

NOTICE TO MARINERS

No 12 of 2021

Port of Southampton – Cross Solent Swims

1. **NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** jointly by the Harbour Master ABP Southampton and Queen's Harbour Master Portsmouth, that swimming across The Solent should not be undertaken without considerable preparation and very careful assessment of the risk. The cross-Solent swimmer has to cross at least one busy shipping lane, taking into account fast moving ferries and hovercraft travelling to and from the Isle of Wight, some of the largest vessels in the world transiting the deep water channel and the many recreational craft that use the area. In addition, tidal streams within The Solent are significant at times and must be carefully factored into any risk assessment.
2. Before any swim can be undertaken, those authorities responsible for safety on the water and for coordination of the passage of commercial vessels through The Solent need to be informed as early in the planning stage as possible. Principally, these are QHM Portsmouth, who is statutorily responsible for most of the waters of the Eastern Solent, ABP Southampton which operates the Vessel Traffic Services Centre for the area and Solent Coastguard, which co-ordinates search and rescue resources within the area.
3. To comply with the Port Marine Safety Code and with the Safety Management Systems of ABP Southampton and the Dockyard Port of Portsmouth, organisers of recreational and charity events planned to take place in The Solent are responsible for the safety of their event and for the detailed planning required to achieve the successful completion of the event.
4. This responsibility includes the undertaking of a detailed Risk Assessment for the event. Help with this can be found at; "Guidance Notes on Risk Assessments for Events in Harbour Authority Areas" which is available from the Royal Yachting Association (www.rya.org.uk/legal) at QHM Portsmouth Local Notice to Mariners No 3 of 2021.
5. To assist with the planning of a swim event a Code of Conduct & Advice for Cross Solent Swimmers has been prepared and approved by Southampton VTS, HM Coastguard, Queen's Harbour Master Portsmouth, Solent Sea Rescue Organisation and Ryde Inshore Rescue. This can be viewed at: <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/qhm/portsmouth/leisure/cross-solent-swim> .
6. Once completed, a copy of the Event Risk Assessment is to be posted / emailed to ABP Southampton, the Queen's Harbour Master Portsmouth and HM Coastguard,

Coastguard NMOC. It is incumbent on a swim organiser to notify, in writing, the above authorities **at least 28 days ahead of the event**, that a swim is planned. With less than 28 days notice, the publication of required Local Notices to Mariners etc may not be achievable and this could therefore result in the harbour authorities recommending that the event does not take place.

**Vessel Traffic Services Centre
Ocean Gate
Atlantic Way
Southampton**

**Steven Masters
Harbour Master**

01st January 2021

Owners, Agents, Charterers, Marinas, Yacht Clubs and Recreational Sailing Organisations should ensure that the contents of this Notice are made known to the masters or persons in charge of their vessels or craft.

www.southamptonvts.co.uk