

# **Regulations for water circulation within Venice city limits**

## **Approval of the City Council**

Resolutions no. 216 of 07/10/1996 and no. 205 of 28/07/1997

## **Approvals in accordance with Art. 517 of the Regulations for execution of the Code of Navigation**

### **Harbour Offices**

favourable opinion of 06/10/1997 protocol no. 35057/p.n.

### **Water Board**

favourable opinion of 02/04/1998 protocol no. 3167

### **Harbour Inspector's Office**

favourable opinion of 24/06/1998 protocol no. 780

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**Art. 1**  
**PURPOSES AND SPHERE OF APPLICATION**

**1.** These Regulations standardize water circulation in the Municipality of Venice for the purposes of:

- a) encouraging circulation of water craft according to criteria of compatibility between the needs of everyday life in the city and the special historic, city and environmental context;
- b) limiting as much as possible the damaging effects produced by wave motion caused by boats and propeller movements and to prevent airborne, water and noise pollution;
- c) giving precedence, among motorized traffic, to public line transportation, goods transport, and non-line public transportation;
- d) safeguarding the services and activities of private transport of persons and goods, using typical Venetian row boats;
- e) reducing to a minimum the inconveniences that can emerge from closing channels and canals for excavation and maintenance.

**2.** These Regulations are applied in the channels and canals used for urban transportation in the Municipality of Venice, as indicated in the city map attached hereto under Appendix "A".

- 3.** For the purposes of these Regulations:
- where not expressly indicated and where the expression "channels and canals" is used, this term refers to the channels and canals described in paragraph 2.
  - all vehicles in circulation in the channels and canals, whether these are water craft, boats, pleasure boats, floating boats or small ships, are defined exclusively with the term "boats". They may be motorboats, row boats or sailboats.

**4.** For anything not included in these Regulations, and where not in conflict thereto, the prevailing legislation on matters of preventing collisions at sea and the matters foreseen in the Code of Navigation and the respective Regulations in implementation apply.

## Art. 2 CIRCULATION

1. The maximum speeds of travel for motorboats in the channels and canals are as follows:

|                           | <i>ACTV</i> | <i>other</i> |
|---------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| GRAND CANAL-MURANO CANAL  | 11 km/hour  | 7 km/hour    |
| RIO NOVO - CA' FOSCARI    | -           | 5 “          |
| CANNAREGIO CANAL          | 7 “         | 5 “          |
| OTHER CHANNELS AND CANALS | 7 “         | 5 “          |

2. Within the maximum speed limits indicated under the preceding paragraph, the captains of motor-powered boats must proceed while limiting speed, generation of wave motion and movement of water as much as possible in order to prevent dangerous situations that might cause damage to persons or property, in circumstances such as:

- a) intersection with other boats, especially rowing boats;
- b) in proximity to boats that are throwing anchor or involved in debarking - boarding persons or loading - unloading merchandise;
- c) where building renovation,, work on channels or banks, during other works, etc. is going on;
- d) in the presence of fog, or other conditions of limited visibility such as rain storms, etc;
- e) during periods of flooding;
- f) when tide levels are below normal values.

When performing manoeuvres, the captains of motorboats must also use the utmost precaution to avoid sudden or violent accelerations in a forward and/or reverse direction to reduce the turbulence that stirs up the canal floor and creates strong movements of water against the banks of the channels or against building foundations.

3. The boats that circulate in the channels and canals must keep to the left.

4. Row boats are permitted to circulate on the Grand Canal, the Murano Canal and the Cannaregio Canal, while keeping to the right or left side, whichever enables the best rowing conditions depending on the atmospheric and tide conditions. Motorboats must proceed in the central part of the canal, keeping to the right when crossing paths with another motorized craft.

5. When travelling on the Grand Canal, all motorboats must give the right of way to gondolas carrying passengers between the banks on the "traghetti" routes where this service is performed; all boats, except for such gondola services, must give the right of way to ACTV boats providing line services.

6. Only gondolas in "serenade" service are allowed to proceed along the Grand Canal in side-by-side groups of three gondolas, occupying only the water space necessary for steering the boat. This privilege is not granted in the section of the Grand Canal between Rio del Fontego dei Tedeschi and Rio di S.Luca.

7. Towing boats is not allowed along the channels and canals, except for the Grand Canal - Canal Grande di Murano - Rio di Cannaregio, except in the case of transferral of motorboats with engine troubles.

