

## Chesil Sailability Standard Operating Procedures

### Part 2 SOP- Specific Operational and Safety Procedures – for Volunteers by Activity

#### Duty Officer (DO) Standard Operating Procedures

##### Updates

March 2025	DO SOP 2025 v2	Original (after amendments)
January 2026	2-1 DO SOP 2026 v1	Annual update incorporating learning from 2025 season

##### Duty Officer – process and role

- The Duty Officer has the overall responsibility for the session. Decisions relating to safety would normally be discussed thoroughly with the Safety Lead(s), however the responsibility for decisions ultimately lies with the Duty Officer.
- Plan the session and allocate roles, usually in discussion with other DO('s)
- Support and encourage your Team
- Provide the DO briefing at the start of the session for the Team
- Keep oversight of the session, including boats on the water, as much as possible.
- Maintain a contemporaneous record of the session, as much as possible.
- Troubleshoot
- Encourage and praise achievements.
- Provide the DO briefing at the end of the session, sharing information and thanking your Team
- Note any accidents/ incidents/ near misses and ensure further action is taken.
- Complete an accurate summary of the session for the record.
- Update Facebook with pictures/comments as appropriate. (Or arrange for an update to be posted).

##### Introduction

###### Qualifications

- There are no formal qualifications for a DO, but there is a 3 stage Assessment process, set out at the end of this DO Section. (See Appendix A and Part 3 SOP Training)
- All volunteers are required to complete the RYA Disability Awareness Course at the earliest opportunity.
- Duty Officers must hold a VHF licence.
- RYA Certificates held must be presented and copied for Chesil Sailability records.
- Duty Officers must confirm that they have read and understood their standard operating procedures (Part 2 and Part 3), and this must be recorded on their training record.

###### Session definition.

A Session is defined as:

- A full Tuesday afternoon session running Safety Boats, Hawks, Hansas, RS Venture (when used) and the Wheelyboat
- A Thursday morning session running Hawks only and/or the Wheelyboat
- Any other scheduled one-off sessions. (i.e. as scheduled on Dutyman).

## Planning for a Tuesday afternoon session

2 or 3 Days prior to proposed sessions, the DO will:

- Check forecast weather for session times and keep a watching brief on the forecasts (for forecast sites and Operating wind limits, see Part 3-2 SOP Daily Log Sheet (SOP8a): Weather Conditions).
- Check the Sailor Schedule provided by 'Tuesday Sailing', usually by the end of the Friday preceding the session.
- Check Dutyman to see if sufficient volunteers are available. Put out a call to fill any gaps, general or specific.
- Check there is an identified DO, First Aider on shore and First Aider on the water and a Safety Boat Lead. Note some of these roles can be combined for smaller sessions, e.g. Thursday morning group sessions. If possible, allocate a person other than the SBL to the role of First Aider on the water.
- Make a session plan (see Part 3-9 SOP Session Plan Template) matching volunteer with roles and crew and Sailors with boats. Circulate the plan to other DO's (at least one) for comment and reflection.
- Make a provisional 'Sail' decision, based on an acceptable weather forecast and sufficient resource availability OR 'No Sail' decision if the session will not be viable due to lack of resources or is judged unsafe to run in the expected conditions. (see Part 3-2 SOP Daily Log Sheet (SOP 8a): Weather Conditions and Sail/ no sail decision matrix)
- Notify 'Tuesday Sailing' of the Session Plan, ideally by the end of Sunday but no later than 11am on the Monday, so Tuesday Sailing can confirm with sailors. Negotiate and incorporate any changes as needed and as we are able to accommodate.
- If conditions are likely to be marginal initial communications to Sailors and volunteers should include the disclaimer that 'Conditions may require cancellation at short notice'. When the forecast is marginal, advise sailors and volunteers that a confirmation email will be sent, and message placed on Facebook, by 11am Tuesday to confirm the session is going ahead or has been cancelled.
- Email the volunteer team to share information on their expected roles, and any other factors (such as flexibility required due to the weather), by end of Monday.
- Arrange for FB post for Sailors to say if session is going ahead, brief weather conditions and what to bring e.g. drink, suncream, hat, sunglasses or if cold hat gloves etc. Remind sailors to arrive early to get ready for sail.
- If cancellation of the session, or part of the session, is necessary, arrange for FB post and ask whoever has the Sailability Mobile (usually Reception), to add a temporary message regarding the cancellation.
- The cut off for a Sail/ no sail decision made prior to the session actually starting is 11am on the Tuesday. Unless cancelled prior to 11am, Volunteers and Sailors should have the reasonable expectation that the planned session will go ahead.
- Notify Bosun of proposed vessel use and equipment requirements.

