

**Off Soundings Club
Safety Equipment Requirements
(OSC - SER) 2015 Edition**

Boat Name/Sail #

*The following requirements and recommendations are based on the US Safety Equipment Requirements (USSER) issued by US Sailing (effective date: 4/23/2014). OSC Races are considered to have certain characteristics of both USSER "US Coastal" and "US Nearshore" Races. Adjustments to the USSER, shown in bold, address regional racing venues and conditions as well as the nature of the OSC racing fleet and the USSER items modified have been greyed. USSER items considered not applicable have been removed. **The text in the blue Prescription may exempt certain boats from the items in the gray sections below it or offer choices to meet the requirement.***

Section Name	USSER #	Requirements & Recommendations	Vessel Compliance (✓)
Definition	1.0.2	US Coastal - Races not far removed from shorelines, where rescue is likely to be quickly available.	n/a
	1.0.3	US Nearshore - Races intended to be sailed during the day, close to shore, in relatively protected waters.	n/a
Overall			
Overall	1.1	The Minimum Equipment Requirements establish uniform minimum equipment and training standards for a variety of boats racing in differing conditions. These regulations do not replace, but rather supplement, the requirements of the US Coast Guard, the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS), the rules of Class Associations and all applicable rating rules.	n/a
Responsibility	1.2	The safety of a boat and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the "person in charge", as per RRS 46, who shall ensure that the boat is seaworthy and manned by an experienced crew with sufficient ability and experience to face bad weather. S/he shall be satisfied as to the soundness of hull, spars, rigging, sails and all gear. S/he shall ensure that all safety equipment is at all times properly maintained and safely stowed and that the crew knows where it is kept and how it is to be used.	
Inspections	1.3	A boat may be inspected at any time by an inspector or measurer of the Organizing Authority. If she does not comply with these regulations her entry may be rejected, or will be liable to disqualification, or such other penalty as may be prescribed by the race protest committee.	
Equipment & Knowledge	1.4	All equipment required shall function properly, be regularly checked, cleaned and serviced, and be of a type, size and capacity suitable for the intended use and size of the boat and the size of the crew, who will have practiced with the use of equipment. This equipment shall be readily accessible while underway and, when not in use, stored in such a way that deterioration is minimized.	
Secure Storage	1.5	A boat's heavy items such as batteries, stoves, toolboxes, anchors, chain and internal ballast shall be secured.	
Strength of Build	1.6	A boat shall be strongly built, watertight and, particularly with regard to hulls, decks and cabin trunks, capable of withstanding solid water and knockdowns. A boat shall be properly rigged and ballasted, be fully seaworthy and shall meet the standards set forth herein. A boat's shrouds and at least one forestay shall remain attached at all times.	
Watertight Integrity	1.7	A boat's hull, including, deck, coach roof, windows, hatches and all other parts, shall form an integral watertight unit and any openings in it shall be capable of being immediately secured to maintain this integrity.	

