Safety Equipment Requirements

Note: Organizing Authorities may add or delete items based on the conditions of their specific races.

Effective Date: January 1, 2027, version 2027.0 valid through December 31, 2028

Changes from the prior version are highlighted with red text

1	**Overall**
1.0.2 Definition	Coastal: Races not far removed from shorelines, where rescue is likely to be quickly available
1.1	The Safety 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 applicable local or national authority for boating, the Racing Rules of Sailing, the rules of Class Associations and any applicable rating rules.
1.2 Responsibility	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.
1.2.1 Responsibility, Investigations	Should there be an incident during a race the Organizing Authority or US Sailing may conduct an investigation to determine the facts of the incident and provide recommendations. By participating in a race conducted under the SER, the person in charge, each competitor and boat owner agrees to reasonably cooperate with the organizing authority and US Sailing in the development of an independent incident report.
1.3 Inspections	A boat may be inspected at any time by an equipment inspector or measurer appointed for the event. If she does not comply with these regulations, her entry may be rejected or she will be subject to a protest filed by the RC. A Violation of the Safety Equipment Requirements may result in a penalty other than disqualification.
1.4 Equipment and Knowledge	All equipment required shall function properly, be regularly checked, cleaned and serviced, not be beyond their expiration date and be of a type, size and capacity suitable for the intended use and size of the boat and the size of the crew. This equipment shall be readily accessible while underway and, when not in use, stored in such a way that deterioration is minimized.
1.5 Secure Storage	A boat's heavy items such as batteries, stoves, toolboxes, anchors, chain and internal ballast shall be secured.
1.6 Strength of Build	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.
1.7 Watertight Integrity	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.
2	**Hull and Structure** **A boat shall have or be equipped with:**
2.1.1 Hull Openings	All companionways shall be capable of being blocked off to main deck level (sheerline). The method of blocking should be solid, watertight, and rigidly secured, if not permanent.
2.1.2 Hull Openings	Hatch boards, whether or not in position in the hatchway, shall be secured in a way that prevents their being lost overboard.
2.1.3 Cockpit	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 Cockpit Drains	Cockpit drains capable of draining six inches of water in 5 minutes. One square inch (645mm2) of effective drain per eight square feet (0.743m2) of cockpit sole will meet this requirement.

2.1.5.2 Cockpit Volume	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, not more than 0.08 x LOA x Max. Beam x Freeboard aft. The cockpit sole shall be at least 0.02 x LOA above LWL.
2.1.6 Through Hulls	Sea cocks or valves on through-hull openings below the waterline except for integral deck scuppers, speed transducers, depth finder transducers and the like; however a means of closing such openings shall be provided.
2.2.2 Stability	The boat must have a stability index greater than or equal to 103 or meet the requirements of ISO 12217-2~~B~~: 2022, Design Category B.
2.2.3 Stability	A boat with moveable or variable ballast (water or canting keel) shall comply with the requirements of Appendix K.
2.4.1 Lifelines	A suitably strong enclosure, surrounding the deck and headstay typically consisting of lifelines and pulpits, meeting the requirements in 2.4.2 to 2.4.8.
2.4.2 Lifeline Stanchions	Stanchion and pulpit bases shall be within the working deck.
2.4.3 Bow Pulpit	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).
2.4.4 Lifelines	Lifelines of uncoated stainless steel wire. 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.
2.4.4.1 Lifeline Deflection	Lifeline deflection shall not exceed the following: a) When a deflecting force of 9 lbs (40N) is applied to a lifeline midway between supports of an upper or single lifeline, the lifeline shall not deflect more than 2" (50mm). This measurement shall be taken at the widest span between supports that are aft of the mast. b) When a deflecting force of 9 lbs (40N) is applied midway between supports of an intermediate lifeline of all spans that are aft of the mast, deflection shall not exceed 5" (120mm) from a straight line between the stanchions.
2.4.5 Lifeline Stanchion Spacing	Maximum spacing between lifeline supports (e.g. stanchions and pulpits) shall be 87" (2.2m).
2.4.6 Lifelines	For boats under 30' (9.14m) at least one lifeline with 15" ~~18"~~ (381mm) 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).
2.4.7 Lifelines	For boats 30' and over (9.14m) 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 Toe Rails	Toe rails 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.
2.5.1 Dewatering pumps	A permanently installed manual bilge pump of at least a 10 GPM (37.8 liter per minute) 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.
2.7.2 Mechanical Propulsion	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.
2.7.3 Mechanical Propulsion Installation	The boat's engine and generator installation (if so equipped) must conform to ABYC, ISO, or U.S. Coast Guard standards.

