

2025 Programme of Racing Medium Event Summary

Version 1.0 – 17 February 2025

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Event	SORC Racing Season 2025	Dates	See Appendix
Organising Authority	Solo Offshore Racing Club Ltd	Event Website	www.offshoresolo.com
Operating Period	April – October 2025	Operating Area	Solent, South Coast and Offshore
Number of boats	Between 10 and 40 boats	Type or Design	Monohulls from 6 to 12 metres in length, most with auxiliary engines
Race Director	See www.offshoresolo.com for event details		
Race Officer - inshore	Dave Giddings +44 7714 242163 dave@jadeconsultants.co.uk	Race Officer - offshore Assisted by	Kirsteen Donaldson +44 7803 162893 kirsteen@jadeconsultants.co.uk Dave Giddings +44 7714 242163 dave@jadeconsultants.co.uk
VHF Channels	Channel 72 (occasionally 77) All usual channels when afloat	Call Sign	SORC Race Control
Supporting documents	www.offshoresolo.com for the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions		

Authority	Date informed	Authority	Date Informed
ABP		Cowes HM	
KHM Portsmouth		UK Coastguard	

1. Introduction

The Solo Offshore Racing Club Ltd (SORC) organises inshore, coastal and offshore short-handed yacht races in the Solent, English Channel and North & West Coast of France. Most boats are solo but two-handed crews are also permitted.

All boats are responsible for their own management and safety and for deciding whether to start or to continue in any race. Safety boats are not provided. All the boats are self-sufficient keelboats or multihulls with cabins, required to meet Category 3 or 4 World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations as prescribed by the race or series concerned.

Recognising the special hazards of short-handed sailing, all skippers are strongly advised by the organisers to wear a life jacket with harness and to keep a personal AIS beacon and a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) attached to themselves at all times from leaving the dock to returning, irrespective of the weather conditions.

The racing does not attract significant attention from non-participants.

2. Scope and Aims of the Document

This paper assesses the likely risks that may be encountered in the race area and defines the measures needed to reduce these to as low a level as reasonably practical. It includes an incident contingency plan on page 6, list of emergency disembarkation locations on page 8, and contact list on page 8.

3. Racing Area

The annual Notice of Race published on the SORC website gives the dates and times of races and the area of each race; the same information is reproduced in Appendix I of this risk assessment.

Where the start area is Central Solent, this will usually be the line between Gurnard Cardinal and the shore to the west of Cowes (previously known as the JOG line).

Otherwise, the start will use the SORC self-start procedure. When choosing the location, the Race Officer will take commercial traffic and other events into consideration.

4. Risks and Safety

There is a risk of collision and grounding, which is always present in sailing.

There is a risk of close-quarters situations between yachts racing and commercial vessels, particularly in the Port of Southampton Precautionary Area and in the shipping lanes of the English Channel.

There is a risk of injury to the crew of the yachts, most notably in cases of gear breakage, collision or whilst gybing (being hit by the boom).

Weather conditions such as very light or very strong winds or poor visibility may increase the above risks.

All the participating yachts are self-sufficient keelboats from about 6 metres to 12 metres in length. Drafts are mostly up to 2 metres, but a few may draw 2.5 metres or more. All are required to carry VHF radios and safety equipment in line with World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations. Most carry an AIS transponder, which is mandatory for offshore races.

As is normal with events of this type, the majority of safety cover is provided by competitors on a mutual help basis. There are usually no on the water race management resources.

5. Risk assessment

The control measures listed in the risk assessment table were already in place before the existence of this document. Therefore, no attempt has been made to estimate risk before control measures were in place.

Risk Level “L” implies a low level of risk, either because the probable consequence is not serious or because the likelihood of an event taking place is very low. Risk Level “M” implies a medium level of risk, because the probable consequence is more serious or the likelihood of an event is greater.