8. Boats must regulate the loading and unloading of goods and the time necessary for their travel keeping in mind tide conditions: low tide can cause them to run aground and remain at length in small channels or canals, which hinders the traffic of other boats and high tide may prevent them from transiting under the lower bridges.

9. Before crossing other traffic in troublesome points, in proximity to forks in the canal or intersections of canals, and any time the channel ahead of one's boat does not provide sufficient visibility or is partly obstructed, every captain must slow down and call the attention of the other drivers, using their horns or calling out, and lighted signals in the night time hours.

**10.** The captain is required to make a hand signal visible to others behind him when his boat slows down or must stop, or when he is going to change direction.

**11.** Drivers of row boats must call out a voice signal when in proximity to an intersection and yell "a stagando" when approaching from the right, "a premando" when approaching from the left or "de longo" when proceeding straight on.

**12.** Boats that enter into the Grand Canal must give the right of way to boats that are already proceeding in it.

**13.** At a canal intersection, the boat on the right always has the right of way; exception is made for ACTV boats providing public transportation service, which always have the right of way over other boats;

**14.** When circulating for the purpose of providing emergency service, fire emergency boats, police, and ambulances boats must have their sirens on or any display other emergency signal and are permitted access anywhere on the canals. Other boats must always give the right of way on channels and canals.

**15.** When overtaking another boat, the overtaking boat must signal this manoeuvre (by sounding a brief signal when overtaking on the right, two when overtaking on the left). The captain of boat that is being passed must slow down to make the manoeuvre easier.

**16.** It is prohibited to overtake on a curve that does not offer free visual for the entire manoeuvre or when another boat is coming from the opposite direction at a distance that does not allow for a complete manoeuvre.

**17.** With the exception of ACTV boats in providing public transportation services, motorboats must shut off the engine as soon as it approaches a docking station or when stopping, even briefly, in channels or canals. This rule does not apply to boats fitted with special instruments critical to the boat that can only be operated when the engine is running.

**18.** Boats must advance in a single file, avoiding travelling side-by-side except in the case illustrated in paragraph 6 of these Regulations. If boats must proceed side-by-side or in a formation other than the formation allowed for special and exceptional needs, the boats involved in the manoeuvre must submit a request to the City for an escort service.

**19.** All boats, row boats or motorboats, must keep a sufficient distance from the ACTV docking stations to prevent obstructing the ACTV services, except for the boats referred to in paragraph 14 of these Regulations and for any boats specifically designated for transporting seriously disabled persons.

**20.** In the interim between half an hour after sunset until half an hour before sunrise, and under conditions of fog or poor visibility :

- a) all motorboats longer than 7 metres must be equipped with navigation lights, following the regulations for prevention of collisions at sea;
- b) all motorboats shorter than 7 metres, whose maximum speed does not exceed 7 knots, must have a white navigation light, visible for 360°, lighted steady.
- c) All rowing boats must have a white navigation light , visible for 360°, lighted steady.

**21.** Transfer of the following from one boat to another in channels and canals is strictly prohibited:

- any materials or goods, if this procedure obstructs normal transit;
- hazardous material or waste;
- loose (unsecured) materials if the boats are not operating using the methods under Art. 5 paragraph 6.

**22.** Except for the matters listed under paragraph 7 of this article, transport boats can be loaded up to an immersion that enables a free board no less than 30 cm, measured with a stringer plate.

**23.** Sounding acoustic signals is prohibited except in the event of danger, at intersections, during manoeuvres, fog or poor visibility.

**24.** Row boats can circulate as long as there is at least one person on board who knows how to row and swim and is at least 14 years old.

**25.** When circulating for the purpose of providing emergency service, police and ambulances boats, with their sirens on or any display other emergency signal sounding, are not required to observe the speed limits prescribed under paragraph 1 of this article and the restrictions under paragraph 1, 4 and 5 of article 3 do not apply.

**Art. 3**  
**PASSABILITY**

**1.** When tides are higher than or equal to 1.10 meters, motorboats are restricted from circulating in the internal channels and canals of the historic centre, except for the Grand Canal and the Cannaregio Canal.

When tide levels are higher than or equal to 1.10 meters and low tides are lesser than or equal to - 0.50 meters in the Grand Canal and the Cannaregio Canal, motorboats must not exceed speeds of 5 km/hour.

**2.** The direction of circulation, the maximum widths of the boats for transit and the maximum volume to use for granting spaces and expanses of water will be defined in implementation of these rules and in order to regulate circulation.

