

Bridport Harbour – Port Marine Safety Code

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Harbour Master: James Radcliffe

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1. Purpose of Report

To report the findings of an assessment made against the Marine Safety Management System (MSMS) at Bridport harbour in support of the Harbour Operations Annual Report and in compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code.

2. Executive Summary

Reporting as the Designated Person (DP) under the Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC), I am able to provide a reasonable assurance of safe harbour operations at Bridport and framework compliance with the PMSC through the Operations Plan and other documentation. Confirmation of PMSC compliance was issued to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) in April 2018 as required by the code, this will again be required ahead of April 2021.

Evidence provided confirms that known risks of marine operations and land based activity at the harbour have been identified and assessed with precautions put in place to manage risk to a level that is considered to be as low as reasonably practicable. A number of compliance visits have been made to Bridport Harbour by the DP over the previous 12 months.

3. Safety Management System & Bylaws

The MSMS is established by combining policies and procedures from both the Dorset Councils Partnership (DCP) and the marine based requirements derived from the PMSC that are contained within the harbour operations plan. The Operations Plan was reviewed in 2017 by the Harbour Master and no significant changes were identified.

Safety managements systems relevant to shore based activities are available through the intranet and hold many similarities to the requirements of the code.

There have been no changes to existing bylaws within the previous 12 months however a legal process to investigate the viability of introducing Harbour Revision Orders is currently underway.

4. Harbour Use

A meeting of the Bridport Harbour users group was held in October 2018. Minutes from the meeting confirm that no safety concerns were raised by users concerning the harbour or harbour operations. Examples were provided of meritable and collaborative working in support of the Gig Club and other harbour users. A record of thanks to the harbour team was also noted.

Pontoon demand within the harbour remains strong with around 40 applicants waiting for a mooring and slipway usage is reported to be similar with that of previous years. A small fishing fleet working from the harbour still flourishes along with angling and sightseeing craft.

The diving air station having now been established for 3-4 years has seen a season of increased demand compared to last year. The station remains a well managed asset for local divers and visitors; it is fully equipped and maintained to a high standard.

The facility was last serviced in August 2018 by CS Services and revealed need for compressor repairs. Air quality was assessed by Dorset County Council on 20 September 2018 and this confirmed compliance with required standards.

The Harbour Master (HM) confirmed that a new boatlifter is due to be received at the harbour in December 2018. The lifter is expected to make boat lifting operations quicker and importantly reduce safety risks associated with the task. This machine is similar to that used at Lyme Regis harbour although the wheelbase has been designed to give a variable axle width to navigate the sluice-gate bridge. The lifter will have a maximum net loading capacity of 8.5 tonnes.

5. Harbour Staff

Staff numbers at the harbour this year have increased slightly from 2.5 full time equivalent posts to 3.00 plus seasonal staff and volunteers.

6. Training

Training this year has had focus in supporting seasonal staff and ensuring that they are able to work safely when undertaking operational tasks. In addition training for the operation of the JCB tele-handler and compressor dive station has been completed. All harbour staff are qualified with either powerboat advanced/level II certificate.

7. Risk Assessments

Bridport harbour has been assessed as having a high health and safety risk profile that demands an effective and pro-active safety management system to mitigate risk. The risk profile is unchanged from 2017.

It is confirmed that there are a good number of risk assessments that demonstrate foreseeable hazards at the harbour have been addressed. Records identify that risk assessments remain unchanged from last year although the HM confirms they are currently being reviewed.

It is confirmed that risk assessments will be formulated for the new boatlifter and operational training will be completed by the harbour team prior to the machine coming into service.

Bridport harbour risk assessments will be subject to an independent risk assessment review undertaken annually by Dorset Councils Partnership.

Marine based risk assessments have also been reviewed and outcomes are unchanged from previous years.

8. Work Instructions

The risk assessment process has led to a small number of work instructions in support of carrying out certain tasks.

The Harbour Master receives regular notification of industry best practice and governance from the United Kingdom Harbour Masters Association (UKHMA). This information is used to benchmark operations and is a source for receiving advisory alerts that can be used in the context of Bridport harbour operations.

9. Harbour Assets - Inspections

The harbour operates with a strong established procedure for inspecting and reviewing harbour assets. Asset inspections are completed on either a daily or monthly basis depending on assessed priority or the likelihood of defects occurring.

Evidence suggests that should asset defects occur they would be detected within a reasonable timescale and properly managed to ultimate remedy. Sample records reviewed showed 13 satisfactory inspections for September 2018.

10. Emergency Planning

The Operations Plan provides insight of the process that should be followed if an emergency arises. Section 6 of the Port Marine Guide to Good Practice: Emergency Preparedness and Response; recommends that regular exercises are undertaken in preparation for a live emergency incident. No planned emergency exercises have been completed over the previous 12 months, however the HM confirms that harbour staff participate with post analysis reviews after significant incidents occur to allow opportunity for learning and improvement.

11. Accidents & Incidents

It is reported that:

- No RIDDOR incidents have occurred within the previous 12 months
- No harbour by-laws have been breached or warnings given to harbour users afloat
- The so called 'lithium ball' that had been recovered from the sea and that had been stored within the boatyard has been removed for incineration. Specialist contractors Adler & Allan were tasked to undertake the work. The process leading up to its disposal had been extremely complex because the ball and its purpose i.e. potentially explosive was unknown and as a consequence extreme caution was needed. It was initially hoped that the lithium could be recycled but after lengthy enquires it was deemed not to be possible. To enable safe extraction of the lithium material a large temporary structure was built within the boatyard and this caused significant disruption to boatyard users at that time.
- Two boats had taken on water and sank within the harbour confines. Explanations for both sinkings were that the boats had been stuck fast under harbourside ladders as the tide was rising. Both vessels were recovered by the harbour team.
- There have been no collisions between boats within the harbour or its approaches however in early summer there was a collision in Lyme bay between two racing powerboats that led to a fatality. The harbour team played an active part with coordinating the incident and recovering the vessels.
- Boarder force officers have made several visits to the harbour amid raised concerns of illegal immigration and attempts of immigrants to reach UK shores from France. No evidence of these attempts has actually been reported locally.

12. Pollution

No pollution events have occurred within the harbour or approaches. Pollution response equipment remains in store and ready for use should an incident arise.

13. Harbour Assurances

Harbour Dredging and Beach Replenishment

Harbour dredging this year was undertaken in March by a Dutch contractor and was extremely successful. Surveys showed depths achieved to be around 2M below chart datum, one of the best results recorded in recent years.

Navigational Aids

Trinity House made a visit to the harbour in April 2018. Their investigation revealed a fault with the sector light at the base of the pier which was subsequently repaired.

14. Forward Assessments

Surveillance visits at the Bridport harbour office are regularly scheduled by the DP and any significant findings from these visits will be reported as required to the Strategy Committee.

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