

***MV Emsstrom* - voluntary no-netting, potting and longlining zone**

The Devon and Severn Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority has a duty to seek to balance the different needs of persons engaged in the exploitation of sea fisheries resources in the district.

In the Authority's Annual Plan, developing the Recreation Sea Angling (RSA) sector is one of the three main objectives. The recent report from the national Sea Angling 2012ⁱ study supported the Authority's opinion that RSA is an important sector in the District and confirms that it would benefit from development.

The Authority has recently published its draft RSA Strategyⁱⁱ. The Authority has been looking for suitable locations around the District to introduce fisheries management that seeks to proactively develop the sector. Initial scoping of potential sites was carried out with the assistance of the RSA representatives on the Authority.

The Authority has identified three potential pilot study areas, the Emsstrom wreck site and the Skerries Banks, in the south of the district and Burnham, Berrow and Brean beaches in the north of the district, to assess the impact of introducing management measures to improve sea angling

The *MV Emsstrom* is a 77m vessel which sank in 2013 approximately 2.5 nautical miles east north east of Hopes Nose, Torquay in 23m of water (Figure 1, Annex 1). *Emsstrom* was originally built in 1968 as a German fisheries protection vessel and was later used as a German naval training vessel. She was en-route to Turkey in 2012, where she was to be scrapped, when she collided with her tug and sank. Wrecks are often attractive to commercial fishermen due to the habitat they provide for commercially valuable species of fish. As a result very few inshore wrecks are unknown and unfished. Inshore wrecks are particularly important to recreational sea anglers and local charter boat operators, who may be limited in their ability to fish wrecks further offshore. Because of its young age the wreck of *MV Emsstrom* is not currently a targeted commercial or recreational fishery however this is likely to change as the ship becomes colonised by fish. In recognition of the significance of the *MV Emsstrom* to the local RSA community the D&S IFCA is therefore proposing a voluntary Angling Zone. The Angling Zone will follow the boundaries set up by the original exclusion zone (Table 1, Annex 1) and will exclude recreational and commercial netting and potting, leaving the area open to anglers and other non-extractive recreational users (such as divers).

The Authority is looking to consultⁱⁱⁱ with all interested parties on the proposal to develop RSA interests at the Emsstrom site by removing potting, longlining, and all netting activities (towed, drift and static).

If following consultation on the proposals the Authority believes that restriction should be introduced the Authority would look to introduce a code of practice in the first instance. The main benefits of such an approach are that the desired management can be introduced relatively quickly and provides flexibility to deal with unforeseen issues that may arise. The main disadvantage is that no formal action can be taken against any person that does not adhere to the code of practice. However evidence that indicates unacceptable levels of non-compliance with the voluntary measures may be used to support the introduction of byelaws.

Annex 1. Position of the proposed *MV Emsstrom* Angling Zone

Table 1 Co-ordinates for the corners of the exclusion zone for the *MV Emsstrom* which now form the corners of the Angling Zone.

Points	Latitude	Longitude
1	50° 28.17'N	003° 24.86'W
2	50° 28.10'N	003° 24.76'W
3	50° 28.03'N	003° 24.86'W
4	50° 28.10'N	003° 24.97'W

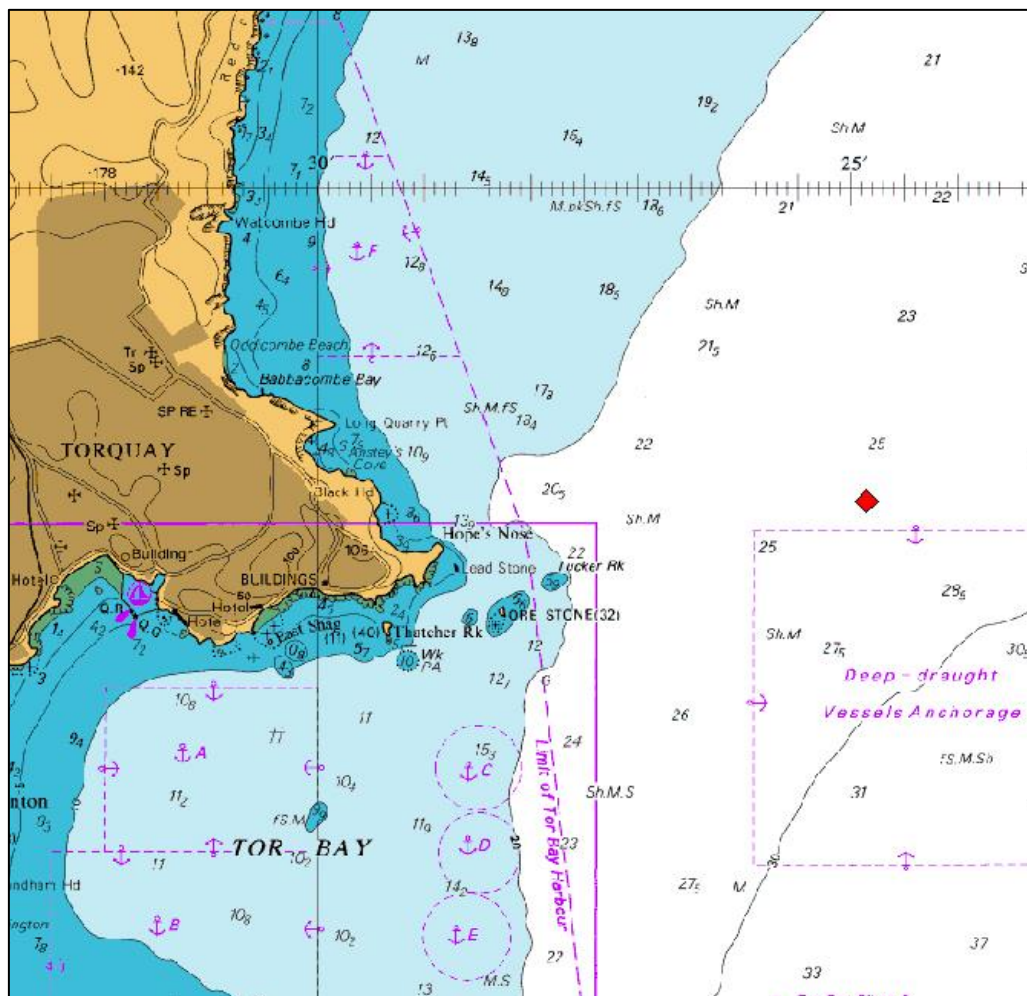


Figure 1 Location of the Angling Zone around the wreck of the *MV Emsstrom*, approximately 2.5 miles east north east of Hopes Nose, Torquay

ⁱ [MMO Sea Angling Report](#)

ⁱⁱ [RSA Strategy](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [RSA Consultation](#)