



Weymouth Harbour

OPERATIONS PLAN AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

THE PORT AND HARBOUR OF WEYMOUTH



Updates and Amendments

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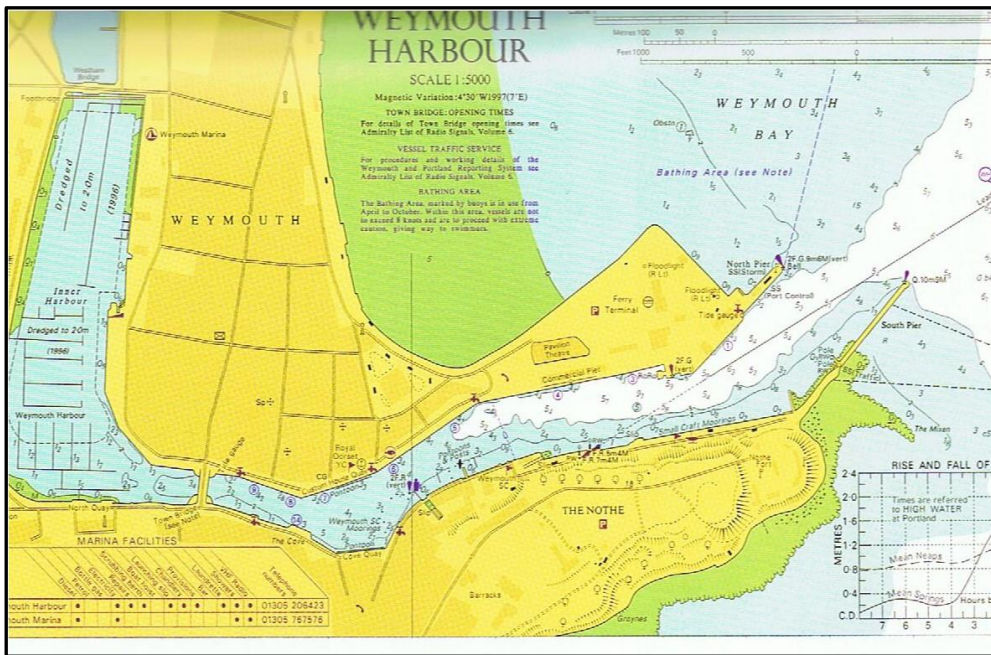


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1. The Port of Weymouth – General Description

1.1 Geography

Weymouth is situated around the mouth of the River Wey in Dorset, facing into Weymouth Bay and the English Channel in Lat. 50° 36.6'N, Long. 002° 27.0'W. There has been continuous port activity since Roman times. The modern harbour is divided into inner and outer parts, separated by the Town Bridge of bascule lifting type. Commercial activity is concentrated in the outer harbour and especially close to the harbour mouth. Apart from some charter boat activity, the inner harbour is entirely given over to three large marinas.

The entrance is open and of easy access, in a sheltered position and with slight (maximum 1 knot) tidal currents across the entrance. Currents within the port are not strong except through the Town Bridge, where up to 2 knots may be experienced on the ebb at spring tides. The harbour bed throughout the port is silt over clay. Unusually, the Council as Harbour Authority owns the bed of the harbour, this having been made over in the original charters of 1571 and 1598.

Within the harbour area both banks are lined by wharves which lie low to the water. The wharves can be prone to flooding on exceptional spring tides, but this does not affect navigation and extra defences have been installed. Virtually all of the quay walls are lined with floating pontoons to which the port's myriad small craft can moor. The harbour limits extend to seaward, and take in much of Weymouth Bay, as well as the harbour itself as shown in Figure 1. This means that the Harbour Authority is responsible for safety off the main bathing and leisure beaches.

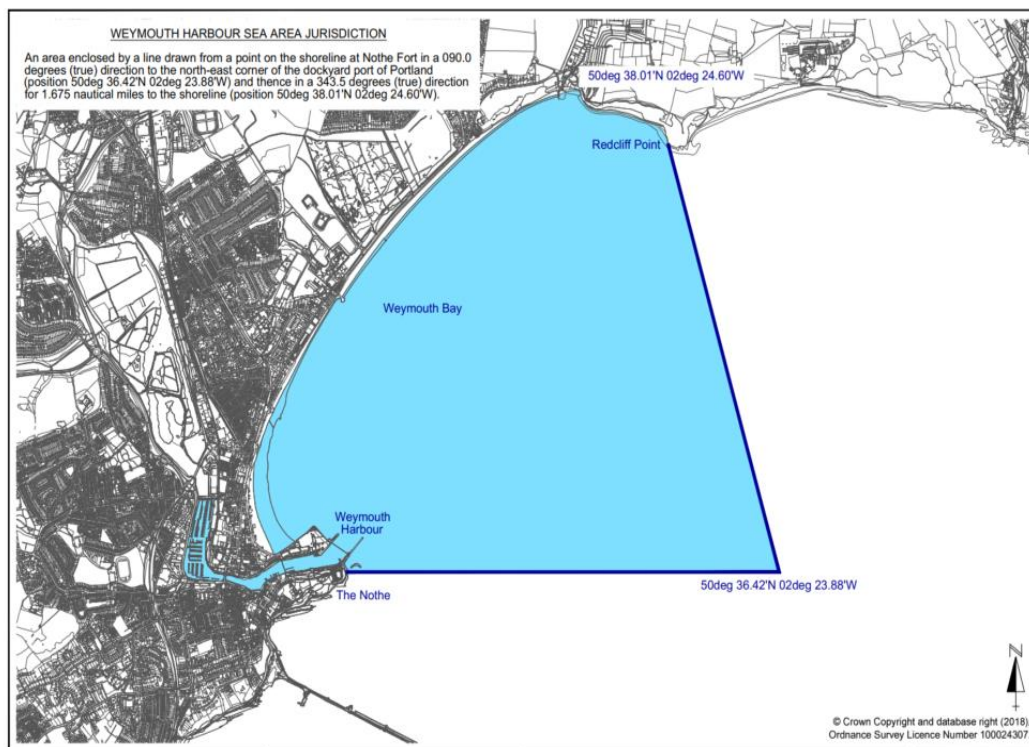


Figure 1. Harbour limits



Figure 2. General view of outer harbour

1.2 Tidal range

Weymouth has one of the smallest tidal ranges in the UK, being up to 2.5M on spring tides, but this can be significantly affected by winds and pressure. Weymouth experiences a double low at low water. A UK National Tide Gauge is located in the outer harbour.

1.3 Anchorages

Anchorages are designated in open water in Weymouth Bay.

1.4 Ship parameters

Ships can be taken up to 130M length overall and maximum draft of 5.0M. There is no specific beam restriction unless going through Town Bridge, where the maximum width is 24.4M.

1.5 Meteorology

Weymouth lies in a sheltered bay well protected from the weather and most vulnerable to winds between NE and SE. In strong winds from this quadrant, it can be an uncomfortable entrance, but it is a rare event for it to be severely affected. There is a funnelling effect within the harbour which means that the wind tends to blow straight up or down it, which is a minor problem for ship handling but does not pose any serious difficulty under normal circumstances.

The port has not had to be closed on account of weather for many years.

1.6 The Town Bridge



Figure 3. Town Bridge closed

The Town Bridge is opened at regular intervals throughout the day to a pre-published schedule. A 'one way at a time' movement control is in place for vessels and traffic signals to control their passage through the bridge cut with priority direction declared at each lift.



Figure 4. Town Bridge fully opened

2. Weymouth Harbour Safety Management System overview

2.1 General

The purpose of this document is to specify the content of the Marine Safety Management System (MSMS) which shall describe the means by which Weymouth Harbour Authority (WHA) carries out its responsibilities as Duty Holder for the safe and effective management of marine and environmental affairs within its jurisdiction at Weymouth Harbour.

The Port Marine Safety Code (PMSC) refers to some of the existing legal duties and powers that affect harbour authorities in relation to marine safety, but it does not in itself create any new legal duties for harbour authorities. There are however several additional measures which, although not mandatory under legislation, are key to its successful implementation.

In order to comply with the PMSC, Harbour Authorities must:

- Be aware of their existing powers and duties.
- Appoint someone as an independent “Designated Person” with direct access to the board.
- Develop an effective marine safety management system, which employs formal risk assessment techniques.
- Employ people who are competent and qualified for the positions they hold.
- Publish a comprehensive safety plan, along with a regular assessment showing the authority’s performance against the plan.

The Marine Safety Management System should be in place to ensure that all risks are controlled – the more severe ones must either be eliminated or kept “as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP)”.

Weymouth Harbour also uses the safety and risk management system of its owner, Dorset Council. It defines risk management as “the culture, processes and structures that are directed towards effective management of potential opportunities and threats to the organisation achieving its objectives”.

At its highest level the Council’s risk management strategy requires that the wider implications of the port’s operations at a political, financial and social level should be built into the risk management system. Weymouth is a particularly open port, with homes, bars and restaurants, and shops along its very attractive waterfront. This means that the effects of its Safety Management System spread beyond the marine consequences of the PMSC’s definition of risk. Where specific hazards would have their own specific responses under the PMSC, with steps identified to eliminate or control them to ALARP levels, the broader vision of the Council’s approach also requires those much wider factors to be considered.

It is the function of the Safety Management System to reconcile these opposites. The Council and port’s staff have a wide range of stakeholders to whom they answer: the Council as the Statutory Harbour Authority and Duty Holder, the people of the area to whom the port is an important aspect of their lives, its many direct stakeholders and users whose livelihoods may depend on it, the many visitors and not least the professional staff whose job it is to run the port.

The Council’s approach to risk also requires that the financial consequences of the port’s operations are not put at risk while the PMSC requires that the port is properly maintained to be a safe port for all users. As an open port, available to all craft able to fit into it against the payment of proper dues, there is a direct legal requirement that it

is fit to be used. Such maintenance costs money and the balance between finance and physical safety is constantly under review through the risk management system.

The full Council system is defined later and contained in Document 2; its introduction is quoted below to demonstrate its approach, followed by the ranking of risk according to each system:

2.2 Introduction to the Council system

2.2.1 Summary

A statutory requirement, and central to the management and control of risks from hazards, is the use of risk assessments. A risk assessment is a paperwork exercise to review any work situation that allows relevant risks to be identified, recorded, communicated and reduced where it is reasonable to do so. A duty exists for the Dorset Council to reduce risk to the lowest reasonably practicable level. This duty extends to ensuring that risk assessments are suitable and sufficient and identify measures to be taken that ensure work tasks are safely undertaken.

2.2.1.1 Hazard

Something with a potential to cause harm. A situation that could occur which has the potential for human injury, damage to property, damage to the environment, or economic loss.

2.2.1.2 Risk

An estimation of the likelihood and potential consequences of a defined hazard, risk expresses the likelihood that the harm from a particular hazard is realised. Risk therefore reflects both the likelihood that harm will occur and its severity.

2.2.1.3 Risk Assessment

A paperwork exercise to review any work situation that allows relevant risks to be identified, recorded, communicated and reduced where it is reasonable to do so. Risk assessments should normally be completed using a template which can be sourced from the Council's forms register. Workplace areas with higher risk, i.e. harbours, may determine that a different and more comprehensive risk assessment template is more appropriate. The same principles of the risk assessment process will still apply.



2.3 Responsibilities

Service managers should ensure that risk assessments are completed for all staff under their control.

Line managers should ensure that members of staff who undertake risk assessments are competent to do so, have a good level of subject knowledge and are aware of the limitations of their expertise. Staff should be advised to seek further advice if needed.

Members of staff charged with undertaking risk assessments (Assessors) should be suitably trained in order that risk assessments undertaken are both suitable and sufficient and have the benefit of reducing risk. The Assessor is normally the immediate Line Manager of the person being assessed. Risk assessment training can be sourced through the Health, Safety and Welfare Officers.

To help further understand the method for assessing risk the Dorset Councils Partnership (prior to Dorset Council) adopted a 5 x 5 matrix that tags numbers to judgements made. The higher the severity and likelihood, the higher the number between one and five is selected.

Once numbers replace judgements these can be multiplied together to give a risk rating.

Likelihood	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
		1	2	3	4	5

Severity

Example:

2.4 Likelihood

1	2	3	4	5
Improbable	Possible	Likely	Very Likely	Certain

2.5 Severity

1	2	3	4	5
Trivial	Slight	Substantial	High	Very High

Rate	Severity Guidance
1	Insignificant/tiny injury, minor bumps, small cuts, light grazing
2	Minor injury, deeper lacerations, bruising, scalding
3	Substantial injury, sprains, broken fingers/toes lacerations needing stitches, deep burn
4	Serious injury, broken bone, dislocation, electric shock, slipped disc & disease
5	Fatality, permanent injury or terminal disease

2.6 Categories of risk diagram

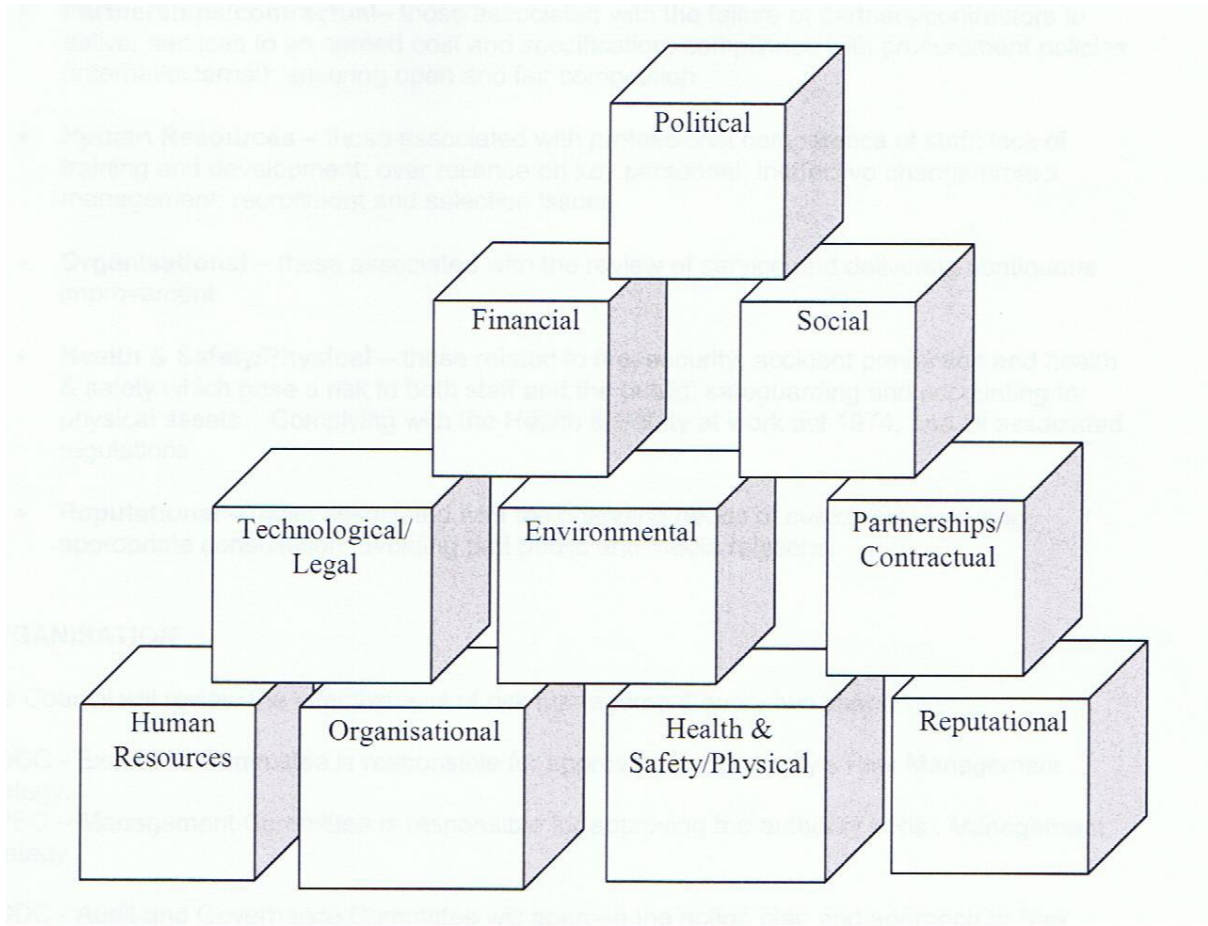


Figure 5. Categories of risk diagram

There is some overlap between this set of considerations, and those of the PMSC but also extra elements which between them provide for a comprehensive view of risk management.

