



**THE PORT OF BRIDPORT
(West Bay)**

**MARINE OPERATIONS PLAN
(for Compliance with the
Port Marine Safety Code)**

September 2012



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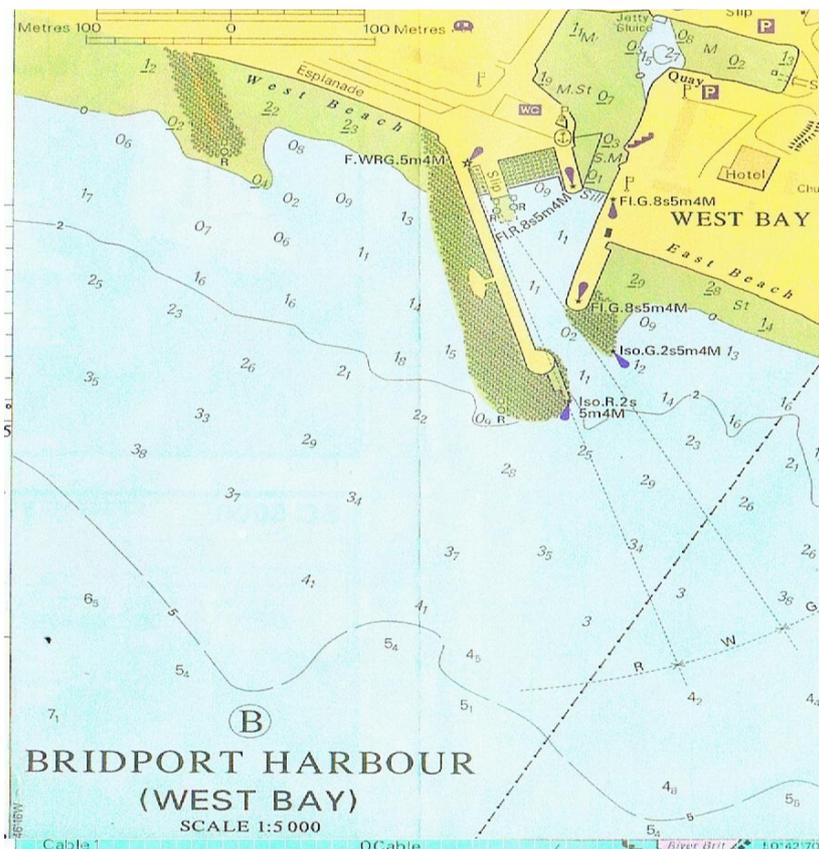
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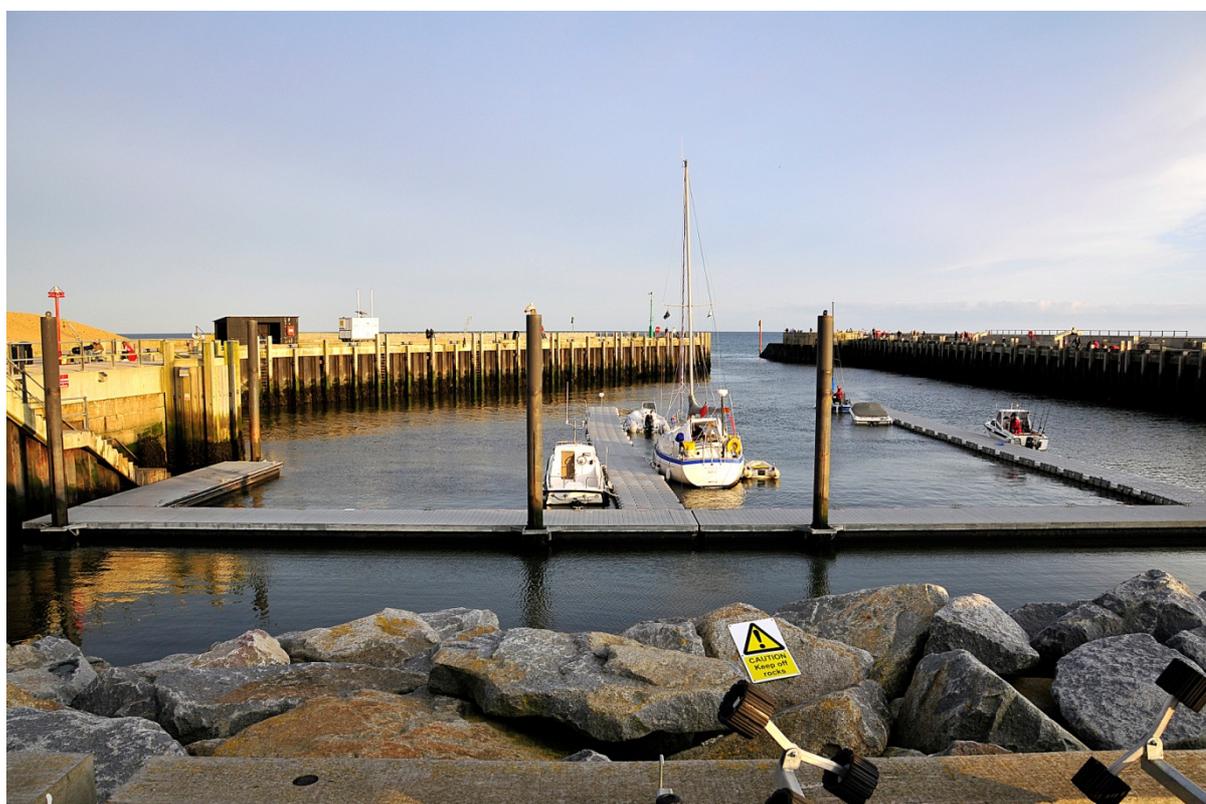
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1 THE PORT OF BRIDPORT (WEST BAY)

The Port of Bridport lies in 50° 42.6'N, 002° 45.8' W, in the North-East part of Lyme Bay. It is a single basin formed at the mouth of the River Brit, but the river is now held behind a dam and sluice gates at the inner side of the harbour, and there is no navigation connection between the two. The new harbour at West Bay consists of a single tidal basin which largely dries out at low water. Originally the port was in Bridport town, some two miles upriver, but silting and a difficult navigation made a new outer harbour necessary and the basin of West Bay was created in Victorian times.

In 2005 West Bay harbour mouth was extensively rebuilt to make the entrance safer; an outer basin and entrance were created set at an angle to lessen the weather effect in the entrance. Except for strong South-Easterlies, this new construction has been effective.



