



Royal Victoria Yacht Club
Home of the Swiftsure International Yacht Race



Swiftsure International Yacht Race

Safety Policy

INTRODUCTION

This policy document outlines the key aspects of safety measures and processes used by the Swiftsure Organizing Authority. It also provides the rationale for the designated category of the races within the Safety Equipment Requirements and the exceptions that have been made to applicable Safety Equipment Requirements.

ORGANIZING AUTHORITY

The Royal Victoria Yacht Club has a Standing Committee that is delegated responsibility to act as the Organizing Authority for the Swiftsure International Yacht Race. The members of this Swiftsure Committee are all volunteers, with administrative support provided by RVYC's office staff. The Principal Race Officer (PRO) for the race sits on this committee; the other members are the Chair, and the heads of Trophies and Award Records, Finance, Sponsorship, Media and Promotions, Technology, Swiftsure Centre and Logistics, and Volunteer Coordination.

The Organizing Authority is responsible to issue the Notices of Race (NOR) while the PRO is responsible to issue the Sailing Instructions (SIs) and for running the race. Swiftsure's PRO is a World Sailing certified International Race Officer. The Race Officers (RO) and members of the Race Subcommittee (this subcommittee is described in the next section) report to the PRO. The Official Judge for the race is a World Sailing International Judge. The Official Judge is in a dedicated judge's boat to observe the 5 starts, chairs the protest committee, advises the Chair related to the NOR or other aspects of the race, and advises the PRO related to the Sailing Instructions.

Safety is an overriding priority in all aspects of running the race. There is a healthy safety culture within the Swiftsure Committee and Race Subcommittee that encourages continuous improvement, and suggestions are welcome from everyone. Financial resources are allocated and steps taken to ensure good communication with the racing fleet during the race. A close working relationship exists with the Victoria Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) during advance planning and during the race.

RUNNING THE RACE

The PRO chairs the Race Subcommittee. It is composed of the PRO, Event Chair, and heads of Race Logistics and Support Vessels, Race Communications, Inspection Dock, Results, and Finish Line (Inshore and Four Long Courses). The Heads organize and coordinate the activities of their volunteers in order to support the PRO in providing the highest possible calibre of race management. The PRO ensures that all volunteers involved in the race management are briefed and trained to perform their duties proficiently and safely.

The Swiftsure International Yacht Race is composed of Four Long Courses and the Swiftsure Inshore Classic. The courses are as follows:

Four Long Courses

1. The Swiftsure Lightship Classic Race for Monohulls (PHRF handicap class and ORC handicap class) -- from a starting line at Clover Point, leaving a mark at Swiftsure Bank to port, and crossing a finish line across the Victoria Harbour – 138.2 NM
2. The Hein Bank Race for Monohulls (ORC handicap class) -- from a starting line at Clover Point, leaving a mark at Neah Bay to port, leaving to port the ODAS 46088 (located about 5 nautical miles bearing approximately 238⁰ M from Hein Bank, and crossing a finish line across the Victoria Harbour – 118.1 NM
3. The Cape Flattery Race for Monohulls (PHRF handicap) and for Multihulls (PHRF handicap) -- from a starting line at Clover Point, leaving a mark at Neah Bay to port, and crossing a finish line across the Victoria Harbour– 101.9 NM.
4. The Juan de Fuca Race for Monohulls (PHRF handicap rating of 40 or slower) -- from a starting line at Clover Point, leaving a mark at Clallam Bay to port, and crossing a finish line across the Victoria Harbour – 78.7 NM

Swiftsure Inshore Classic

There are separate races for Monohull Flying Sails, Monohull Non Flying Sails, and for Multihulls. The PRO determines the course for each of the Races after consideration of the weather prediction and tidal currents, and this is announced to racers on the morning of the race. The racecourse area is from a starting line at Clover Point and occurs in the vicinity of Juan de Fuca Strait and the Victoria waterfront reaching from William Head to Trial Island, and in the vicinity of Haro Strait, as far easterly as Beaumont Shoal and northerly to D'Arcy Shoals and Zero Rock. The finish is in Cadboro Bay near the Royal Victoria Yacht Club.