For a Thursday morning group session or other events, essentially the same process applies although some roles may be combined.

## Running a Session

**On Day of Session:**

- Duty Officer attends at least 1 hour before first flight.
- Volunteer Briefing should be scheduled for no later than 30mins before the first flight. (To aid first flights getting away on time)
- Make the On-the-day Sail / No Sail Decision, with advice from the Safety Boat Lead and an independent source. Complete the Sail/No Sail section of the Daily Log Sheet. This may include proviso's and potential for 'Plan B'.
- Collect two VHF handsets, one for the working channel for the session, the other, DSC enabled, for monitoring Channel 16 and emergencies. (Code Red)
- Check that the Bosun Team have arrived to prepare vessels and equipment to be used.
- Check that the Pontoon Team have arrived to prepare the Pontoon and Hoists for use.
- Check Reception and Link have arrived, will be ready to welcome Sailors and will pass on relevant information regarding the Sailor and carers to Pontoon, Safety Boat Lead and Skippers.
- Provide signing in sheet for volunteers
- Complete (or delegate) board showing volunteer roles
- As Volunteers arrive confirm and allocate roles for the event.
- In poor weather ensure your strongest team members are allocated to key roles.
- Consider with SBL the value of allocating 3 crew to SB1
- Monitor that Volunteers check and rig equipment necessary for their role.
- DO works through and completes the Sailing Session Safety Checklist on the Daily Log Sheet. This checklist covers many safety and other essentials, so is really important to work through.
- DO checks that all Safety boats, Hawks and Wheelyboats have VHF radios and do a radio check (or delegate to someone). (see Appendix on VHF). Hansa's carry a whistle and flag to attract attention.
- Before any boats leave their moorings ensure a minimum of one safety boat is crewed and available to assist if required.
- Hansa's are launched by taking them down the slipway, and gently into the water, for a Safety boat to collect and take across to the pontoons (& likewise in reverse at the end of a session). Hawks go under motor from the finger berths to the hoist / embarkation pontoon.
- Agree Sailing Area for Hawks, course mark location for Hansa's, and Wheelyboat plans with Safety Boat Lead. (3-5 Sailing Area)
- Volunteers Briefing by DO, covering:
  - Wind and weather conditions, any clothing recommendations
  - Session Plan
    - Boats and crew
    - Sailing areas, other water users, etc

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any specific safety or other issues, such as reefing requirements, and safety tip/scenario</li> <li>• Identify Team Leads</li> <li>• How the session is starting</li> <li>○ No Hansa to leave the pontoons with sailors until the keel safety pin has been checked by the DO, or someone appointed by them.</li> </ul>
<b>Sailor timing:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrive at least 20 mins before flight time.</li> <li>• Register at Reception and get kitted out by the Link Team.</li> </ul>
<b>Sailing Session:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain constant awareness of the sailing conditions, with feedback and wind readings from a Safety Boat, normally Safety Boat Lead.</li> <li>• Dynamically manage the safety of the session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ on the water primarily through the Safety Boat Lead.</li> <li>○ liaise with Pontoon Lead re Pontoon Safety.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In Liaison with the Safety Boat Lead ensure sufficient Safety cover is always available (Part 3-2 SOP Daily Log Sheet)</li> <li>• Manage any emergency through the Emergency Action Plan. (Part 3-3 SOP Emergency Action Plan)</li> <li>• Monitor for risk of lightning (See Part 3-7 SOP Lightning Plan)</li> <li>• Monitor for risk of Fog/ poor visibility (See Part 3-8 SOP Fog Plan)</li> <li>• Manage the flow of sailors and any changes (liaise closely with Link), flight progress, volunteer roles, etc, to ensure that the session runs smoothly, and to schedule.</li> <li>• Monitor and manage the welfare of sailors, carers, and volunteers throughout the session, e.g. if very hot or cold weather.</li> </ul> <p><b>WIND &amp; WEATHER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain N Entrance anemometer as primary wind reference.</li> <li>• Supplement wind/conditions assessment with SBL and experienced Hawk Skipper on the water assessing conditions, both any sheltered areas (e.g. Castletown), and crux points (e.g. Marina Entrance)</li> <li>• While DO considers the conditions are safe continue to sail, <b>but</b> work to an <b>upper gusting limit of 24 knots</b> on the N Entrance anemometer, and above that, close the session down.</li> </ul>
<b>End of session – debrief:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De rig the sailing boats and safety boats.</li> <li>• Kit to containers for storage.</li> <li>• Gather available Volunteers for a debrief, including asking for any damage to persons, boats or kit, and any other concerns, to be recorded.</li> <li>• Write up Session summary in Daily Log Sheet (Part 3-2 SOP Recording)</li> </ul>