Photograph 1 Bridport West Bay new outer basin and harbour mouth

1.1 Harbour limits

The Bridport harbour limits consist of a semi-circle of 1,000 feet (304.88m) radius, centred on the pier ends. Figure 1 illustrates this.



Figure 1 Bridport Harbour Limits

1.2 Tidal range

The tidal range at Bridport is a maximum of 4.6m on highest spring tides, and a minimum of 0.9m on slackest neap tides. The harbour very largely dries out at low water and all movements in the port are on the tides.

1.3 Anchorages

There are no designated anchorages at Bridport.

At Bridport ships can anchor about 740m South of the pier ends, or farther out beyond the 10m contour. The area is completely open from South-East through South to West and offers no shelter to weather from those sectors. A choppy sea can get up very rapidly in Lyme Bay when the wind rises from an exposed quarter.

1.4 Ship parameters

There are no set size limits for craft in Bridport, and in times past coasters used the port. Nowadays only small fishing boats and yachts enter, and a length of 21m, beam 3.75m, and draft 2.4m, would be considered the maximum practicable in the harbour.

1.5 Port users

Bridport West Bay is used by a fleet of small fishing boats, some charter boats, and leisure craft of various types. There is no commercial traffic (other than fishing boats) nor any expectation that there will be. The inner basin is completely filled with small craft moorings.

1.6 Designated Nature Conservancy Sites

There are no designated nature conservancy areas within the Bridport harbour limits. The river Brit from the dam at West Bay up to Bridport town is an SSSI. The only craft operated on the river above the dam are a small fleet of day hire rowing boats which are licensed annually by the Bridport harbour master.

2 LEGAL STRUCTURE; PROFESSIONAL STAFF; POLICY

2.1 Statutory Authority

West Dorset District Council (WDDC) is the Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA) and Competent Harbour Authority (CHA) for Bridport. It is answerable to its electorate via the councillors both in direct approaches and at the ballot box.

2.2 Legal duties and powers

Bridport has a very long history. It is an open port, into which any user has a right to navigate on payment of harbour dues. There is a duty to operate it safely for the benefit of all such users. The berths and wharves are under the control of the Harbour Master.

2.3 Enabling legislation

Bridport operates under an Order of 1921, when the port's ownership was transferred from Trust Commissioners to Bridport Corporation; the title subsequently passed to WDDC in 1974.

2.4 By-laws

Bridport has a set of by-laws drawn up in 1945 and believed still to be in force; a copy is enclosed at Appendix 3. In addition a general set of WDDC by-laws, mainly concerned with conduct on roads and in public places, has force in both harbour areas.

2.5 Harbour rules

Mooring holders are required to comply with additional rules and a Harbour Policy document; copies are attached at Appendix 2.

2.6 Directions

There are no directions extant

2.7 Harbour revision orders

There are no Harbour Revision Orders in force.

2.8 Accountability

The WDDC as the SHA and CHA is accountable for its duties and powers. Its discharge of this responsibility is measured against nationally agreed standards as laid down in the Port Marine Safety Code and amplified in the Code's accompanying Guide to Good Practice.

2.9 The Duty Holder

Under the terms of the Port Marine Safety Code, the Management Committee of West Dorset District Council is the Duty Holder.

2.10 The Designated Person

The Management Committee has nominated its Senior Health and Safety Officer to be the Designated Person for Bridport.

2.11 Professional staff

DDC employs a Harbour Master and two seasonal Harbour Assistants at Bridport with day-to-day operational responsibility for the ports.

2.12 Policy

As required by the Port Marine Safety Code, WDDC publishes its policies, plans and periodic reports, setting out how they comply with those standards and these are found below.

2.13 Statement of policy

WDDC as the Statutory Harbour Authority (SHA) is committed to undertaking and regulating marine operations so as to safeguard the harbours, their users, the public and the environment.

The Authority aims to run a safe, efficient, cost-effective, sustainable harbour operation for the benefit of all users and the wider community.

The Authority aims to meet the national requirements in the Port Marine Safety Code, and fulfil its legal responsibilities whilst endeavouring to meet the changing needs of harbour users.

2.14 General management policy

The Council will support the commercial, fishing, and recreational activities in the harbours through the provision of appropriate services of good value.

The policy of the Council is to:

Manage the assets of the Authority safely, economically and efficiently.

Train the operational staff and ensure they are properly trained in emergency and contingency procedures.

Regulate traffic within the harbour limits to ensure safe and efficient movements.

2.15 Environment

The SHA and its authorised officers are aware of their environmental commitments. Although there are no designated conservation areas within the harbour limits, the local environment is considered important and the impact on it will be a material consideration if any changes to the existing situation are proposed.

2.16 Marine safety policy

The Council and its staff will ensure marine safety by:

Providing a safe environment for navigation through aids to navigation and conservancy.

Regulating activities within the port as required by statute.

Training and educating staff, users and the public in safety awareness.

Ensure as far as reasonably practicable the safety at work of its employees and other people who may be affected by its activities.

Application of the Port Marine Safety Code and its supporting Guide to Good Practice through this Marine Operations Plan.

2.17 Systems and standards

The plans established in this document have been developed on the basis of a formal risk analysis, and a Safety Management System evolved in response to that risk analysis. It is based on the "As Low As Reasonably Practicable" (ALARP) principle, which aims to reduce risk levels to the lowest practical level.

2.18 Consultation

Representatives of all regular user groups were consulted in the creation of this Code. Provision is made under the continuous assessment procedure for any change which affects a consultee to be consulted before or at the time of any such change.

In the course of preparation of the PMSC Plan for Bridport, the following were consulted:

Harbour Staff

Fishermans' Association

West Bay Small Boat Owners' Association

No further consultations were carried out in 2012

3 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

WDDC considers the following key responsibilities apply to its ports, all of which conform to the best practice requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code and its appending Guide to Good Practice.

3.1 Operation

To operate the port and regulate vessel movements to provide a 100% incident-free service.

3.2 Conservancy

To maintain and operate all navigation marks and lights to at least IALA standards.

A sand and shingle bar can build up between the piers at Bridport Harbour under certain weather conditions. Should this occur it is either scoured away at the earliest opportunity or, should this fail, it is dug out.

3.3 Hydrography

The Harbours will be surveyed as and when necessary, by professional surveyors. Where appropriate the results will be notified to the Hydrographer of the Navy.

3.4 Emergencies

To carry out one major exercise per year.