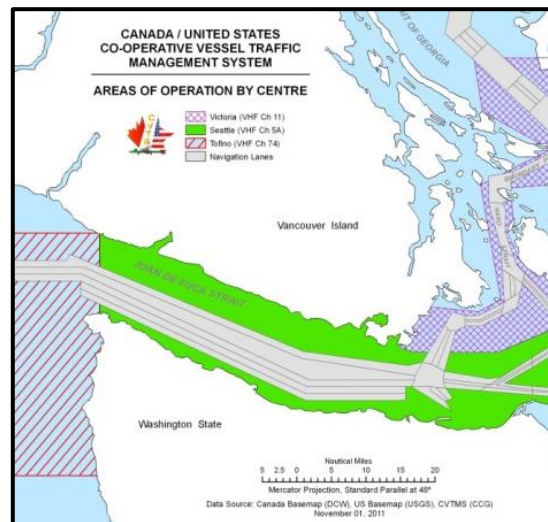
Having four long courses and the inshore course complicates race management. Plus double-handed entries are open to boats racing in the Juan de Fuca course, and single-handed entries in the Swiftsure Inshore Classic.

A Meteorological Monitoring Protocol (to track actual and forecast winds) has been implemented and is reviewed annually to ensure it is current, and takes into account lessons learned from prior years and input from various sources such as other races, Environment Canada, and JRCC Victoria. The 2017 protocol has been published on the Swiftsure website, and is part of the PRO's orientation and training of race management volunteers. A copy is given to all RO's and radio communication volunteers. Necessary steps are taken to ensure up-to-date information is received from Environment Canada concerning wind and wave observations and predictions prior to the start and during the race.

RACE ENVIRONMENT

The Juan de Fuca Strait poses a number of challenges for Swiftsure racers and the Organizing Authority implements measures to continually assess and mitigate risks. There is a complex commercial traffic-shipping pattern (VTS) that exists in the racecourses, and not all racers are accustomed to sailing in such waters where the commercial vessels can be steaming at 22+ knots. Racers are issued a VTS Grid chart to use for reference when listening to the twice-hourly MCTS commercial shipping broadcasts on VHF 09 throughout the duration of the Swiftsure International Yacht Race. This safety measure provides valuable information to all racers, which is one of the tools available to enable them to avoid collisions.

Even those yachts that monitor Automatic Identification System (AIS) transmissions from commercial traffic are advised to listen to the Vessel Traffic Services' broadcasts provided half hourly by the Canadian Coast Guard and US Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound prior to their entering and while within the shipping or separation lanes. This is because the US Navy is not obligated to transmit AIS information so these potential hazards will remain unknown to racers if they do not monitor the VTS broadcasts. Similarly, the position of commercial vessels that have a malfunctioning AIS transmitter would otherwise remain unknown.



There is a relatively strong current that can set up a steep wave pattern when opposed by wind. Fog can occur as well to impede visibility, and racers will be sailing at night to further the challenge. Many sailors have encountered all of the foregoing issues at one time or another but rarely together.

Additionally, there is the risk that the pressures of racing can degrade prudent decision-making when it comes to operating yachts in a safe manner.

The water itself poses another consideration – a prevailing sea temperature of ~10°C means cold water shock and the risk of hypothermia exists if a racer is swept overboard. And the risk of drowning is increased significantly if the person in the water is not wearing a personal flotation device. MOB recovery is a challenge and even more so at night.

While there have been instances of MOB and dismastings in some previous races, there has only been one fatality since Swiftsure's inception in 1930 – a most commendable record given the challenges of the race. In the 1976 race, Wilbur Willard, skipper of *Native Dancer*, was swept out of the cockpit after grounding off Bonilla Point in a 30-35 knot gale. This plus fatalities in other relatively recent races in other parts of the world are a strong reminder that safety is a paramount consideration in sailboat racing.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

In response to the risks identified above, the Organizing Authority ensures that a number of measures are implemented. This includes, but is not limited to, the following actions.

Weather and Currents

A representative from Environment Canada provides a weather briefing at the Skippers' Meeting the night prior to the race. The PRO and ROs follow Swiftsure's Meteorological Monitoring Protocol when making a decision about whether to start or to postpone or abandon races in one or more courses in the event of high winds and hazardous sea states.

An oceanographic expert from Ocean Networks Canada (located at the School of Earth and Ocean Sciences at the University of Victoria) provides a briefing to skippers about the currents they may encounter during the race. This expert also produces hourly current predictions for all of the Swiftsure racing area, and these are posted well in advance on the Swiftsure website.

