Day Shapes

Commercial vessels also use our waters. Some of the day shapes and lights they show, are depicted in the diagrams below. Give Way and Keep Clear of all commercial vessels.

Boats restricted in their ability to manoeuvre
Used by boats engaged in servicing navigation marks, towing, underwater operations, cable laying.

Q27. If you see a vessel displaying a black ball over a black diamond over a black ball, what does it mean?
Commercial vessels, due to the nature of their work, may be restricted in their ability to manoeuvre. They could be towing, or servicing navigation aids, or laying cable etc. A commercial vessel displaying these shapes is asking you to keep clear.

Boats fishing
LIGHTS: Commercial boats trawling, green over white, trawling at night.
Commercial boats fishing (other than trawling), red over white, fishing at night.

Q28. If you were out at night and saw a vessel with normal lights, plus an all round green over white light, approaching you on your starboard side, what would you do?
Approaching vessel is a commercial trawler. Keep well clear by at least 200 metres to avoid nets.

Boats engaged in underwater operations or dredging
Must display day shapes and lights to indicate it is restricted in its ability to manoeuvre. If there is an obstruction on one side, it should also carry
- two black balls or two all round red lights on the side of the Obstruction, and
- two black diamonds or two all-round green lights on the side where boats should pass.
Q29(a). You are approaching a dredge in a channel, which is displaying day shapes to indicate that one side of the dredge is blocked for passing. What are the shapes, and how do you know which side to pass?

The dredge would display two vertical black diamond shapes indicating the side to pass, and two vertical black balls indicating which is the obstructed side. Pass on the side of the diamonds.

Q29(b). What would happen at night?

The dredge would show two vertical green lights showing the side to pass, and two vertical red lights showing the obstructed side. Pass on the side of the green lights.

**Sound Signals**

Q30. If you hear 3 short blasts from another vessel, what does it mean?

*Larger vessels sound three short blasts when they are reversing or stopping*

Q31. If you hear 5 short blasts from another vessel, what does it mean?

*Larger vessels sound 5 short blasts when they are unsure of your attentions, or require you to provide them clear passage*

**Sound Signal remembrance hint:** SPA

S = Starboard 1 short blast
P = Port 2 short blasts
A = Astern 3 short blasts
5 = What are you doing/ Get out of the way?