To ensure on-going training is maintained in all emergency procedures within the port.

3.5 Tide watch

Although rare, the harbour staff at Bridport attend when a tide watch is called by the Environment Agency and operate the hatches if necessary. They also check for problems in the harbour and assist in protecting adjacent property from flooding at any one of three levels. The need for tide watch has receded since the building of the new outer harbour but is still a theoretical possibility.

3.6 Consultation

Both commercial and leisure users are met at the annual harbour users' meeting but the Harbour Master is available on a daily basis to discuss with any users, any areas of concern.

3.7 Audits and continuous assessment

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

Carry out a full formal audit at not more than three year intervals, of all port functions and report the results publicly.

4 SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

4.1 Introduction

The Port Marine Safety Code requires that a port's powers, policies, plans, and procedures must be based on a formal assessment of hazards and risks. Harbour authorities must have formal safety management systems.

To comply with this, the hazards within the port of Bridport have been identified, the risks associated with each evaluated, and the element of the Safety Management System which applies to that risk described.

4.2 Safety

Safety is not a separate discipline, isolated from the workings and day-to-day life of a port. The full and proper application of safety measures allows an incident-free and safe working environment in which ships go about their business without hazard.

The objective of the Port Marine Safety Code is to ensure that every element in a port's operation follows the same unitary system of safe working practices, working within which is automatic and embedded in the way everyday activities are carried out. To this end it prescribes lines of authority, actions to be taken, and the way in which the port's activities are to be carried out to achieve that level of safety. Within the Marine Operations Plan for Bridport, safety has been integrated at all levels.

4.3 Lines of authority

The Port of Bridport has a simple and effective line of authority. The port is managed by WDDC's Leisure & Tourism manager. The Leisure & tourism Manager reports to the Duty Holder, normally via the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee but directly if necessary.

Each port has a Harbour Master who reports to the Leisure & tourism Manager. The Harbour Master manages and regulates his port and all movements into and out of their ports are under their direction. There are two Harbour Assistants to give general help in the running of their port.

4.4 The Duty Holder

The Duty Holder is the Management Committee of West Dorset District Council. The lines of command are shown at Appendix 5.

4.5 Structure of the Safety Management System

The Safety Management System provides a framework for the operation of the port and is in three parts:

Port Procedures: The port procedures lay down the practical day-to-day working practices of the port as contained in the Marine Operations Plan.

Risk Assessment: The Formal Risk Assessment identifies and grades the risks likely to occur within the port of Bridport/West Bay.

Responses: to risks identified in the formal risk assessment are contained within the Marine Operations Plan.

4.6 Free-standing plans now adopted into the system

There are four plans adopted into the Safety Management System:

WDDC Civil Emergencies Plan

The District Emergency Plan lays out the systems to be used for any emergency in the district. Should any incident in the harbour area have consequences reaching beyond its confines, it is the regional plan which will be brought to bear.

Coastal Oil Pollution Response Plan

The port is below the size limit for the requirement to have an individual oil pollution response plan, but is party to the Coastal Region plan which is being re-written after experience of an exercise.

Environment Agency Major Incident Plan for West Bay

This plan deals with flooding of West Bay from tidal or fluvial events. It is to be incorporated into the Civil Emergencies Plan.

Waste Management Plans

A WDDC waste management plan approved by MCA is in force, appendix 10

4.7 Integration of the elements

Only a limited number of people are involved in running the port; there is a clearly defined senior officer, the Harbour Master, in charge of all practical marine matters. His reporting line is also short and clear, and hence the scope for uncertainty or confusion is minimised.



Photograph 2 View looking inwards across outer basin to inner harbour

5 OPERATIONS PLAN

5.1 Overview of port movement control

Very largely, traffic movement in and out of Bridport is left to the skippers of craft on the move. At Bridport most are regular users familiar with the entrance and have no difficulty avoiding each other. There is an understanding that craft outside the entrance channel must give way to craft which are in it, and allow them to clear before entering.

The Harbour Master has reserve rights to direct vessel movements and determine priorities when the need arises. Given the port's excellent safety record there seems little point in changing the simple direct intervention methods which have been so effective.

When required, navigation control is carried out by the Harbour Masters or their assistants by direct intervention from the quayside, or by VHF radio. There are no formal navigation control centres. Bridport is equipped with a fast patrol boat, used both within the harbours and to police the beaches and inshore waters around their harbours.

Two documents, the "Rules for Harbour Users at Bridport and Lyme Regis", and "Harbour policy" control the behaviour of port users at both ports. Both documents are updated in November each year and are shown at appendix 2.

5.2 Communications

When the Harbour Master is in attendance he listens and works on VHF Channel 16 and 11 at Bridport.

5.3 Collision Regulations

Vessel movements are carried out in conformity with the provisions of the International Regulations to Prevent Collision at Sea, 1972, as amended.

5.4 Speed limits

At Bridport, a speed limit of bare steerage way is in force within the harbour. Outside the harbour entrance, an 8 knot limit is in force.

In the harbour limits and over an extensive coastal strip from Eype by way of West Bay to the mouth of the River Bride, a speed limit of 8 knots is enforced. This is intended to keep vessel speeds to the legal minimum when within 200 metres of any beach.

5.5 Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

There is no VTS service at Bridport.

5.6 Pilotage

Officially, pilotage is compulsory at Bridport. But there has not been an act of pilotage since 1985, and no expectation that any vessel will call at Bridport requiring

a pilot. Accordingly, the West Dorset District Council as owners and managers of the port is considering seeking to relinquish their pilotage duties and the CHA status of the port once legislation permits. A harbour Revision Order may be used for this.

No pilots are authorised; should any vessel request the services of a pilot, guidance could be given and visiting yachts have on occasion been led inwards by the harbour boat.

5.7 Passage plan

As there is no pilotage service, there is no requirement for a formal passage plan system to be in place. The Harbour Master will give advice, by radio if appropriate, to visiting craft on request.

5.8 Training and qualifications

The SHA requires its Harbour Master to have had suitable harbour experience. Each year one aspect of the port's emergency response regime should be subject to a full-scale response exercise and the other aspects be subject to refresher training with all relevant equipment surveyed and checked as necessary.

The Council used to operate a staff appraisal scheme when the training, further qualifications, or revalidation needs of all staff were assessed. A training plan for the following year was then drawn up and implemented as resources allow. This has ceased to be applied but could usefully be re-introduced.