Type of Risk	Description of Risk	Location of Maximum Risk	Probable Consequence	Main Control Measures (Section 6)	Risk Level
Collision	1.1 Racing boat with racing boat	Start line & rounding marks	Possible damage or injury	1.2, 1.3, 1.7, 1.8, 1.12, 1.13, 3.8, 3.11, RRS	M
	1.2 Racing boat with spectator boat	Solent	Possible damage or injury	IRPCAS	L
	1.3 Racing boat with cruising boat	Solent	Possible damage or injury	IRPCAS	L
	1.4 Racing boat with commercial vessel	Port of Southampton Precautionary Area & shipping lanes	Possible damage or injury	1.2, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.2, 2.7, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.10, 3.12, 3.13, IRPCAS	L
	1.5 Commercial vessel with spectator boat	Solent	Possible damage or injury	IRPCAS	L
	1.6 Spectator boat with spectator or cruising boat	Solent	Possible damage or injury	IRPCAS	L
	1.7 Racing boat with obstruction (e.g. navigation mark)	At marks of course	Possible damage or injury	1.8, 1.13, 3.11	L
	1.8 Racing boat with committee boat	At start	Possible damage or injury	1.3, 1.12, 2.2	L
Grounding or capsize	2.1 Poor navigation	Out of deep-water channels	Possible damage or injury	1.1, 3.8, 3.12	M
	2.2 Result of rig or equipment failure or misuse	Solent & offshore	Possible damage or injury	1.7, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.12	M
	2.3 Multihull capsize		Probable need of external assistance	1.7, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.12	L
Boat damage	3.1 Rig or equipment failure		Minor to moderate damage	1.7, 3.4, 3.5	M
	3.2 After grounding		Nil to moderate damage	1.9, 2.3, 2.6	M
	3.3 After collision		Minor to severe damage	1.9, 2.3, 2.6	M
Personal injury	4.1 Man overboard		Possible injury, hypothermia or drowning	2.3, 2.5, 3.1	M
	4.2 Injury impacting on rescue services		Possible need for lifeboat, ambulance, or helicopter	1.4, 1.9, 2.6, 2.7	L
Other risks	5.1 High winds		Possible gear damage, collision, injury or man overboard	1.7, 2.3, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.10	M
	5.2 High waves	Solent & offshore	As 5.1	1.7, 2.3, 2.5, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.10, 3.12	M
	5.3 Fog		Possible collision with damage or injury	1.7, 2.3, 2.7, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 3.10, 3.12, IRPCAS	M
	5.4 Engine failure impacting on other traffic		Possible collision with damage or injury	2.6, 2.7, 3.12, IRPCAS	L
	5.5 Close-quarters situation between racing boat & commercial vessel	Port of Southampton Precautionary Area & shipping lanes	Possible collision with damage or injury	1.6, 2.2, 2.7, 2.8, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.10, 3.12, 3.13	M
	5.6 Racing boat infringement of TSS	Casquets TSS	Possible collision with damage or injury; possible legal action	2.1, 2.2, 3.10, 3.12, 3.13, RRS, IRPCAS	L
	5.7 Injury to Race Officer afloat	Solent	Possible injury	1.7, 1.8, 1.11	L

