

Survey Plan for Iceland 2008 to 2015

An entire re-survey of the waters around Iceland's coast is not essential. The coastline is mainly rocky and steep except on the south coast where sand waves move the coastline back and forth within a mile. Harbors that need resurvey are shown as dark blue points on figure 1. Those harbors are Saudarkrokur on the north coast, Thorlakshofn on the south-west coast and Hofn (Hornafjordur) on the south-east coast.

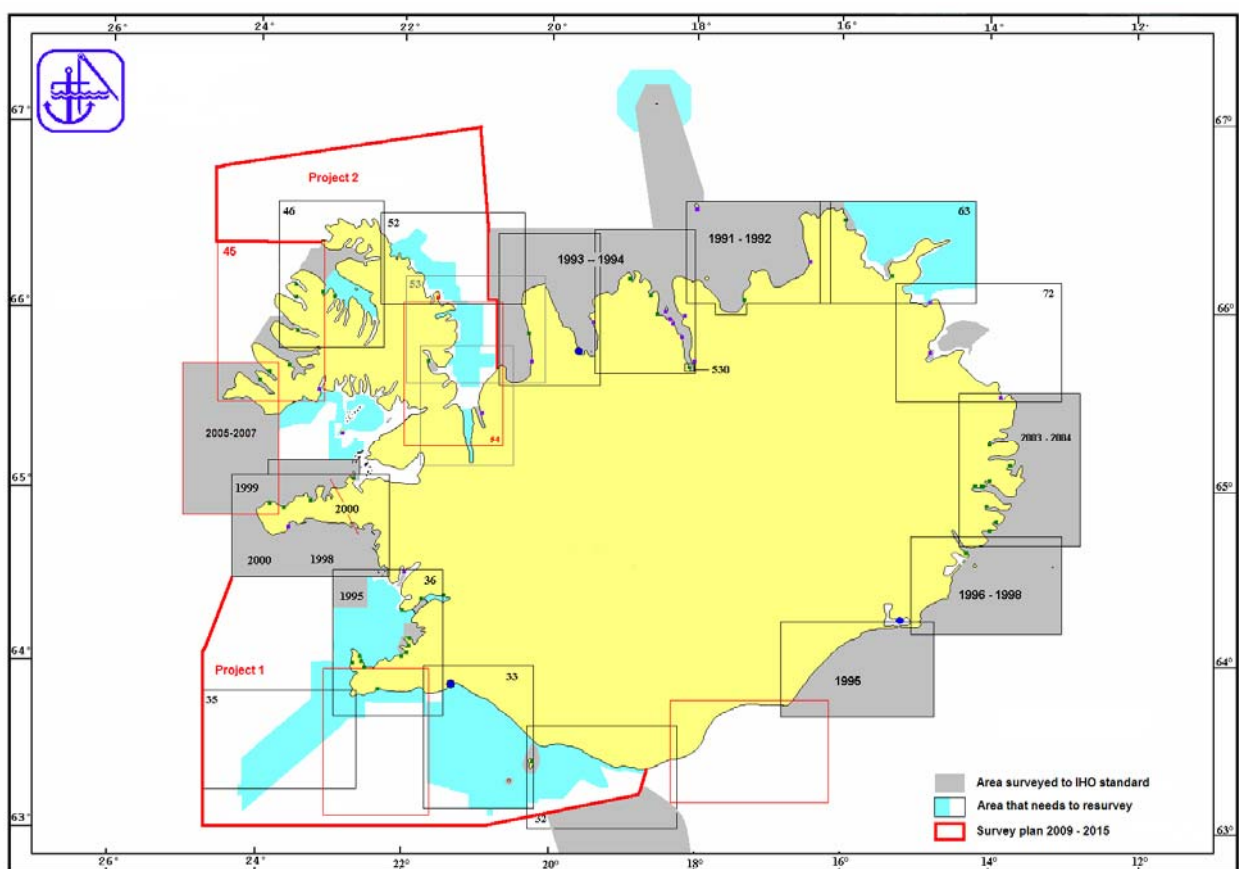


Figure 1 Survey plan 2008 – 2015

The Coast Guards plan for 2008 is to complete a survey for chart no. 45 on the NV-Coast. Due to a considerable increase in industrial activities in the south-west part of Iceland in the last decades, large vessel traffic has increased. Two aluminum smelters and a ferrosilicon smelter are located in the Faxaflói Bay area. The third smelter and an extension of an existing one are being planned. The majority of oil products imported to Iceland are transported through the Port of Reykjavík. Because of this the Coast Guard will start to re-survey the south-west coast of Iceland shown as Project-1 on figure 1, in 2009. A new Coast Guard vessel will be in service and take part in the survey by 2010. In this area is a new Traffic Separation Scheme,

Two-way Route and Areas to be avoided, that will take effect 1st July this year¹ and is shown on figure 2.