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Hull and Structure			
Hull Openings	2.1.1	A boat's companionway(s) shall be capable of being blocked off to main deck level. The method of blocking should be " <i>essentially</i> " watertight and rigidly secured, if not permanent.	
	2.1.2	A boat's hatch boards, whether or not in position in the hatchway, shall be secured to the boat (e.g. by a lanyard) for the duration of the race to prevent their being lost overboard.	
Cockpit	2.1.3	A boat's entire cockpit shall be solid, watertight, strongly fastened and/or sealed. Weather-tight seat hatches are acceptable only if capable of being secured when closed.	
	2.1.4	A boat's cockpit drains shall be capable of draining six inches of water in 5 minutes. One square inch (645mm ²) of effective drain per eight square feet (0.743m ²) of cockpit sole will meet this requirement.	
	2.1.5.2	Recommendation: A boat's maximum cockpit volume for cockpits not open to the sea, including any compartments capable of flooding, to lowest points of coaming over which water can adequately escape, shall not exceed 0.08 x LOA x Max. Beam x Freeboard aft. The cockpit sole shall be at least 0.02 x L above LWL.	
Through Hulls	2.1.6	A boat's through-hull openings below the waterline shall be equipped with sea cocks or valves, except for integral deck scuppers, speed transducers, depth finder transducers and the like; however a means of closing such openings shall be provided.	
Accomm.	2.3.1	A boat shall be equipped with a head or a fitted bucket.	
Dewatering Pumps	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item #s 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3. It is recommended that yachts have at least one permanently installed manual bilge pump that is either operable from below deck or (preferably) operable from on deck. The permanently installed pump should meet the installation criteria of USSER 2.5.1. Yachts that, by design, do not have a permanently installed manual bilge pump, shall be equipped with a portable manual bilge pump that meets the criteria of USSER 2.5.3.	
	2.5.1	<i>A boat shall have a permanently installed manual bilge pump of at least a 10 gallons per minute (GPM) capacity and which is operable from on deck with the cabin closed with the discharge not dependent on an open hatch. Unless permanently attached to the pump, the bilge pump handle shall be securely attached to the boat in its vicinity via a lanyard or catch. A bilge pump discharge shall not be connected to a cockpit drain. The bilge pump shall not discharge into a cockpit unless that cockpit opens aft to the sea.</i>	
	2.5.2	<i>A boat shall have a second permanently installed manual bilge pump of at least 10 GPM capacity, operable from below deck, meeting the same criteria as above.</i>	
	2.5.3	<i>A boat shall have a manual bilge pump of at least a 10 GPM capacity.</i>	

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Lifelines	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item #s 2.4.1, 2.4.3, 2.4.5, 2.4.6, 2.4.8. On yachts that, by design, do not meet the subject life line, bow pulpit and toe-rail requirements (e.g., Melges 24, Various Multihulls) the skipper and crew must wear PFDs at all times while racing.	
	2.4.1	<i>A boat's deck including the headstay shall be surrounded by a suitably strong enclosure, typically consisting of lifelines and pulpits, meeting the requirements in 2.4.2 to 2.4.8.</i>	
	2.4.2	A boat's stanchion and pulpit bases shall be within the working deck. Stanchions used with HMPE shall have rounded openings to reduce chafe.	
	2.4.3	<i>Bow pulpits may be open, but the opening between the vertical portion of stanchion pulpit and any part of the boat shall not exceed 14.2" (360mm).</i>	
	2.4.4	Lifelines may be either uncoated stainless steel wire or high molecular weight polyethylene (HMPE) line with spliced terminations or terminals specifically intended for the purpose. A multipart-lashing segment not to exceed 4" per end termination for the purpose of attaching lifelines to pulpits is allowed. Lifelines shall be taut (see RRS 49). When HMPE is used, the load-bearing portion (core) shall meet or exceed minimum diameter requirements. Note: It is strongly recommended that stainless steel wire lifelines should be uncoated. Furthermore, on yachts equipped with coated stainless steel wire lifelines, it is recommended that stainless steel lifelines installed after 2015 be uncoated.	
	2.4.5	<i>The maximum spacing between the bases of lifeline supports (e.g. stanchions and pulpits) shall be 87" (2.2m).</i>	
	2.4.6	<i>Boats under 30 feet (9.14m) shall have at least one lifeline with 18" (457mm) minimum height above deck, and a maximum vertical gap of 18" (457mm). Taller heights will require a second lifeline. The minimum diameter shall be 1/8" (3mm).</i>	
	2.4.7	Boats 30 feet and over (9.14m) shall have at least two lifelines with 24" (762mm) minimum height above deck, and a maximum vertical gap of 15" (381mm). The minimum diameter will be 5/32" (4mm) for boats to 43' (13.1m) and 3/16" (5mm) for boats over 43' (13.1m).	
	2.4.8	<i>Toe rails shall be fitted around the foredeck from the base of the mast with a minimum height of 3/4" (18mm) for boats under 30' (9.14m) and 1" (25mm) for boats over 30'. An additional installed lifeline that is 1-2" (25-51mm) above the deck will satisfy this requirement for boats without toerails.</i>	
Mast & Rigging	2.6	Recommendation: A boat shall have the heel of a keel-stepped mast securely fastened to the mast step or adjoining structure.	
Mechanical Propulsion	2.7.2	A boat shall have a mechanical propulsion system that is quickly available and capable of driving the boat at a minimum speed in knots equivalent to the square root of LWL in feet (1.8 times the square root of the waterline in meters) for 4 hours.	