5.9 Berth operators and private users

5.9.1 Freight

There is no freight traffic in Bridport. The last commercial cargo vessel called in 1986 and there is no foreseeable prospect of freight returning.

5.9.2 Passenger ships

There are no passenger vessel calls at Bridport. Day trip charter boats take 'round the bay' excursion traffic.

5.9.3 Hazardous goods

Apart from small quantities of fuel for the port's boats, no hazardous goods are handled at either port.

5.9.4 Leisure users

There is an active boating community based at Bridport, with 132 private moorings let for leisure purposes. They are made up of 28 commercial fishing boats, 83 yachts and the rest small day fishing boats. Many of these are small privately-owned motor boats for non-commercial fishing. In 2011 173 other small fishing boats landed at Bridport.

5.10 Moorings

Bridport West Bay harbour is extensively filled with moorings. These are strictly controlled by the Harbour Masters on behalf of WDDC, which has the sole authority to authorise moorings. Most moorings are in trots, laid to ground chains across the harbour. Both the ground chains and risers are provided by the Council, boat owners providing their own rope attachments. Ground chains and risers are inspected annually by the Harbour Masters and their staff, it being the Council's responsibility to maintain these. The upper parts of moorings are the responsibility of the berth holder. Ground chains have to be renewed every 3 to 4 years.

There is a long waiting list – in 2011 about one hundred people - for moorings with a waiting time in the order of seven years. Moorings are allocated annually giving priority to existing mooring holders, then to WDDC ratepayers on the waiting list. Controls are in place to ensure fair allocation.

A large new launching slip was built into the outer basin as part of the 2005 harbour mouth reconstruction. With its coming into service the older slipway in the inner basin was taken out of use, but is still in place.

Two documents, the “Rules for Harbour Users at Bridport and Lyme Regis”, and “Harbour Policy” deal in detail with harbour use, moorings use and allocation, and general behaviour in the harbour area. These are shown at Appendix 2.

The moorings allocation for Bridport is shown at figure 4.

5.11 Fishing vessels

A total of 14 professionally-run fishing boats are based at Bridport. These are inshore trawlers or pot boats, with some swapping between functions to suit the seasons. There is one larger vessel and plans for a second one. The rest are of modest size and only operate on a day-trip basis. Catches are landed at Bridport, direct to transport, but there is no fish market as such. The catches are bought and transported by Samways, an old-established fish trading business which has its origins in Bridport but is now much more widely spread. When the tide is out it is not unusual for fishing boats to land their catches on the seaward wall.

5.12 Charter boats

There are 14 trip charter boats operating from Bridport. These variously provide trips round the bay, boat rides, sea angling, and diving activities. All are MCA licensed under the latest Codes of Practice.

5.13 Dangerous vessels

The Dangerous Vessels Act of 1985 defines a dangerous vessel as:

- 1) one which poses a grave and imminent danger to the safety of any person or property within the port;
- 2) one which may, by sinking or foundering in the harbour, prevent or seriously prejudice the use of the harbour by other vessels.

Harbour Masters have powers to deal with such vessels and may give orders to the owner, master, or any other person, including a salvor, who may be in charge of such a vessel.

If it is practicable to do so, the first step should be to require the person in charge of a dangerous vessel to make it safe immediately. If they are unwilling or unable to do so, the Harbour Master may take steps himself to make it safe or to remove it, having a usual lien over the ship for the cost of doing so.

In many cases a vessel will become dangerous very rapidly and leave no time for considered action. The port's emergency plan must be initiated, according to the problem the dangerous ship has. The Harbour Master's duty is to protect life and property, while ensuring that his port can continue to operate.

A port is not bound to accept from sea a dangerous vessel which requests entry, but the 1985 Act states that in making a decision the Harbour Master must have regard to the safety of any person or vessel, whether in or outside the harbour.

5.14 Wrecks

There are no wrecks close to Bridport.

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, any body 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:

- 1) 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;
- 2) to light or buoy the vessel or part of the vessel and such other property until it is raised, removed or destroyed.

Beyond this, the Secretary of State has general superintendence throughout the United Kingdom of all matters relating to wreck. He is entitled to appoint a special representative (SOSREP) to exercise those powers on his behalf, or to appoint a Receiver of Wreck. The Secretary of State may appoint a representative to take control of any incident, whether within a port or not, and Harbour Masters are required to co-operate in dealing with the incident.

SOSREP has a particular brief to prevent or control pollution and is most likely to take charge when pollution may be involved, but his derogated powers are not limited solely to this area.

5.15 Conservancy

At Bridport, the permanent navigation marks are the two lights on perches marking the seaward end of the groins from the pier ends. Both are isophase 2 second lights,

a red to port and a green to starboard. There is also a Flashing green 8 seconds light on the East pier end. A fixed sector light shows a white light marking the entrance channel, with red to port and green to starboard over the piers. The inner harbour entrance has a flashing red 8 seconds light on the inner pier end, and a flashing green 8 seconds opposite. These lights mark the sill protecting the inner harbour erected as part of the outer basin development. Other unlit perches have baskets on top as day marks. All permanent navigation lights at Bridport are powered by mains electricity without emergency back-up, but as both ports are very largely daylight only operations, this is not considered to be a major problem.

5.16 Standards and inspection of aids to navigation

The WDDC aims for a minimum of IALA standards, which for its ports is category three. WDDC is a local light authority and its aids have been subject to an annual inspection by Trinity House, the last being in March 2012. Reports are made under the Panar system. The regular routine regime for inspection and maintenance is shown at Appendix 7.

5.17 Dredging, hydrography and Admiralty charts

Bridport is prone to shoaling both in its entrance channel, and within the harbour. In the entrance channel, sand is swept around the pier ends from the adjoining beaches and tends to build up along the East outer pile encroaching into the entrance channel. Twice a year it is necessary to dredge this build up using cranes from the shore. Traditionally this material has been returned to the beach East of the harbour, from whence it came, but the Environment Agency have a problem with this as the sand is fine and the agency wants pebbles. At 2012 this is an on-going debate.

Within the harbour, silt builds up, removed either by sluicing (see below) or by grab cranes from the corners out of reach of the sluicing flow. After an incident in early 2012 when a digger got stuck on the harbour bed, flooded by the incoming tide, and ruined, new methods are being explored.

Bridport can still practice the ancient art of sluicing. There are a series of sluice gates separating the harbour from the River Brit. The sluice gates are owned by the Environment Agency who are responsible for the river, but operated by the harbour staff according to laid down procedures shown at Appendix 6. It was last done seriously in 2005, but a new method using pipes which can be moved round the harbour bed and take water from the head behind the river dam is being looked at closely..