The Council risk registers lay out the matrices of risk level and acceptability. The non-marine risks of the port are assigned levels from within these matrices, and the Safety Management System demonstrates how they are managed. The specific marine hazards that come within the definitions of the PMSC, by being assigned values from within the Council matrices, are incorporated in one cascading system. All the hazards and risks identified are catalogued in The Port Risk Register Document. Two of the comprehensive risk management system matrix systems are shown:

	Likelihood	
1	Rare	<6%
2	Unlikely	6-20%
3	Possible	21-50%
4	Likely	51-80%
5	Almost certain	>80%

Figure 6. Table of risk level

Impact		Financial	Strategic Priorities and Opportunities	Health & Safety	Reputational	Criticality of Service (following Business Impact Assessment)
5	CATASTROPHIC	Over £300,000	Complete failure to deliver on a strategic priority	Fatality; multiple permanent injuries	Receives national / international attention with potential for long term impact on public memory; Total loss in public confidence	Critical Service Level One (i.e. Those that present a major risk to public health or safety)
4	MAJOR	£100,000 - £300,000	Major impact (positive or negative) on a strategic priority	Major injury or illness leading to long term incapacity/disability; multiple significant injuries	Receives national / international attention with medium term impact on public memory	Critical Service Level Two (i.e. Those that present a medium to major risk to reputation / finances)
3	MODERATE	£50,000 - £100,000	Moderate impact (positive or negative) on a strategic priority	Moderate injury or illness requiring professional intervention; RIDDOR reportable; multiple minor injuries	Receives local press attention with medium term impact on public memory	Critical Service Level Three (i.e. Those that present a medium risk to public health or safety)
2	MINOR	£10,000 - £50,000	Minor impact (positive or negative) on a strategic priority	Minor injury or illness requiring minimal intervention or treatment	Receives local press attention but with likely short term impact on public memory	Critical Service Level Four (i.e. Those that present a low to medium risk to reputation / finances)
1	NEGLIGIBLE	Up to £10,000	Negligible impact (positive or negative) on a strategic priority	None, or minimal injury or illness requiring no intervention or treatment	Minor complaints or rumours	Critical Service Level Five (i.e. Those that present minor risk to public health or safety)

Figure 7. Table of risk level & acceptability

2.7 Generic risk assessments

A number of generic risk assessments against common hazards were provided by Dorset Councils Partnership as a framework for services to use and adapt. These will be adopted by the harbour to avoid unnecessary effort. The following are available to date:

1. Management of Health and Safety at Work	2. Risk Assessment
3. Accidents, Incidents and Disease	4. Asbestos
5. Confined Spaces	6. Construction (Design and Management) regulations 2008
7. Contractors	8. COSHH
9. Display Screen Equipment	10. Fire Risk Management

11. Health and Safety Training	12. Home Working
13. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment	14. Management of Workplace Stress
15. Manual Handling	16. New and Expectant Mothers
17. Noise at Work	18. PAT Testing
19. PPE	20. Provision and Use of Work Equipment
21. Road Safety	22. Safety Signs
23. Slips and Trips	24. Travelling Officers and Lone Workers
25. Working at Heights	26. Young People

2.8 Review of risk assessments

The harbour risk register and assessments will be reviewed:

- whenever a new activity is started
- at least on a minimum annual basis in accordance with Dorset Council policy
- whenever an accident or incident occurs
- when significant changes occur to work practices that may impact on health, safety and welfare.

The review will normally be led by the Harbour Master and will consult Harbour Staff, Dorset Council expertise and external assistance including the Harbour Consultative Group. The risk assessment methodology is demonstrated under the plan, do, act and check philosophy as shown on the next page.



Figure 8. Plan, Do, Check and Act

3. Weymouth Port and Harbour Safety Management System and Risk Management

3.1 Introduction

The Safety Management System defines how the Port and Harbour of Weymouth is operated to provide a safe, accessible, and efficient operation which takes into account the differing needs of its many and varied stakeholders. The Council's risk management strategy states that risk management is used to process, evaluate and control risks at all levels. In this context, risk is defined in the widest sense and is not confined to the traditional areas of insurance and health & safety. Within the port environment this means that all activities have to be subject to this wider scrutiny while still adhering to the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code. Details of how the two systems are combined are shown in this Section 0.

The Port Marine Safety Code requires that each port's powers, policies, plans, and procedures must be based on a formal assessment of hazards and risks (Document 2). Harbour authorities must have formal safety management systems. The structure which follows, moves from broad considerations to identifying the individual risks and hazards which the system is structured to cope with. At all times the object is to eliminate risk if possible, and where it is not possible to eliminate it completely, to apply the 'ALARP' principle to managing and controlling it.

The Code requires all complying Harbour Authorities to publish their plans and safety management systems, and to make them available for public scrutiny. Weymouth Harbour Authority achieves this by having a paper copy of this plan available for public access in the harbour office, and by publishing the plan on its website.

3.2 Documentation

Weymouth Harbour has two principal documents for its risk and Safety Management System. This one, which presents an overarching view of the port, its activities and hazards, and the structure within which its risk and Safety Management System operates.

A second document registers and identifies the hazards and lists the risks associated with them, within the Weymouth Harbour Authority limits. It defines the methodology for dealing with those risks and identifies areas and levels of responsibility. The second document leads in turn to the direct controls and paperwork of individual risks and activities.

The documentation trail is: Policies (in this overarching document, Document 1) - Procedures (including risk assessments) in Document 2 – and Work Instructions – Records and Evaluation in separate files arranged in accordance with documents 1 and 2.

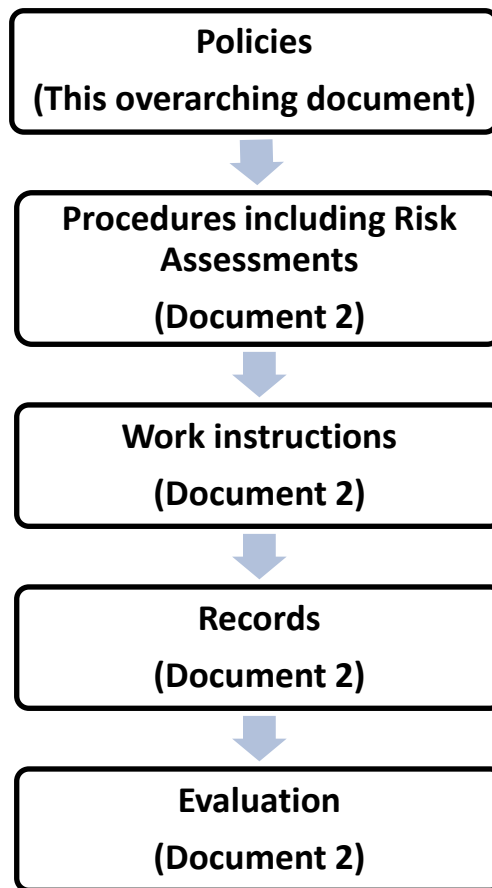


Figure 9. Documentation Trail

3.3 Legal and management structure

Weymouth is a Statutory Harbour Authority and Competent Harbour Authority under the definitions of each, owned by Dorset Council.

Following the formation of Dorset Council through a Local Government reorganisation in 2019, Dorset Council became the Statutory Harbour Authority for Weymouth.

The former Harbours Committee, which was decommissioned in 2022, was replaced by the Harbours Advisory Committee. The Harbours Advisory Committee advise the Cabinet member for Place Commissioned Services (the Duty Holder) Councillor Jon Andrews, in exercising functions of the Council as a harbour authority as defined in the Harbours Act 1964 and any other functions arising under any local Act and/or byelaw in respect of the operational issues for the harbour.

The Advisory Committee has the power to advise the Executive (Cabinet) in determining income and expenditure matters relating to the harbours for which it is responsible.

James Hannon of ABP Mer is the 'Designated Person' (covered further in Chapter 6) and provides independent assurance to the Harbours Advisory Committee and the Duty Holder that the safety management system is working effectively.

Practical policy is produced by the Committee, which has general oversight of the Harbour Master and the activities of the professional staff. The Committee controls the port's budgets and maintains the business plan. The organigram, figure 10 lays out the system. The port's professional staff structure is laid out in the organigram, figure 11. During the busy summer season, additional seasonal staff are taken on.

The Harbour Master, supported by the Harbour staff, has day to day responsibility for managing the safe operation of navigation and other marine activities in the area of jurisdiction. He is authorised to act on behalf of the Harbours Committee in the course of his/her duties to meet the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code, Business Plan and Harbour Budget. The Harbour Master is authorised to exercise all powers granted by statute to his position.

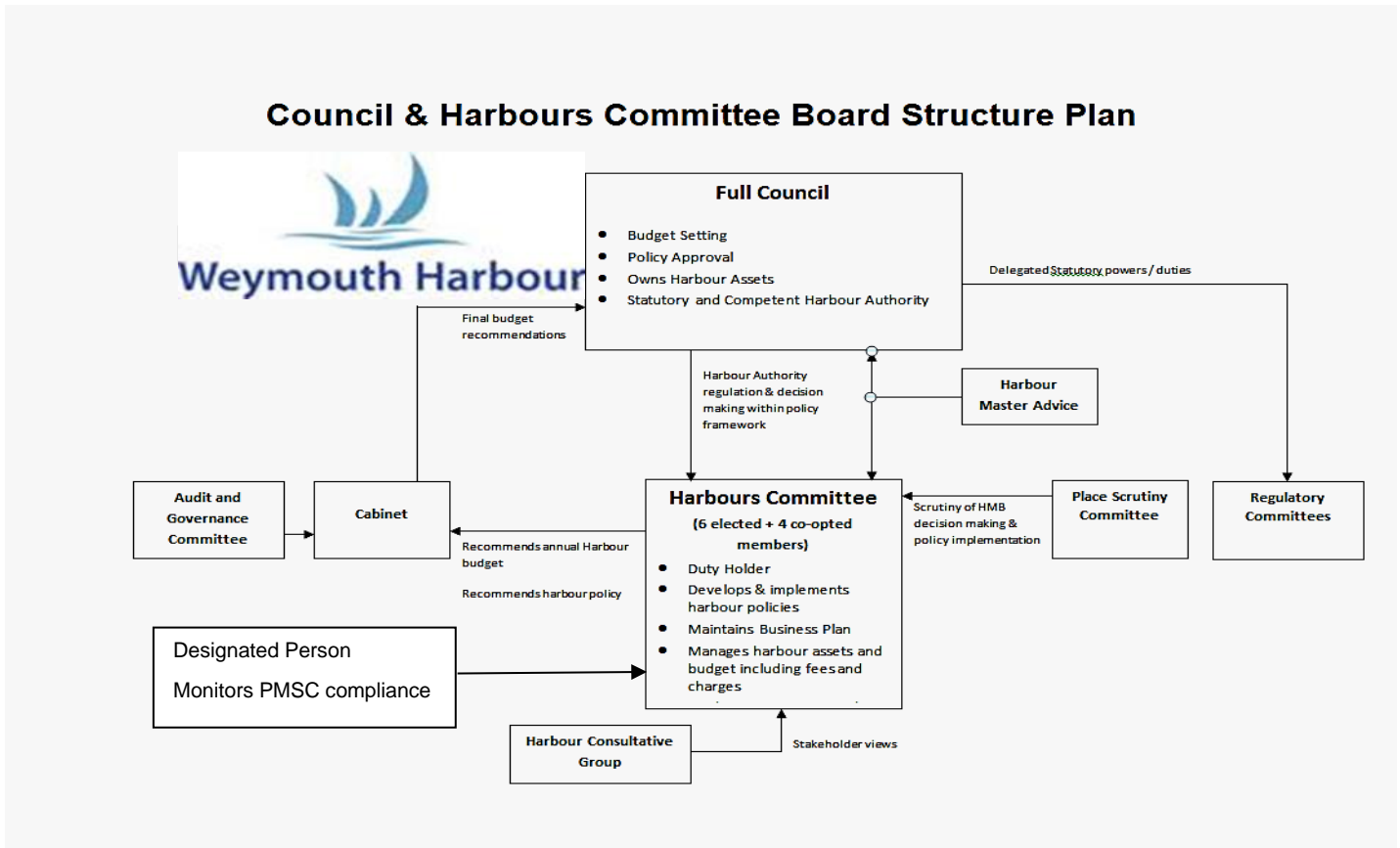


Figure 10. Council & Harbours Committee Structure Plan

3.4 Weymouth Harbour staff structure

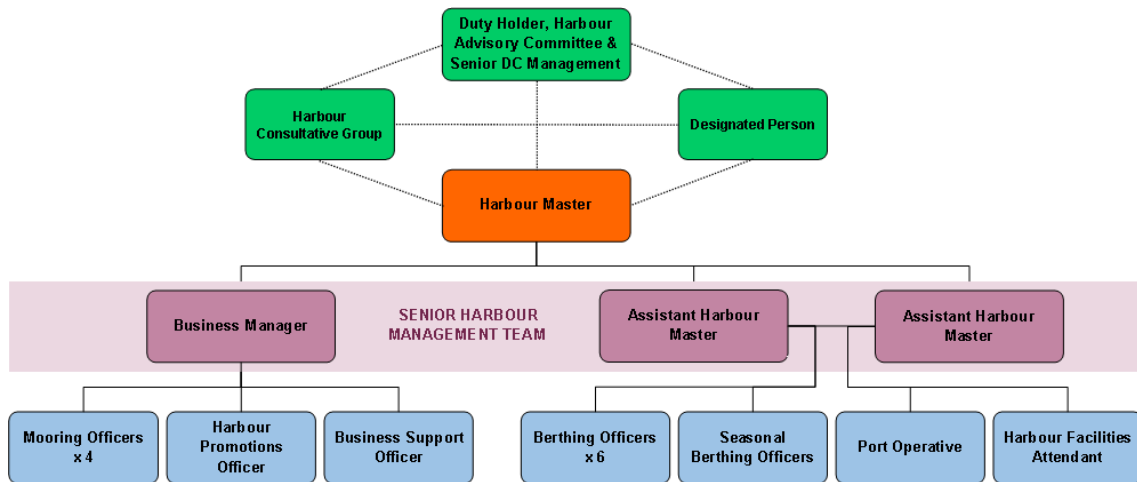


Figure 11 Weymouth Harbour staff structure

3.5 Legal structures, duties and powers

Weymouth has been a formally constituted port since the charters granted by Queen Elizabeth I in 1571 and 1598.