**3.**In one-way channels and canals open exclusively to city traffic, the following regulations apply:

- a) Spaces and expanses of water must be granted in order to leave the channel or canal free for transit in a measure of at least 2/3 of its width. If the width of the channel or canal is different in the individual sections, the 2/3 minimum of free space for transit must be considered on a section-by-section basis. In entire channels or canals or for sections thereof, any space or expanse of water granted can be restricted where special needs require.
- b) fire fighting, police or ambulance boats can transit in both directions when they are circulating for the purpose of providing emergency service, with their sirens on or any other emergency signal sounding.
- c) row boats and other specifically authorized vehicles can also transit in either direction.

**4.**In channels and canals open exclusively to city traffic where a "blue route" is instituted, transit is granted only to row boats or boats with specific licenses of space or expanse of water in that particular channel.

**5.** Channels and canals open exclusively to city traffic are defined as "traffic limited zones" and as such, the following rules apply:

- a) times and restrictions to transit;
- b) limits on transit for categories of boats;
- c) methods of access to residents and holders of licenses for space or expanse of water.

**6.** Motorboats that transport fish to the fish market at Tronchetto must transit exclusively along the Giudecca Canal or the Canal of the Fondamenta Nuove, when entering and exiting the area.

**7.** Towing water skiers and circulating in jet skis is prohibited in all the channels and canals.

**8.** Sail boats are not allowed to transit in internal channels or canals.

**Art. 4**  
**SPACES AND EXPANSES OF WATER**

1. The City Council must issue a permit to boats if necessary to permanently occupy a space or an expanse of water in internal channels and canals. The term "space" intends a portion of water occupied by a single boat or craft, with well-defined characteristics and moored to two or more wooden mooring posts and/or rings; the term "expanse of water" intends a portion of water in which one or more boats owned by a single owner can moor, with a certain, defined number of docking posts. The expanse of water can be fitted with permanent (walkway or a landing stage), temporary or stable fittings that must be authorized by the competent offices. City administration must issue authorization to drive posts of any nature, even without using the expanse of water or space.

2. Permits to occupy a permanent space or expanse of water are considered tacitly renewed each year, unless the owner expressly withdraws the request or the city administration revokes the permit. The permit-holder is directly responsible to third parties for any damage caused to persons or property in exercising permit rights. If the permit is not used for a period of more than six (6) months, the permit will be considered automatically revoked, unless previously reported and authorized. The permit-holder must keep the space in good conditions, at own care and expense, including to remove any sections of post left embedded into the canal floor. The permit holder is not authorized to replace the boat with another having different dimensions from the original and must submit a request for a new permit. The permit holder may not occupy a space other than the one assigned. If the boat is registered, the information about the new boat must be communicated to the city administration. No boat may be left moored and unattended in the expanse of water or space granted to others or otherwise obstruct access. Only one permit to occupy water space can be issued to each boat.

3. The holder of a permit to an expanse of water must have authorization from the city administration to perform ordinary maintenance of fixed equipment (docking stations, walkways or terraces).

4. The poles and posts for docking in the spaces and expanses of water must be erect, made in wood and the maximum diameter must not be greater than 30 cm or higher than 3 meters above the water level. The "casada" posts must be in wood, bear the colours of the "casada" and shouldn't exceed a maximum diameter of 40 cm and height of 5.00 meters on the average level of the water.

5. Boats must be properly moored in spaces and expanses of water in a way that they will not accidentally become disengaged, or be battered against the posts with the resulting danger of submersion. It is strictly prohibited to embed nails or other objects into the sides of a canal bank or in the walls of homes to moor the boat or to anchor the mooring posts. Equally, it is prohibited to anchor or even lean mooring posts against railings, walls, low walls, columns and embankments.

6. The permit to occupy space or expanse of water implies payment of a fee, according to the methods foreseen by the prevailing regulations.

7. When the permit-holder no longer requires the mooring posts or other fixed equipment to occupy the space, he must remove them at his own expense.

8. If a boat becomes submerged, the owner must return it afloat, as soon as possible. If the owner does not immediately return the boat to floating, the city will do so, at the owner's expense. Boats found adrift will be towed to the city depot and must be picked up by the owner no later than two days after receiving notification. The owner must pay a fine for the infraction under the preceding point 5 and reimburse the expenses for collection of the boat. After this term expires, if the boat has not been collected or if the owner is notified of the event, the measures contained in Art 508 of the Code of Navigation will be applied.

9. The minimum distance between occupied spaces cannot be less than 30 cm. In the event of occupied spaces in close proximity to public banks, a sufficient space must be left free for easy mooring of a 12 meter boat. In the case of private banks or

water entrances to homes, third party non-owners must keep a distance of more than 3.00 meters from each side.