6. Primary Control Measures & Assets Planning

Measure	Comments
1.1 Use of tidal predictions	Decide on race area and design courses to suit tides
1.2 Limit competitor numbers	Provide organisational and race management capacity to suit numbers
1.3 Planning of starting sequences	Set class splits and start sequence so number of boats per start is appropriate. Provide some separation between starting faster boats and slower boats
1.4 Advance safety briefing with authorities	Liaise with relevant port and safety organisations
1.5 Advance briefing by the Race Officers	Oral or written
1.6 Shipping movement monitoring	Obtain shipping movement list from VTS & KHM Portsmouth and take into account when setting courses; where possible, minimise racing in confined areas
1.7 Weather monitoring	Be aware of weather forecast. If necessary, postpone or abandon some or all classes or set courses in more sheltered areas. SORC will generally not start a race when F8 or greater is forecast in the race area during the expected duration of the race or if winds are reliably forecast to be over 25 knots for a prolonged time in the race area.
1.8 Manning	Ensure adequate competent personnel for race management
1.9 Emergency / contingency procedures	Establish action plan for foreseen circumstances (as described in Section 7 Incident Contingency Procedures or as briefed by the Race Director if different)
1.10 Media management	Single contact to control information to media in an emergency. This is restricted to Race Officer, Race Director, or other Director of the company.
1.11 Race management team welfare	Adequate clothing, equipment and provisions for the expected conditions. Lifejackets to be worn on a committee boat in adverse weather, and on a RIB at all times. Work within safety limits of committee boat and RIB, which may well be below those of competitors
1.12 Start line	Set an appropriate start line for number and size of boats; locate start line away from areas of shipping / dense traffic
1.13 Liaise with other race committees	Endeavour to establish what other races are taking place and set race areas and courses to reduce potential conflicts as appropriate

6.1 Communications

Measure	Comments
2.1 Notice of Race	Advise preliminary details of event and conditions of entry including the applicable rules and regulations
2.2 Sailing Instructions / amendments	Instructions to competitors
2.3 Safety requirements	Appropriate to the category of event, specify World Sailing Offshore Special Regulations to be met, any additional safety or construction requirements
2.4 Crew lists	Ashore contact and on-board crew details for each boat
2.5 Shore and Committee Vessel signals	Amendments, postponement, abandonment / cancellation notified by appropriate means, e.g. SORC website, email, text message or VHF
2.6 Radio communications	Require boats to carry VHF radio and specify channel in use with competitors
2.7 Communication with Authorities	When racing in shipping channels, monitor port control channel and communicate as necessary
2.8 Mobile telephone	Communication between race management team, competitors and outside contacts. Require boats to carry working mobile phone.

6.2 Other control measures

Measure	Comments
3.1 Safety inspections	Reserve right to check on board safety equipment by race scrutineers
3.2 Record starters	May be required later to find out which boats are unaccounted
3.3 Postponement / abandonment of start	In the event of conflicting commercial shipping movements or unsuitable weather
3.4 Abandonment during race	In the event of unsuitable weather or other factors requiring abandonment of one or more classes
3.5 Shorten course	In the event of unsuitable weather or other factors requiring race to be shortened
3.6 Race observers	Observers ashore monitor race progress. For offshore races, nominate a lead boat in each class
3.7 Monitoring of weather / sea conditions	Ashore or afloat
3.8 Finish line position and length	Appropriate to number and size of competing boats; due to the handicap spread of the fleet finishers are usually well spaced Set finish line avoiding areas of dense traffic & lee shores Finish line will generally be a bearing and distance from a mark
3.9 Retirement monitoring	Reporting by competitors and recording of retirements
3.10 Course setting	If flexibility is possible, use areas based on weather and sea conditions; avoid sharp turns directly into shipping channels when practicable
3.11 Mark rounding	Set courses to minimise opposite mark rounding, widely different approach/exit angles or large numbers of boats at the same time
3.12 Course restrictions	Minimise use of areas with risk of interference with commercial ships, moored vessels, severe seas, increased risk of grounding, or unusually strong tide.
3.13 Commercial vessel considerations	Co-operation with Statutory Harbour Authorities: penalise competitors infringing bylaws, IRPCAS or other rules for avoiding close-quarters situations with commercial vessels Highlight to skippers the rules for "Small Vessels" transiting the Port of Southampton Precautionary Area
3.14 Competitor mutual monitoring & support	Competitors are strongly encouraged to keep an eye out for other competitors who may be having difficulties and to provide mutual support in the event of an emergency; to this end, all competitors should actively monitor CH16 & CH72 to facilitate easy contact and avoid unnecessary action A competitor who suspends racing to investigate another competitor for whom they have genuine concern may apply for redress

