



**Scottish  
Canals**

## **Large Craft Operating Protocol / Speed Limit– Caledonian Canal**

The Bye Laws of the Caledonian Canal, which have been in force since 1966, require that vessels comply with the speed limits of **6 m.p.h. (5.2 knots)** in any part of the canal where ‘the waterway has been raised artificially’ and Skippers are required to pass moored craft at ‘**Dead Slow**’.

It is particularly important that large craft on passage through the canal adhere to these speed limits in order to ensure the safe navigation, and safe berthing, of all craft on the canal.

1. Within the man-made sections of the Caledonian Canal, and at wind speeds of 30 knots and less, vessels must abide by the Caledonian Canals bye laws of a maximum of 6 m.p.h. (5.2 knots). At wind speeds above 30 knots in the immediate vicinity of the vessel, increased revs. will be accepted for only such a short period to allow the vessel to be brought under control and recover her line. The vessel must then immediately reduce revs. as soon as it is safe to do so.
2. When passing mooring craft, vessels must proceed at ‘**Dead Slow**’ and to a maximum speed of **4.5 knots**.
3. On operation through Loch Dochfour, at the northern end of Loch Ness, a maximum speed of 8 knots may be achieved although the impact of wake on other vessels and moored craft should be monitored and minimised so as not to cause damage to, or difficulties for, other craft.
4. Vessels approaching Bona Narrows (NE end of Loch Ness) should take recognition of the prevailing circumstances and conditions. Where winds in excess of 25 knots, and associated wave heights, are being experienced, it is accepted that increased revs. / speeds may be required to ensure safe entry to Bona Narrows. In these circumstances, vessels may need an increase in revs to maintain headway and hold their course. Vessels must immediately reduce revs. as soon as it is safe to do so e.g. when sheltered from the wind.
5. These limits do not apply on Loch Ness and Loch Lochy but Skippers of large craft are asked to be mindful of the presence of smaller craft, some of which may have inexperienced skippers and crew on board.

**Vessels found to be speeding in the canal may be held back at locks to remove any time benefit gained through excessive speed.**

**We thank you in advance for your understanding and co-operation.**