Weymouth is an open port into which any user has a right to navigate on payment of harbour dues. It has a duty to operate its port safely for the benefit of all such users. The berths and wharves are under the control of the Harbour Authority, other than those in Weymouth Marina that are operated by Boatfolk.

3.6 General Directions & Byelaws

Dorset Council as the Harbour Authority for Weymouth Harbour in exercise of its powers under The Weymouth Harbour Revision Order 2021 and having carried out the consultations required by article 22 of the 2021 Order, have given the Weymouth Harbour General Directions 2024.

The General Directions have been given for the purpose of promoting or securing conditions conducive to the ease, convenience or safety of navigation, the safety of persons and the protection of property, flora and fauna in Weymouth Harbour as prescribed in article 21 of the 2021 Order.

In order to maintain and enhance the ease, convenience and safety of navigation within Weymouth Harbour, it is important that Masters and Officers are also aware of current Byelaws (including the Weymouth Harbour Byelaws 1976 and Seaside Pleasure Boats 1966) and Local Notices to Mariners, as well as any Special Directions applying to their Vessel.

It is the duty of the Master of a Vessel to which a General Direction applies to comply with that General Direction. However, the giving of a General Direction does not diminish or in any other way affect the responsibility of the Master of the Vessel to which the General Direction is given in relation to their Vessel, persons on board, its cargo or any other person or property.

The General Directions will be kept under review and revised as appropriate following due consultation with stakeholders.

3.7 Directions

The pilotage direction is the only direction in force for Weymouth. It is shown as an appendix to the Safety Management System. The direction was rewritten after careful examination of the port's pilotage requirements and came into force in February 2015. Further consideration of this direction is given in the section on pilotage.

In 2021 a Harbour Revision Order was approved and has updated the current powers for Special Directions and for developing General Directions to strengthen the legal powers available to the port's authorities. These powers are required in the interests of providing safe navigation for a wide variety of vessels within a busy harbour.

3.8 Harbour Revision Orders

There are three harbour revision orders in force. The order of 1993 extends the harbour limits further into Weymouth Bay as shown in Figure 1. The second came into force in 1996 after a public enquiry and permits the Harbour Authority to lease the upper part of the inner harbour for private development by Boatfolk as a marina. A new Harbour Revision Order came into force in February 2021 which will enable a modernisation of the legal status of the harbour.

3.9 Policy

To meet its legal and operational commitments, Weymouth publishes its policies, plans and periodic reports, setting out how they comply with the standards it has set itself, and with those of the Port Marine Safety Code.

Dorset Council as the Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA), Duty Holder and Competent Harbour Authority (CHA), acting through the Harbours Committee, is committed to providing and operating the Port of Weymouth as a safe and reliable port for all its users and staff.

The hierarchy of risk which defines the Council's approach requires all its systems and staff to consider the wider implications of the way in which risk is managed, and this pyramid is shown in the overview section earlier. The requirements of this wider view of risk, infuses the port's approach to the narrower definitions of the Port Marine Safety Code.

The Port of Weymouth is committed to maintaining and improving a good record of few serious incidents. To this end, it conducts regular reviews of all its activities and safety provisions to ensure that they remain the most appropriate and continue to be carried out to the highest standards.

The SHA will ensure that the best standards of good governance and management current at any time are applied to the Port of Weymouth.

The SHA and its authorised officers are aware of their environmental commitments and strive to ensure that the entire harbour estate is maintained in an environmentally friendly fashion acceptable to the wide variety of users the area sees.

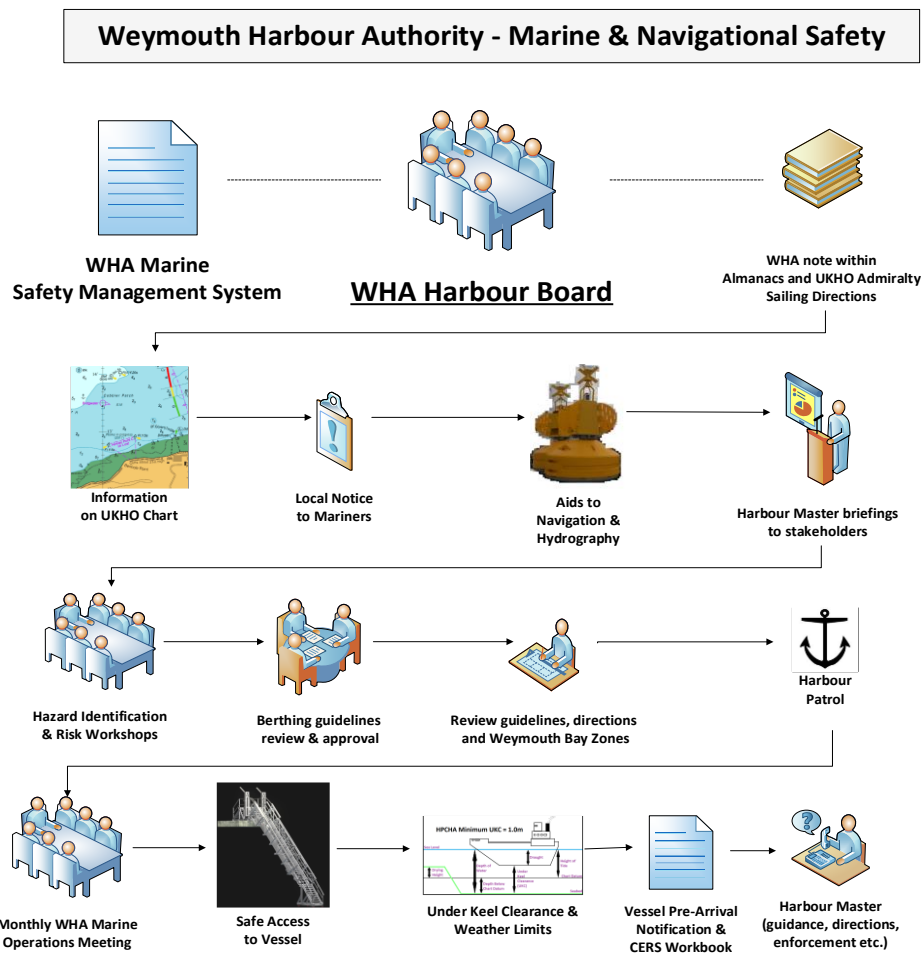
The SHA will continue to ensure that standards within the Port of Weymouth meet the demands of Government and the ever-rising expectations of society at large.

3.9.1 Marine safety policy

The Council, through the Harbours Committee and the professional staff, will ensure marine safety by:

- Providing a safe environment for navigation through aids to navigation and conservancy.
- Operating a well-run and efficient pilotage service.
- Regulating activities within the port as required.
- Training and educating staff, users and the public in safety awareness.

- Strict application of the Port Marine Safety Code and its supporting Guide to Good Practice through this Safety Management System.



3.10 Implementation

The Harbour Authority deploys a mix of standardised procedures, written requirements, and management systems in everyday use, to ensure that the stated policies are followed. Safety within the port is not a separate issue, rather it infuses all procedures so that staff at all levels are aware of their duties and commitments. From formal briefing through reading and signing the relevant texts, to day-to-day instruction and individual job procedures, all members of the harbour hierarchy are kept aware of the Committee's commitment to safe and sensible management and operation of the port.

3.11 Training

The port has a full training policy. All Councillors as part of the Full Council and specifically Harbours Committee members are expected to undertake appropriate lectures to give them an understanding of their duties and responsibilities, particularly regarding the Port Marine Safety Code and its application. Training is conducted at least annually and as necessary to match the election cycle of the Council.

Professional staff officers are properly qualified for their duties, with the current Harbour Master having completed all mandatory training. Any new marine staff will be required to train and obtain appropriate qualifications for their role in the harbour if they do not have correct qualifications already.

A programme of updating knowledge and renewing qualifications when required, is pursued and records kept of all staff qualifications and training.

Requirements for exercises in accordance with MCA Guidelines for Ports Appendix J (Oil Spill) are for two Notification exercises, two Tier 1 mobilisation exercises and one Table-top exercise per annum.

3.12 Consultation

It is both good practice, and required by the PMSC, that all those with an interest in the running of Weymouth Harbour should be consulted about its operations, charges and facilities. There are three levels of consultation:

Regular formal meetings take place between stakeholders and the Harbour Authority. The Harbour Consultative Group meets 4 times a year and is seen as an important part of the process. This group provides input to the Harbours Committee. Details of the Group can be found on the Dorset Council website Committees and Meetings' area.

When the PMSC plan comes up for audit and update, all stakeholders may be consulted about matters pertaining to the PMSC. The results of this should be reflected in the subsequent updated PMSC plan.

There is an open-door policy at the Harbour Master's office, whereby any stakeholder with an issue can call and discuss it with the Harbour Master or whoever else may be appropriate. Day-to-day matters have been dealt with in this way in Weymouth for very many years and a general level of satisfaction is expressed by the stakeholders. If a satisfactory conclusion is not reached to issues, representation could be made through the Harbour Consultative Group and ultimately to the Harbours Committee.

3.13 Application

The SMS applies in three primary ways within Weymouth Harbour's estate:

- To activities of, and affecting, the general public.
- To the many marine type operations carried on, on quaysides, in yacht yards and slipways, in marinas and alongside the pontoons which line the quay edges.
- To activities on the water.

3.14 Activities of, and affecting, the general public

Weymouth is a very popular destination for visitors, both holidaymakers and day trippers. The long beach sees a constant demand throughout the season and its quay edges frequently mix general public and marine activities in potentially hazardous ways. These are not so much specific and physical hazards as the mixing of unsuspecting and uncomprehending people with the activities typical of any port. The Council's risk matrices provide a framework for addressing these issues. The wish to make the harbour an attractive place in which the public will want to visit, balanced against third party liabilities and damage to the port's reputation if an accident should happen, requires careful management without it appearing to the public that there is any controlling management or regimentation at all.

3.15 The Beach Area

Weymouth has an extensive beach that is very popular with holidaymakers. It lies entirely within the harbour limits (see Figure 12 for a general plan) and hence safety on the water is a matter for the Harbour Authority.

Due to the conflicting pressures on it from different users it has been found necessary to divide up the water area off the beach into a series of sectors. The latest map of these is shown at Figure 12; the sectors are marked by buoys and larger, flagged

markers. The information is promulgated by Local Notices to Mariners. Experience has led to the amendment of the boundaries of the sectors, which no longer conform to those laid down in the byelaws. However, the changes are extensively promulgated including a formal notice of deviation from the byelaws. The buoys are in place from 1st April until 30th September and the division of water only applies when the buoys are in situ. In the swimming areas, a speed limit of 4 knots is enforced on all craft and only power-driven vessels with a prop guard may enter. Throughout the summer season. The beach water area is patrolled by the Harbour Authority, partly as a general rescue craft and partly to enforce the sector arrangements. The RNLI also patrol the main beach area and adjacent water.

A particular problem arises with swimming rafts which have traditionally been moored off the beach. These provide a target and a halfway resting place for swimmers who go out to them but Weymouth Beach only shelves very gradually and for the rafts to be accessible they are moored in what is still fairly shallow water. This has tended to pose a risk to anyone diving from them, so these rafts have been moved to a safer point off the beach; they are now only put out for the months of July and August when the RNLI lifeguards are on station at Greenhill.

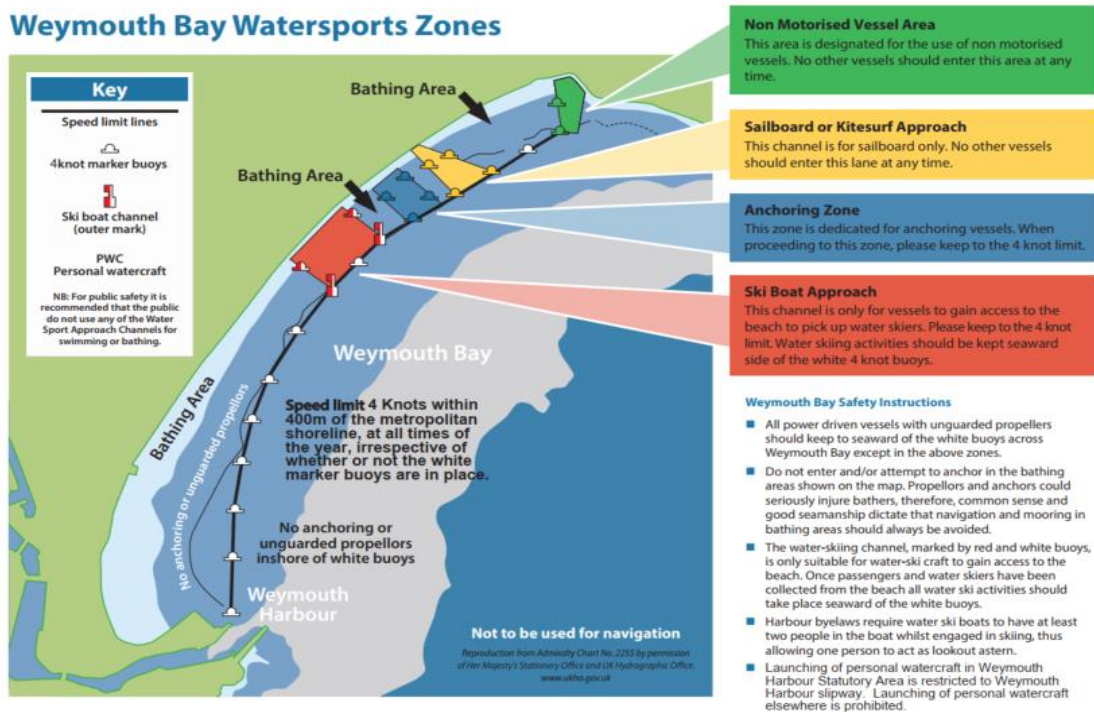


Figure 12. Plan of Weymouth Bay

The main concern is to keep the different user types apart: swimmers, windsurfers, kite sailors, kayaks, personal watercraft, and other small boats; each has their own regulated section, marked by buoys and large outer markers. The many racing yachts based at Weymouth use the whole scope of the Bay and unlit racing marks are placed and lifted frequently, to take best account of wind and weather conditions.

The pedaloe operation on the beach is subject to a lease agreement with Weymouth Town Council and an operating licence from Dorset Council via the Harbour Authority.

3.16 Marine type operations on the shore

As with any busy harbour, Weymouth's quays see a lot of activity between vessels and shore. These activities are kept safe and under control by a mixture of seamanship and specific controls. The port's many commercial operators all have their demands, and the other primary generator of shore-side marine operations is the multitude of leisure yachts and motorboats which use the port.

3.17 Freight activities

Any freight traffic which was offered would be concentrated on Berth No 1, the furthest to seaward of the merchant ship working berths. It is 100M long and can accommodate vessels up to 115M by overhanging the short No 2 Berth. There is a least depth of 5.0M of water alongside.