**10.** It is prohibited to occupy spaces and expanses of water under bridges or in a double row where the channel or canal does not allow it.

**11.** To occupy water spaces facing homes located on the ground floor that do not have protective gratings over their windows, the homeowner must provide his authorization for the space.

**12.** The city administration can change or revoke any space or expanse of water permit, without the permit-holders right to indemnity or damages, when reasons of safety, public interest, viability or organization call for such measure. The city administration can order removal or towage of any boat and demolition of the fixed equipment that occupy the spaces or expanses of water that are different from the original permit, without the necessary permits.

**13.** To all holders of permits for space or expanse of water, the city administration will issue specific ID labels that must be affixed to the boat and one of the mooring posts.

**14.** Expanses of water less than 3 metres from intersections of channels and canals is prohibited.

**Art. 5**  
**BANKS**

1. The city of Venice has set up a system of banks for loading and unloading goods that is marked by appropriate signage to denote this purpose. Rights of pre-emption to these banks and embankments are granted to boats that transport goods for third parties, whose service is assimilated with the non-line public transportation. Other goods transport boats can dock along these banks only for the amount of time strictly necessary for performing loading and unloading procedures, providing they do not obstruct the procedures of other boats officially authorized to use such docks.

2. Boats cannot be left unattended along the landing banks and the embankments except for those boats regulated with limited stop time.

3. Boats cannot be docked along bridges, along railings, to low walls, to the columns of balustrades or to anything else that is not specifically designated for boat docking. (iron rings, mooring posts, etc).

4. Certain spaces along the banks and embankments will be reserved only for A.M.A.V., postal service, or other city-owned public service boats; goods transport boats can dock in these spaces only for the time absolutely necessary to carry out the loading and unloading procedures, providing they do not obstruct the procedures of other boats officially authorized to use such docks. The boat may not remain moored, even with the captain on board.

5. Banks and embankments or public landing stations that are reserved for taxis, gondola services, or other people transport service cannot be used for goods unloading and loading procedures.

6. For loading and unloading loose materials, the captain must lay a waterproof canvas sheet between the boat and the bank or embankment to prevent loose materials from falling into the water. During the approach and the subsequent docking, special bumpers must be laid out in order to prevent damage to the banks, the embankments and the docking structures in general. Boats with an iron hull must be equipped with the material referred to in Art. 7 section 1.

7. Boats docked without appropriate authorization or incorrectly, according to the matters indicated by Art. 4-5 of these regulations, will be removed and the fines described under Art. 11 will be applied.

**Art. 6**  
**SIGNAGE**

**1.** A 60 x 80 cm sign is posted at the entrance to the canals and channels; the sign is white with dark blue border and lettering and indicates:

- a) the name of the channel or canal, the maximum width of the boats allowed for transit and the maximum passable speed;
- b) instructions relating to the direction of motion, restrictions and anything else that might be necessary to govern circulation.

**2.** The information contained in the signs in the previous point refers to the street signs, with dimensions of 20 x 20 cm while awaiting approval of a more appropriate sign.

**Art. 7**  
**BOATS**

1. To prevent damage to banks, embankments, bridges and any other boats, iron-hulled boats (except for ACTV boats) must be equipped with ferrules, fixed bumpers and/or rubbing strakes that must be in rubber, plastic or cord.

2. Motorboats must have an exhaust pipe located in the stern and turned downward.

3. Motorboats must keep the noise emissions to the lowest possible allowable by law.

Alteration or application of devices that eliminate or reduce the effects of the silencer are strictly prohibited.

Boats must also be equipped with a device for acoustic signals of moderate sound intensity, in the limits of what is required by the prevailing specific law.

Use of multi-note indicators is prohibited and indicators must be used properly.

4. Traditional Venetian boats, listed below, can transit and stay in the channels and canals reserved for city traffic only if constructed in wood and in respect of the maximum dimensions allowable for such canals:

batela - batela a coa de gambero - batelon - bragozzo - burcela - caichio - caorlina - comacina - boats representing the rowing clubs - gondola - gondolino - gondolone - mascareta - peata - puparin - sampierota - sandalo - sandolo buranelo - sandalo da barcariol - sandalo da fossino - sandolino - sciopon - varigola - veneta - vipera.

5. Iron boats, except for A.C.T.V. and A.M.A.V. boats, exceptional transport and city maintenance (floating pontoons), constructed after execution of these regulations cannot transit in channels and canals.

