

## NOTICE TO MARINERS

No 15 of 2023

### **RISK ASSESSMENT OF RECREATIONAL EVENTS**

- 1 **THIS NOTICE IS ISSUED** jointly with King's Harbour Master Portsmouth, the Harbour Masters of Portsmouth International Port, Cowes and Langstone Harbour. It is intended to give advice to event organisers on the requirement and scope of risk assessment and risk management in line with the principles of the Port Marine Safety Code
- 2 This notice is to be read in conjunction with the document entitled – A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (Section 8 Management of Navigation – Event Planning (Paragraph 8.11.8 – 8.11.11 DforT February 2018) and the document guidance notes entitled 'Event Risk Assessment: A Brief Guide to Organiser's Procedure' (attached).
- 3 Your attention is also drawn to advice given in the preparation of risk assessments by the Royal Yachting Association ([www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk)).
- 4 **The risk assessment and the safety management of a particular event will always be the responsibility of the Event Organiser.**
- 5 All Event Organisers are requested to consult with the relevant Harbour Authority at the earliest opportunity prior to any event taking place. For most types of event a formal risk assessment will be required, but the content of the risk assessment needs only to be proportional to the event /activity.
- 6 The risk assessment should identify all risks concerned with the safe and efficient use of the harbour by all harbour users. Details of how the risk is to be controlled will be part of this assessment.
- 7 The formal risk assessment should be submitted **not less than 4 weeks** prior to the planned event to enable the Harbour Authority to comment and consult on it.
- 8 Any requirement for the Harbour Authority to provide additional resources by the way of escort craft, navigation marks or promulgation of an Event Notice to Mariners will normally be at the expense of the Event Organiser.
- 9 From June / July 2023, ABP Southampton will be moving over to an automated system to eliminate the need for separate forms. More information will be released nearer the time.

**Steven Masters**  
**Harbour Master**

**Vessel Traffic Services Centre**  
**Ocean Dock, Atlantic Way**  
**Southampton**

**1<sup>st</sup> January 2023**

**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.**

# **EVENT RISK ASSESSMENT**

## **A BRIEF GUIDE TO ORGANISER'S PROCEDURE**

### **Aim**

To provide a common procedure to be followed by Event Organisers / Harbour Authorities in the safety management of events held within The Solent area.

### **References**

The Port Marine Safety Code (DforT March 2016).

A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations (DforT February 2018).

Risk Assessment Pro-formas – Royal Yachting Association (RYA)

### **Definitions**

#### **Event**

An organised occurrence on the water, in which harbour users congregate or compete against others. This may include but not be limited to: a race, sponsored event, display, regatta, rally or demonstration.

The event may include all types of craft and vessels from sailing vessels of all descriptions, vessels under oars, power driven craft, sailboards, canoes/kayaks and personal watercraft. Such events may include moored barges/pontoons perhaps for a firework display. It may even involve swimmers in the water escorted by suitable vessels.

#### **Event Organiser**

The person(s) or organisation that is intending to organise or hold an event.

#### **Appropriate Harbour Authority**

The Harbour Authority whose area of jurisdiction encompasses the event's planned location. If the event encompasses more than one such area then one or more Harbour Authorities will need to be consulted.

#### **Risk Assessment (RA)**

A formalised report into the risk management of the event being held. The document should include the three principles of RA; ie what are the hazards, who is at risk from these hazards and the control measures that can be put in place to reduce the risks.

#### **Hazard**

Hazard means any item or occurrence that can cause harm.

#### **Risk**

Risk is the probability, generally expressed as low, medium or high, that a hazard may do harm.

## **Introduction**

This document is designed to give guidance to all Event Organisers on the safety management procedures that are to be followed prior to an 'event' taking place within The Solent area. It is intended that every Event Organiser follows the procedure listed below, such that a dialogue between Event Organiser and relevant Solent Harbour Authority can achieve a mutually agreed path for the safe management of any event.

This procedure has been agreed and promulgated by the following Harbour Authorities within The Solent area:

- 1 ABP Southampton
- 2 Queen's Harbour Master (QHM), Portsmouth
- 3 Cowes Harbour Commission
- 4 Portsmouth International Port
- 5 Langstone Harbour Board

## **Responsibilities**

Harbour Authorities have a statutory duty to manage safety within their area of jurisdiction and have a safety management system in accordance with the Port Marine Safety Code.

The Event Organiser will be responsible for the safe management of the event.

The drawing up and submission of the event risk assessment will be the responsibility of the Event Organiser.