Safety requirements would dictate that any freight movements which did come would require the general public to be kept back from the work area. Specific risk assessments are recorded into Document 2.

3.18 Hazardous goods

No hazardous goods are routinely handled at Weymouth. The port retains an ability to deal with them as a part of its retained capacity to handle freight movement should any be presented for shipment.

3.19 Fishing boats

The fishing fleet is the largest commercial user of Weymouth Harbour.

There is an active fleet of smaller fishing boats, their numbers average 60 boats. There are about ten further boats that visit in season. Of these, 20 operate full-time and the rest are part-time. Activity varies with season, but the fleet can be categorised as 2 trawlers, 5 scallopers, and the rest crabbers. In season some vessels Bassline, which requires them to operate in Portland Race and Fiddler's Race. All bar one of the boats operates on a day trip basis.

There are two associations representing the Weymouth and Portland fishermen and charter boats. The fishing boats have their own designated landing area on the North side of the harbour close by the Harbour Master's office. This has two modern cranes, a hand powered one of 500 kg SWL, and a powered one of 125 kg SWL. These are in a fenced-off area for landing catches, handling and holding gear, and general supply purposes. All catches are landed straight to transport as there is no market at Weymouth. Most of the catch goes to Brixham market. The fencing keeps the general public back from the area when work is going on.

There are also lay-by berths further up the harbour above and below the harbour bridge. pontoons line the landing and lay-by areas, and the boats tend to land their catches, their equipment and their supplies onto the pontoons. This has the potential to create problems when gear is not cleared from the pontoons as it can become completely blocked off by the equipment left lying around and needs to be prevented. The risks in this practice are considerable and looked at in detail in the risk assessments in Document 2.

3.20 Charter boats

Weymouth has the largest concentration of charter boats in the UK, averaging around 60 annually. There are dive boats, 25 angling craft and 'trips round the Bay' excursion boats. These boats are further divided into craft with the Professional Boatowners' Association (PBA) and the Licensed Skippers' Association which are largely certificated by the MCA. A very small number of boats continue to be licensed by the Harbour Authority. This licensing by the Harbour Authority was last reviewed and updated in 2023. The main boats now being licensed by the Harbour Authority are the cross-harbour rowing ferry boats.

The Council adopts a proactive approach to the many charter boats and actively encourages them. Many of the facilities provided for these boats are being updated as they reach the end of their working life.

Portland and Weymouth have a dispensation from the MCA for category D waters within certain criteria. Merchant Shipping Notice 1776 (M) gives specific authority for some vessels to operate between Weymouth and Portland Harbours throughout the

year, and in summer further out to a line from Redcliffe Point to Grove Point. This allows the boats more waters in which to operate. Coastline Cruises provide seasonal ferry services to Portland Castle, Ringstead Bay and occasionally Lulworth Cove with MCA Coded craft licensed for 52 and 41 passengers.

All these craft are operated to professional standards by experienced boatmen and have a good safety record. Over-familiarity is the only likely navigational problem within the harbour limits.

Application of the Council's risk system to these commercial, marine-based, activities rests with ensuring that the narrow individual risk assessments each is subject to, is fitted into the wider considerations of the risk matrices of the Council.

3.21 RNLI Lifeboats

There has been a RNLI lifeboat stationed at Weymouth since 1869, and it remains a major station for the service. It is presently served by a Severn type which operates out to mid-English Channel and to 3 degrees West. The boat lies on dedicated pontoon adjacent to the Lifeboat Station. Since 2022 the station has also had an Atlantis 85 RIB located in a boatshed within Weymouth Sailing Club's yard. Following the RNLI's assumption of such duties nationally, since 2004 it has also provided beach patrols throughout the season now under Weymouth Town Council management.

In general, the operation of the large lifeboat has not encountered any problems over the years. There is an outside possibility of encountering a larger vessel in the harbour mouth if one happened to be moving when the lifeboat was called out or returning in a hurry with casualties, but usually there would be room for both. As all parties work VHF Channel 12, it should be possible to arrange matters in advance to avoid any conflict of movements.

During daylight hours harbourmasters' boats may be operating in the entrance and can control any other traffic likely to impede the lifeboat's movements. In addition, it is suggested that if other large craft see the lifeboat getting under way, they should refrain from moving until the lifeboat has cleared the harbour. An audio warning system is activated to warn shore and boat users of the lifeboat activation, replacing the traditional maroons. It normally takes about ten minutes to scramble the boat from the emergency call going out.

3.22 Leisure activities

Weymouth is a major port for leisure activities. Its three marinas have around 1,000 berths, virtually all allocated, and there are around 5,000 leisure vessels visitor nights each year in the outer harbour. This traffic is mainly bunched into the sailing season from Spring to Autumn and can be intensely busy in the high summer period. Shore activities in the marinas are largely those of servicing and storing the yachts, with personnel coming and going all the time.

In the harbour's three marinas comprehensive risk assessments should be carried out with respect to individual hazards. As well as the marinas, visiting yachts frequently use the pontoons lining both sides of the outer harbour which allows them to be readily accessible to the port's many facilities, both technical and leisure. The risks associated with this easy access are balanced against the popularity it brings to yachtsmen planning their passages.

3.23 Events

The Councils (Dorset and Weymouth Town) have an established system for all events within its jurisdiction, whether on land or on water. Event management is laid down in its own manuals, according to the Council standard system. This requires risk assessments, operational plans, information management and insurance to be considered.

Weymouth stages events regularly through the year and has acted as host for the Tall Ships Race on three occasions. There are firework displays in the Bay throughout the year.

A good number of these events take place both on the shore and on the water so do not categorise easily. Among the events are gig racing, Weymouth yacht and dinghy regattas and the Seafood Festival. On Christmas Day there is a cross-harbour swim. All events are coordinated with the Councils' Events Teams and their policies. They have to be carefully regulated and monitored for safety.

Section 8 of the PMSC Guide to Good Practice discusses event management from the port's point of view. For activities on the water, its precepts should be followed and blended with the Council's own defined system.

There is a constant review of the arrangements for holding events. It is up to the organisers of each event to carry out the risk assessment of their event. The Harbour Authority 'notes' each risk assessment presented by the organisers of events and as necessary, approves events to proceed. It is normal for events to be insured by the organiser and, if the insurers are willing to accept and underwrite the event, it instils more confidence for the Harbour Authority.

3.24 Activities on the water

The water traffic in Weymouth Harbour is substantial but mostly consists of smaller, more manoeuvrable craft. When any large vessel is on the move within the harbour, other water-borne movement may be stopped. This has always had particular force with the ferry movements but applies to other large vessels as well.

On the water, the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code also come to bear, and this gives an extra layer of control requirements. Mostly, the equipment, operations plan, and general provisions keep the port functioning safely. But the mix of commercial and leisure use and widely varying standards of skill, always carry the potential for problems and harbour staff are vigilant in attending to this mix.

3.25 Overview of port movement control

Weymouth has a short and clear entrance, direct from its Bay. Therefore, the Operations Plan can be simple and aimed primarily at three areas: traffic control around the entrance; regulating movement within the port area; and control of leisure uses off Weymouth Beach.


Vessels approaching Weymouth work on VHF Channel 12 and all ship movements are controlled by VHF radio. It is standard practice to stop all other movements through the harbour entrance when a large vessel is manoeuvring, and a set of traffic regulating signals are placed on the South pier end, known as the 'Stone Pier'. These lights do not follow standard convention and so mariners need to research the unique configuration in almanacs or other local guidance. Apart from this, small craft are free to come and go as they please. The port's professional users often only call on VHF if there is uncertainty about movements around the harbour. All visiting vessels are encouraged to call on VHF Channel 12 for directions and berthing.

It is usual in the port's operation that other large vessel movement ceases when three red lights or three green lights are shown, backed up by radio broadcasts and (in the summer season) by a harbour boat attending in the harbour mouth while the large vessel is manoeuvring. Small craft may still enter, and leave provided they do not interfere with the passage and manoeuvring of the larger vessel. These lights were replaced by more powerful versions in 2008 with a view to making them more visible. While some minor problems are still reported by small craft in seeing the lights against the backdrop of the town's general lighting, overall these lights are an improvement.



Figure 13. Movement control signal tower on South Pier end

Before entering the harbour, visiting vessels should contact Weymouth Harbour for berthing advice.
Call sign "Weymouth Harbour" on VHF channel 12

Traffic Signals  indicates flashing light







 Entry to harbour is clear with caution.	 A vessel is LEAVING or is about to leave the pierheads area. No other vessel may approach the pierheads in such a way as to obstruct the pierheads area.
 All vessels await instructions.	 A vessel is APPROACHING the pierheads area from seawards. No vessel may leave that part of the harbour which lies west of the pierheads area.
 Port Closed. Entrance foul. No vessel may enter the pierheads area.	 A vessel may proceed only when it has received orders to do so.

Figure 14. Movement control signals



Figure 15. Small vessel in the harbour entrance



Figure 16. Large vessel in the harbour entrance

3.26 Pilotage

Weymouth Harbour is a Competent Harbour Authority. After a review in 2014, Pilotage is re-affirmed as being compulsory for all vessels over 50m in length, passenger vessels carrying more than 12 passengers and vessels with dangerous cargoes. The service is available to any other vessel that requests it, on due notice. The requirements have been promulgated in a pilotage direction dated January 2015, authorised in February 2015 and updated in January 2020. The direction is included in the list of freestanding documents in this overview of the port's Safety Management

System. Following from the pilotage review, two pilots have been authorised for the port. Both are self-employed and only provide services when these are called for.

The pilotage area is shared with the nearby Port of Portland and the two ports have common borders. Figure 2. (Schedule 1 of the pilotage direction) shows the pilotage areas and boarding point.

Demand for pilotage is not high, in 2011 there were around 550 acts of pilotage inwards and outwards although most were by Pilotage Exemption Certificate holders. With the cessation of Condor Ferries' services in March 2015, this has dropped to virtually zero and will remain so unless a new service or other trade comes to fruition. The lack of currency for pilotage operations is covered in Pilotage Directions.

3.27 Pilot boarding & landing

The pilotage area and the boarding and landing point for the Port of Weymouth is defined in Figure 17 below. The pilot boat is provided by the Port of Portland through an agreement with Weymouth Harbour. The station is in a sheltered spot in Weymouth Bay and there is no record of problems for pilots getting on or off vessels. Many aspects of the pilotage are shared in common with the Port of Portland. These include agreement on contiguous pilotage areas, arrangements to use each other's pilot boats when their own is unavailable and a common traffic control system in the approaches to Weymouth Bay managed by Portland Port.

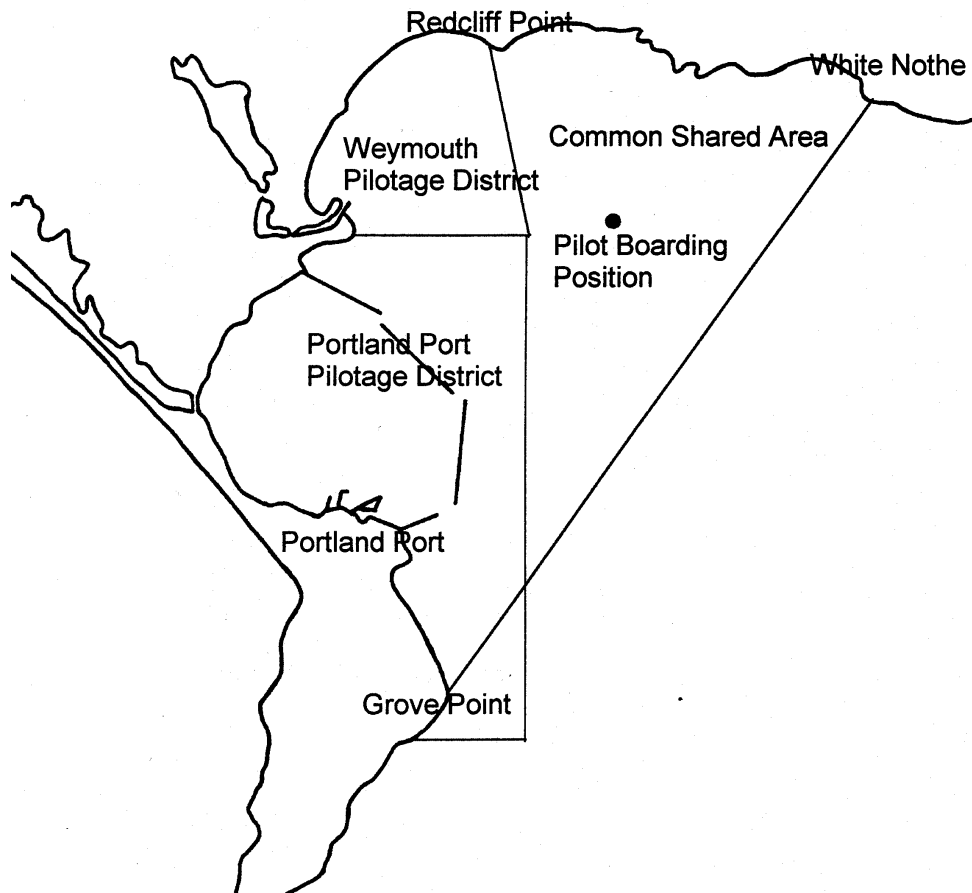


Figure 17. Pilot boarding position

3.28 Pilotage Exemption Certificates

The pilotage direction makes provision for exemptions to be granted to any suitably qualified officer who makes eight pilotage acts (four trips in and four trips out) or more each year and after passing the pilotage exam which has been subject to a review and update. The new pilotage direction provides full details of the requirements for issuing Pilotage Exemption Certificates.

3.29 Tugs

Aquatic Towage is based at Weymouth Harbour and can be utilised, however their vessels are often away working, and cannot guarantee to be available at short notice. Tugs are also based at Portland, just five miles away and available on about half an hour's notice in the daytime, 4 hours' notice at night. Due to their size there may be difficulties for them operating in the Outer Harbour. Visiting Royal Naval ships have been the only vessels to use this facility in recent times.

3.30 Collision regulations

Vessel movements in the port are carried out in conformity with the provisions of the International Regulations to Prevent Collision at Sea 1972, as amended. Within the port environs, however, all craft are encouraged to be prepared to give way and the requirement to stand on is lessened.

Particular care needs to be taken in the vicinity of the cross-harbour rowing ferry, which has right of way at all times.

3.31 Passage plan

The passage plan is given and explained to the captain when the pilot boards, exchanging it with the ship information card.

3.32 Communications

Communications within the port are by VHF radio, using channel 12.

Communication with Portland Harbour is on Channel 74.

Lulworth Firing Range Safety is Channel 8.

Coastwatch based at Portland Bill are Channel 65.

VTS - There is no VTS service. When necessary, Weymouth and Portland co-ordinate movements on an ad-hoc basis.

3.33 Passenger ships

Cross-Channel Ferries

There have been ferries running from Weymouth to the Channel Islands for about 150 years, these have now ceased.