Crew Lists

Having accurate crew lists for every competing yacht before they cross the start line is emphasized. Skippers or their designates are able to enter their crew lists together with emergency contact names and telephone numbers online when they register, and these lists can be updated as required. When Skippers check in at Swiftsure, which is a mandatory requirement, they are asked to review online their crew list and assistance is given to amend it if needed. Also, yachts are expected to advise the Race Committee via VHF radio the morning of

the race should they have any crew changes. And the importance of accurate crew lists in the event of a Search and Rescue (SAR) incident is stressed at the Skippers' Meeting. The electronic crew lists are available online to the JRCC during the race should they be needed for a SAR incident.

Communication with Fleet

Notwithstanding ISAF Fundamental Racing Rule #4, ("The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone."), one of the key aspects of safety is the ability to communicate with racers throughout the duration of the race or, should an abandonment of the race be necessary, until they reach safe haven. This is accomplished through use of VHF 26, which Transport Canada designates for Swiftsure's use during the race.

Skippers and navigators are reminded in the Sailing Instructions of the need to monitor VHF 16 in case of a Sécurité message, or if being hailed by the Race Committee. This is reinforced at the Skippers' meeting.

Qualified radio operators serve as the communications hub for the PRO and the ROs (using VHF transmitted via radio tower at Mount Helmcken). Radio operators and a transmitter are also stationed at Sombrio Point throughout the period of time that racers are in the western Strait of Juan de Fuca. They are able to relay messages between competitors and the radio operators in Victoria, should traffic via Mount Helmcken not function to a specific racer. In addition, the radio operators at Sombrio Point have a Digital Selective Calling (DSC) capable VHF radio, which can be used to contact a specific yacht if it has failed to report in as required. All traffic with competitors is duly logged. Notwithstanding the Race Committee's communications capabilities, it is reinforced at the Skippers' Meeting that if a competitor has an emergency or a developing situation they should contact the Coast Guard on VHF 16.

It is noted that, for all courses, yachts are expected to have a cellular phone aboard for use in case their yacht's VHF and portable VHF radios are not working. However, cellular phone coverage is unreliable in the western part of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Carrying satellite phones is not mandatory, but for those who have it aboard it provides much more reliable coverage than mobile phones.

Location of Fleet

Knowing the location of competing yachts is important, but it is not expected that exact location will be known at all times due to technology limitations. However, a number of steps have been taken for the Four Long Courses, which include night sailing and considerable distance, to ensure the general locations of boats are known.

Yachts participating in the Four Long Courses are required to check in with the RC (via the radio operators using VHF 26) prior to the start of the race. This procedure, which was initiated for the 2017 race is intended to ensure the RC knows which vessels actually started the race.

All yachts in the Four Long Courses are given a SPOT unit, which feeds position data about every 10 minutes to the Swiftsure Tracker System using the Globalstar satellite system. While this is not part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (an EPIRB is part of the GMDSS, for example), it does provide valuable information provided that crews follow, as instructed, the positioning of the unit on their yachts, as well as the turn on and reboot procedures (reboot for Generation 2 units). Experience has demonstrated, however, that the SPOT units are not failsafe so launching a SAR activity when a unit ceases to transmit may or may not be justified. The PRO will discuss with the JRCC Victoria any concerns about non-reporting SPOT unit as part of the decision process of whether a SAR should be initiated. Intermediate steps include the RC attempting a voice call to the applicable yacht on VHF channels 26 and 16 and their onboard mobile phone, contact via DSC, announcements by VTS during their half hourly broadcasts. In addition, VHF contact the whole fleet can be made requesting traffic about where and when any competitors had visually seen the applicable yacht.

Other steps are taken to identify locations of yachts and, conversely, identify yachts for which concern about their safety status may be a red flag. Yachts in the Swiftsure Lightship Classic (going to Swiftsure Bank) are required to report their position twice when outbound and twice when inbound. Yachts in the Hein Bank, Cape Flattery, and Juan de Fuca courses are required to report their position once when outbound and once when inbound. This reporting process can assist in identifying if a yacht appears to be in difficulty—especially if they cannot be reached via VHF 26 or 16, fail to be alerted by a message from VTS on VHF 09, can not be contacted by DSC using VHF radio, and are not transmitting AIS (AIS transmission is not mandatory for any of the race courses because the majority of competitors are not equipped with this equipment, and AIS is not generally required for coastal racing).