The sluice water moves with considerable force, so use of it is always advertised in advance to warn boats to keep out of its way. Normal practise is to restrict this to the winter months when there are much fewer boats in the harbour.

Bridport harbour is surveyed three times a year by a launch from the firm Shoreline Surveys. It examines the harbour and the sea bed out to the harbour limit 1,000 feet from the pier ends. The surveys are done in March, and pre-and post- dredging. Any major changes are notified by a Notice to Mariners with a copy to the Hydrographer of the Navy.

5.18 Meteorology

Bridport is seriously affected by the weather. Lyme Bay is open to the Atlantic from the South-West quadrant, and very large seas can buffet the area in strong gales. In addition, any wind from the south can very quickly kick up a short sea uncomfortable for small boats.

Bridport had what is considered to be the second most dangerous entrance in Britain for small craft. Heavy seas swept the entrance, with large swells running up the channel and into the harbour. On average the port was closed for 190 days a year due to bad weather. The building of the new outer harbour has made a major difference and days lost to weather are now under fifty a year. The construction of the new outer harbour and entrance in 2005 was primarily to alleviate the effect of bad weather on the port. The mouth of the harbour was re-oriented to a more south-easterly direction and enlarged. In the outer harbour wave absorbing defences were put in place and strategically located groins built to check the run of wave or swell into the harbour. This has been effective, and the inner basin is now rarely seriously disturbed by seas although the outer basin can be somewhat rough. The entrance is more available and apart from weather direct from South-south-east is much more readily navigable.

Movement is considered to be largely self-regulating: the boats only operate by day and if bad weather is expected imminently, or the entrance is difficult of exit, boats do not go out and hence the need to provide protective measures for craft struggling to make the entrance is minimised. The harbour master can and does provide weather warnings and advice when appropriate.



Photograph 3 Looking across outer basin with south-easterly seas rolling in

5.19Tugs

There are no tugs available at Bridport, the nearest source being Portland or, for a smaller tug, Weymouth. Local fishing boats have, on occasion, given a tow to other craft in difficulties. See Emergency Plan.

5.20Works licensing

Major works are either carried out by direct labour of WDDC, or by contractors directly controlled by the Engineering Division so the need for licensing is minimised. Works carried out are agreed with the Harbour Master and controlled by the Principal Engineer in consultation with WDDC officers. It is rare, other than dredging, for such works to affect navigation. Minor works are carried out by the harbour master himself, and/or his staff.

5.21Event management

Bridport hosts many events through the year, and an informal level of risk analysis, along with a high degree of organisation, has always gone into planning these events. Gig racing is proving popular.

The 'Guide to Good Practice' annexed to the Code requires risk analysis to be carried out fully by the organisers before any event is allowed to go ahead, and the results of the risk analysis must be given to the Harbour Master.

In 2009 a thorough review of the arrangements for holding events and for carrying out the concomitant risk assessments was carried out. It is up to the organisers of each event to carry out their risk assessment of their event. The Harbour Authority 'notes' each risk assessment presented by the organisers of events, and unless it chooses not to approve them they can go ahead. It is normal for events to be insured and it is felt that, providing the insurers are willing to accept and underwrite the event, this should be enough for the Harbour authority.

In turn the Harbour Master must be satisfied that the event meets the requirements of the Coastguard, the RNLI, and the shore-based emergency services. Where a national body represents the type of craft taking part in an event, any guidance or code provided by that body should be adhered to.

When submitting their risk analysis it goes to the management in Dorchester, and event organisers must also inform them of:

- Names of event organisers and officials;

- List of participants;

- List of authorities consulted;

- Timetable and programme of events;

- Arrangements for controlling the event, including any special communications;

- Any navigational constraints being imposed such as restricted areas or partial port closures;

- Emergency arrangements;

Media arrangements.

Any additional resources required from the Harbour Master, the Council or the emergency services will normally be at the expense of the event organiser.

6 FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT

6.1 General commentary

Since the reconstruction of its entrance in 2005, Bridport has shed its reputation as the second most dangerous port in the UK. Nevertheless, its entrance remains a demanding one if the weather comes at all strongly from East of South, with substantial seas rolling in and dissipating against the defences round the outer harbour. The inner harbour basin is now relatively calm, with a firm bottom which allows of craft taking the bottom on each low tide with a high degree of safety. The old practise of 'sluicing', which could pose a hazard, has largely ceased although as it remains a possibility it remains an identified hazard. The building of a new slipway as part of the outer harbour construction has removed the hazards associated with use of the slipway in the inner basin. It remains in place but is no longer in regular use. Overall, Bridport/West Bay is a safer place than it used to be.

With the exception of extreme weather conditions, those hazards that exist are not major and more generally relate to the port's popularity as a small boat centre. The hazard areas we have identified, and the risks that follow from them, are given below in Section 5.

6.2 Methodology

This risk assessment has been carried out by Captain Douglas J Lindsay, in association with James Radcliffe, Harbour Master of Bridport. Each risk has been identified and assessed, with the response to it considered and described. It is believed that all significant hazards and the risks following from them have been identified. Some very minor risk were considered but not felt to be of sufficient consequence to justify individual treatment.

6.3 The ALARP principle

In planning and organising its safety systems the port has applied the 'ALARP' (As Low As Reasonably Possible) principle by working to a fundamental basis of keeping different user groups apart as far as reasonably possible.

6.4 Definitions

The Port Marine Safety Code defines:

Hazard is something which has the potential to cause harm.

Risk is a combination of frequency of occurrence and consequence (outcome).

For analysis purposes the following definition has also been adopted:

Control Measures are objects or systems put in place singly or in combination, to mark hazards and control risks.

6.5 Risk level assessment

Each hazard identified is assigned a two-word risk level assessment *Viz. Medium/High*. Of these the first is an assessment of the Likelihood, (indicated 'L' on

individual Risk Level Assessments), of the event occurring. The second is an assessment of the Consequences, (indicated 'C'), if it should occur.

6.6 Oil pollution

No specific mention is made in this risk analysis of oil pollution, as the port is below the size to require a full pollution plan if its own. The regional plan, applying to the entire coast in the region, does apply.

6.7 Other emergency response plans

For complete emergency response, this plan should be taken in conjunction with the West Dorset District Council's regional emergency response plan.

