Marine Forecast Terminology

Beaufort Scale
(speed of wind in knots)

0	<1 knot
1	1-3 knots
2	4-6 knots
3	7-10 knots
4	11-16 knots
5	17-21 knots
6	22-27 knots
7	28-33 knots
8	34-40 knots
9	41-47 knots
10	48-55 knots
11	56-63 knots
12	64+ knots

Gale Warnings

Gale	Winds of force 8 (34-40 knots)
Severe gale	Winds of force 9 (41-47 knots)
Storm	Winds of force 10 (48-55 knots)
Violent storm	Winds of force 11 (56-63 knots)
Hurricane force	Winds of force 12 (64 knots or more)

Time
(respect to time of issue)

Imminent	< 6 hours
Soon	6 to 12 hours
Later	> 12 hours

Wind Terms

Wind direction	Direction the wind is blowing from
Cyclonic	Considerable change in wind direction (passing depression)
Veering	Changing of the wind in a clockwise direction
Backing	Changing of the wind in an anticlockwise direction
Variable	Light winds from various directions, usually < force 3.

Sea State
(Wave Height)

Smooth	< 0.5 m
Slight	0.5 to 1.25 m
Moderate	1.25 to 2.5 m
Rough	2.5 to 4.0 m
Very rough	4.0 to 6.0 m
High	6.0 to 9.0 m
Very high	9.0 to 14.0 m
Phenomenal	> 14.0 m

Visibility
(how far we can see)

Very poor	< 1000 metres
Poor	1000 metres to 2nm
Moderate	2 to 5 nm
Good	More than 5nm

Pressure System Movement
(speed of weather system)

Slowly	< 15 knots
Steadily	15 to 25 knots
Rather Quickly	25 to 35 knots
Rapidly	35 to 45 knots
Very rapidly	> 45 knots

Pressure Change (Rising or Falling)
(over a 3 hour period)

More slowly	A progressively slower rate than previous
Slowly	0.1 to 1.5mb
Rising / Falling	1.6 to 3.5mb
Quickly	3.6 to 6.0 mb
Vary rapidly	> 6.0 mb
Now rising / falling	A change in pressure direction change.

Weather Terms

Fair	No significant precipitation
Rain	Liquid precipitation
Drizzle	Moist air without drops
Showers	Intermittent rain
Snow	soft solid precipitation
Hail	hard solid precipitation
Sleet	mix of rain and snow
Thunder	Electrical storm