

Passage/Voyage Planning

SSWA Info 007 (Jan 04)

Regulation 34, SOLAS Chapter V, requires that any vessel putting to sea must have a passage plan prepared. A copy of this plan must be left with a contact person ashore. This regulation came into force in June 2002, and applies to all vessels, including leisure craft. Officially this regulation does not apply to inland waterways, but the Sea Scout Team recommends that a similar procedure should be followed as a matter of good practice.

Although this SOLAS regulation is new, you should note that the Scout Boating Guidelines have included the substance of this regulation for more than 25 years. The Boating Guidelines are available in Appendix 1 of the Sea Scout Leaders Handbook.

Marine Notice No.5 of 2002 details requirements for passage plans, but is mainly concerned with commercial shipping. The following is a summary of this document, modified for Sea Scout use.

1. Objectives

The development of a passage plan and the continuous monitoring of the vessel's progress are important for safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and protection of marine environment.

2. Appraisal

2.1 All information relevant to the passage should be assembled e.g. –

- Condition of the boat(s) and its/their equipment
- Experience of the Leader in charge and of the crew
- Relevant and up-to-date charts, maps and notices to mariners
- Up-to-date sailing directions and almanac, checking on all areas of possible difficulty or danger
- Details of local tidal times and currents
- Weather forecast and outlook
- Consideration of possible problems related to wind / tide
- Volume of commercial traffic likely to be encountered
- Safe anchorages and harbours on the way
- Accompanying escort or safety craft if relevant

For inland waterways – include information on locks, permits and fees, bridge clearances or lifting arrangements, moorings or berths, campsites, fresh water

availability, provisions, fuel.

2.2 Considering the above information, an overall appraisal of the intended voyage should be made.

3. Planning

3.1 On the basis of full appraisal, prepare a detailed passage plan

3.2 The plan should include -

- Plan the intended route on appropriate scale charts
- Alternative plans – safe harbours / anchorages, etc.
- Choosing waypoints, reporting positions, etc, if applicable
- Check list of the boat(s) and equipment (standard, spares and emergency)

3.3 Note passage details on the passage plan form.

3.4 A copy of the plan must be left with the Group Leader, or other recognised contact person ashore.

4. Execution

4.1 The passage should be made in accordance with the plan. Give TR to Coast Guard before departure. Call on Ch.16, and change to working channel as directed.

4.2 Factors to be taken into account when executing the plan, or deciding on any change, postponement or cancellation, include -

- the reliability and condition of the boat's navigational equipment
- ETA at critical points for tide height /stream
- meteorological conditions, (low visibility, weather forecast, etc)
- effect of unexpected delay, or of slow progress.

4.3 Some circumstances may introduce an unacceptable hazard to the continuing safe conduct of the passage, e.g. restricted visibility, or other deteriorating weather conditions, injury or sickness of a crew member, or damage to the boat. If so, the Leader-in-charge must decide whether that section of the passage should be changed, postponed or abandoned, or whether assistance should be sought.

5. Monitoring

5.1 The Leader in charge should check the plan throughout the passage.

5.2 Progress should be continuously monitored and a written log should be kept, noting positions, weather, sea state and any events or items of interest. Any changes made to the plan should be clearly logged. Any major change to the details given in the TR should be reported to the Coast Guard by VHF radio, and should also be reported as soon as possible to the contact person ashore. On arrival at the destination, planned or emergency, the TR must be closed with the Coast Guard.

6. Inland Waterways

6.1 Above recommendations also apply to cruising/passage making on large inland lakes, e.g. Lough Ree, Lough Derg, Lough Erne (Upper and Lower) and Lough Neagh, all of which now have Coast Guard and either RNLI or other rescue services available.

Lough Derg is covered by Valentia CG Radio (Ch.16&61), Lough Ree is covered by Malin Head CG Radio (Ch.16/62), Upper and Lower Lough Erne and Lough Neagh are covered by Belfast Coast Guard (contact on Ch.16, and CG will nominate working channel). Passage planning recommendations and TRs apply as at sea.

Passage Plan Form

A suggested form for passage planning is attached to this notice. Leaders may wish to modify this form or to design their own form to suit local conditions and the craft available.

In order to save space on the passage plan form, it is suggested that individual check lists for each boat and its equipment (standard, spare and emergency) should be available in each Group, but need not be included on the passage plan form. However, these lists should be checked before every activity, and this fact should be recorded on the passage plan form. The lists themselves may be left in the Scout den or with the shore contact person. There should be a separate list for each boat.

Boat check list may include (where applicable and depending on waters, the type of craft and the activity planned) –

Hull and fittings, rudder, tiller, yoke and lines, bottom boards, stretchers

Oars (number), spurs (number) and spares (one of each)

Bow and stern lines. Separate tow line.

Masts, standing rigging and fittings, fore, main and mizzen halyards and flag halyards

Booms, main and mizzen sheets, kicking strap, downhails

Sails – jib (with sheets), main (with reefing lines), mizzen.

Spare line, shackles and bungee cord in bag.

Outboard engine, secure attachment, spare fuel, kill-cord, cooling system. Spare starter rope, spark plug, spanner, screwdriver and knife in container

Inboard engine, fuel, oil, cooling system, electrical system and batteries, adequate tool kit.

Anchor and cable, secure attachment.

Flares – 2 orange smoke and 2 red hand flares (minimum), in waterproof container.

Handheld VHF radio in waterproof case.

Mobile phone in waterproof case

Laminated card noting Coast Guard radio and local port VHF working channels, and useful phone numbers, including shore contact person

Chart laminated in plastic, backing board, chinagraph pencil, plotter.

Two compasses – one handbearing and one for steering (a Silva-type hiking compass will work very well for this).

Torch, spare bulb and batteries.

Handheld GPS and spare batteries

First Aid Kit in separate waterproof container

Personal equipment – adequate warm clothing, with water-proof outer layers.

Personal Flotation Device – in Restricted Waters and Day Cruising Waters, minimum of 100 Newton Buoyancy Aid, or 150 Newton Lifejacket.

Emergency rations, hot drinks in flasks, drinking water.

Scouting Ireland - Sea Scouts

Passage Planning Form for day and short coastal/lake cruises

Group _____

Details of proposed cruise / expedition _____

Dates – from _____

to _____

via _____

Person in charge of the cruise _____

Details of Boat(s) - Name, Type, Person in charge, Number of Crew _____

Navigation Details

Chart in use, number / title _____

Course(s) plotted and distances measured? Check _____

Details shown to and discussed with shore contact person? Check _____

ETA at chosen checkpoints and destination

Day 1 _____

Day 2 _____

Day 3 _____

If future ETAs are not known because times of departure are not decided, they should be communicated to the Coast Guard and to the shore contact person each day.



Dangers or difficulties to be avoided? _____

Tides (corrected for local time) Standard Port _____

Date		Date		Date	
Time	Height	Time	Height	Time	Height

Tidal Streams

Favourable (times) _____

Unfavourable (times) _____

Weather

Forecast at _____ hrs. for area _____

Outlook _____

Parents informed? _____

Group Leader informed (if different from shore contact person) ? _____

County Commissioner informed (if outside Day Cruising Waters)? _____

Boat and Equipment check

The person in charge of each boat must complete a full check of the boat and equipment as noted in the Group's boat Check List. The Leader in overall charge of the cruise must confirm this.

I certify that checklist(s) have been completed for each boat participating in this activity

Signed _____ Leader in Charge

Further details may be recorded on blank sheet(s) and attached to this form.