6.8 Other hazards considered possible, but not meriting full examination

Tidal surges or cuts: The normal tidal rise at Bridport stays below the quay edge and protective barrier walls are in place for exceptional tides which rise over the lowest parts of the quay edge. The flooding which can occur on the highest spring tides associated with bad weather is a hazard when it occurs. When it may occur harbour staff are alerted by the Environment Agency (EA) and they attend a tide watch with the EA. Should the EA consider there is a risk of significant flooding they will instigate a Major Incident Plan (MIP). West Dorset District Council will then follow its Civil Emergency Plan.

Collision between small craft in the harbour: Both ports are busy, especially in the summer, with yachts, fishing boats, and charter boats all manoeuvring in the same area, but speeds are low and there is no record of anything other than minor bumps ever having occurred. Should there be a more major collision, the port is well organised to deal with it.

6.9 Recent events

Within 2012 there have been two accidents at Bridport. Both were exceptional and not considered to represent a systematic hazard requiring full assessment.

In the first, a Digger which drove down the old slipway to do some dredging, sank into, and became embedded in the inner harbour bottom. It could not be rescued in time, the tide rose round it, and an expensive piece of modern machinery was a write-off. The soft spots on the harbour bed have been scrutinised since.

In the second, a very small boat, The M/V 'Titanic 2' (no less) sank in the entrance after filling up with water. It had been out of the water for some time prior to the incident, and was not being very skilfully cared for. Its owner/skipper was rescued at the time. The boat was lifted out at the next low water, and has become memorable more for its name than for any navigational significance.

6.10 List of hazards identified

- 1) Entrance Channel
- 2) Swell within Harbour

- 3) Tide across Entrance
- 4) Vessels Refuelling
- 5) Fire
- 6) Slipway Operations
- 7) Harbour Bed Scouring using Sluicing

7 FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 HAZARD ONE: Entrance Channel

The entrance Channel to Bridport has become much safer since the construction of the new outer basin and entrance. But it remains a hazard, especially when strong weather is experienced from south through to East. The port is open to Lyme Bay and hence to the English Channel and ultimately to the Atlantic. Its entrance is oriented South-South East and hence turned away from the worst of the weather but it can still present a challenge in bad weather. At low water there is little water in the channel and swells rolling in can break. The reconstruction included a cill at the entrance to the inner basin, built of steel piling and timber clad. Inside the cill, the harbour dries at low water. In the outer basin to seaward of the cill, there is around 1 metre depth at low water springs.

RISK 1a:

Collision with pier ends or breakwaters or with other craft.

RISK 1b:

Grounding

RISK 1c:

With a significant swell running, there is a risk of craft striking the bottom around the cill if moving too early or late on the tide.

RISK 1d:

Vessels in collision

RISK 1e:

Small craft capsize - persons in the water

RISK 1f:

Blockage of entrance by sunken vessel

Risk Assessment level:

L: LOW

C: HIGH

RESPONSE:

Evacuate personnel, either to liferafts or direct to shore.

Collect liferafts and tow to safe place for landing.

Make shoreside arrangements for reception of survivors

Make arrangements for securing or salvaging of vessels as appropriate.

Instigate pollution control measures if necessary.

Close the port to other traffic until the problem has been dealt with.

7.2 HAZARD TWO: Swell within the Harbour

In storm conditions from the South-East, the swell which makes the entrance channel difficult continues into the outer harbour where it largely dissipates. This can make conditions within the outer harbour uncomfortable and possibly hazardous for any visiting vessels lying on the pontoons provided.

RISK 1a: Moored vessels may contact others, possibly causing damage.

RISK 1b: Boats lying on the outer pontoons roll a good deal in bad weather. This can make movements between boat and pontoon difficult.

RISK 1c: Vessels lying to the outer pontoons and moving around in a swell or breaking waves may damage themselves or the pontoons.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: LOW

C: HIGH

RESPONSE:

- a) The outer basin is covered by CCTV and in bad weather is watched closely.
- b) The procedure for rescuing persons from the water within the harbour, where help is close at hand, is laid down. Emergency services are practised in dealing with this and any injuries which may arise.
- c) In the inner basin the danger from swell has been greatly reduce by the new entrance construction. But some risk remains, and so far as is practicable, moorings are far enough apart for vessels not to come into contact. The 'Rules for Harbour Users' require all vessels to have three adequate fenders rigged on each side, and outboard motor propellers to be covered up.

7.3 HAZARD THREE: Tide across the Entrance

The tidal current can run across the entrance at up to 4 knots and accurate navigation is required to make the entrance at such times. When combined with strong Southerly weather, making the entrance can be difficult.

RISK 1a: Is of vessels misjudging the tidal effect and being swept to the wrong side of a breakwater. This effect is much greater when strong Southerly weather sets in, because vessels missing the entrance are then hard on a lee shore with little scope for backing out and trying again.

RISK 1b: Wind over tide effect can create a localised steep and breaking sea in the entrance which compounds the difficulties for vessels trying to enter in marginal conditions.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: for local vessels: LOW. For visiting vessels, MEDIUM/HIGH

C: HIGH

RESPONSE:

- a) All local skippers know to keep a sharp eye on the tidal stream when making the Bridport entrance.
- b) Advice is available on VHF from the Harbour Master for skippers new to the port.
- c) Aware of the dangers, the local boats do not go out if re-entry conditions are likely to be marginal (or worse).
- d) There are procedures in place for rescuing crews and boats which end up on the beach instead of making the entrance in on-shore weather.

7.4 HAZARD FOUR: Vessels Refuelling

Local craft refuel over the public jetties. The larger craft all use diesel fuel. Most of this refuelling is done from drums, which are either pumped out from the quayside or lowered into the boats for emptying direct into boats' fuel tanks. Some fishing boats and charter boats take bulk deliveries from a road tanker. Petrol fuelling is limited to 2-stroke mixture for outboards, which is brought on board in appropriate tanks.

RISK 1a: Fire: Not a major risk as the fuel is mostly diesel. The petrol brought on board is almost invariably in small lots for outboard engines. A flash fire from a petrol tank could be serious for the boat and its handler.

RISK 1b: Oil pollution: not a major risk as quantities tend to be small and the oil is light fractions which disperse readily.

RISK 1c Injury or contamination of bystanders and the general public.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: LOW

C: HIGH

RESPONSE:

- a) Naked flames and smoking should be prohibited, and equipment used should be correct for the purpose and fire resistant. Bystanders should be kept back from the working area.
- b) The provisions of the Yacht Harbour Association 'Code of Practice for the Design, Construction and Operation of Coastal Marinas and Yacht Harbours' should be followed with regard to fuel handling.

