

SOLENT AREA SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SASAC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 23 November 2023 at 11:00

Present:

Charles Hall-Thompson	Chairman SASAC & SCRA President
Bob Gatehouse	Chairman Designate SCRA
Steven Masters	Harbour Master ABP Southampton
Pippa Moody	Deputy Harbour Master ABP
Barry Sadler	ABP Southampton Pilots
Jennie Smith	Deputy Harbour Master Cowes
Becky Walford	Port Safety Officer - KHM Portsmouth
Daniel Saund	Port Safety Boat Officer - KHM Portsmouth
Nigel Edwards	Southampton Water Sailing Association
Mike Samuelson	RYA South
Richard Gunn	Chair RYA South
Jeremy Britton	Langstone Harbour
Toby Hughes	Wightlink
Charles Darwall	Portsmouth Port
Bob Trimble	Chair CWL & CCCL
Mary Scott-Jackson	SCRA Assistant Secretary

1. Chairman's opening remarks and welcome

The chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those in attendance and thanked everyone for coming.

2. Apologies

Guy Addington	RNLI Regional Safety Lead
Matthew Hunt	HMCG
Alex Bell	Southampton Water Sailing Association

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022

These were accepted as a true record and approved.

4. 2023 Review, including incidents between shipping and yachts in the Solent

Charles Hall-Thompson reported that the RYS had a busy summer season with events such as the Richard Mille Cup, Edinburgh Cup and the 6mR Worlds taking place.

Pippa Moody and Barry Sadler on behalf of **ABP** reported that in the past year they had eight CQS incidents, three MPZ breaches and 10 enforcement letters sent. There were two serious incidents in the North Channel and it is important to recognise that this is not as well marked as the main channel. If a ship in the North Channel is confirmed to 350m width there's not much room for manoeuvre. The deep water is right in the middle and cannot change course. Warnings are given by ships, but they are often ignored. GDPR makes it hard to track owners. The threshold for prosecution was very close for one of the incidents. There were two serious jet ski incidents, the main one was in Cowes and the other in the ABP area. The issue with PWCs is they did not fall under the Merchant Shipping Act which made it difficult for the enforcement authorities to prosecute but the new Merchant Shipping (Watercraft) Order 2023 has gone some way to alleviate

that. <https://www.rya.org.uk/knowledge/regulations/merchant-shipping> It would be helpful if there was social media campaign to promote this.

On behalf of **Cowes Harbour Commission**, Jennie Smith reported that with increased patrolling by CHC the number of jet ski incidents were down on the previous year. It was a successful season with reported incidents down. Propulsion failure is a common problem due to lack of pre-season checks and basic engine maintenance. There was a decrease in interventions (usually speed and wash), down from five to two. Cowes United was vandalised on Trinity Landing so CHC are increasing the number of CCTV cameras in the area. There was an incident between a Red Jet and a racing yacht during Cowes Week so need to ensure that there is always a Red Funnel representative on the RYS Platform during racing.

On behalf of **Langstone Harbour** Jeremy Britton reported that as of 11th October 2023, they were currently sat at 67 incidents for the past rolling 12 months 11/10/2022 to 11/10/2023, down from 162 in the same period 2021/2022. Potential reasons being:

- Significantly reduced number of failed bridles/moorings/Eastney foreshore incidents.
- Reduced usage of the harbour. Much quieter from a leisure point of view.
- Reduced levels of patrol. LHB aim to put on more evening patrols in 2024.

- 6 lives saved.
- 13 breakdowns.
- 9 flooding/sinking (all of which were resolved before they became a wreck!)
- 4 groundings.
- 4 bridle failures.
- 4 Tidal mooring failures.
- 3 Vehicle strandings.

Becky Walford for **KHM Portsmouth** said that KHM Nick Randall is retiring in the Spring and a new KHM is being recruited currently. Daniel Saund has joined as Port Safety Boat Officer. Becky reported that they have sent nine warning letters, varying from speeding, reporting collisions with other vessels or items, anchoring in areas where they shouldn't, and not keeping a good lookout. With the caveat of if they do this again, we will look at prosecution.

