shot be fired, all vessels in the vicinity must stop immediately, so far as their safety will allow. In no case will vessels then be allowed to enter. Non-compliance with these instructions expose a vessel and its crew to danger.

As a rule, entering at night is prohibited. If an examination vessel is not met in the entrance, then the vessel must heave to or anchor outside.

If off the entrance of the Westerschelde, vessels may proceed inward until an examination vessel is met. No previous announcement will be made of the enforcement of these measures for any particular zeegeat or harbor.

Search and Rescue

A Coastguard Service operated by the State Pilotage Board provides search and rescue support from stations along the entire Netherlands coast.

The Netherlands Lifesaving Service is provided by the Royal South Holland Society for Saving Shipwrecked Persons from Cadzand to Ter Heijde; and the Royal North and South Holland Lifesaving Society N of Ter Heijde. Motor lifeboats and/or line throwing equipment are found at stations along the Netherlands coast.

All lifeboats are equipped with radiotelephone, VHF channel 16; larger boats, if necessary, are fitted with 2182 kHz.

SAR operations are coordinated by RCC IJmuiden. The Coastguard maintains a continuous listening watch of international frequencies.

Signals

Netherlands storm signals are shown only at Flushing and Hoek van Holland. The signals are the same as the night signals for gales and strong wind as given for Belgium.

In Netherland waters the following sluicing signals are shown:

1. By day—A blue board, with the word SPUIEN painted on it, often displayed in addition to the three red lights.

2. By night—Red lights exhibited in a triangle point up.

Time Zone

The Time Zone description is ALPHA (-1).

U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at Lange Voorhout 102, 2514 EJ, The Hague.

The mailing address is PSC 71, Box 1000, APO AE 09715. There is a Consulate General in Amsterdam.