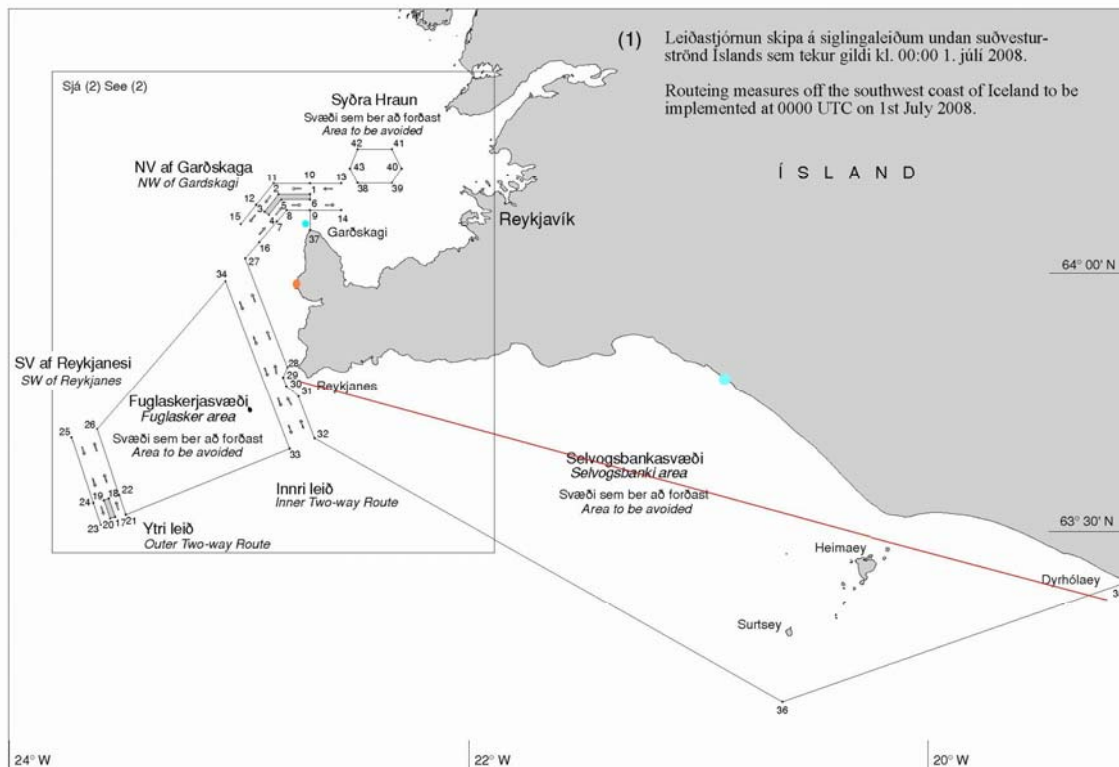


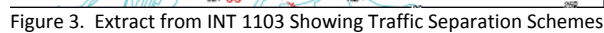
Figure 2 Traffic Separation Schemes, Two-way routes and Areas to be Avoided off the southwest coast of Iceland

The present shipping lanes, shown with red line, from Dyrhólaey to the Faxaflói Bay district, pass north of the Westman Islands (Heimaey) transiting through the rich and environmentally sensitive Selvogur Bank, around the Reykjanes Point through the Hullid Passage. The passage Hullid, between Reykjanes Point and Eldey Island (black dot southwest of Reykjanes) is known for heavy overfalls and eddies in strong tidal streams.

In the last decade, some serious accidents have happened in this area. In March 1997, the 8,633 gross tonnage container vessel Vikartindur suffered engine failure 12 nautical miles off the southwest coast of Iceland in a force 8-9 south-westerly on-shore gale and later drifted on to a sandy beach (shown in figure 2 as light blue dot). The ship was a total loss.

In December 2006, the cargo ship Wilson Muuga ran aground on Hvalsnes on the Reykjanes Peninsula (shown with orange dot in figure 2). The marine environment suffered little damage in these two accidents but sadly the life of one rescuer was lost in each case. Last year a container vessel lost several containers just northwest of Garðskagi.

¹ Adopted by IMO, 8 October 2007 with RESOLUTION MSC.250 (83)



gales and foul weather.