## **Appendix A**

### Qualification

There is a 3 stage Assessment process for becoming a DO.

1. This involves a candidate firstly shadowing different DOs for a number of sessions.
2. A new DO shadows the weekend planning of a session then has a turn at planning a session in co-operation with experienced DO.
3. When the candidate and the other DOs are confident, the second stage is that they lead a session with a DO alongside
4. Once the DOs and the candidate are confident that the candidate can run a safe session, as a third stage we then ask the Portland Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre to watch the candidate run a session and give us independent feedback. If the feedback is overall positive, the candidate will be recommended to the Management Committee as a DO.

There is the RYA Senior Instructor qualification, but this is a much wider qualification, and requires considerable investment of time and funding, unrealistic for a voluntary organisation. Our basis is to work to the equivalent standards, for our specific sailors, sailing waters & boats.

### Key skills

#### Duty Officer Key Skills

- Able to make, negotiate, adapt (sometimes 'on the fly'), communicate and execute a plan.
- Have oversight of all activities during the session.
- Demonstrate good communication skills across Reception, Link, Pontoon, Skippers, Sailors and Safety Boat Team.
- Know what will be needed when. Able to look ahead and react quickly when needed.
- Able to identify, manage and allocate resources to ensure the session runs smoothly.
- Able to constantly monitor the weather and other factors that might impact on the session, and, in liaison with the Safety Lead, Skippers and Pontoon Lead, take steps as appropriate.
- Able to keep records.
- Able to use the VHF radio and knowledge of call signs used by Chesil Sailability.
- Knowledge of the Emergency Action Plan
- Knowledge of appropriate actions to take should someone fall overboard

## **Appendix B**

### On-the-Day Sail/No Sail decision: Additional Notes (See also Part 3-2 Daily Log Sheet)

We work to a sailing wind speed limit of 20 knots average, gusting up to 23 knots. Other factors (temperature, rainfall, proximity of lightning, visibility etc) might impact on conditions for safe sailing, and these, and any weather warnings, must be considered by the DO in making the Sail/ No Sail decision. Winds from the East are more challenging with more chop, but the Hawks can manage this, and the Hansa's can sail in the Marina.

In planning a session, use the forecasts sites set out in Daily Log (previously SOP8A) as the main ones, although using others if the forecast is marginal. Note that most sailors won't come if it is raining, although there is a small core who will sail whatever the weather, so running a reduced session for them can be considered, subject to the welfare of the volunteers.

When running a session, check the actual conditions are within our sailing range when you arrive on site.

Ask for advice from an independent source (Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre SI, or an appropriate Academy member of staff), note this on the Daily Log and sign to confirm you are confident the session can go ahead.

Decide and communicate the level of reefing required for the Hawks & Hansa's, as set out in Daily Log. Confirm and record Wheelyboat area of operation.

If the wind conditions rise unexpectedly above our levels during a session, then bring all boats back to the pontoons. Either delay (if conditions are forecast to improve) or cancel the rest of the session.

## **Appendix C**

### Getting the best out of the session.

#### Notes on Sailing Area (see **SOP 3-5 Sailing Area**)

Chesil Sailability uses the entire area of Portland Harbour **excluding** the Portland Port area, RNSA moorings and the shoreline Area A, as marked on the map below.