7.5 HAZARD FIVE: Fire

Fire is always a major hazard for ships or small boats. As well as the refuelling hazard identified at Hazard 7.4, gas explosions, fire following from fuel leaks, and galley fires, are all potential threats.

RISK 1A: From leakage on unattended vessels.

RISK 1B: From activities on vessels.

RISK 1C: In a tightly-packed harbour, fire or a gas explosion on one vessel can spread rapidly to others nearby.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: LOW

C: HIGH

RESPONSE:

- a) Call the fire brigade immediately. Alert other emergency services if there are likely to be injuries to people or any threat to bystanders on the quayside.
- b) Remove other craft in the vicinity to create a fire break around the vessel on fire.
- c) Move bystanders away to a safe distance

COMMENTARY:

Bridport is surrounded by public access quays which vehicles can reach, and it is likely that emergency services will always be able reach a vessel on fire.

Exercises should be carried out with the fire brigade so that the response will be a well-drilled routine when needed.

7.6 HAZARD SIX: Slipway Operations

The new slipway at Bridport is available, like the old, for public use. Harbour staff can provide supervision but this is not a requirement. Therefore members of the public are engaging in potentially hazardous activities on their own.

The new slipway is much larger and easier of access than the old one, still *in situ* in the inner harbour. The main hazard is that it faces directly towards the harbour mouth, and in anything like strong weather from south to East, significant swell runs up it, making its use more difficult.

The old slipway is no longer considered to be in use but is still available in emergency. It had its own problems such as having to cross a public road to access its head and it was much narrower. Against that, it let into the inner harbour with much quieter water to go into which means that it is still used from time to time when conditions on the new slipway are not suitable for taking craft out of the water.

RISK 1a: Injury to members of the public handling boats and trailers and road vehicles.

RISK 1b: Road vehicles going off the end of the slipway, which has a drop from its end into the harbour. Both vehicle and driver are at risk if this should happen.

RISK 1c: With the old slipway, traffic conflicts from vehicles backing down onto the slipway across a busy public road.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: LOW/MEDIUM

C: MEDIUM

RESPONSE:

- a) Prompt calling of an outside contractor or the emergency services whenever an individual or road vehicle gets into trouble on the slipway.
- b) Ensure that any users are familiar with the process, and are able to deal with swell breaking on the slipway.
- c) Keep an eye on users, by CCTV if appropriate, to ensure that they are launching or recovering safely.



Photograph 4 Bridport new slipway with sea breaking on it

7.7 HAZARD SEVEN: Harbour Bed Scouring using Sluicing

Bridport retains its capacity to scour the harbour bed at low water, using the sluices in the dam containing the River Brit. As the head of water is substantial, full force scouring produces a powerful blast of water across the harbour. This would be hazardous to any vessel or person that got in its way.

RISK 1a: Is of the scour water washing away any craft which got caught by it. For smaller craft, this would probably mean their destruction.

RISK 1b: If any person fell in or otherwise got in the way of the scour water, injury and/or drowning are likely outcomes.

RISK 1c: Damage to the harbour or to moorings is possible. A deep hole has developed by the harbour bed opposite the sluices and a hole appeared at the bottom of the quay wall above. The wall is slowly collapsing.

RISK ASSESSMENT LEVEL:

L: LOW

C: MEDIUM

RESPONSE:

- a) Sluicing operations are highly organised. Boats moored in the harbour likely to be directly affected are individually notified.
- b) Harbour staff carry out the sluicing operations according to laid down procedures shown at Appendix 6, and keep a sharp eye open for any craft or person that might get into difficulties. The scouring can be stopped at any time by dropping the sluices, an action which takes only a few seconds.
- c) When sluicing is considered necessary, it is carried out during the winter months when only a few boats remain on their moorings.
- d) A new plan is being considered to pipe the water from the dam at the sluices, with portable pipes which can be moved around and allow much more accurate direction of the sluicing at points in the harbour bed requiring treatment.

8 EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

8.1 Assigned areas of responsibility

8.1.1 All vessels in the harbour approaches

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

8.1.2 Craft in the 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.

8.1.3 All craft alongside in the harbour

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

8.2 SOSREP

The Secretary of State has general superintendence throughout the United Kingdom of all matters relating to wreck. He is entitled to appoint a special representative (SOSREP) to exercise those powers on his behalf, or to appoint a Receiver of Wreck. The Secretary of State may appoint a representative to take control of any incident, whether within a port or not, and Harbour Masters are required to co-operate in dealing with the incident.

SOSREP has a particular brief to prevent or control pollution and is most likely to take charge when pollution may be involved, but his derogated powers are not limited to this area. The primacy of SOSREP is to be acknowledged in all marine emergency situations.

Action:

For emergency assistance the RCC and CHA should be contacted.

8.3 The plan

8.3.1 General

The emergency responses of Bridport/West Bay are under the overall command of their Harbour Master, reporting to the SHA duty holder.

The port only has the capacity to deal with minor incidents from its own resources. An incident at port level would require additional expertise and resources. Whilst a major incident is not envisaged, this would call for significant resources and expertise from external services.

Should an incident occur requiring further resources the Harbour Master will receive support and approval from line management in Dorchester.

A full scale emergency would be initiated by the emergency services and would activate West Dorset District Council's Emergency Plan.

8.3.2 Pollution

Bridport is exempt from the need to have a full Oil Spill Response Plan, but carries small stocks of pollution control equipment. This is located in the stores buildings and harbour staff are fully familiar with its use.

8.3.3 Tug and salvage equipment availability

There are no tugs at Bridport. The Harbour master's RIB is a powerful vessel capable of towing small craft in and around the harbour. Outside the harbour, it is probable that the larger fishing boats could give first aid assistance to smaller boats and these should be looked to in the first instance. The nearest large tugs are at Portland, 25 miles away and available to move on about half an hour's notice in the daytime, 4 hours' notice at night. Draft limitations preclude the use of large tugs in the harbour or its immediate approaches.

There is some limited salvage capacity at Portland, which could be mobilised reasonably rapidly. At Bridport the usual way of dealing with the small craft which use them is by crane, working from the shore. Any craft which sank would be lifted ashore at the next low water and dealt with from there.