Because it is a day race, there is no need to have yachts report their position when racing in the Swiftsure Inshore Classic. Most boats are within a short distance of each other and will be within view except in the case of fog. Communication with the yachts in the Swiftsure Inshore Classic is possible using VHF 26 and, in the event of an emergency, mariners are expected to contact the Coast Guard using VHF 16 or other means of communications.

Minimum Safety Requirements

Ensuring a yacht is seaworthy, adequately equipped, and has an experienced crew with sufficient ability to face bad weather is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the person in charge of each yacht. Skippers (the Persons in Charge) confirm that they accept this responsibility when they register to enter Swiftsure.

Section 1.2 of the Safety Equipment Requirements for all monohull and multihull yachts, which is covered by the Notices of Race, says: “Under RRS 4 the responsibility for a boat’s decision to participate in a race or continue racing is hers alone. The safety of a boat and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the Person in Charge who shall do his best to ensure that the boat is fully found, thoroughly seaworthy and manned by an experienced and appropriately

trained crew who are physically fit to face bad weather. The person in charge shall also assign a person to take over his responsibilities in the event of his incapacitation.”

Fundamental rule 4 in the ISAF Racing Rules of Sailing, which govern the race (covered in the Notices of Race), says: “DECISION TO RACE The responsibility for a boat’s decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.”

The first page of the online registration form (and it is on the paper form as well) is a liability waiver as follows (must check that they agree before they can proceed to next page in registration process):

PERSON IN CHARGE/OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

A boat shall have on board a person in charge as per the World Sailing Racing Rules of Sailing 2017-2020 (Rule 46). The safety of a boat and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the Person in Charge, as per 1.2 of the Safety Equipment Requirements for Monohulls for the 2017 Swiftsure International Yacht Race and 1.2 of the Safety Equipment Requirements for Multihulls for the 2017 Swiftsure International Yacht Race. The Person in Charge shall do his best to ensure that the boat is fully found, thoroughly seaworthy and manned by an experienced and appropriately trained crew who are physically fit to face bad weather. The person in charge shall also assign a person to take over his responsibilities in the event of his incapacitation.

The Person in Charge must provide a complete crew list, which shall include all persons who will be aboard the yacht during the race. Any changes to this crew list up to the start of the race must be given to the Race Committee prior to starting the race.

The Person in Charge/owner is responsible for having a current, valid rating certificate and ensuring that the yacht is sailed in the race as specified in the rating certificate. Any change to the rating subsequent to submitting this entry form is to be reported to the Organizing Authority prior to 1700 Friday, May 19, 2017.

WAIVER AND RELEASE

I have read the Notice of Race for The Four Long Courses issued for the 2017 Swiftsure International Yacht Race, and agree to be bound by the Rules therein and the Sailing Instructions or any Addenda to either document. I recognize the inherent and other risks in yacht racing activities and freely accept these risks. I have read and intend to comply with the Safety Equipment Requirements for the 2017 Swiftsure International Yacht Race as spelled out in the Notice of Race For The Four Long Courses. In consideration for participating in this event, I represent to the Royal Victoria Yacht Club that my vessel currently has and will continue to have during the Swiftsure International Yacht Race third-party liability insurance covering property damage, personal injury and death in an amount not less than \$500,000 (Canadian or U.S.) per occurrence, and that the policy covers yacht racing activities. I agree to waive my rights to take legal action against and release and forever discharge the Royal Victoria Yacht Club, the Swiftsure Committee, and their respective organizers, agents, officials, servants, representatives, and volunteers (collectively the “Organizers”) from and against any and all

claims, actions, costs or expenses and demands in respect to death, injury, loss or damage to my person or property howsoever caused arising out of or connected with my participation in the Swiftsure International Yacht Race notwithstanding that the same may have been contributed to, caused or occasioned by the negligence of the Organizers or any of them. I understand that this waiver and release is binding upon myself, my heirs, executors and assigns.

