

Quickstart Guide

RealDistance.com Routing Workbook

Dear Captain:

INTRODUCTION

RealDistance.com is an automated routing system designed specifically for slow to medium speed merchant vessels engaged in worldwide tramping. The system uses both climatic and forecast data to predict the **Least Time Track (LTT)** on passage. The Routing Workbook is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet document which permits the vessel to communicate with shore-based routing simulators

This Quickstart document is an abbreviated text only guide for deployment by E-mail. It is designed to give the ship master sufficient information to start using the routing system. If you have access to broadband connectivity the full Users Guide is available at the following link.

http://www.realdistance.com/downloads/ship_ManualV2.pdf

GETTING STARTED

Locate the Workbook file and place on any PC with Microsoft Excel installed. This file is a compressed Microsoft Excel document and will need to be unzipped. The file contains macros and is digitally signed by RealDistance.com to ensure that it is virus free.

Once unzipped you should save a copy of the original file then open the document. Before using the workbook you will be required to acknowledge the terms and conditions of use which are appended to the end of this document.

GETTING A ROUTE RECOMMENDATION

Setting Report Options – The routing workbook is designed to return route recommendations with varying levels of detail. The default setting will return an email with a Microsoft Excel attachment which is in compressed format. This is the recommended setting because it contains detailed graphical information on currents and predicted wave heights. If your vessel E-mail cannot handle attachments or is limited in attachment size you should switch to the TEXT ONLY report option.

To switch to Text Only Report Option:

1. Click SETUP button then click CHANGE SETTINGS button.
2. Select RETURN TEXT EMAIL ONLY option.
3. Click the SAVE SETTINGS button then the BACK button to exit the window.

The text only mode will return a deep sea waypoint list of the recommended Least Time Track Route.

REQUESTING THE INITIAL ROUTE RECOMENDATION

The routing workbook is primarily designed for trans-oceanic weather routing. If you are on passage from Odessa, Ukraine to Philadelphia, USA the start point for routing will be in open water to the west of the Gibraltar Strait. Similarly the end point will be the coordinates of the entrance to the Delaware River.

1. Click the REAL TIME ROUTING button. Enter vessel name, IMO number and email address of the vessel. The email address entered here will be the address to which the automatic routing servers respond. Check this address carefully. If it is incorrect you will not receive any routing advice.
2. Enter the vessel speed in good weather. Imagine the vessel in calm seas with no surface current. The speed entered here should be that speed and not the average passage speed you expect to make good after consideration for weather on passage.
3. Enter your current position in SECTION 2 - PRESENT COORDINATES. For example 35 58 N 5 50 W would be appropriate for a vessel passing through the Gibraltar Straits. Using geographical coordinates is preferable to Port Names.
4. Adjust the ETD box as appropriate to correspond to the position entered in step 3. If the position entered is your current position and you are underway then the ETD box should be set to NOW. If you want an initial route recommendation for a future departure then adjust to NOW PLUS X Hrs.
5. Enter your open water destination coordinates in SECTION 3. In this example a position approaching the Last Outward Delaware pilot station would be appropriate.
6. If your E-mail system uses Microsoft Outlook as the mail program you can send the message automatically. Just click the SEND REQUEST AUTOMATICALLY button. This simply transfers a text message to Microsoft Outlook for transmission in the usual way. If you are using another email program, do the following

MANUAL SEND

1. Click the VIEW REQUEST FORMAT BUTTON. This will give you all the information you need to send an Email to the routing servers.
2. Note the E-Mail address of the designated routing server (normally autoroute@realdistance.com)
3. Note the subject of the Email (normally "autoroute")
4. Click the COPY TO CLIPBOARD button. This will capture the body of the E-mail message to be sent.
5. Open a new mail message in your E-mail program. The "To" field of this message should be the email address noted in step 2. The "Subject" line should be as in step 3.
6. Paste the body of the message copied in step 4 into the new mail message.
7. Send the E-mail message in the usual manner.

Once you have completed the above steps, your initial route recommendation has been requested. You may expect a response in about one hour. Press the back button returning to the Initial workbook page and exit saving all changes. This will preserve settings such as vessel name, Email address etc.

REQUESTING ROUTE UPDATES

It is important to note that all route recommendations are based on forecast data which, like any weather forecast, is subject to change. Frequent updates should therefore be requested on passage. The frequency of updates is dependent on the prevailing weather conditions. For example a summer passage may only require a once daily update whereas a winter passage in bad weather may benefit from updates every 6 or 12 hours. To request an update do the following:

1. Open the workbook which was previously saved.
2. Update SECTION 2 – PRESENT POSITION with the vessel's current coordinates.
3. Change ETD to NOW. (If you intend to send the message immediately)
4. Send the message as described above.

