

The Code of Practice for the Safety of Small Fishing Vessels mandatory
equipment for decked vessels of less than 10m registered length

**CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SAFETY OF SMALL FISHING VESSELS:
CHECK LIST OF REQUIREMENTS: SEE ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE IN ANNEX 2**

Equipment need not be MCA approved provided it is fit for its intended purpose.

DECKED Vessels of less than 10 metres (L)

“Decked vessels” means a vessel with a continuous watertight weather deck that extends from stem to stern and has positive freeboard throughout, in any condition of loading the vessel.

Item	Remarks/compliance	Expiry/Service Date
Liferaft(s) (for vessels of 7 metres (L) and over) - sufficient capacity for all persons on board vessel and appropriate for area of operation – See Annex 2 for guidance		
Lifejackets - 1 per person		
2 Lifebuoys (1 with 18 metre buoyant line attached) or 1 Lifebuoy (fitted with 18 metre buoyancy line) +1 Buoyant Rescue Quoit		
3 Parachute Flares		
2 Hand-held Flares		
1 Smoke Signal (buoyant or hand held)		
1 Multi-purpose Fire Extinguisher (fire rating 5A/34B)		
1 Multi-purpose Fire Extinguisher for oil fires (fire rating 13A/113B)		
Gas Detector		
1 Fire Blanket (light duty) in galley or cooking area (if applicable)		
Fire Detectors		
1 Fire Pump + Hose and 1 Fire Bucket and lanyard		
1 Satellite EPIRB or Personal Locator Beacon(s) – 1 per person		
VHF Radio – DSC fixed or hand held		
Bilge Pump		
Bilge Level Alarm		
Approved Navigation Lights & Sound Signals		
Anchor and cable/warp		
Compass		
Waterproof Torch		
Medical Kit in accordance with The Merchant Shipping and Fishing Vessels (Medical Stores) Regulations 1995 No.1802 or any superseding regulations		
Radar Reflector		
CO Alarms for every enclosed space that has a fired cooking or heating appliance or where engine exhausts penetrate the wheelhouse or crew space		

Note: The checklist represents the minimum safety equipment requirements and owners should consider carrying additional safety equipment. It is recommended that if you carry the Satellite EPIRB, you also carry Personal Locator Beacons for each member of the crew, and if you carry Personal Locator Beacons, you also carry a Satellite EPIRB. The liferaft, which is mandatory for vessel of 7 metres (L) and over and strongly recommended for vessels under 7 metres (L), should be fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Coastguard Operations Centres maintain a listening watch only on VHF Channel 16. The primary means of distress and urgency alerting should be via VHF DSC. Substantial modifications or alterations affecting the vessel's dimensions, structure or stability, the removal or repositioning of equipment, changes in the vessel's mode of fishing and/or its gear or the fitting of additional equipment shall be investigated, prior to making any changes, to ensure that the vessel ensure that the vessel is stable for its intended purpose and/or will continue to comply with the stability requirements of this Code. In addition such modifications or alterations shall only be carried out after consultation and with the approval of the MCA.

Coastguard OMS Vessel overdue guidance

Vessel - Overdue

Incidents involving reports of vessels missing or overdue

The report may be made because the vessel failed to make a scheduled call or because of its non arrival at a port/harbour

Overdue leisure vessels will often be reported by a concerned friend or relative

Additional considerations need to be made for commercial vessels reported overdue

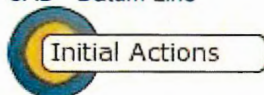
Related Links

[SafeTrx](#)

[EMSA Maritime Applications Portal](#)

[SAD - Datum Area](#)

[SAD - Datum Line](#)



Information Gathering

Who - first informant details

Who - vessel

- Name, callsign and MMSI number
- Type, size and description of vessel, CG66
- Radio
- Mobile Phone / Communications devices
- satcomms
- EPIRB
- SART
- Other tracking device

What - Activity or passage details

- Departure point
- Departure time
- Car registration number
- Activity
- ETA

Try to contact the vessel by any means possible as soon as practical

Persons On Board

- How many
- Profiles (e.g. age, sex, physical state etc.)
- Experience, Familiarity with the area

Is/might skipper be using [SafeTrx](#) trip monitoring or similar App?