Have had 112 incidents between 23 November 2022 and 23 November 2023 with 53 being recreational based. This is, 10 up on last year, collision and CQS being the most common theme followed by grounding, but also an increase with contact structures such as piles or jetties.

Two incidents of note: SV 'Atlantic' making contact with an anchored vessel at North Sturbridge. It was the quick thinking of the skipper of the anchored vessel that saved lives as the SV Atlantic was not keeping a good look out by all available means.

Motorboat 'Vereval' making contact, with South Ryde Middle at 32 knots in the dark, vessel had to have emergency lift on return to base.

Also worth mentioning, equipment failure from vessels breaking moorings, loosing masts and large vessels capsizing.

Mike Samuelson mentioned that Bembridge Lifeboat will be appearing in Saving Lives at Sea on Thursday 30 November which covers the MFV cable laying incident.

Nigel Edwards for **Southampton Water Sailing Association** said there appears to have been a reduction in the number of PWCs launched with many now on Versadocks in the river which makes them easier to monitor.

There was a general discussion around the issue of education of small boat owners and what the guidelines are for safety on the water. Pippa said that they have made offers of giving talks to the various clubs, but it is never taken up. Bob Trimble noted that the key messages coming across are communication and education, but it appears that the people causing the incidents are outside of the club structure.

5. **Special Events 2024**

Fifes & Classic Regatta 14 – 18 June

Round the Island – 15 June

Cowes Classic Week – 8 – 12 July

British Classic Week – 15 – 19 July

Clipper Fleet due back into Portsmouth on 27 July

Cowes Week – 27 July – 2 August

Etchells South Coast Championship – 31 Aug – 01 September

6. **Seasonal Race Marks**

BT reported that Cowes Week has been looking after the marks for 20 years. The maintenance contract has just been awarded to CHC and the marks will be coming out of the water very soon and will go back in early March (Nigel Edwards said that their first race in 2024 is 17th March). A few buoys have recently broken free from their moorings and it seems the shackles are the weak link so going to look at possible options. A Clench Shackle was suggested as an option.

7. **Online system for notifying events and their locations.**

Pippa Moody said that there is a lack of information added to the SCRA fixtures and Steven Masters said that they will be imposing charges for non-notification of events. MSJ suggested that it might be possible for automatic notifications are sent out to race organisers a few weeks before their event to remind them they need to supply all relevant information (RA's, contact info, number of boats, race area etc). To be investigated to see if this is possible.

8. **Issued raised by clubs, SCRA, RYA or other attendees.**

Mike Samuelson said that the disposal of flares is becoming an issue and asked if CHC will be organising another **flare amnesty**. Jennie Smith said they will be looking at this again for the future.

MS put in a plea for clubs to use Channel M1 or M2 on low power. Barry added that **Ch16 is a distress signal** and during a recent incident that the Coastguard was dealing with, a club out racing sent out a message to their fleet which cut across the distress signal. Clubs need to be reminded that radio operators need to be licenced.

PWCs – it was agreed that Andrew Norton of the PWC Partnership will be invited to the next meeting. Becky to provide details for Charles.

Bob Trimble said it would be useful if all the information provided on incidents could be added to a spreadsheet so that it could be analysed year on year. *Post Meeting Note: MSJ to start the process and will share with the group.*

Becky asked if the SASAC minutes could be added to the website. *Post Meeting Note: Minutes for 2021 and 2022 are already available to view.*

7. Any Other Business including Matters Arising from last year's Minutes if not already dealt with

Barry Sadler & Pippa Moody for ABP will organise a pre-season Solent Safety briefing/seminar for March in Southampton – possibly at one of the cruise terminals. Date TBC

Post Meeting Note: Action taken as a result of the meeting: BG has had a meeting with ABP, Pippa Moody, and they have agreed that the SCRA will organise a safety briefing for their members in the 1st week of March. This will be hosted by ABP.

9. Next Meeting Date

21 November 2024 at Regatta House, Cowes.