7. Incident contingency plan

Inshore Series – race control

Race control on the water for inshore races is the responsibility of the Race Officer of the day (RO). The RO or a delegated assistant race officer should record starters and retirements, monitor the fleet, shipping movements, and weather, and take early action if required. If a serious incident occurs:

- Keep a written log of events and communication
- Maintain contact by VHF or mobile phone with the appropriate emergency services, port authority, other competitors, and others involved
- Consider abandoning racing to free up resources

For a major incident, contact a Race Director or other Director of the club to act as the sole media spokesperson. In consultation with them, appoint a shore-side co-ordinator if appropriate.

Offshore Series RO Start – race control

Where the RO starts Offshore Series races, race control on the water **prior to the start** is the responsibility of the RO. The RO or a delegated race officer should record starters and retirements, monitor the fleet, shipping movements and weather and take early action if required. If a serious incident occurs:

- Keep a written log of events and communication
- Maintain contact by VHF or mobile phone with the appropriate emergency services, port authority, other competitors and others involved
- Consider abandoning racing to free up resources

For a major incident, contact a Race Director or other Director of the club to act as the sole media spokesperson. In consultation with him, appoint a shore-side co-ordinator if appropriate.

After the start race control becomes the responsibility of the race director; however, the RO retains responsibility for collecting retirement and finish texts and passing this information to the race director using whatever means are appropriate to the situation.

Offshore Series Self Start – race control

Where Offshore Series races are started using the SORC self-start procedures, race control on the water is the responsibility of the Race Director. The Race Director will record persons who have reported that they will not start, retirements, and monitor the fleet, shipping movements, and weather, as far as practical and take early action if required. For offshore races, the main responsibility for monitoring during the race is as per control measure 3.14, competitor mutual monitoring and support, as the Race Director's ability to monitor will become progressively more difficult as the race progresses and the fleet spreads out; in addition, in most cases the race director will also be competing. If a serious incident occurs:

- Keep a written log of events and communication.
- Maintain contact by VHF or mobile phone with the appropriate emergency services, port authority, other competitors and others involved
- Consider abandoning racing to free up resources.

For a major incident, contact a Director of the club to act as the sole media spokesperson. In consultation with him, appoint a shore-side co-ordinator if appropriate.

The RO retains responsibility for collecting retirement and finish texts and passing this information to the Race Director using whatever means are appropriate to the situation.

Adverse weather causing major concern for safety

- Notify the coastguard and/or port authority of the concern
- Signal abandonment by VHF and any other effective means
- Ask competitors to report by VHF or mobile when in safety
- Check that the course area is clear, if conditions allow

Boat adrift in shipping channel or causing a blockage to the port

- Inform port authority
- Inform other competitors of the situation and request any that are nearby to assist if possible

Request for assistance – boat aground or dismantled

- Tell competitor to contact coastguard directly; call coastguard if unable to do so
- Inform other competitors of the situation and request any that are nearby to assist if possible

Request for assistance – boat sinking or on fire

- Tell competitor to contact coastguard directly; call coastguard if unable to do so
- Inform other competitors of the situation and request any that are nearby to assist if possible

Request for assistance – competitor injury

- Tell competitor to contact coastguard directly; call coastguard if unable to do so
- Inform competitors of the situation and request any that are nearby to assist if possible

Request for assistance – MOB (man overboard)

- Call coastguard
 - Inform competitors of MOB and request any that are nearby to assist
 - If appropriate and available, dispatch craft or committee boat to recover MOB
 - Inform port authority of the boat not under control
- Once MOB has been recovered***
- Liaise with the port authority and coastguard regarding recovery of the MOB's boat
 - If appropriate, send a craft to assist, but only tow if appropriate and competitor accepts responsibility.

