

Off Soundings Club
2005-2008 Minimum Equipment and Accommodations Standards
For Monohull Vessels

Based on Offshore Racing Council Categories 4 and 5

April, 2005

DRAFT

SECTION 1.0 - PURPOSE, APPLICABILITY, AND IMPLEMENTATION

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to establish uniform Minimum Equipment and Accommodations Standards for monohull yachts racing in Off Soundings Club events.
- 1.2 The intent of these standards is that a yacht shall be equipped to be capable in heavy weather of continuing to race or seek shelter under reduced sail, abandon racing and proceed to shelter under power, or stabilize her situation, summon assistance, and safely await its arrival as her Master may decide.
- 1.3 These requirements and recommendations do not replace, but rather supplement, the requirements of the United States Coast Guard, the Racing Rules, Class Associations and rating systems, except as may be specified herein or in the Sailing Instructions.
- 1.4 A yacht may be inspected at any time. If she does not comply with these Equipment Standards her entry may be rejected, or she may be liable to disqualification or other such penalty as may be prescribed by the protest committee. OSC officials or other competitors may protest a yacht not in conformance.

SECTION 2.0 - RESPONSIBILITY

- 2.1 The safety of a yacht and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the Master who has entered her in a Race Series.
- 2.2 The Master must do his/her best to ensure that the yacht is fully found, thoroughly seaworthy, and manned by an experienced crew who have undergone appropriate familiarization with the capabilities, workings, and peculiarities of the vessel and its equipment, and are physically fit to face bad weather. The ability to successfully deal with difficult conditions is dependent not only on being properly equipped, but also on the overall soundness of the vessel, prior planning and preparation, and the judgment and skill of the Master and crew. The Master must be satisfied as to the soundness of the hull, spars, rigging and all gear, and must ensure that all safety equipment is properly maintained and stowed and that the crew know where it is kept and how it is used.
- 2.3 Neither the establishment of these Regulations and Recommendations, their use by race organizers, nor the inspection or non-inspection of a yacht under these Requirements in any way limits or reduces the complete and unlimited responsibility of the Master.
- 2.4 The responsibility for a yacht's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is the Master's alone.
- 2.5 By completing, signing, and submitting an Entry Blank for an Off Soundings Race Series the Master commits to read and understand, and to honor and fulfill the spirit and substance of the Regulations and Recommendations in this document.

SECTION 3.0 - SUITABILITY OF EQUIPMENT

All equipment specified by these Regulations shall:

- (a) function properly,
- (b) be regularly checked, cleaned and serviced,
- (c) when not in use be stowed in conditions in which deterioration is minimized,
- (d) be aboard and readily accessible when racing,

- (c) Lifelines shall be effectively continuous around the working deck but may be substituted for by appropriate horizontal rails in pulpits. Lifelines need not be fixed to the bow pulpit if they terminate at, or pass through, adequately braced stanchions set inside and overlapping the bow pulpit, provided that the gap between the upper lifeline and the bow pulpit does not exceed 150 mm (6 in.).
- (d) Lifelines shall be permanently supported at intervals of not more than 2.13 m (7 ft.) and shall not pass outboard of supporting stanchions.
- (e) Support struts and terminals aft are allowed provided that the complete lifeline enclosure is supported by stanchions and pulpit bases within the working deck. Lifeline terminals and support struts may be fixed to the hull aft of the working deck.
- (f) Lifelines shall be taut. Lifelines should not deflect more than 50 mm (2 in) when a force of 50 N (5.1 kgf, 11.2 lbf) is applied to the lifeline midway between supports.
- (g) Lifelines and Vertical Openings. Yachts of 8.5 m (28.0 ft.) LOA and above shall have a taut double lifeline at a height of no less than 600 mm (24 in) above the working deck. No vertical opening shall exceed 380 mm (15 in). A yacht less than 8.5m (28.0 ft) LOA shall have at least a taut single lifeline, at a height of no less than 450 mm (18 in) above the working deck. No vertical opening shall exceed 560 mm (22in). When an intermediate lifeline is fitted, no vertical opening shall exceed 380 mm (15 in). On all yachts with intermediate lifelines, the intermediate line shall be not less than 230 mm (9 in) above the working deck and shall be of the same construction and general arrangements as required for the upper.
- (h) Lifeline Materials. Lifelines shall be stranded stainless steel wire, minimum diameter of 3 mm (1/8") for yachts under 8.5m (28.0 ft) LOA, 4 mm (5/32") for yachts 8.5m (28.0 ft) to 13.1m (43.0 ft) LOA, or 5 mm (3/16") for yachts over 13.1m (43.0 ft) LOA. Plain uncoated wire is recommended.
- (i) Synthetic Rope. A taut lanyard of synthetic rope may be used to secure lifelines provided the gap it closes does not exceed 100 mm (4 in). All wire, fittings, anchor point fixtures and lanyards shall comprise a lifelines enclosure system which has at all points at least the breaking strength of the required lifeline wire. It is recommended that synthetic rope used in such a fashion be replaced annually.
- (j) Attachment. Stanchions and Pulpits shall be securely attached to the vessel.