P/S Waverley, M/V Balmoral and SS Shieldhall

The Pleasure Pier, the seaward extension of the North side piers, is no longer used by the paddle steamer Waverley, which is certified for 1500-day excursion passengers, and the M/V Balmoral, to pick up passengers. Operations are now conducted on No.1 Berth. The SS Shieldhall, based at Southampton as a preserved steamship, takes passengers for day trips and Weymouth is sometimes included in its itinerary. Any of these vessels calling at Weymouth generally lie on No. 1 Berth, the outermost berth on the North bank of the harbour where entry and exit are easiest. It is normal practise for such vessels to berth head in and back out of the harbour, turning in the open waters of the Bay.

3.34 Leisure uses

Weymouth has a major fleet of pleasure craft. Around 1,000 yachts are based here, mainly in the three marinas, but there are important moorings on the South side of the outer harbour, mainly dedicated to Weymouth Sailing Club. The latter has extensive facilities at the Nothe, on the South side of the outer harbour. The Sea Cadets National Training Centre boat park, Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre's Sailing Centre and the Weymouth Gig Rowing Club are also located on the South side of the outer harbour.

In the inner harbour two marinas (North Quay and Westwey Road) are owned by the Harbour Authority. The third is privately operated; it is in a leased upper section of the inner harbour and run by the marina specialists Boatfolk, who also operate Portland Marina.

There is also a small marina owned by Mr. Barry Curtis, known as the Nelson Wharf Marina, on the East side of the harbour between the public slipway and the Boatfolk marina. It accommodates about 10 craft. Mr Curtis has riparian rights.

The port is also popular with visiting yachts, and on average just over 5,000 leisure vessels' visitor nights were recorded. Visitors' berths are mainly provided alongside the pontoons on the North side of the outer harbour.

Weymouth beach lies within the harbour limits and harbour staff are actively involved in its management on the water. Due to the many, conflicting uses, to which the beach area is subject to, it has been found necessary to divide it into sections for different purposes. These sections are shown at Figure 12 in the section considering beach safety. The Harbour Authority's responsibilities are only on the water; RNLI lifeguards under Weymouth Town Council's beach management staff patrol the beaches and the water's edge.

3.34.1 Visiting leisure vessels

As has been noted, Weymouth is one of the leading leisure ports on the English Channel, having around 1,000 permanent moorings and a further 5,000 leisure vessels' visitor nights yearly. The annual berth-holders are mainly berthed in the marinas of the inner harbour, but Weymouth Sailing Club has chain and sinker moorings, some pontoons and extensive facilities on the South side of the outer harbour.

This intensive, if seasonal, traffic is a dominant feature of the port. Standards vary from highly experienced local yachtsmen with thorough knowledge of the port, to occasional visitors with limited marine knowledge who can find navigation difficult in such a busy environment. A significant part of this traffic moors in the inner harbour and it creates a relentless demand for passage through the Town Bridge throughout the summer season. The Town Bridge is operated by Weymouth Harbour staff.

There is an active yacht racing fleet based at Weymouth with frequent competitions in the Bay. Starts and finishes are often close to the harbour entrance and this creates conflicting traffic movements from time to time. Large commercial vessels, however, retain right of way at all times.

The general policy is that this yachting traffic should be allowed to move as freely as safety permits. Weymouth offers simple navigation with only a few minor hazards, so it is possible to allow a high degree of freedom from regulation without undue risk. Such controls as are necessary - for traffic regulation in the entrance, and through the Town Bridge - are well established and examined in detail in the formal risk assessments in Document 2.

3.34.2 Jet skis, personal watercraft and towed aquaplaning water sports craft

In 2003 a permit system was introduced for these craft and activities. This provides for licenses to be issued for any period from a day to a year and remains in force.

The funds raised by the controlling Council pay for law enforcement on the water, but the system allows the Harbour Authorities to control such crafts' activities by educating when permits are issued and withdrawing their license if they transgress.

After a good deal of legal debate and rulings, personal watercraft were proclaimed to be sea-going craft like any other and subject to the International Collision Regulations. This regularised their position and in crowded waters they behave like any other vessel. The permit system has been used to control such craft.

3.35 Conservancy scheme

The conservancy scheme for Weymouth is contained within the harbour, there being no navigational obstructions or channels to mark beyond the harbour mouth.

3.35.1 General description

On the North pier end there are two vertical fixed green lights visible six miles. On the South (Stone Pier) end, there is a quick flash white light visible nine miles.

On the Nothe, two fixed red leading lights, or two diamond shape marks by day, provide a leading light bearing 239° 38' to mark the entrance line into the harbour mouth.

Both these sets were upgraded with LED lights in 2008.

The traffic signals previously described control movement through the entrance area whenever larger vessels are moving. The Town Bridge cut is also controlled by red and green lights which show to control the movement of craft through the cut. The priority for traffic will be given on each lift depending on the number of vessels expected.

3.35.2 Standards for aids to navigation

The Port of Weymouth aims for 100% reliability from its aids to navigation, with a minimum fallback to IALA standards. reports are made to Trinity House (through LARS) in the event of defects, ensuring the obligations as a Local lighthouse Authority are maintained.

3.35.3 Inspection of Aids to Navigation

Weymouth is a local light authority, and its aids are subject to an annual inspection by Trinity House. The regular routine regime for inspection and maintenance is shown with the freestanding plans.

3.36 Dredging, hydrographic survey and Admiralty charts

The beds of Weymouth Harbour and Bay are not subject to great change, other than a tendency for sand from the beach to build up, spilling around and through the Pleasure Pier into the harbour mouth. This sand accumulation has to be dredged by plough dredging from time to time.

As part of the preparations for installing the new marina in the inner harbour it was extensively dredged in 1996, for the first time in 20 years. A least depth of 2.2M was created in the navigable area and this has remained stable.

A detailed hydrographic survey is carried out every year by a contract hydrographic firm and depths are carefully monitored. The results of each hydrographic survey are notified to the Admiralty Hydrographic Office in full. The Hydrographic Code of Practice is followed.

3.37 Chain and sinker moorings

Both inner and outer harbours have several chain and sinker moorings in them, generally controlled by the Harbour Master. In the inner harbour, yacht moorings for the long-term local residents are provided by bow sinkers and stern lines to the shore along the West side of the harbour. These were provided as substitutes when marinas were built over the area formerly occupied by local users.

In the outer harbour the South side is lined along its length by yacht moorings, again mostly chain and sinkers. The RNLI lifeboat is moored in the same area. Many of these moorings are associated with Weymouth Sailing Club which has landing facilities and premises on the bank alongside the moorings and are controlled by the club. These moorings can be affected by wake from passing craft, but there is no record of serious problems arising from this cause.

At the outer end are moorings given over to the Sea Cadets Training Centre, a national boat training establishment at Weymouth and some belonging to Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre. Sea Cadets control and look after their own moorings, which are opposite the ferry terminal. While there is the possibility of risk arising when larger vessels manoeuvre close to the Sea Cadet moorings, the requirement that all other activity must cease while the larger vessels are on the move provides a level of safety against the risks involved. This is addressed in the risk assessments of Document 2.

3.38 Works licensing

All works in the port are controlled by the Harbour Master. It is rare for such works to affect navigation, other than dredging.

3.39 Wrecks

There are no wrecks in any position close to the navigable channel. The only dangerous wreck noted in the pilot book lies 5 cables SSE of Redcliffe Point, but it is not a hazard to navigation in and out of the harbour (and is outside the harbour limits).

3.40 Diving

All diving for favour or reward (i.e. "at work") is subject to the Diving at Work Regulations 1997 (DWR 97) and the associated Approved Codes of Practice (ACOP). Diving at work may only be carried out by a diving contractor who has notified the Health and Safety Executive in compliance with the provisions in DWR 97 and dives may only be carried out in accordance with the legal requirements. Additionally, Weymouth Harbour requires that divers at work apply for prior consent from the Harbour Authority before undertaking a dive.

Weymouth Harbour strongly recommends that all diving (whether the diver is at work or not) should meet all the above requirements.

3.41 Towing

Towing in the outer and inner harbours is subject to approval from the Harbour Master. Permission for planned tows should be requested in advance. The following are standard given approvals:

- The towing of vessels by the RNLI lifeboats.
- The towing of dinghies and sailing boats by the Sea Cadet Training Centre, Weymouth Outdoor Education Centre and Weymouth Sailing Club subject to each organisations' risk assessments and safety cases.
- The towing of dedicated Boatfolk recovery vessel subject to the organisations risk assessments.
- The towing of a vessel in immediate danger.

3.42 Local Notices to Mariners (LNTM)

Weymouth Harbour maintains a system of Local Notices to Mariners (LNTM) in accordance with industry expectations and the PMSC GGP. LNTM are used to promulgate relevant information for the safety of navigation to harbour users and maritime stakeholders. Distribution is via email (subscriber list), with current and recent LNTM being displayed on the website www.weymouth-harbour.co.uk and in the Harbour Office reception.

4. Freestanding and Second Tier plans

There are 11 plans adopted; key plans can be found on the Weymouth Harbour website.

4.1 The Weymouth Oil Spill Contingency Plan

This plan has been fully developed and approved by MCA. This is held separately by the Harbour Master but is considered to be an integral part of the emergency response system.

4.2 The Port Waste Management Plan

This plan is fully developed. It is adopted into the Operations Plan and Safety Management System and is approved by the MCA.

4.3 Pilotage review and directions

Weymouth's pilotage requirements were subject to comprehensive review in June 2021. This report and the associated pilotage directions are incorporated in the roster of separate plans attached to the Safety Management System.

4.4 Dorset Council –Emergency Response Plan

These plans lay out the systems to be used for any emergency in the region. Should any incident in the harbour area have consequences reaching beyond its confines, it is the Emergency Response Plan which will be brought to bear. There are both Weymouth Town Council and Dorset Council plans.

4.5 Former Ferry Terminal Emergency Plan

This plan provides the systems for any emergency occurring on the shore side of the ferry terminal. Vessels alongside the terminal are considered to be within the scope of the terminal's provisions.

4.6 Commercial Area Linkspan

The operation of the linkspan has its own manual.

4.7 I S P S

Weymouth had a full ISPS Port Facilities Security Plan in place and was fully compliant with its requirements until 2015. Since then it has been suspended following the end of Condor sailings, but the plan remains available for revival if another ferry operator comes to the port. It would need to be modified for any new operation to reflect any necessary modifications to the infrastructure.

4.8 The Town Bridge

Has its own operating manual included in the roster of plans within the general ambit of the Safety Management System.

4.9 Conservancy Inspection Regime

Forms for this are now part of the risk register and management control system. Defects are reported by PANAR to Trinity House.

4.10 MSN 1832 (M)

MCA Merchant Shipping Notice MSN 1832 (M), the Merchant Shipping (Port State Control) Regulations 2011.

5. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

5.1 Assigned areas of responsibility

The Port Marine Safety Code states that the Safety Management System should include preparations for emergencies and that these should be identified as far as practical from the formal risk assessment.

If an incident should occur, we will require robust, reliable and resilient plans and resources to manage the incident and to achieve the best possible outcome in a potentially hostile and hazardous environment.

The WHA Harbour Emergency Plan details responses to emergency situations within harbour limits and approaches. This plan will work alongside the Regional Emergency Plan to enable an appropriate response to incidents in or affecting the Harbour.

Training, exercises and drills will be programmed and completed to test emergency procedures. Records will be maintained by the HPCHA and the contractor, procedures will be updated as required following lessons learnt.

All incidents, emergencies and near misses within the Harbour or Approaches should be reported to the Harbour Master at the earliest possible opportunity. This should not detract for the Master's responsibility to react and respond to emergencies etc. on board their vessel.

HM Coastguard is responsible on behalf of the Department for Transport for the co-ordination of Civil Maritime Search and Rescue within the United Kingdom Search and Rescue Region. When alerted or notified by a Harbour Authority or in the event of being the first recipient of an alert or notification HM Coastguard will, after consulting with the Harbour Authority, assist the Harbour Authority by co-ordinating the "Search and Rescue" phase of any Distress incident within the harbour limits. A Distress incident is defined in IAMSAR Manual (Vol. 1) as being a situation wherein there is a reasonable certainty that a vessel or other craft, including an aircraft or a person, is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance. The Harbour Authority will remain responsible for managing the overall response to any incident within the port limits.

Objectives

The objectives of this plan include:

- Use our best endeavours to reduce the vulnerability to and resultant effect of a major emergency.
- Comply with relevant international conventions, legislation, regulation, guidance and industry best practise.
- The plan will define the Harbour Authority's overall emergency management structure and departmental responsibilities, and to define the role of support organisations.
- Ensure that there are adequate resources available to respond to reasonably foreseeable emergencies.
- To reduce Risk to As Low As Reasonably Practicable as required by the Port Marine Safety Code.

Scope

The Plan applies within the statutory jurisdiction of the Weymouth Harbour Authority limits and approaches.

The Harbour Master is responsible for the implementation of this Plan, and for ensuring stakeholders meets the obligations described in the Plan.

5.1.1 Incidents inside the harbour (from the pier ends inwards)

The Harbour Master has overall responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation with other emergency services for any incidents within port limits.

5.1.2 Commercial shipping

HM Coastguard Solent is the co-ordinating authority for any incident to a merchant vessel unless it is lying alongside a berth.

5.1.3 All vessels in the harbour approaches or Weymouth Bay

H M Coastguard is the co-ordinating authority for any incident in these areas, in close co-ordination with the Harbour Master, and will call in other services as necessary.

5.1.4 Craft in the harbour and inner harbour

The Harbour Master has a primary authority for dealing with incidents to vessels on the move farther into the harbour, calling in other services as necessary.

5.1.5 Former Ferry Terminal

A thorough emergency plan exists for this already, which should be referred to for detailed advice. A vessel alongside Berth 3 or 4, at the terminal, is considered to be integrated into the terminal emergency plan.

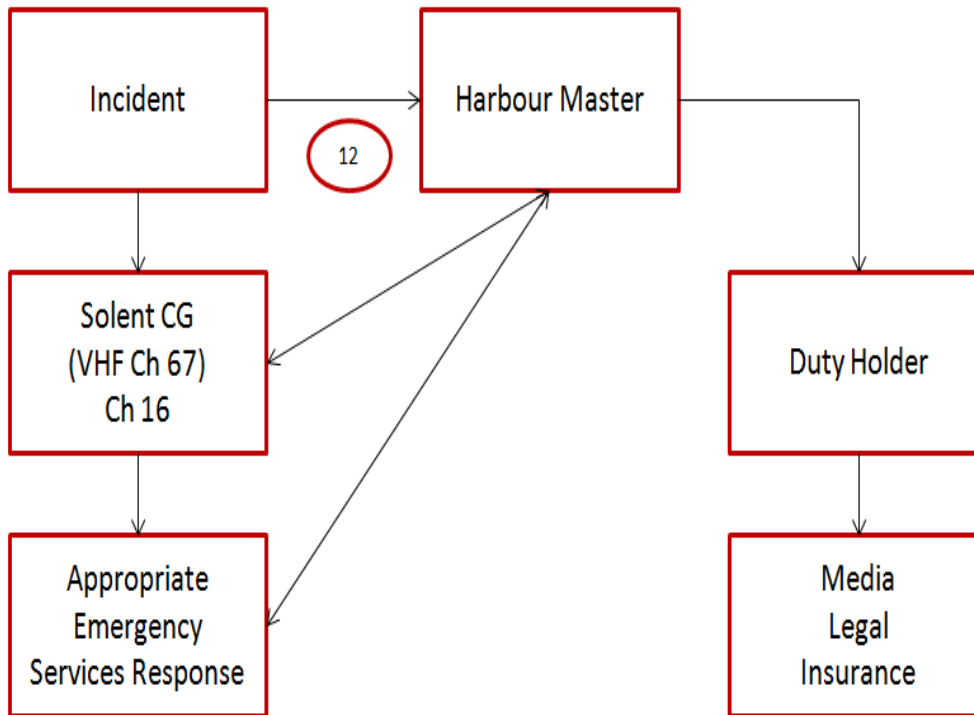
5.1.6 All craft alongside other parts of the harbour

Craft alongside a berth come under general shore emergency provisions, which mean that the emergency services have the controlling responsibility, in co-operation with the Harbour Master as appropriate.