✓ Ask if there are any other potential sources of information, e.g. Clubs, Website

✓ Look for latest entries on their Facebook / social media pages

Ask the first informant to call if they have any further information, or if the vessel returns

Declare Phase and Follow Phase Actions

Mission Conduct



? Could info from **IMDatE** be useful (e.g. FVMS)

Vessel

- Type and size
- Capability and equipment
- Condition (i.e. seaworthiness)
- What means of communication are there on board
mobile phone, VHF radio etc.
- LSE

Persons on board

- How many
- Crew composition
- Profiles
age, sex, health etc.
- Experience

Vessel Activity

If fishing vessel

⚠ Overdue FVs often due to distress situation

⚠ Check FVMS via **IMDatE**

When was vessel due in port or to market

Is owner/agent aware or concerned - if 1st informant, probably something wrong

Does FV have:

- EPIRB
- AIS
- MAFF/DEFRA tracker (VMS - check **IMDatE**)

Do crew have PLBs

If making passage

- Last known position
- Type and size of vessel
- Did the vessel depart
- Is the ETA reasonable given environmental / tidal conditions or could the vessel still be under passage
Weather over passage
Tidal conditions

- Could the vessel have arrived or taken port en-route

If not making passage

- What activity was being undertaken
- Location or area of activity
- Radius of capability
How far could the vessel get before running out of fuel or needing to return

⚠ If the vessel departed from within another Ops Centre's area of responsibility, contact and liaise with the other Ops Centre

⚠ If vessel using, or possibly using, [SafeTrx](#) app, contact the NMOC

Search Plan

? Is a search plan required

- Alert and Distress Phase - Request a RIPA enquiry using a SPOC to try to obtain location information on any mobile phones/devices

Consider

- Datum Area
- Datum Line

Environment

- Poor weather may have caused the vessel to take shelter
- Poor visibility may have caused the vessel to become lost or delayed
- Strong head winds or flat calm (for sailing vessels) may cause delay
- Tide -direction and rate over period

⚠ Forecast conditions and possible hazards along or near route must be considered when determining emergency phase and level of response

? Contact

On Call Duty Personnel - see [Duty Rosters](#) for contact details

- Duty Controller
- Duty Press Officer
- Duty CPSO
- Lloyds
- DEFRA/SFPA
- Local Fisheries Officer
- MAIB
- Send EU_SITREP to CERS
- MCA Duty Surveyor (if applicable)
- FCO (if applicable)
- MCA Enforcement Branch (if applicable)

Tasking Facilities

- Lifeboats
- Aircraft
- Additional
- Coast Rescue
- Emergency Services

Phases

- Distress
- Alert
- Uncertainty

Mission Conduct

- Planning
- Statement
- Records
- Reports
- Reviews

Welfare

- Welfare
- Blood Borne Viruses
- TRiM Procedure

Conclusion

- Termination
- Post Mission Review Form

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Safety Flyer to the Fishing Industry

SAFETY FLYER TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Fishing vessel *Solstice*, capsized and sinking resulting in the loss of one life, 26 September 2017

Narrative

At 1938 on 26 September 2017, the 9.9m fishing vessel *Solstice* (**Figure 1**) capsized in calm weather conditions about 7 miles south of Plymouth. The skipper and crewman were rescued from the vessel's upturned hull (**Figure 2**) about 5½ hours later, but the vessel's owner was trapped and drowned in the wheelhouse. *Solstice* later sank.

The scallop dredger had recently been modified to operate as a stern trawler and its owner, skipper and crewman were in the process of hauling their second catch of the day on board when the capsizing occurred. The net's cod-end was full of fish, moss and sand, and started to move uncontrollably along the transom as the vessel rolled in the light swell.

The capsizing was rapid, and the crew did not have time to raise the alarm before they entered the water. As the vessel was not equipped with an emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) and the crew did not carry personal locator beacons (PLBs), they were wholly reliant on family and friends realizing they were overdue and alerting the coastguard.



Figure 1: *Solstice*



Figure 2: Upturned hull floating on surface (photograph taken the following morning)

Safety lessons

- *Solstice* capsized because it did not have sufficient transverse stability to safely lift the contents of its net on board over the stern. This was primarily because the weight in the net was excessive and the height of the lifting point at the stern was high (**Figure 3**).



Figure 3: *Solstice* scallop dredging four weeks before the accident

- The dangers of modifying small fishing vessels and changing fishing methods are well known and the consequences on stability are often fatal. However, the vessel had no stability data and a safe method of fishing had not been developed.
- It is important to have a clear understanding of your vessel's stability, but the impact that fishing methods have on stability cannot be emphasized enough. Talk to your local fishing vessel surveyors and seek expert advice if necessary before commencing any structural modifications, but especially modifications to change or alter the method of fishing.
- It was obvious that the weight in the net was excessive, but the crew remained determined to lift the catch on board. No catch, no matter how valuable, is worth a life. Stop and seriously consider your options and, ultimately, be prepared to let it go.
- The survivors were extremely fortunate that *Solstice's* upturned hull remained afloat as they were not wearing lifejackets when they entered the water, and it took over 5 hours for them to be found and rescued. Personal flotation devices should always be worn when working on deck and emergency use lifejackets should be readily available.
- It was also fortunate that the survivors were found. Their friends and family did not know where they had been fishing and, because *Solstice* was not equipped with an automatic identification system (AIS) transceiver, the coastguard could not identify the vessel's last recorded position. The carriage of an EPIRB and/or PLBs would have resulted in an immediate and location-focused emergency response. The carriage of an AIS transceiver in this case would have been of invaluable benefit.

This safety flyer and the MAIB's investigation report are on our website: www.gov.uk/maib

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