

A close-up photograph of a ship's throttle lever and speedometer. The throttle lever is black and metallic, with a blue light reflecting off its surface. The speedometer has a red arc with white markings for 20, 40, and 60. The background is blurred, showing other parts of the ship's engine room.

## Speed reduction is an option.

Slowing down allows you to assess the situation and avoid a collision.

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## What stops you from reducing speed to avoid a collision?

In a significant number of collisions, we have found that most mariners do not reduce speed to avoid a collision.

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In a significant number of collisions, we have found that most mariners do not reduce speed to avoid a collision. They are either in a hurry to attain sea speed after dropping the outbound pilot or reluctant to touch the telegraph to reduce the speed when navigating in areas with high traffic density. There could be many reasons for this reluctance, such as commercial pressures to maintain ETA, tides to catch, fear that engine would sustain damage, penalties on late arrival, and maintaining performance of the vessel in terms of speed-consumption.

Whatever the reasons, a reduction of speed does have benefits. It not only allows the mariner greater time to assess the situation but also in the unfortunate case of a collision the resulting damage would be a lot less severe to both the vessels. Also, hard helm orders without reducing speed could lead to large over-swings which can become difficult to control.

### **More information**

Loss Prevention Poster [Speed reduction is an option](#)

Alert [Can an officer on bridge watch slow down the clock to better assess the risk of collision?](#)

Case study [Pilotage](#)