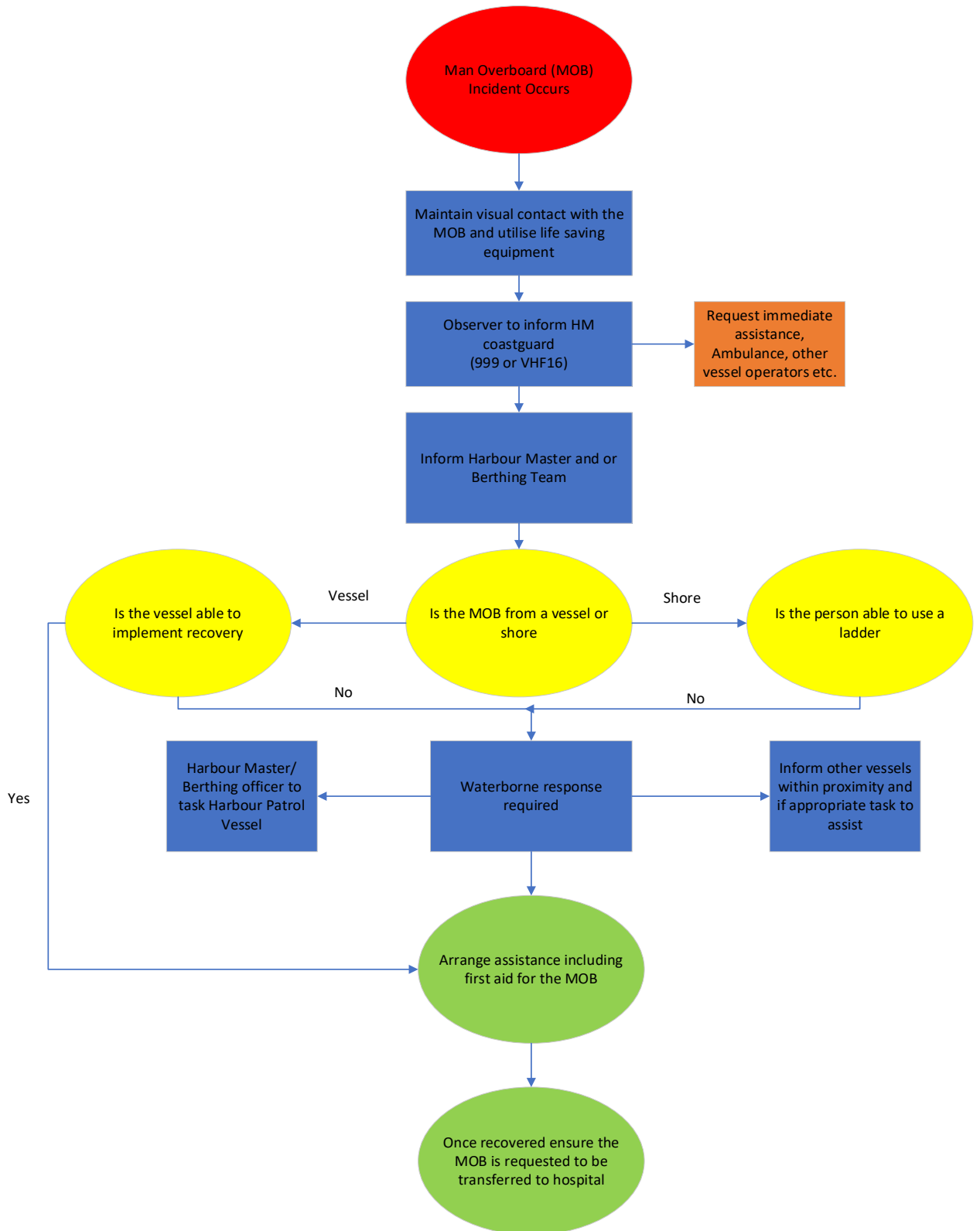
5.1.7 On board ship

For incidents arising on board ships, the vessel's Master is in charge of on-board action, in close co-ordination with the Harbour Master and emergency services.

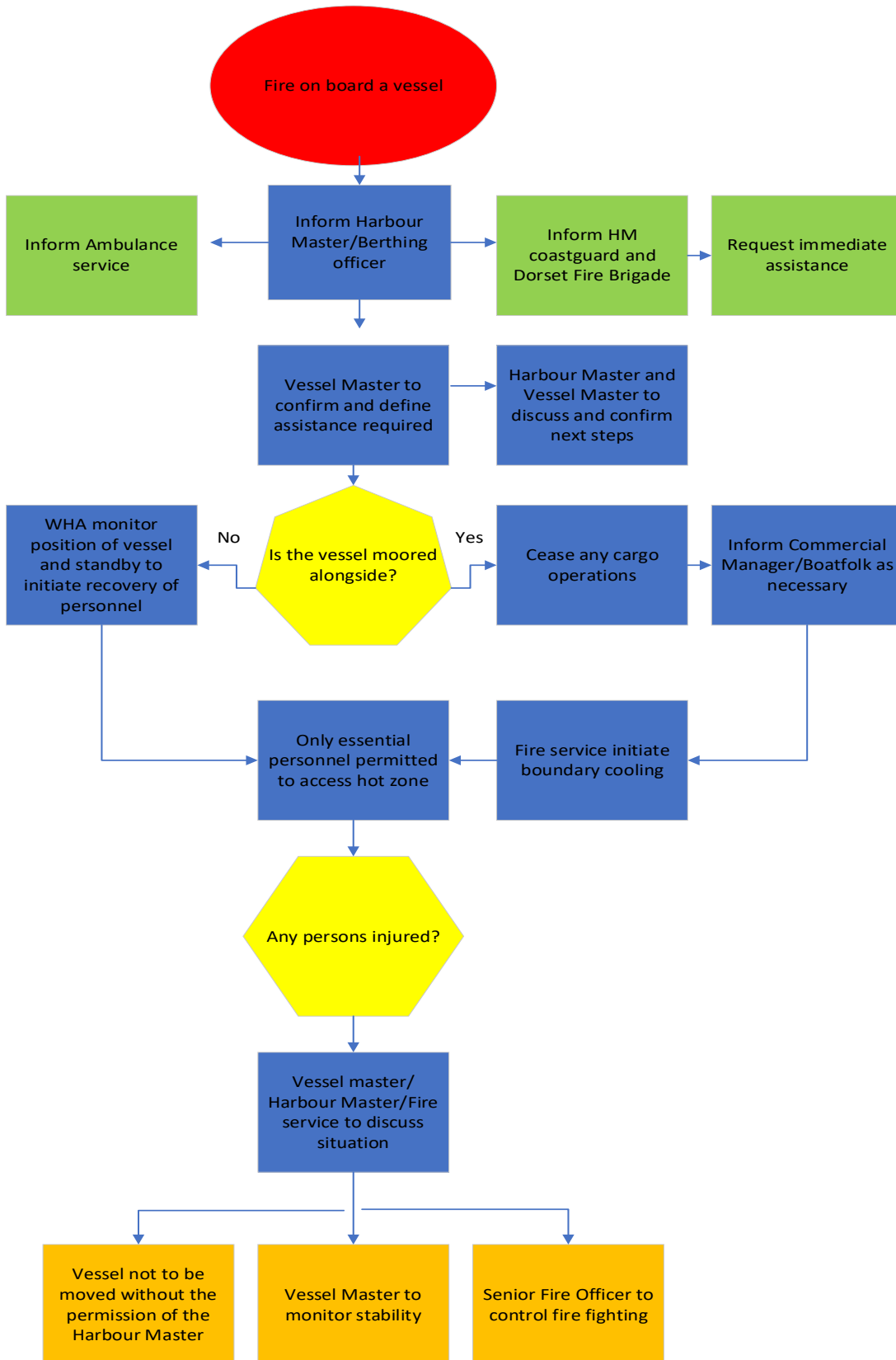
5.2 Flowcharts



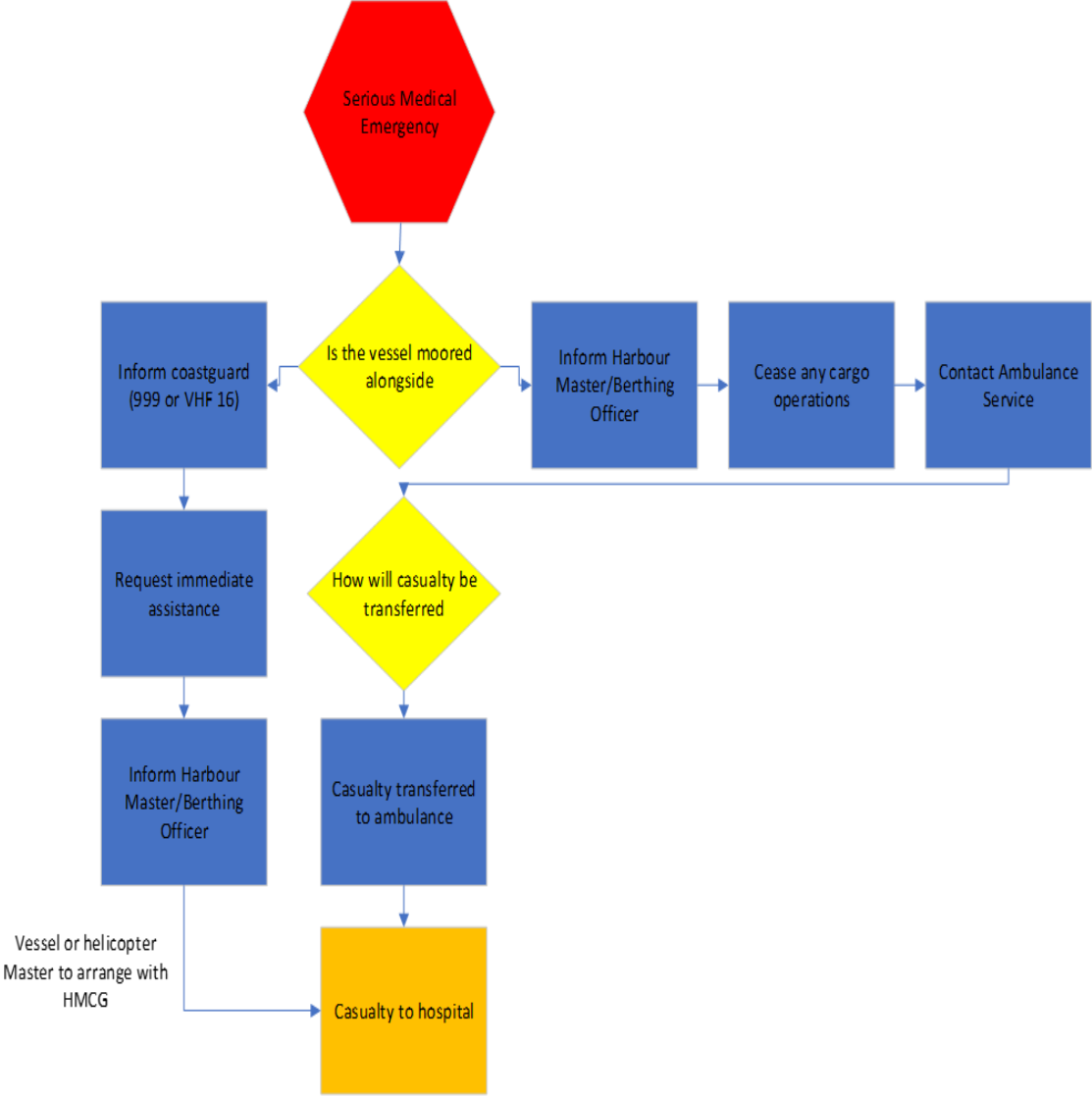
Man Overboard:



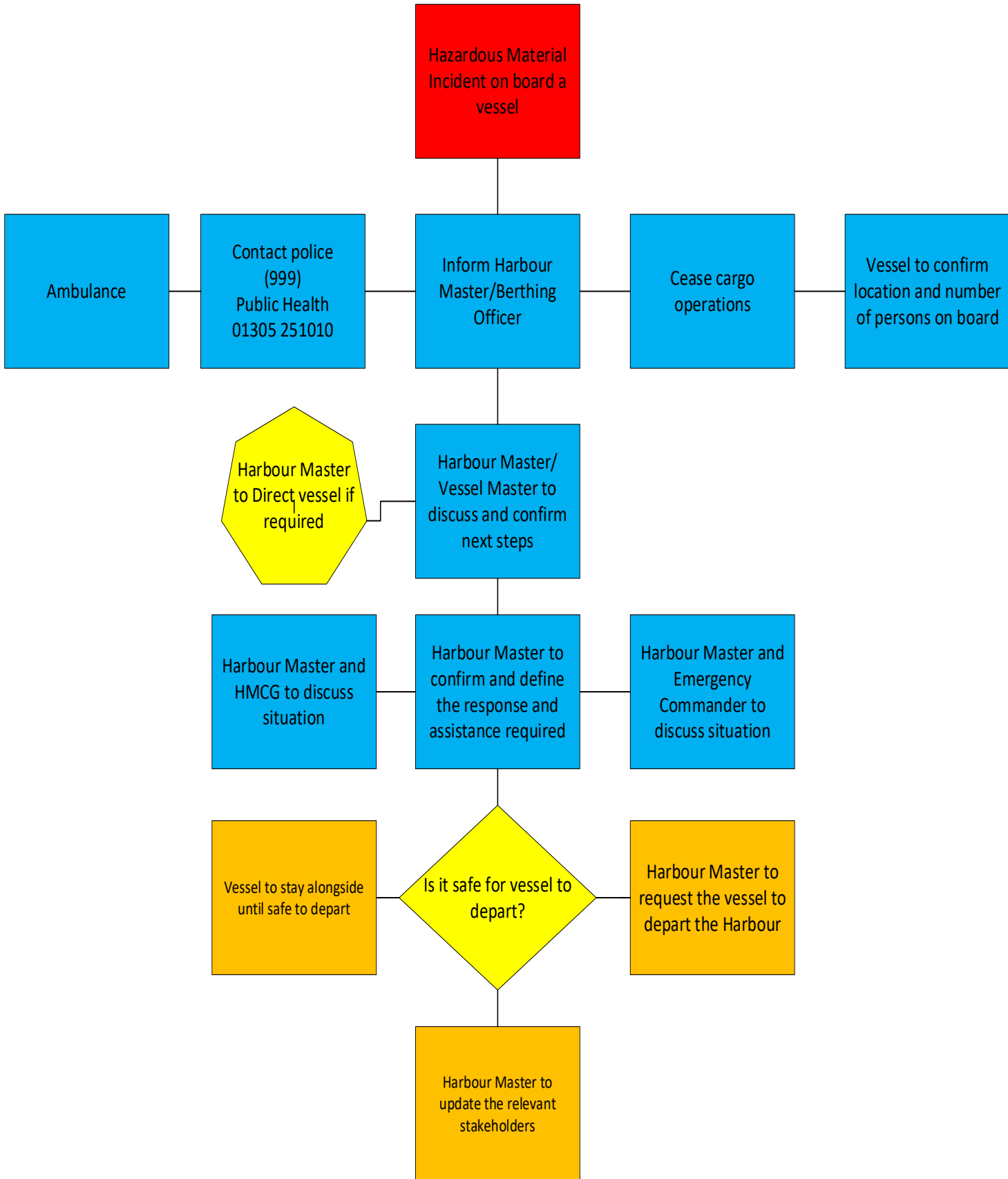
Fire on board vessel:



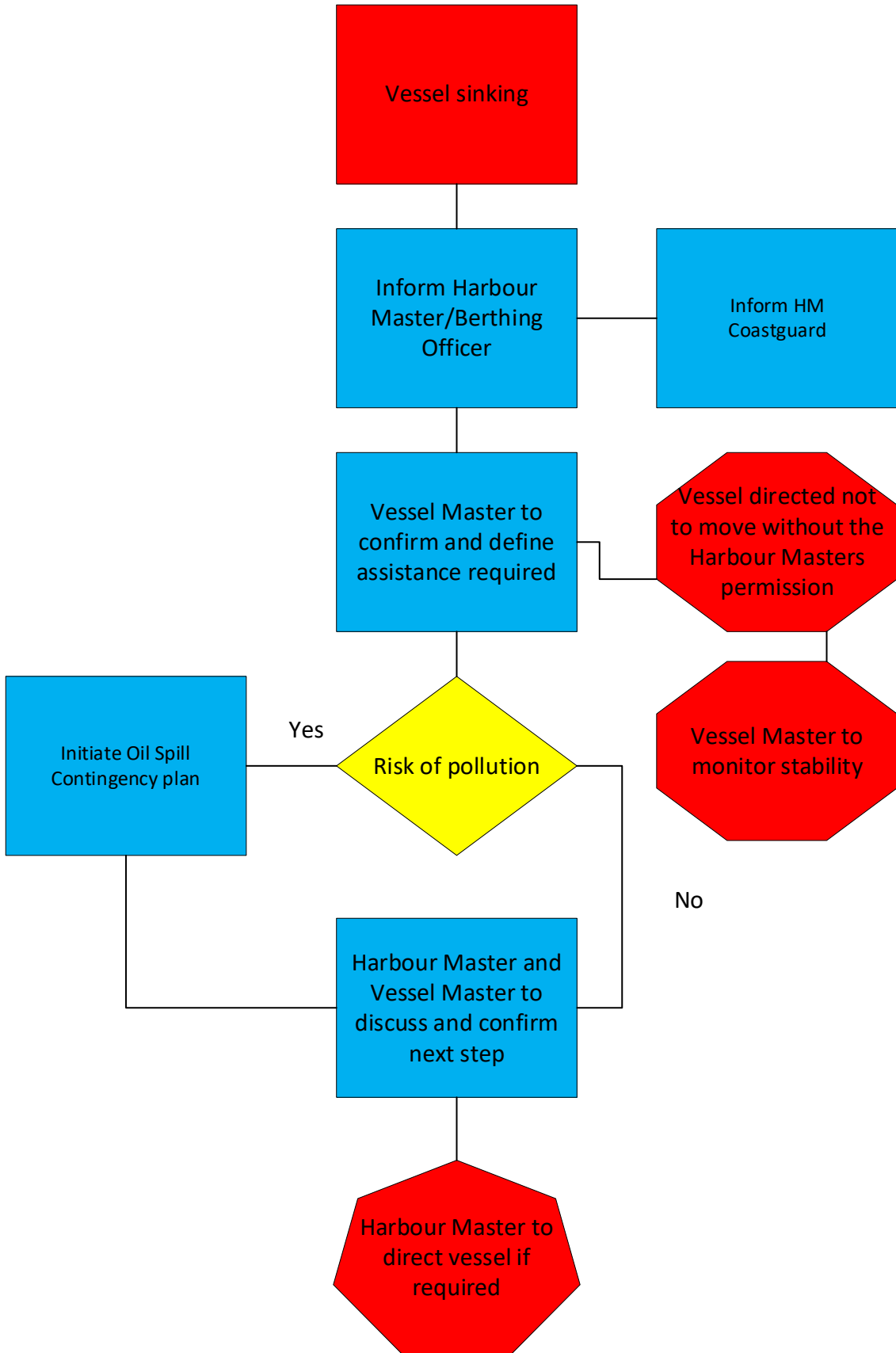
Medical Emergency:



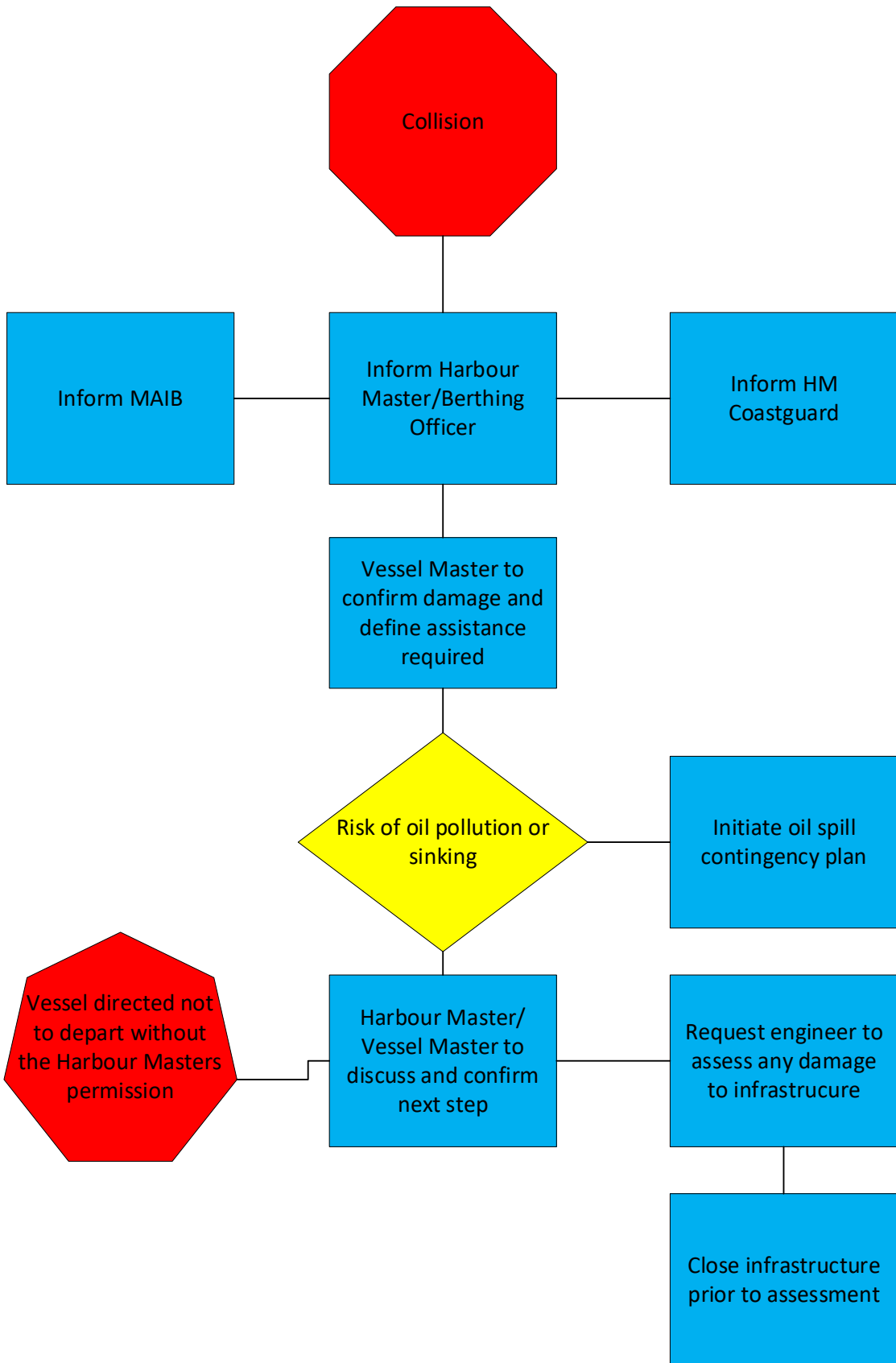
Hazardous Material Incident:



Sinking Vessel:



Collision:



5.3 The Plan

5.3.1 General

For all marine incidents, the Port of Weymouth emergency response is under the overall command of the Harbour Master, reporting to the CHA Duty Holder.

The Port of Weymouth only has the capacity to deal with minor marine incidents from its own resources. An incident at port level would require additional expertise and resources. Whilst a major marine incident carries a fairly low probability, it would call for significant resources and expertise from external services. This emergency response would be used in conjunction with the Former Ferry Terminal plan when appropriate, and/or the Weymouth Town Council and Dorset Council Emergency Plans which define all emergency services on the shore side of the harbour and in the region.

5.3.2 Pollution: Weymouth Harbour Oil Spill Contingency Plan

The oil spill plan is a freestanding plan which was audited and approved by MCA in 2019. Its provisions run in harmony with the overall emergency response plans and should be used for all pollution matters.

Copies are held by the Harbour Master.

5.3.3 Movements within the harbour during an emergency

In any emergency occurring within the harbour, movement of other vessels must be controlled and if necessary, stopped while the emergency is dealt with. In extreme circumstances closure of the port may have to be considered. Any decision to control vessel movements or close the port rests with the Harbour Master, in close co-ordination with emergency controllers and the emergency services.

5.3.4 Accessibility

The berths of Weymouth Harbour are unusual in that the vast majority are alongside open public streets. Apart from the massed ranks of parked cars, this makes emergency access exceptionally easy and much the greater part of the port's berths can be reached without difficulty.

On the water, the upper parts of the harbour are narrow and even if a craft got into severe difficulties rescue of personnel at least should be simple. Apart from through the Town Bridge cut, tidal streams are weak and there is no great danger of persons in the water being swept away.

In the more open waters around the harbour mouth direct support from the shore will be less easy. It is probable that marine rescue services, be it lifeboat, harbour service vessel or tug will be called for.

In the Boatfolk marina in the inner harbour, a particular access problem arises. Although open quay space is close around it, its layout of long finger pontoons means that some boats are in relatively inaccessible positions for support from shoreside facilities. This access should be studied in more detail, with co-operative exercises between the operating company, the Harbour Authorities and the emergency services.

Should it be appropriate to consider berthing a vessel to effect emergency evacuation, as much information as possible should be obtained from the master about the condition of his ship, crew, passengers and cargo with special reference to any hazardous materials on board. Any need for outside assistance should be ascertained and organised. It is the Harbour Master's responsibility to allocate a berth for any such vessel taken in and ensure all appropriate services are closed up.

5.3.5 Tug and salvage equipment availability

Aquatic Towage is based at Weymouth Harbour and can be utilised. Tugs are also based at Portland, just five miles away and available on about half an hour's notice in the daytime, 4 hours' notice at night. Due to their size there may be difficulties for them operating in the Outer Harbour.

There is some limited salvage capacity at Portland which could be mobilised rapidly and extensive salvage equipment available from the Solent, about four hours steaming to Weymouth.

The Port of Portland listens 24 hours to VHF Channel 74 for emergency response.

5.3.6 HM Coastguard

The area Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) is at the Solent HQ, but a district 'mobile unit' is also based at Weymouth. The district Coastguard holds access equipment and shore support gear.

Solent Coastguard can be contacted by:

Telephone 02392 552100 or 999 for an emergency

DSC MMSI 002320011

VHF Channel 16 or 67

5.3.7 Vessel Master

The vessel Master presides over and has total responsibility for the ship and those who sail on her. The Master runs the ship and has authority over all those on board. The Master is responsible for safe navigation in the broadest sense of the word and ensures that the crews are ready at all times to carry out on board duties as necessary.

The Master will organise duties in such a manner, as to ensure that he/she and their crew can benefit from the legally required amount of rest as stated by The Merchant Shipping (Maritime Labour Convention) (Hours of Work) Regulations 2018 & the Maritime Labour Convention 2006. The Master has the overriding authority and responsibility to make decisions about carrying out those actions the Master deems necessary in order to contribute to the interests of those on board, the ship, safety, health and environment, and to prevent pollution and to request the Company's assistance.

The Master will ensure that legislative and regulatory measures and the operation of the management system are enforced. He/ she implements the environmental and safety policy as described in the ships ISM Compliant Safety Management System. During an incident the Master remains responsible and in command of decisions made onboard his vessel, but will ultimately liaise with the Harbour Master, the Emergency Services, MCA and SOSREP (Secretary of State's Representative) on the actions required to safeguard the safety of life, environment and property. The decision to abandon ship (or evacuate) will always be made by the vessels Masters (or senior surviving officer)

5.3.8 Wrecks, Abandoned Vessels & Dangerous Vessels

Port authorities have a common law duty to ensure that their harbours are safe for navigation and, equally, to warn ships using the harbour of any hazards within its port. Wrecks are an important consideration within this duty.

In the first instance, anybody having control of a wreck has a duty to remove it and Harbour Masters are entitled to demand that they remove it forthwith.

That said, Harbour Masters have powers to deal with any wrecked vessel which is, or is likely to become, an obstruction or danger to navigation or to lifeboats within his port or its approaches.

These powers are:

- To take possession of, and raise, remove or destroy the whole or any part of the vessel and any other property to which the power extends.
- To light or buoy the vessel or part of the vessel and such other property until it is raised, removed or destroyed.

Definition of Powers and Legal Framework

Weymouth Harbour has powers under s.252, *Merchant Shipping Act 1995* (as amended); s56, *Harbours, Docks & Piers Clauses Act 1847* to remove and, if necessary, destroy wrecks and abandoned vessels.