Sight of a distress situation

- Call coastguard
- Ask competitors, or other craft if available, to assist as appropriate

Concern for a competitor without actual indication of distress

- Ask competitors to attempt to contact vessel
- Ask coastguard if they have heard from vessel (make it clear that at this stage we are not declaring a distress situation)
- Contact the competitor's emergency contact
- If possible, contact a SORC Race Director or other Director of the club with details of the reasons for concern and information gathered to date and ask for further guidance
- If, with all the information available, there is still cause for concern, then this must be raised and discussed with the coastguard and elevated to a distress situation if warranted

Note: This paragraph applies **only** where **uncertainty exists** – if it is known that a competitor is in distress then the first point of contact should be the coastguard as outlined in the paragraphs above.

8. Emergency disembarkation locations in the Solent area

Location	Landing point	Tel
Beaulieu	Buckler's Hard Yacht Harbour	01590 616200
Cowes	Trinity Landing	01983 293952
Gosport	Haslar Marina	023 9260 1201
Hamble	Harbourmaster's Jetty, Warsash	01489 576387
Lymington	Royal Lymington Yacht Club	01590 672677
Portsmouth	Portsmouth Town Camber	02392 723694
Southampton	Southampton Town Quay	02380 234397
Yarmouth	Town Quay	01983 760321

9. Contact list

Contact	VHF	Tel
Alderney Harbour	74	01481 820070
Ambulance		999
Cowes Harbour	69	01983 293952
Cherbourg Port Chantereyne	09	+33 2 33 87 65 70
Dart Harbour	11	01803 832337 07968 839846 (out of hours)
Dielette Port		+33 2 33 53 68 78
Falmouth Coastguard	16	999, 020 381 72630 (admin)
Falmouth Harbour Radio	12 14	01326 213537 (office hours)
Hamble Radio	68	01489 576387
Lymington Harbour	66	01590 672015
Police		999
Poole Harbour VTS	14 16	01202 440230
Poole Quay Boat Haven	80	01202 649488
Portland Harbour	74	01305 824044
Portland Marina	80	01305 866190
Portsmouth KHM	11	02392 723694
Sea Start	M1 (37)	0800 885500
Solent Coastguard	16 or 67	999 or 023 9255 2100
SORC Director of Racing		07860 895736
SORC Race Officer Inshore	72 or 77	07714 242163
SORC Race Officer Offshore	72 or 77	07803 162893 / 07714 242163
Southampton VTS	12	023 8033 0022 023 8060 8221 (in emergency)
St Peter Port Control	12	01481 720481
St Peter Port Victoria Marina	80	01481 725987
St Vaast Marina		+33 2 33 23 61 00
Weymouth Harbour	12	01305 838423
Yarmouth Harbour	68	01983 760321

Appendix 1: 2025 Schedule of Races

Date	Event	Start Area	Distance or Duration ¹	First Start ¹
5 Apr	Training day	-	-	
6 Apr	Solent Shakedown	Central Solent	4-6 h	1000
26 & 27 Apr	Yarmouth & Back	Central Solent Western Solent	4-6 h per race	1000 1000
10 & 11 May	Weymouth & Back	Central Solent Weymouth	50 NM each way	0900 0700
31 May & 2 Jun	Dartmouth & Back	Central Solent Dartmouth	90 NM each way	1400 1100
2 Jun	Dartmouth to Falmouth	Dartmouth	63 NM	0700
21 Jun	Falmouth to Portland	Falmouth	104 NM	TBD
5 Jul	Round Isle of Wight (RIOW)	Central Solent	50 NM	0900
2 Aug	24 Hour Race	Central Solent	24 h	1000
22, 24 & 25 Aug	Cherbourg Peninsula	Central Solent Cherbourg St Vaast	75 NM 28 NM 80 NM	1800 TBA TBA
13 & 14 Sep	Poole & Back	Central Solent Poole	4-6 h per race	1000 1000
4 & 5 Oct	Cowes	Central Solent	4-6 h per race	1000 1000
25 Oct	Lay-up Nab Tower Race	Central Solent	30 NM	1000

1. Start times are in BST. Distances and durations are approximate.