It is not feasible to conduct a safety inspection of each yacht prior to the start of the race as a considerable number of yachts are not moored in the Inner Harbour (they come directly from yacht clubs or marinas in the Greater Victoria area) and the logistics and resources for inspection of about 200 yachts would be significant. In any event, even if there were to be a pre-race inspection it would be advisory in nature, as this would not mitigate the responsibility of the persons in charge to ensure they have safe boats, adequate safety equipment, and capable crew who have adequate personal safety equipment.

In order to reinforce the need for yachts to be safely prepared for the Four Long Courses, each yacht, upon finishing, must proceed to the inspection dock where they are greeted and subjected to an inspection of a sample of the Safety Equipment Requirements. The inspection is formally recorded, signed by the person in charge and the inspector, and retained by the Swiftsure Inspection Team. Should a yacht fail to comply with any item on the inspection list, this is recorded and referred to the PRO who will decide whether a protest action is to be initiated.

A post-race safety inspection is not done for the Swiftsure Inshore Classic competitors but the NOR indicates that they are subject to inspection, and this could be undertaken if the RO or PRO were to conclude that a yacht appeared to not be in compliance with required safety requirements.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

Background

Swiftsure's Organizing Authority has historically used the Pacific International Yachting Association's PIYA Category Certificate as the safety requirements for Swiftsure International Yacht Race. When PIYA adopted the Safety Equipment Requirements (SERs) for monohulls, which were developed by US Sailing using the World Sailing's Offshore Special Regulations for reference, the Organizing Authority adopted these SERs for the Swiftsure race, but with some modifications.

In the absence of PIYA developing Safety Equipment Requirements for multihulls, the Swiftsure Event Chair developed them in consultation with the BC Multihull Society and the Northwest Multihull Association.

The PIYA v2 draft of the SERs for monohulls for 2017 has been adopted with some modifications for Swiftsure 2017 (the NORs were issued prior to PIYA formally approving the 2017 SERs). The SERs for multihulls, which were developed specifically for Swiftsure, are being used with some minor modifications for Swiftsure 2017. Both sets are on the swiftsure.org website under Registration, Notices of Race & Safety Equipment Requirements page, and they are identified within the Notices of Race.

The SERs are used for Swiftsure rather than the ISAF Offshore Special Regulations because they are an easier reference for racers and do cover the necessary elements of safety. Also, many of the races in the Pacific Northwest use the SERs so racers are accustomed to using them albeit not every race uses the most current version.

When determining what minimum safety equipment requirements will apply to the Four Long Courses and to the Swiftsure Inshore Classic, it is understood that there is no absolute in safety and by the nature of the challenge of sailboat racing there is risk. The goal is to assess potential objective risks with the view of preparing response scenarios should they materialize and reducing subjective risks, which are those mariners can control. The Organizing Authority and PRO also can play a role in reducing subjective risks. However, it is also a consideration that sailboat racing could be greatly diminished, if not extinguished, by making the safety requirements too onerous, thereby making it impossible or too expensive to compete.

Compliance with the SERs is ultimately the responsibility of the Person in Charge of each competing yacht. This includes secure storage of heavy items, strength of build of the yacht, watertight integrity, hull and structure, the boat's safety equipment, crews' personal safety equipment, minimum gear, heavy weather sails, rigging, crew skills for emergency steering methods and MOB procedures, and safety training.

The rules for the Four Long Courses include, "Between sunset and sunrise while on deck all crew shall wear life jackets having lights, whistles, tethers, marine grade retro-reflective material, and crotch/thigh straps." In addition, a clause in the Sailing Instructions encourages persons in charge to establish a safety protocol for their crew as to when PFDs are to be worn and tethers used to ensure safety, and it is recommended that personal flotation devices and tethers be worn by all crew members whenever conditions warrant such as when winds are over 15 knots, seas over 2 feet, diminished visibility (fog or night), when sailing short-handed, and always in rough water. It is recognized that requirements may vary depending on the type of yacht being sailed. It is noted that crotch/thigh straps attached to PFDs are mandatory, and this feature is vital in case a MOB is/becomes unconscious or is being pulled out of the water via their inflated PFD (to avoid slipping out of it).

Four Long Courses

The rationale for the Four Long Courses being designated as 'Coastal' for monohulls is that it most closely relates to the criterion for this category in the PIYA's SERs; specifically: "Races across open water, most of which is relatively protected or close to shorelines." Coastal equates to Category 3 for monohulls and multihulls in the World Sailing's Offshore Special Regulations.