8.3.4 HM Coastguard

The area Marine Rescue Sub Centre (MRSC) is at Portland. The sector manager is based at Lyme Regis; Bridport has an auxiliary Coastguard Station which holds access equipment and shore support gear.

Portland Coastguard can be contacted by:

VHF channel 16 or 70 (DSC) or tel. 999

8.3.5 R N L I

There is an R N L I station at Lyme Regis with an Atlantic 75 lifeboat. To obtain lifeboat assistance, contact Portland Coastguard in the first instance.

8.3.6 Vessels aground

As only small craft use Bridport which is tidal, vessels aground do not constitute a significant problem. Any vessel capable of using the ports, if it could not be towed off, would be removed at low water by crane.

8.3.7 Wrecks

For emergency assistance the MRSC should be contacted immediately by 999. The SHA duty officer should be advised of the problem, the action being taken and any action required of the SHA.

8.3.8 Fire

Bridport Fire Brigade will attend any vessel fire within the ports.

Action:

- a) If alongside within the harbour, call Fire Brigade Tel. 999
- b) If on the move, Call Portland Coastguard VHF Channel 16 or 70(DSC)

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 vessel

Type and nature of assistance required

8.3.9 Persons in difficulties in the water

- a) Outside the harbour mouth:

Action

Call Portland Coastguard VHF Channel 16 or 70 (DSC)

Notify:

Vessel name

Inbound/outbound

State of tide

Speed of current

Location

Number of persons in the water

Whether local assistance available

Portland Coastguard will decide appropriate response and if necessary will call the RNLI or other appropriate service.

b) Inside the harbour mouth:

When an incident is observed or the Harbour staff are informed, the Harbour Master or his assistant will ensure that the Coastguard is informed, take charge and co-ordinate the rescue until such time as the emergency services are established on site.

If time is of the essence and it is safe to do so, harbour staff may attempt to assist the person in the water and rescue them or move them to a safe location.

9 REPORTING, ASSESSMENT AND AUDIT

9.1 Overview

9.1.1 External reporting

The port authority is required to report to the appropriate external authority whenever a major incident, an environmental hazard, or a sub-standard vessel is within their port limits.

9.1.2 Internal reporting chain

The internal reporting chain within WDDC is short and effective:

The Harbour Master reports to the Leisure and Tourism Manager. He in turn reports to the SHA Duty Holder (normally via the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee but direct if necessary). Staff concerned with harbour operations will report to the Harbour Master.

9.2 Continuous assessment

a) The Principal Engineer together with the Harbour Master keep the plans, policies and procedures under continuous review to ensure that they continue to provide best practice to nationally agreed standards.

b) At twelve-monthly intervals the process of continuous assessment is to be monitored in accordance with Section 2.2. This will normally be done in the early spring before the main boating season commences.

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

9.3 Investigation and reporting

The reporting of events within the port has to be made to appropriate authorities whenever called for. Any physical checks or action required should be put in hand. Any 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.

1) Incident reports by skippers to the Harbour Master to include:

Near miss between boats

Touching bottom when on the move

Berthing and unberthing or mooring problems

2) Status reports by Harbour Master or staff to Leisure & tourism Manager each Monday morning, to include:

Incidents

Moorings

Aids to Navigation

Safety Equipment around the Harbour.

Access landings and ladders

- 3) Report to Leisure & Tourism Manager at monthly meeting of Tier 4 managers. The Leisure and Tourism Manager reports to the Duty Holder, as and when events require, and always in accordance with Section 2.2.

Material condition of the harbour

Reporting of incidents

Operational difficulties

Dangerous acts

Port statistics

9.4 The audit trail

9.4.1 Introduction

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

It is preferred that the review is undertaken by an outside body.

9.4.2 Twelve-monthly review

The Harbour Master should monitor, that is make a more structured examination of the port's workings, every twelve months 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:

- i) Are the port's legal framework, bylaws and directions appropriate, and if not what amendments should be recommended to the Competent Harbour Authority?
- ii) Is the port being operated in accordance with the requirements of the Port Marine Safety Code and the Guide to Good Practice?
- iii) 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?
- iv) Have all statutory requirements, surveys and local regulations been complied with?
- v) Have there been any incidents in the previous year which call for review of the Safety Management System?
- vi) Have the elements of the operations plan all functioned to the level expected of them? If not, what remedial action is being taken?
- vii) Have emergency systems been tested, and is progress towards or the results of the annual major exercise being developed?
- viii) Have appropriate notices been given?
- ix) Have any consultees affected by any activity in the last period been consulted, and with what results?
- x) Are there any upcoming changes, events, or problems to be considered, and if so what action is being taken to prepare for them?
- xi) What training has been carried out in the period, and what is planned both for the next period and the next year?
- xii) Any other relevant considerations.

This monitoring should be recorded and signed for by the Leisure & Tourism Manager and Harbour Master and delivered to the Duty Holder by including it in the annual report with a recommendation that the Duty Holder (The Management Committee) accepts the report. Once satisfied with its contents The Management Committee as Duty Holder formally approves the report making comments as appropriate.

9.5 External reporting

a) Sub-standard vessels

Every port has had a duty to report any sub-standard vessel or crew which visits the port in accordance with Notice MSN1775. In January 2011 MIN 380 advised that a new regime is being brought into force to comply with latest international requirements, and a new MSN will be issued. In the meantime ports should continue to be advised by the former MSN 1775 which has now been withdrawn. A copy of the relevant page is at Appendix 12.

The procedure to be followed is as laid down in that notice. That is the Harbour Master will note and if necessary refuse permission for any sub-standard vessel to enter or to move, advising the MCA. All advices should be in writing, signed and dated.

b) Reporting of incidents, accidents or disasters

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

9.6 Internal investigation and reporting

All significant unplanned events within the port 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 objective 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.

9.7 Reporting

Reports on all significant unplanned events within the port should be addressed to the chairman of the CHA by way of:

a) The Leisure & Tourism Manager

In addition:

b) Copies go to the Chief Executive, CHA

c) The Insurance Manager

d) Dorset County Emergency Planning Officer

9.8 Public scrutiny

This plan showing conformity with the Port Marine Safety Code has to be available for public scrutiny. A copy of the latest plan should be lodged in a public place such as a library, or available at the Harbour Master's Office. As an alternative, posting the latest plan on the Council's website satisfies the Code's requirement that the plan should be publicly available.

— END —

**THIS IS THE LAST PAGE OF THE
BRIDPORT MARINE OPERATIONS PLAN**