The general power of harbour authorities in relation to wrecks is set out in s.252 of the 1995 Act:

“Where any vessel is sunk, stranded or abandoned in, or in or near any approach to, any harbour or tidal water under the control of a harbour authority or conservancy authority in such a manner as, in the opinion of the authority, to be, or likely to become, an obstruction or danger to navigation or to lifeboats engaged in the lifeboat service in that harbour or water or approach thereto, that authority may exercise any of the following powers.” (NB. This contains power of destruction)

- To require the owner of the wreck to remove it; or
- To take possession of, raise, remove or destroy the whole, or any part of the vessel, and any other property to which the power extends; or
- To light or buoy the vessel until it is raised, removed or destroyed.
- Subject to various restrictions, sell the vessel or part of the vessel so raised or removed and any other property recovered during the exercise of the above powers; and
- To reimburse itself, out of the proceeds of the sale, for the expenses incurred by the authority in relation to the sale.

s.56, Harbours, Docks & Piers Clauses Act 1847

“The harbour master may remove any wreck or other obstruction to the harbour, dock, or pier, or the approaches to the same, and also any floating timber which impedes the navigation thereof, and the expense of removing any such wreck, obstruction, or floating timber shall be repaid by the owner of the same; and the harbour master may detain such wreck or floating timber for securing the expenses, and on non-payment of such expenses, on demand, may sell such wreck or floating timber, and out of the proceeds of such sale pay such expenses, rendering the overplus, if any, to the owner on demand.” (NB. There is no provision here for destruction of the vessel)

The Dangerous Vessels Act 1985 grants powers to Harbour Authorities to manage vessels deemed dangerous. These powers include the ability to detain, move, and ultimately dispose of vessels posing a hazard to navigation or safety within their jurisdiction. Harbour Authorities can take action to safeguard both maritime activities and the environment by addressing potential threats posed by such vessels.

5.3.8.1 Action:

For emergency assistance the RCC and CHA should be contacted.

5.3.9 Fire

The local Fire Brigade will attend any ship fire within the port.

5.3.9.1 Action:

If alongside within the harbour, call Dorset Fire Brigade Tel. 999

If in the river, call Solent Coastguard VHF Channel 16 or 67 and notify:

- Position.
- Whether able to reach an access point and if so which one.
- ETA at access point.
- Scale of problem.
- Number of persons on board.
- Type of fire.
- Type of cargo.
- Type and nature of assistance required.

Call Weymouth Harbour Office (VHF Ch. 12 or 01305 838423).

5.3.10 Persons in the water

For persons in the water within the harbour, or close to the beaches in Weymouth Bay where Harbour Master's vessels patrol, direct and immediate action should be taken by such craft to conduct a rescue, notifying Coastguard of their actions.

For persons in the water outside the confines of the area patrolled by Harbour Master's craft, or if they are not available, action should be taken as follows:

Notify Solent Coastguard VHF Channel 16 or 67, dial 999 and notify:

- Ship name.
- Inbound/outbound.
- State of tide.
- Speed of current.
- Location.
- Number of persons in the water.
- Whether local assistance available.

Solent Coastguard will decide appropriate response and if necessary will call RNLI, their shore team or other appropriate service.

5.3.11 Initial Communications

In the event of an emergency or incident within the harbour limits mariners should utilise the international distress, urgency or safety messages and procedures to ensure that the most appropriate assistance is provided in a timely manner. HM Coastguard can be contacted via VHF channel 16, or by dialling 999.

A MAYDAY or MAYDAY RELAY message will be utilised by vessels when a vessel or person is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requires immediate assistance. A PAN PAN message will be utilised by vessels when the safety of a vessel, or of someone on board or within sight is threatened, but which does not require immediate assistance.

The Harbour Master should be informed of incidents and emergencies within the

Weymouth Harbour limits or approaches via calling the Berthing Office on 01305 838423. Alternatively, if within range, the UHF Site Radio orange button facility on the radio handset can be used for establishing communications in an emergency.

5.3.12 Press and Media

Information to the Public and Press will be channelled through Dorset Communication Team. Staff must be instructed not to make “on the spot” statements to the media unless authorised by the Communication Team. Contact: 01305 838073

6. REPORTING, ASSESSMENT AND AUDIT

6.1 Key performance indicators

The Port of Weymouth has set itself the following key performance indicators, all of which conform to the best practice requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code and its appending Guide to Good Practice.

6.1.1 Pilotage

A pilot will be available at the correct time for every vessel requiring one.

Pilots will be appropriately trained and competent.

6.1.2 Pilot boat

The pilot boat is provided by the Port of Portland by an agreement and is maintained to full MCA requirements as laid out in the appropriate Code and operated safely and reliably by competent qualified crew.

6.1.3 Navigation

The harbour operates the pilotage service and regulates vessel movements in order to provide a 100% incident-free, effective and safe service to shipping.

6.1.4 Conservancy

A target is set to be as close to 100% reliability as possible with aids to navigation. As an imperative minimum, IALA reliability specifications must be achieved. A published schedule of routine checking is No. 4.9 of the list of freestanding documents attached to this SMS, which is issued as a guide to achieving these targets. See section 3.36 – 3.36.3 for details. Defects are reported by LARS to Trinity House.

6.1.5 Hydrography

The Harbour of Weymouth is surveyed annually by professional hydrographers. The results will be notified to the Hydrographer of the Navy. Any significant changes should be disseminated to relevant harbour users.

6.1.6 Emergencies Exercises

One major emergency exercise should be programmed per year. Ongoing training is to be maintained in all emergency procedures within the port. The specific requirements of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan are addressed in its own plan, calling for more frequent exercises.

6.1.7 Consultation

All stakeholders meet with the harbour management four times a year in the Harbour Consultative Group.

6.1.8 Audits and continuous assessment

Ensure continuous assessment is carried out with periodic internal reviews of all port functions. See section on audit and assessment for details.

Carry out a full formal audit and update at not more than three-year intervals, of all port functions and report the results publicly. This is also an opportunity to refresh the PMSC plan aspects of this overarching document. As detailed in the risk assessments of Document 2, all risks are subject to the scrutiny and requirement of the 'ALARP' principle. At five-year intervals the PMSC requires that the plan is re-assessed from first principles.

6.2 External reporting

Every port has had a duty to report any ship or crew with 'Apparent Anomalies or Deficiencies' which visits the port in accordance with Notice MSN 1832 (M). A copy of the relevant notice is contained with the freestanding documents. This legal requirement is placed on pilots as well and they must report to the Harbour Master or manager any vessel they board which they find has anomalies. If the vessel is seriously sub-standard, they are entitled to refuse to put the port at risk by moving the vessel.

The procedure to be followed is as laid down in that notice. That is, pilots should advise the Harbour Master who will in turn advise the MCA. Or if not reporting to a Harbour Master, pilots should advise the MCA direct by electronic means.

Reportable incidents defined by the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, and the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 are notified to the MAIB at the earliest opportunity.

In December 2023, the Department for Transport (DFT) requested further notification of any incidents affecting UK maritime assets or interests, including incidents occurring in or around UK waters, involving UK-flagged vessels or those with UK connections, and incidents involving UK citizens worldwide.

Reporting promptly to the Maritime Resilience team at DFT assists in mobilising resources efficiently, providing accurate situational reports to stakeholders, and complementing existing reporting regimes. Qualifying incidents should be reported by email to maritimeresilience@dft.gov.uk.

6.3 Internal reporting

The internal reporting chain within the Port of Weymouth is short and effective.

The Harbour Master reports to the Harbours Committee, the Duty Holder, through its chairman and brief holder. The Committee in its' turn is answerable to Dorset Council as the Competent Harbour Authority. All harbour staff report to the Harbour Master.

6.4 Investigation and reporting

The reporting of events within the port has to be made to appropriate authorities whenever called for. Any such event also triggers an immediate review of those aspects of plans, policies and procedures which are affected by it, to seek out and amend any deficiencies shown up by the event.

Incident reports by pilots to the Harbour Master to include:

- Near miss.
- Touching bottom.
- Dangerous pilot access.
- Berthing and un-berthing problems.

Status reports by harbour staff to Harbour Master each Monday morning:

- Navigation aids.
- Lifesaving equipment as part of a harbour check.

- Boat defects.

Harbour Master to Duty Holder:

- Reporting of incidents.
- Operational difficulties.
- Dangerous acts.
- Port statistics.

6.5 The audit trail

The Port Marine Safety Code requires every port to carry out a thorough review and audit of its safety system at intervals no greater than three years.

6.6 Designated person

The Port Marine Safety Code requires every port to appoint a designated person to carry out periodic audits of a port's compliance with the Code. Dorset Council as CHA has appointed an external contractor to perform this role.

The Designated Person (DP) will perform his role as defined by the Port Marine Safety Code by formal audits, attendance at Harbours Committee meetings and regular informal liaison.

James Hannon of ABPmer Ltd has been appointed as Designated Person for the three Dorset Harbours, and undertakes independent audits of each harbour's compliance with the Code.

As per the Council's constitution, the Designated Person reports to Full Council via the Harbours Committee the summary of an internal audit against the Port Marine Safety Code and compliance of the Safety Management System. This will also form the basis of the 3-yearly report of PMSC compliance to the MCA.

6.7 Continuous assessment

The Harbour Master keeps the plans, policies and procedures under continuous review to ensure that they provide best practice to nationally agreed standards.

Whenever change appears necessary under the continuous assessment process, affected parties are to be consulted before the change is implemented.

6.8 Annual review

The Harbour Master should monitor, that is make a more structured examination of the port's workings, at which time all employees should be formally asked if they have any inputs to make, and the Duty Holder consulted.

The following should be addressed:

- Are the port's legal framework, byelaws and directions appropriate, and if not what amendments should be recommended to the Competent Harbour Authority?
- Is the port being operated in accordance with the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code and the Guide to Good Practice?
- Are the policies, plans and procedures described herein being carried out? If not, why not? Does this plan require amendment or is there some deficiency in the managing and operating of the port?
- Have all statutory requirements, surveys and local regulations been complied with?
- Have there been any incidents in the previous quarter which call for review of the Safety Management System?

- Have the elements of the Operations Plan all functioned to the level expected of them? If not, what remedial action is being taken?
- Have emergency systems been tested, and is progress towards or the results of the annual major exercise being developed?
- Have appropriate notices been given?
- Have any consultees affected by any activity in the last period been consulted, and with what results?
- Are there any upcoming changes, events, or problems to be considered, and if so what action is being taken to prepare for them?
- What training has been carried out in the period, and what is planned both for the next period and the next year?
- Any other relevant considerations.

This monitoring should be recorded and delivered to the Duty Holder as part of the Council's reporting requirements. This will form part of the Designated Person's annual audit.

6.9 Reporting of incidents, accidents or disasters

Other than emergency services, the external authority to whom ship damages, stranding's, sinking, fires and other events concerning ships or crews should be reported to is the MCA.

The Marine Guidance Note "Accident Reporting and Investigation" is addressed to all Harbour Authorities and explains the reporting requirements of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations. Any accident which meets the criteria should be reported to the MAIB by the quickest available means. Further details are also provided in the Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations including with an incident report form template.

Details of the extensive list of contacts for environmental emergencies or reporting are contained in the Data Directory of the Oil Spill Contingency Plan, which should be consulted.

The internal Incident Report Form should be used for all accidents, incidents or near misses to gather the correct information to assist with investigation and both internal and external reporting. A database is held to summarise such reports and to guide analysis of trends.

6.10 Internal investigation and reporting

All unplanned events within the Port of Weymouth must be investigated by the Harbour Master as soon as possible after the event.

All staff within the port must be trained to record the event, making contemporaneous notes.

Whenever possible, photographs should be taken. Photographs taken at the time are sometimes a most powerful way of dealing with questions after the event.

The object always is to ensure that there is sufficient evidence to be able to draw conclusions about the event. Such contemporaneous records can be very important also in providing information for insurance interests and in providing the employer or authority with the information to deal with any claims which may arise.

Where it is not practicable to make contemporaneous notes, those involved should be debriefed by the Harbour Master as soon after the event as is possible. In all cases, the record must be agreed and signed by all parties involved.

6.11 Reporting

Reports on all serious unplanned events within the port should be forwarded by the Harbour Master to:

- The chairman of the Harbours Committee and brief holder for the harbour.
- The Chief Executive of Dorset Council for the CHA.

If appropriate, reports should also be made to:

- The Insurance Manager.
- Dorset Council Emergency Planning Officer.
- Appropriate Council Director.
- Dorset Council Emergency Planners
- Dorset Council Communications Team.

6.12 Formal audits

The Designated Person, or other nominated individual, will conduct an annual internal audit against the Port Marine Safety Code and compliance of the Safety Management System as part of the reporting requirement to Full Council via the Harbours Committee.

The Harbour Risk Register will be audited at least annually by Dorset Council as part of the Council's audit system.

The three-year update and audit will be published by the CHA and lodged in the Council library and available at the Council offices. The updated plan is published on the port's website.

At five-year intervals the Plan for Conformity is to be comprehensively re-examined and redrafted from the beginning.

An audit by an independent, external organisation may be requested by the Harbours Committee if considered necessary.

Annex 1

Roles and Responsibilities

Weymouth Harbour supports the Port Marine Safety Code so roles and responsibilities align with the Code and the Guide to Good Practice on Port Marine Operations.

Harbours Committee

Dorset Council, as the Statutory Harbour Authority, has delegated to the Harbours Committee its functions as Harbour Authority as defined in section 57(1) of the Harbours Act 1964 and all other legislation including local Acts and byelaws which may apply for time to time in respect of the Council's functions with regard to the administration and management of Weymouth Harbour.

The Harbours Committee is a committee of Dorset Council ("the Council") and is the Council's prime decision-making body for Weymouth Harbour ("the Harbour"). Whilst the Council is itself the Statutory and Competent Harbour Authority, the Harbours Committee has delegated authority from the Council to make decisions relating to the Harbour in accordance with the Business Plan and agreed budget, the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code ("the Code") and Health and Safety at Work (etc.) legislation ("the legislation"). The Committee will properly discharge its duties and powers in relation to marine safety and the safe use of all harbour lands in accordance with the Port Marine Safety Code. The Harbours Committee will be responsible for developing and implementing its budget and policy framework and managing harbour assets.

The Harbours Advisory Committee advise the Cabinet member for Place Commissioned Services (the Duty Holder) Councillor Jon Andrews, in exercising functions of the Council as a harbour authority as defined in the Harbours Act 1964 and any other functions arising under any local Act and/or byelaw in respect of the operational issues for the harbour.

The Advisory Committee has the power to advise the Executive (Cabinet) in determining income and expenditure matters relating to the harbours for which it is responsible.

Harbour Consultative Group

The Council's Harbours Committee (HC) will establish a group, to be known as the Weymouth Harbour Consultative Group. The HC will regularly consult the Consultative Group (except in a case of special urgency or where it would be seriously detrimental to the interests of the Council to do so) on all matters substantially affecting the conservation, protection, regulation, management, maintenance and improvement of the harbour and its navigation.

The Harbours Committee shall seek the views of the Consultative Group on: -

- The Weymouth Harbour Business Plan
- Proposals to vary any charges in relation to business and recreational use of the harbour and its use by any vessels
- The giving of General Directions
- Proposals to construct or license any significant works in the harbour including dredging
- Changes to the use of the harbour.

Duty Holder

The Full Council of Dorset Council is the Statutory Harbour Authority and Competent Harbour Authority as defined in the Port Marine Safety Code. The Duty Holder is the Cabinet member for Place Commissioned Services Councillor Jon Andrews.

Designated Person

The Designated Person for Weymouth Harbour is an external contractor, currently James Hannon of ABPmer.

Harbour Master

The Harbour Master is authorised to act on behalf of the Harbours Committee in the course of his/her duties to meet the requirements of the Business Plan and Harbour Budget.

The Harbour Master is authorised to exercise all powers granted by statute to his position.

The Harbour Master may delegate some of those powers on a case-by-case basis to named members of harbour staff in his absence or for other specific occasions.

The Duty Berthing Officer is the Harbour Master's representative and is authorised to act on his behalf in the course of his/her duty.