The alternative would be to designate these courses as 'Offshore', which is defined as "Races of extended duration along or not far removed from shorelines or in large unprotected bays or lakes, where a high degree of self-sufficiency is required of the boats." While in the Strait of Juan de Fuca competitors are never more than about 6 nautical miles from either the Canadian or US shorelines. And Swiftsure Lightship Classic competitors are not more than about 10 nautical miles from shorelines when sailing to round the turning mark.

While a relative term, it is felt that rescue in the event of an emergency would be quickly available; i.e., within no more than one hour. Racers are in relatively close proximity to each other and would likely be the most immediate resource in the event of an incident involving one of the competing yachts, and they should become aware of such an emergency, as they are required to monitor VHF 16. SAR emergency resources are quite readily available throughout the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The Royal Canadian Naval vessels stationed as the turning marks at Swiftsure Bank and Neah Bay are within relatively close proximity of the fleet at the western entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Although they are not designated as SAR resources they no doubt could be called upon by the JRCC in the event of an emergency. JRCC tasks the Oak Bay, Sooke, and Victoria Royal Marine Search & Rescue units (33, 35, and 37) to be available in the event of a SAR related to Swiftsure. JRCC re-deploys to the Victoria airport one or two cormorant helicopters from 442 Squadron for the duration of the Swiftsure race as well as a Coast Guard vessel to be located in the Jordan River area. In addition, the resources of the US Coast Guard Puget Sound Sector can be tasked in the event of a SAR incident.

It is noted that the 2017 Southern Straits' Grande, Long, Medium and Short courses hosted by West Vancouver Yacht Club is designated as 'Coastal'. The racecourses for Southern Straits occur within Georgia Strait, which is also subject to high winds and waves. It is considered that SAR resources are more readily available for the Swiftsure International Yacht Race since it does not take place on a Canadian holiday weekend (Southern Straits occurs Easter weekend). The Royal Canadian Air Force Squadron 442 redeploys a Cormorant helicopter to the Victoria airport during the Swiftsure race, and the Port Angeles Coast Guard station is near the race courses thereby supplementing the Canadian SAR resources in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

The Organizing Authority has made some modifications to the SERs for monohulls for the Four Long Courses, and the rationale for these changes is as follows:

1. Coated stainless steel lifelines are permitted if installed within the last 10 years and the Person in Charge has visually inspected them. A number of relatively new boats have been manufactured with coated stainless steel lifelines. It would be unfair to expect skippers to replace perfectly good lifelines with uncoated prior to their needing replacement. Deterioration is most likely to occur at the swaged fittings and these are most often readily visible for inspection. In addition, it is the responsibility of the Person in Charge to ensure that all safety equipment on their yacht is in safe working condition. This modification was made after consultation with the Rigging & Metal Fabrication Manager, Blackline Marine Inc.
2. The mechanical propulsion system has been increased from the SER requirement of 4 hours to 10 hours. It is expected that boats will be able to seek safe haven when motoring for 10 hours; 4 hours is insufficient for the Swiftsure race.

3. The requirement for SOLAS flares has been modified to require yachts to comply with US Coast Guard/Transport Canada requirements (it is noted that the US Coast Guard has developed standards for electric S-O-S Distress Lights and accepts that manufacturers will self-assess their products against these standards). The minimum requirements of US Coast Guard/Transport Canada are accepted because of the generally close proximity of competitors to each other and the fact that other forms of Mayday communication will be effective from anywhere within the race area.

4. The requirement for a VHF masthead antenna has been eliminated. While it is considered as highly desirable, the Person in Charge will need to be satisfied that their yacht can communicate with the Race Committee and the Coast Guard, and receive communications from VTS if they do not have a masthead antenna. A well-installed VHF antenna on the pushpit connected to a VHF radio via a coaxial cable in excellent condition should provide adequate communication. Past experience has shown that yachts without a masthead antenna have been able to communicate as required. Given the receiving capabilities of the US and Canadian Coast Guards, and Swiftsure's VHF radio coverage, this is not thought to be a safety issue.