The Hansa's are normally allocated an area northeast of the Marina entrance, marked out with some marks, and not too far to be able to sail back to the pontoons easily. With winds of 18-gusting 23 knots, the Hansa's should be sailing in the Marina, apart from Race Team sailors who can sail in the Harbour if the conditions are manageable (wind direction, etc)

The Hawks are able to sail anywhere in the Harbour, but it is helpful, and often more sociable, if the Hawks can sail in reasonable proximity to each other.

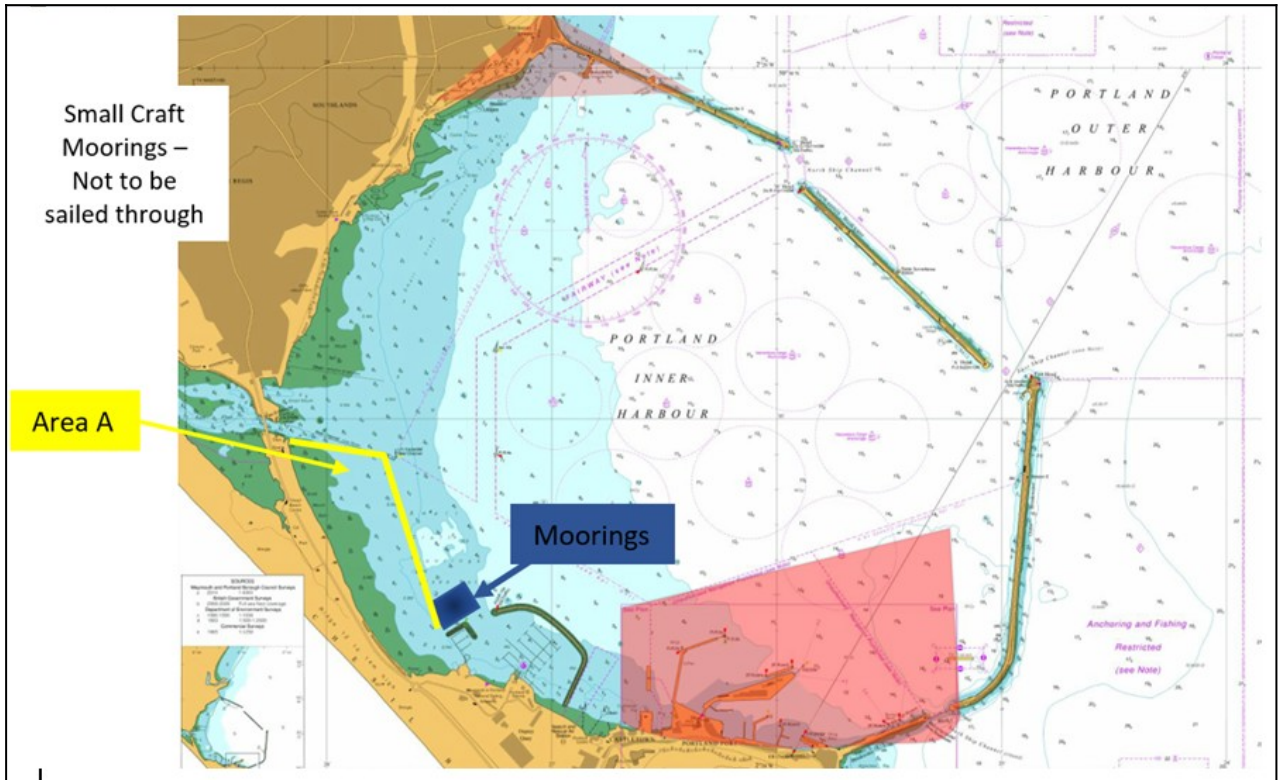


Figure 3 – Sailing Area

Hansas usually sail with an allocated volunteer skipper however, DO's may consider pairing suitably experienced Sailors to sail together, either allocating the role of 'Skipper' to one sailor or accepting that the role will be shared. This would mark a progression in sailing experience for the sailors however would not be for the purpose of instruction or coaching. The SBL should be informed of Hansas sailing without a volunteer skipper as crew.