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Safety Equipment			
Personal & Deck Safety	3.1.1	<i>USSER 3.1.1, regarding inflatable life jackets and Type I life jackets, is considered optional.</i> Each crewmember shall have a life jacket that provides at least 33.7lbs (150N) of buoyancy, intended to be worn over the shoulders (no belt pack), meeting either U.S. Coast Guard or ISO specifications. Life jackets shall be equipped with crotch or leg straps, a whistle, a waterproof light, be fitted with marine-grade retro-reflective material, and be clearly marked with the boat's or wearer's name, and be compatible with the wearer's safety harness. If the life jacket is inflatable, it shall be regularly checked for air retention. Leg or crotch straps will be required starting 01/01/2014. Alternatively, each crewmember shall have a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type I life jacket equipped with crotch or leg straps, a whistle, a waterproof light, retro-reflective material, marked with the boat or owner's name, which is compatible with a safety harness.	
	3.1.2	Each crewmember shall have a U.S. Coast Guard approved Type III or Type V life jacket intended for small boat sailing or other active boating for each crewmember or an inflatable life jacket as described above. <i>In addition to the requirements of USSER 3.1.2, it is strongly recommended that the "Person In Charge" should personally check each life jacket at least once annually.</i>	
	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item #s 3.1.4, 3.2.1. It is strongly recommended that yachts carry jacklines and that jacklines will be rigged prior to severe weather conditions. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that all yachts be equipped with an adequate number of safety harnesses and tethers to accommodate the minimum number of crew that must be on deck during severe weather conditions.	
	3.1.4	<i>Recommendation:</i> Each crewmember shall have a safety harness and compatible safety tether not more than 7 feet (2.13m) long with a minimum tensile strength of 4500 lb. (20kN). The tether shall have a snap hook at its far end and a means to quickly disconnect the tether at the chest end.	
	3.2.1	<i>Recommendation:</i> A boat shall carry jacklines with a breaking strength of at least 4500 lb. (20kN) which allow the crew to reach all points on deck, connected to similarly strong attachment points, in place while racing.	
Navigation Lights	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item # 3.3.1. Yachts that, by design, do not have permanently installed navigation lights, shall be equipped with temporary or portable navigation lights that meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements for vessels greater than 7 meters (23 ft). Note: The "person in charge" is advised that U.S.C.G. rules require navigation lights to be exhibited from sunrise to sunset in restricted visibility.	
	3.3.1	<i>A boat racing between sunset and sunrise shall carry navigation lights that meet U. S. Coast Guard requirements mounted so that they will not be obscured by the sails nor be located below deck level.</i>	
Fire Extinguishers	3.4	A boat shall carry fire extinguisher(s) that meets U.S. Coast Guard requirements. <i>Additionally, it is recommended that the fire extinguisher(s) should be readily accessible and when two or more are required (based on LOA of yacht) they should be stored in suitable and different parts of the yacht.</i>	
Sound Producing Equipment	3.5	A boat shall carry a sound-making device that meets U.S. Coast Guard requirements, when applicable.	