5. An alternative to having soft plugs attached or stowed adjacent to every through-hull opening is being permitted. Specifically, "Alternatively, some soft plugs (e.g., Forespar Tru Plug) and/or Stay Afloat Instant Leak Plug & Sealant may be stored in an easy-to-obtain place and the location identified on the Safety Equipment Chart per SER #3.28"

6. In addition to crew being aware of methods of steering the yacht with the rudder disabled (SER 4.1.2), Swiftsure requires that all boats have a secondary steering mechanism and that a sea drogue system is acceptable. This requirement is meant to ensure that not only are crew aware of methods of steering with the rudder disabled but also that such equipment is actually on board.

7. Safety at sea training for at least some of the crew on a yacht is being recommended but not made mandatory. This exemption is being made because it is felt that a considerable number of yachts could not comply and therefore could not enter the race. US Sailing and BC Sailing offer a 2-day Safety as Sea course and in 2017 a 4-hour course is being offered prior to Patos Island Race and prior to Southern Straits Race. It is noted that over 1,000 racers have taken the Safety at Sea course offered by BC Sailing so safety training is fortunately being rolled out among racers. Voluntary compliance with this SER is encouraged to the extent that the Event Chair of Swiftsure is a BC Sailing and Sail Canada approved Safety at Sea trainer.

The SERs for multihulls were specifically drafted for Swiftsure in reference to the SERs for monohulls and taking into consideration the unique characteristics of multihulls. A change for 2017 permits, as an alternative to having tapered soft plugs adjacent to every through-hull opening, having some soft plugs (e.g., Forespar Tru Plug) and/or Stay Afloat Instant Leak Plug & Sealant may be stored in an easy-to-obtain place and the location identified on the Safety Equipment Chart per SER #3.28.

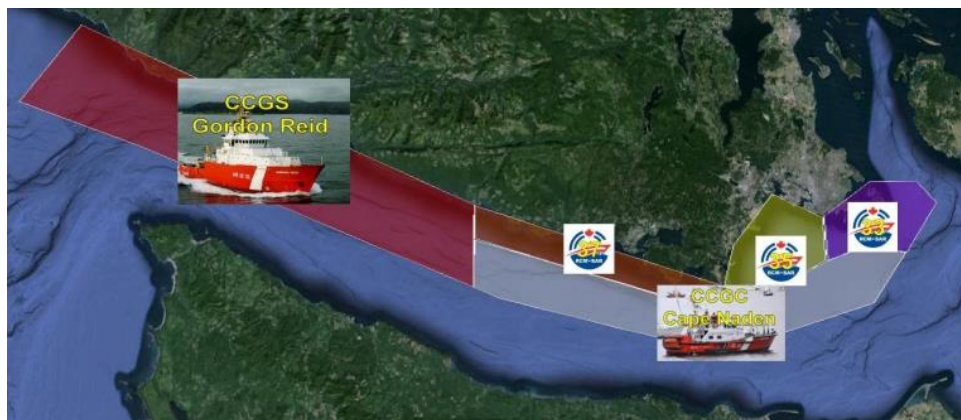
Swiftsure Inshore Classic

The rationale for the Swiftsure Inshore Classic being designated as ‘Inshore’ is that it is a day race, close to shore in relatively protected waters. This is comparable to Category 4 in the World Sailing’s Offshore Special Regulations.

The racecourse is within the area described as “in the vicinity of Juan de Fuca Strait and the Victoria waterfront reaching from William Head to Trial Island, and in the vicinity of Haro Strait, as far easterly as Beaumont Shoal and northerly to D’Arcy Shoals and Zero Rock, and crossing a finish line located in Cadboro Bay near the Royal Victoria Yacht Club.” This is within the same area that the Royal Victoria Yacht Club’s long distance races normally occur, and they are designated as ‘Inshore’. Also, this is consistent with Southern Straits Race’s Inshore course.

SEARCH AND RESCUE SUPPORT

Enabling the Coast Guard to plan availability of SAR resources during the Swiftsure International Yacht Race is accomplished by promoting excellent relationships and communications with the manager and the supervisor of the JRCC Victoria. The JRCC communicates with the Canadian Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Air Force 442 Squadron in planning SAR contingency plans, and with the US Coast Guard as the Canadian and US Coast Guards have interoperability arrangements (i.e., either US Coast Guard SAR resources or Canadian Coast Guard resources, or both agencies at the same time, may be tasked by JRCC in the event of a SAR incident). This is depicted in the following graphic of 2014 CCG SRUs.



