



**COWES HARBOUR
COMMISSION**

Marine Safety Management Plan

Issue Version 6.0 – 2025 - 2027

Document	Marine Safety Management Plan
Issue Version	Issue 6.0 – March 2025
Amendment	0

Marine Safety Management Plan, 2025 - 2027

1. Introduction

As required by the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC), Cowes Harbour Commission (CHC) publishes its Marine Safety Management Plan for the conduct of marine operations in Cowes Harbour every three years; this plan covers the period 2025 – 2027.

This Marine Safety Management Plan commits CHC to undertaking the proper management and regulation of marine operations within the scope of its powers and authority, according to Cowes Harbour Revision Order 2012 (as amended) and the PMSC. CHC has the primary responsibility of maintaining safe access to an ‘Open Port’, managing and supporting the safety of vessels and all users of Cowes Harbour, together with a duty to conserve the river and its environment. In managing the safety of navigation and the provision of services, CHC always has the safety of life as its highest priority.

2. Marine Policies

The CHC Board has developed several marine policies in support of the management and regulation of marine operations that safeguards the harbour, its users, the public and the environment within harbour limits. The Cowes Harbour Advisory Committee are an integral part of the formal consultation process prior to implementing new harbour safety policies or regulations.

CHC’s ‘Navigational Safety Policy’ is based on a continuing, formal assessment and mitigation of risk in consultation with river users. CHC ensures compliance with this policy by actively communicating and educating, via various media, both of which are underpinned by clear and precise rules and regulations.

CHC’s ‘Enforcement Policy’ comprises the promulgation of regulation and guidance, training of staff, effective surveillance of harbour users, incident investigation and, where appropriate, formal warning and prosecution. This policy is based on education in the first instance and generally only reverts to prosecution for repeat offenders; for offences bringing significant risk of serious injury or loss of life or when users threaten or abuse our staff members.

All policies are included in CHC’s Marine Safety Management System (MSMS) and are subject to periodical review.

3. Marine Safety Management System (MSMS)

A comprehensive overview of CHC’s structure, management and maintenance of the MSMS and CHC’s compliance with the PMSC in support of this Plan, is contained in the full MSMS Manual and available at the Harbour Office.

External audits of the MSMS and CHC’s compliance with the PMSC are undertaken at least every 3 years. CHC are also subject to annual internal audits, supplemented by regular internal reviews of documentation and policies. The audits for 2025 & 2026 will be conducted internally, with the next external audit planned for February 2027.

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4. Safety Management Objectives

Number	Service Provision / Activity	Objective
1	Provide a safe and navigable harbour for all users.	No serious incidents, major injuries or Tier 2 level pollution incidents as the result of a failure of CHC's SMS and / or of associated CHC safety control measure provisions.
2	Provide a safe working environment for all employees.	No incidents requiring staff to take time off work.
3	Provide management and /or support in any emergency within the harbour or close to its boundaries.	Ensure the development, maintenance, and regular testing of comprehensive emergency response and counter-pollution plans, along with the capability to effectively implement them when needed.
4	Provide safe and cost effective marine services for the benefit of all stakeholders and harbour users.	Regularly review the services offered, including associated charges and safety controls, to ensure they meet the needs and expectations of all stakeholders.
5	Provide a safe, efficient and effective pilotage service.	No serious incidents resulting from errors made by authorised Cowes Pilots or PEC holders.
6	Employ suitably qualified managers and staff, in an effective structure to the benefit of all stakeholders and harbour users.	Ensure that those with marine safety responsibilities are competent and trained to undertake their duties.
7	To ensure that empowering legislation available to CHC is appropriate and fit for purpose.	Review legislation on a regular basis, with legal advice sought as required.