If you are in any doubt about program operation or would like a second opinion regarding your route choice please feel free to contact RealDistance.com using the email given by the ROUTING SUPPORT button.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Qu. Why can't I open the work book.

Ans. Firstly you must unzip the file. Secondly, you must have Microsoft Excel installed on your computer to use the workbook.

Qu. Why I am not receiving route updates despite sending several messages?

Ans. The most common reason for this is that your ship board E-Mail system is rejecting mail from noreply@realdistance.com. You should contact your owners and request that email filters be adjusted. Some ship board email systems also reject messages with attachments. If this is the case you should either contact your company or switch to the TEXT ONLY mode.

Qu. Is there any other way of confirming that a message was sent?

Ans. Yes. When using Microsoft Outlook, check the sent messages folder. Checking the Outbox folder will also show if there are messages waiting to be sent. Other E-Mail programs should also have equivalent folders that store or record sent messages.

Qu. Is there any limit to the number of updates I can request?

Ans. The system is fully automatic and never offended if you ask for very frequent updates. Please remember that all E-mail charges to the vessel are for the users account. If you are asking for an update every few hours in the attachment mode your E-Mail cost will be larger than necessary.

Qu. Why do I frequently receive simulation failed messages and how can I stop them?

Ans. If you have received more than one message in a short space of time you will most likely receive an explanation from routing@realdistance.com. The most common reasons are

1. Start or End positions must be in water connected and navigable to the high seas. Check both positions to ensure that they are on water that is connected to the high seas. If in doubt, shift the position a few miles off-shore. A common mistake is to specify Easterly longitude when it should be West. (and N for S)
2. If adjusted, any number of advanced settings can cause the passage between valid start and end points to fail. For example, if steaming from Stavanger to New York in January, setting the Workbook to consider load lines and then setting the vessel as loaded to Summer Marks will cause a simulation failure. Similarly, routing from Ijmuiden to New Orleans with Dover Strait and North About UK options deselected will cause a simulation failure because there is no viable route.

If you have experimented with advanced settings and are unsure what was changed you can just revert to a previously save copy of the workbook. WE RECOMMEND YOU DO NOT ADJUST ADVANCED SETTINGS UNTIL YOU ARE COMFORTABLE WITH BASIC PROGRAM OPERATION.

Any routing, technical support or other questions please do not hesitate to contact Realdistance.com

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF USE

The following describes the terms on which RealDistance.com (a California Corporation) offers you (the user) access to the Weather Routing Workbook (Service).

1. *This service provides Least Time Track (LTT) route recommendations. This information is for guidance only and you are not obliged to follow the recommended routes. Nothing in this service shall supersede the master's ultimate authority and responsibility for routing decisions.*
2. *This service estimates the LTT for your vessel from analysis of forecast wave heights and climatic data. To obtain the optimum track for a particular vessel it is necessary to consider others factors, including but not limited to, vessel type, stability, cargo stowage and nature of cargo. **THE MASTERS UNWILLINGNESS TO FOLLOW THE LEAST TIME TRACK DOES NOT NECESSARILY CONSTITUTE A DEVIATION OR FAILURE TO PROSECUTE THE VOYAGE WITH UTMOST DESPATCH.***
3. *Navigation limits, Restricted Areas and Latitude limits are set at arbitrary values. Scrutinize carefully before use.*
4. *This service is designed primarily for mono-hull propeller driven merchant vessels normally described as Handy-Size, Panamax etc. Use by other forms of sea-borne transport is not recommended. Masters should carefully scrutinize the performance assumptions made for their vessel which are included in the route recommendations.*

5. *This service is designed for use by licensed and competent seafaring professionals who have significant knowledge of passage planning and weather routing. It should not be considered a substitute for the ordinary practice of good seamanship.*
6. *Waypoint information is generated from wave height and surface current data only. It does not consider the numerous other navigational hazards which may be encountered on voyage.*
7. *The user acknowledges that this service is not a passage plan and that waypoints, charts or other data included in reports SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.*
8. **ALL SERVICES ARE PROVIDED "AS IS", WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO THE WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY, FITNESS FOR A PARTICULAR PURPOSE AND NONINFRINGEMENT. IN NO EVENT SHALL REALDISTANCE.COM, THE AUTHORS OR COPYRIGHT HOLDERS BE LIABLE FOR ANY CLAIM, DAMAGES OR OTHER LIABILITY, WHETHER IN AN ACTION OF CONTRACT, TORT OR OTHERWISE, ARISING FROM, OUT OF, OR IN CONNECTION WITH THE USE OF THIS SERVICE EVEN IF CAUSED BY FAILURE TO EXERCISE REASONABLE CARE ON THE PART OF REALDISTANCE.COM**