The Royal Canadian Air Force deploys one or two CH-149 Cormorant helicopter to Victoria to be on standby during the Swiftsure Race. In coordination with the JRCC, the Canadian Coast Guard deploys at least one vessel to the western part of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The JRCC tasks the Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue Unit 33 (Oak Bay) and Unit 35 (Victoria) to provide safety support at the start of the Swiftsure race. Units 33 and 35 plus Unit 37 (Sooke) are also tasked to be on standby throughout the duration of the race in case of a SAR incident.

The Royal Canadian Navy has a vessel at the Swiftsure Bank and Neah Bay rounding marks, which the JRCC could use as SAR resources if needed.

In addition, Swiftsure requests the support of a vessel from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, South Island Marine Unit Island District, to provide security and safety support during the start of the races.

Swiftsure obtains a marine event permit from the US Coast Guard Sector Puget Sound. This also alerts the USCG about the timing and area covered by the Four Long Courses of the Swiftsure race.

Safety Reviews

In an effort to encourage continuous improvement, the Organizing Authority will ensure that a review of race safety is completed every year. The Organizing Authority when updating this policy and other applicable race documents will consider findings and recommendations from the review.

SUMMARY

Racers in the Swiftsure International Yacht Race can encounter benign or challenging wind and tidal current conditions, and there are always dangers such as commercial traffic and collisions among racers. Therefore, a focus on safety of the race in its organization and in the attitude of participating racers must be ever-present. This needs to continue to be reinforced to skippers at the Skippers' Meeting.

The Safety Equipment Requirements do not mitigate the responsibility of the person in charge to ensure that their yacht is well prepared, well crewed, and sailed in a fashion that would be expected of highly competent mariners. These SERs are minimum requirements, and many persons in charge will choose to exceed these standards.

Excellent communications with the JRCC Victoria and other agencies is considered a key aspect of safety, and the advice and support of the JRCC is a necessary component of safety for the race.

Vern Burkhardt
Event Chair
Swiftsure International Yacht Race

GLOSSARY

AIS – Automatic Identification System
CCG – Canadian Coast Guard
CMCC – Canadian Mission Control Centre
COSPAS-SARSAT- ‘Cosmicheskaya Sistyema Poiska Avariynich Sudov’ – Search and Rescue Satellite-Aided Tracking (satellite-based search and rescue system)
DND – Department of National Defense
DNS – Did Not Start (the race)
DSC – Digital Selective Calling
EC – Environment Canada
EPIRB – Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon
GMDSS – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
IRC – IRC handicap system managed by the Royal Ocean Racing Club in the United Kingdom
ISAF – International Sailing Federation, renamed “World Sailing”
JRCC – Joint Rescue Coordination Centre
MCTS – Marine Communications & Traffic Service (CCG)
MOB – Man Overboard
NOAA – National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (US)
NOR – Notice of Race
OA – Organizing Authority
ONC – Ocean Network Canada (VENUS and NEPTUNE Canada cabled networks)
ORC – Offshore Racing Council
PFD – Personal Flotation Device
PHRF – Pacific Handicap Racing Fleet
PIC – Person In Charge (of a racing yacht)
PIYA – Pacific International Yachting Association
PLB – Personal Locator Beacon
PRO – Principal Race Officer
RC – Race Committee
RCAF – Royal Canadian Air Force
RCC – Rescue Coordination Center
RCMSAR – Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue
RCN – Royal Canadian Navy
RO – Race Officer
RRS – Racing Rules of Sailing (“Sail Canada”/International Sailing Federation)
RVYC – Royal Victoria Yacht Club
SAR – Search and Rescue
SER – Safety Equipment Requirements

SI – Sailing Instructions

SOLAS – Safety Of Life At Sea

SPOT – Satellite Personal Tracker assigned to each yacht racing in the Four Long Courses of Swiftsure (is not part of GMDSS)

SRU – SAR Response Unit

TC – Transport Canada

USCG – United States Coast Guard

USN – United States Navy

VHF – Very High Frequency (radio)

VTS – Vessel Traffic Service (Sector Puget Sound)

VTS – Vessel Traffic Services (CCG)