4.10 Accommodations.

- (a) Marine toilet (MSD), securely installed, or fitted bucket.
- (b) Bunks securely installed.
- (c) Galley facilities securely installed.
- (d) Adequate handholds shall be fitted below deck so that crewmembers may move about safely at sea.

4.11 Bilge Pumps and Buckets

- (a) At least one manual bilge pump shall be fitted.
- (b) No bilge pump may discharge into a cockpit unless that cockpit opens aft to the sea.
- (c) Bilge pumps shall not be connected to cockpit drains.
- (d) Unless permanently fitted, each manual bilge pump handle shall be provided with a lanyard, catch, or similar device to prevent accidental loss.
- (c) At least one bucket of stout construction and of at least 9 liters (2.4 US gallons) capacity shall be carried. Each bucket shall have a lanyard to prevent loss overboard.

4.12 Compass. A properly adjusted marine magnetic compass shall be permanently installed and visible from the helm.

4.13 Marine Radio.

5.9 Radar Reflector. The radar reflector shall have a minimum documented “equivalent echoing area” of 6 m² (64 ft²). Octahedral reflectors shall have a minimum diameter of 300mm (12 in). The radar reflector shall be deployed per the manufacturer’s instructions in poor visibility.

5.10 Echo Sounder or Lead line. A depth sounding device shall be carried.

5.11 Identification. The yacht’s name shall be affixed to miscellaneous buoyant equipment, such as lifejackets, oars, cushions, lifebuoys and Lifeslings etc.

5.12 Marine Grade Retro-Reflective Material shall be fitted to all lifebuoys, Lifeslings and lifejackets.

5.13 Lifejackets.

- (a) One U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I, II, or III Personal Flotation Device shall be aboard for each crewmember.
- (b) Each lifejacket shall have a whistle, shall be fitted with marine grade retro-reflective material, and be clearly marked with the name of the yacht or the wearer; a light is recommended.
- (c) Inflatable PFDs shall be USCG approved, have an automatic compressed gas inflation system, and be checked regularly for leakage. (Note that inflatable PFDs are Type V devices and do not satisfy the USCG requirements of one PFD for each crewmember unless worn.)

5.14 Lifebuoys. At least one lifebuoy with a drogue OR Lifesling (without a drogue) equipped with a self-activating light shall be within easy reach of the helmsman and ready for instant use. Lifebuoys must be inherently buoyant. Every inflatable lifebuoy e.g., MOM systems, shall be tested regularly and otherwise maintained in accordance with its manufacturer’s instructions.

5.15 Heaving Line. Minimum 15 m – 25 m (50 ft - 75 ft), minimum 6mm (1/4") diameter, floating, of UV-inhibited material and readily accessible to the cockpit.

5.16 Waivers. There will be no waivers of Section 5 Regulations.

SECTION 6.0 – Part C: RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Purpose. These recommendations recognize that given differences in hull and rig design and construction, space availability and configuration of vessels, differences in equipment, and the experience and preferences of individual Masters it may not be possible to develop universally workable specifications for all desirable safety requirements.

It is expected that each Master will recognize the importance of ensuring the safety of his crew and vessel and the safety of others, and develop and implement methods of dealing with the issues raised in this section. Any consequence of a failure to do is the responsibility of the Master and is at his own risk.

6.2 Portable VHF Radio. It is recommended that in addition to a fixed mount radio a self-powered waterproof portable VHF marine transceiver with a minimum rated output of 5 watts high power be carried aboard. The following is recommended:

- (a) If the portable unit has a rechargeable battery system the unit be fully charged at the start of each race.
- (b) If there is an accessory to recharge the internal battery from ship’s power, and/or to operate the unit from ship’s power such device(s) be aboard.
- (c) If a rechargeable device can be backed up by a supplemental dry cell battery pack that backup should be available.
- (d) If the unit operates from conventional dry cell batteries only, a full set of fresh backup batteries should be aboard in an easily accessible waterproof container.
- (e) A portable unit is considered to meet the section 4.13 requirement for a radio with an antenna independent of the rig.

6.3 GPS. A Global Positioning System position-fixing device is recommended.

6.4 Safety Harnesses. It is strongly recommended that an adequate safety harness and tether be available for each crewmember.