**Art. 8**

## REGISTRATION AND TITLES

1. In order for boats to circulate, they must be registered in the rolls kept by the competent bodies for Maritime Navigation and for Internal navigation, where required by law. The documents issued by the aforementioned authorities providing the ownership of the boat must be kept on board to exhibit any time requested to do so by the police.

2. Exercise of public transport services:

- a) line;
- b) taxi;
- c) rental with captain;
- d) goods on behalf of others;
- e) rental without captain;
- f) transport with gondola;
- g) transport with "sandal" boat;

can only be performed by holder of city line permits, licenses or authorizations according to the matters foreseen by prevailing regulations.

**Art. 9**  
**HAZARDOUS MERCHANDISE**

**1.** Boats intended for transport of flammable, toxic or radio-active substances or hazardous or poisonous goods must be built in a way that avoids any damage to people or property. In particular:

- a) if the boat is a rowing boat and the material is transported in tanks, cans or metallic or plastic containers for liquids, these containers must be appropriately stocked and lashed down and anchored from above by a metal grating or grill in order to prevent the material from floating or bobbing if the boat should sink.
- b) motorboats must have a metal bulkhead between the engine and the goods, to separate them at a distance of at least 60 cm. This bulkhead must start at the bottom of the boat and be connected to the sides by sealant, to ensure that there is no communication between the load and the engine. Here too, if the load is tanks, cans or metallic or plastic containers for liquids, the load must be appropriately stocked and lashed down and anchored with a metal grating or grill as required in letter a).

**2.** Boats designed for these transport services must have a large reserve of sand, spades, a wool covering measure at least 2 m<sup>2</sup>, and a 10-litre foam fire extinguisher in perfect working order and located close at hand.

**3.** Transfer any flammable or inflammable liquid from one container to another must be done using a closed circuit, by:

- a) a flexible tube that starts from the bottom of the receptacle to empty and carries the liquid to the container to fill;
- b) another smaller tube that starts in this second container and carries the saturated air to the upper part of the first container, in order to prevent the formation of dangerous fumes.

**4.** In order to reduce the possibility of fire caused by static electricity, boats that make transfers of any flammable liquid must use suitable electrical grounding wires between the source and the mouth of the receptacle of the liquid in question.

**5.** It is strictly prohibited to allow flammable liquid, toxic substances or dangerous substances to fall into the water during transport and transfer procedures.

**6.** Boats used in transporting dangerous merchandise must fly a red flag and post signs with the lettering "NO SMOKING/VIETATO FUMARE" in well-visible locations.

**7.** During the night, these boats must be docked outside of the city lines, in the docks of the Marghera factories having flammable liquid deposits with authorization of these facilities.

**8.** Repair and general work on board boats designed for transporting flammable or toxic substances must be done in areas far from the inhabited community after obtaining certification of ability to execute the works planned by the chemist registered at the local Harbour Office.

## **Art. 10 ORDINANCES**

**1.** In order to implement these regulations and to enact the directives issued by the Mayor of Venice, having heard the opinion as indicated in the following paragraph 2, the following specific ordinances are issued in the matters listed below:

- directions of circulation, maximum width of the boats for transit and maximum dimensions of the permits.
- "blue route".
- times and bans on transit, limits of transit for categories of operators and methods of access to residents in the "limited traffic zones".
- hours and methods of use of the banks.
- rules of access and stopping on the Grand Canal.
- maximum power of the engines allowed, type of hulls and limits of residual resistance, in view of the matters established by the "Commission for Definition of the Technical Boat Protocol" superseded with resolution no. 2139 of the Town Council on 22/06/95.

**2** During the conference discussing the services, held between the city administration and the competent authorities identified by art. 517 of the Regulations for execution of the code of navigation, approved with D.P.R. no. 238 of 15/2/52, the methods with which the opinions will be expressed on the ordinances described in the previous paragraph.

These methods must include the maximum term by which the opinions must be formulated, after which the opinions will be considered favourable.

**Art. 11**  
**FINES**

1. Violations of the rules present in these City Regulations are punishable in accordance with Art. 106 et sequitur of the City and Provincial Law - Consolidated Act no. 383 of 3 March 1934 and successive modifications. To certify infractions, to raise objections to such infractions, and to notify and define the certifications, as regards the income and devolution of the proceeds of the sums collected, the regulations of the Consolidated Act of the Municipal and Provincial law cited and Law no. 689 of 24 November 1981 apply. For every violation, the Mayor establishes an amount to pay by specific ordinance in a reduced form as a fine.