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Visual Distress Signals	3.6.4	A boat shall carry U.S. Coast Guard flares meeting day-night requirements not older than the expiration date.	
Man Overboard	3.7.1	A boat shall carry a Lifesling or equivalent man overboard rescue device equipped with a self igniting light stored on deck and ready for immediate use.	
	3.7.3	A boat shall have a throwing sock-type heaving line of 50' (15m) or greater of floating polypropylene line readily accessible to the cockpit.	
	3.7.4	A boat shall carry a Coast Guard approved Type IV "throwable device". If the device carried under 3.7.1 satisfies this requirement, then no additional device is needed.	
Emergency Comm.	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item #s 3.8.1, 3.8.2. It is strongly recommended that a yacht is equipped with a permanently installed 25-watt VHF radio. A masthead antenna is preferred, but optional. If this is not feasible, the yacht shall be equipped with a watertight handheld VHF radio. Additionally, if the handheld radio is the only radio on board, there shall be a means to recharge the handheld radio or there shall be a fully charged back-up battery pack on board. The specific requirement that VHF radios have DSC/GPS capability is considered a recommendation for 2015.	
	3.8.1	<i>A boat shall have a permanently installed 25-watt VHF radio connected to a masthead antenna by a co-axial feeder cable with no more than a 40% power loss. After 01/01/2015 all radios shall have DSC capability, have an antenna of at least 15" (381mm) in length, be connected to or have an internal GPS, and have the assigned MMSI number (unique to the boat) programmed into the VHF.</i>	
	3.8.2	<i>A boat shall have a watertight handheld VHF radio or a handheld VHF radio with waterproof cover. After 01/01/2015, this radio shall have DSC/GPS capability.</i>	
	3.10	Recommendation: A boat shall carry a cellular phone in a waterproof container.	
	3.14	A boat shall carry a GPS receiver.	
	3.15	A boat shall carry an electronic means to record the position of a man overboard within ten seconds. This may be the same instrument listed in 3.14.	
	3.19.1	A boat shall have a permanently mounted magnetic compass independent of the boat's electrical system suitable for steering at sea.	
Navigation	3.20	A boat shall have non-electronic charts that are appropriate for the race area.	
Damage Control	3.22	A boat shall carry soft plugs of an appropriate material, tapered and of the appropriate size, attached or stowed adjacent to every through-hull opening.	

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Gear			
Anchoring	3.23	A boat shall carry one anchor, meeting the anchor manufacturer's recommendations based on the yacht's size, with a suitable combination of chain and line. <i>The anchor should be readily accessible.</i>	
Lights	3.24.3	A boat shall carry at least two watertight flashlights with spare batteries.	
Medical Kits	3.25	A boat shall carry a first aid kit and first aid manual suitable for the likely conditions of the passage and the number of crew aboard.	
Radar Reflectors	3.26	A boat shall carry an 11.5" (292mm) diameter or greater octahedral radar reflector or one of equivalent performance.	
Dewatering	3.27	A boat shall carry two (2) sturdy bucket(s) of at least two gallons (8 liters) capacity with lanyards attached.	
Emergency Steering	3.29.2	Wheel steered boats shall have an emergency tiller, capable of being fitted to the rudder stock.	
Sails & Rigging			
Mainsail Reefing	Adjustment to USSER	OSC Prescription for USSER item # 3.33.1. It is recommended that a yacht have mainsail reefing capable of reducing the area of the sail by an amount appropriate for the weather conditions possible on the racecourse.	
	3.33.1	Recommendation: A boat shall have a mainsail reefing capable of reducing the luff length by at least 10%:	
Halyards	3.35	A boat shall not be rigged with any halyard that requires a person to go aloft in order to lower a sail.	
Boom Support	3.36	Recommendation: A boat shall have a means to prevent the boom from dropping if support from the mainsail or halyard fails. Additionally, it is recommended that a yacht is prepared to rig a "preventer" or boom restraining device to mitigate an "auto gybe", as conditions warrant.	
Skills			
Man Overboard	4.2	Annually, two-thirds of the boat's racing crew shall practice man-overboard procedures appropriate for the boat's size and speed. The practice shall consist of marking and returning to a position on the water, and demonstrating a method of hoisting a crewmember back on deck, or other consistent means of reboarding the crewmember.	
Safety at Sea Training	4.3.2	Recommendation: At least 30% of those aboard the boat, but not fewer than two members of the crew, unless racing single handed, including the person in charge, shall have attended a half-day, one-day, or two-day US Sailing Safety at Sea Seminar within the last 5 years, or other courses as accepted by US Sailing (required after 01/01/2015).	
Self-Inspection Completed (Skipper/Designated Rep. Signature) _____ Date _____			