The Event Organiser will be responsible for the costs of any additional safety controls including the issue of a local Notice to Mariners.

## **Areas of Jurisdiction**

### **ABP Southampton**

The area of the Central Solent between Egypt Point to Stansore Point (western port limit) to Old Castle Point to Hillhead (eastern port limit) and including all of Southampton Water.

### **QHM Portsmouth**

The area of the Eastern Solent and including Portsmouth Harbour, between Old Castle Point to Hillhead (western port limit) and Sandown Bay (IoW) to Eastney Point at Langstone (eastern port limit)

### **Cowes Harbour Commission**

The area south of a line between Egypt Point, the Prince Consort (north cardinal mark) buoy and Old Castle Point.

### **Portsmouth International Port**

This harbour area is within the overall area of jurisdiction of QHM Portsmouth. However, Portsmouth Commercial Port is responsible for certain areas within the harbour area of Portsmouth eg. Camber Jetty, Gunwharf Quays and the Continental Ferry Port.

## **Langstone Harbour Board**

The area of Langstone Harbour north of a line joining Eastney Point to Gunner Point (Hayling Island).

### **Event Planning**

Event Organisers should be familiar with the **Port Marine Safety Code** (DforT March 2016) and **A Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations** (DforT February 2018 - Section 7).

Event Organisers are to consult the appropriate Harbour Authority at an early stage to discuss the need for the safety management and the associated Risk Assessment (RA) for the particular event. For the largest events this should be several months prior to the planned event date.

Event Organisers are required to submit a detailed RA for the event. The requirement should be proportional to the activity. The event RA should identify all hazards and risks concerned. Details on how the risks are managed or reduced will also be included in the RA.

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) has its own risk assessment guidelines and these are available on [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk). The RYA suggests three assessment models providing for high, medium and low impact events. A high impact event is one which is likely to have a major impact on the operation of the harbour, requiring special arrangements agreed in advance with the Harbour Authority. Any event should be conducted in accordance with the guidance provided by and with the approval of the national bodies representing the types or classes of craft participating.

The RYA's template for the High Impact RA is primarily designed for 'Race Events' and may need to be adapted for 'other' types of events. **The RA will be the responsibility of the Event Organiser.**

When conducting the RA, clear details concerning the following may need to be included.

- 1 Names of event organisers and officials
- 2 List of participants
- 3 Timetables and programme of events
- 4 List of hazards, who may be effected and the associated risks
- 5 Arrangements for controlling the event including communications eg contact telephone numbers, VHF Radio Channels and call signs
- 6 Any navigation constraints being imposed eg restricted areas
- 7 Emergency arrangements
- 8 List of Authorities consulted

The Harbour Authority needs to be assured that the Event Organiser has, where appropriate, consulted the appropriate organisations, which may include but not be limited to:

- 1 HM Coastguard
- 2 Local Emergency Services
- 3 The Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI)
- 4 The Local Authority

Fundamentally, the principle is that an early dialogue must take place with the relevant Harbour Authorities so as to be clear as to what detail is required within the RA.

## **Risk Assessment for Events Held Regularly**

Where an event is held regularly, that is to say for example a weekly yacht race organised by a yacht club, a generic RA may be authorised by the Harbour Authority but the period for which the RA remains valid will be limited to a maximum period of 12 months. The RA should then undergo a formal review prior to its re-commissioning.

## **Harbour Authority Procedure**

The principle of early dialogue between Event Organiser and Harbour Authority will allow initial comments and advice to be passed. Upon receipt of the formal RA the Harbour Authority will consider the implications of the event and the safety management of the Event Organiser. The Harbour Authority will confirm receipt of the RA and may comment or require further safety control measures to mitigate any identified risks. On agreement and inclusion of these additional safety control measures, the Harbour Authority will formally accept the RA and authorize the event to proceed in accordance with the RA.

The 'on the day' safety management will remain the responsibility of the Event Organiser.

## **Additional Costs**

Any requirement for additional Harbour Authority resource; eg patrol vessel or extra navigational mark will normally be at the expense of the Event Organiser.

If the Harbour Authority so decides, a Notice to Mariners may need to be published to advertise the event. The administration cost of the Notice will also be met by the Event Organiser.

## **Timetable**

Initial consultation with the appropriate Harbour Authority should clearly take place at an early stage. For high impact events this could be several months before the event is due to be held. Once it has been mutually agreed as to the nature of the event and to the type / format of the RA, the formal RA should be submitted no less than four weeks prior to the event. The Harbour Authority will endeavour to comment on this RA within two weeks.