2.12 Keel and Rudder Inspection	At a haul-out within 4 years prior to the event, the owner or his/her representative shall inspect the integrity of the keel and rudder following the recommendations in Appendix L. - Model Keel and Rudder Inspection Procedure. It is the responsibility of the Owner to undertake any repairs. The Organizing Authority may require a more recent inspection.
2.13 Keel and Rudder Inspection	Inspection after Grounding – an appropriately qualified person shall conduct an internal and external inspection after each unintentional grounding.
3	**Safety Equipment** **A boat shall have or be equipped with:**
3.1.1 Lifejackets	For each crewmember, 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. Alternatively, each crewmember shall have an inherently buoyant off-shore life jacket that provides at least 22lbs (100N) of buoyancy meeting either U.S. Coast Guard or ISO specifications.
3.1.2 Lifejacket Features	Life jackets shall be equipped with crotch or leg straps, that are manufactured for the purpose and are attached to the lifejacket at all times while racing, 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.
3.1.4 Lifejacket Use	Lifejackets as described in 3.1.1 – 3.1.3 shall be worn by all crew on deck unless the person in charge has indicated that they may be set aside.
3.1.5 Harness	6'7" (2m) 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 while under load and without the use of a tool.
3.2.1 Jacklines	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.
3.3.1 Navigation Lights	A boat racing between sunset and sunrise shall carry navigation lights that meet U. S. Coast Guard or applicable government requirements mounted so that they will not be obscured by the sails nor be located below deck level.
3.4 Fire Extinguishers	Fire extinguisher(s) that meets U.S. Coast Guard or applicable government requirements, when applicable.
3.5 Sound Producing Equipment	Sound-making devices that meets U.S. Coast Guard or applicable government requirements, when applicable.
3.6.4 Visual Distress Signals	Either three SOLAS red hand flares not older than the expiration date OR one Electronic Visual Distress Signal Device ("eVDSD") marked as meeting "RTCM Standard 13200.0" (red-orange/cyan LED flashing SOS + infrared flashing SOS) PLUS one orange distress flag marked "Complies with U.S. Coast Guard Requirement in 46 CFR 160.072."
3.6.5 Raft Flares	Boat flares stored inside of life rafts may not be used to satisfy the flare requirement.
3.7.1 Crew Overboard Sling	A Lifesling or equivalent man overboard rescue device equipped with a light stored on deck and ready for immediate use.
3.7.2 Crew Overboard Equipment	A man overboard pole and flag, with a lifebuoy, a light, a whistle, and a drogue attached. A self-inflating Man Overboard Module, Dan Buoy or similar device with or without a lifebuoy with at least 150n buoyancy will satisfy this requirement. Self-inflating apparatus shall be tested and serviced in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. These items shall be stored on deck, ready for immediate use, and affixed in a manner that allows for a "quick release".
3.7.3 Throw Line	A throwing sock-type heaving line of 50' (15m) or greater of floating polypropylene line readily accessible to the cockpit.

3.7.4 Throwable Device	A Coast Guard or applicable government approved "throwable device". If the device carried under 3.7.1 or 3.7.2 satisfies this requirement, then no additional device is needed.
3.8.1 Fixed Mount VHF	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. Such radio 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) programed into the VHF.
3.8.2 Handheld VHF	A watertight handheld VHF radio or a handheld VHF radio with waterproof cover. This radio shall have DSC/GPS capability with an MMSI number properly registered to the vessel.
3.9 AIS	An AIS Transponder, sharing a masthead VHF antenna via a low loss AIS antenna splitter. An acceptable alternative is a dedicated AIS antenna that is a minimum of 0.9 meters long, mounted with its base at least 3 meters above the water, and fed with coax that has a maximum 40% power loss.
3.14 GPS	A GPS receiver.
3.15 Crew Overboard Button	An electronic means to record the position of a man overboard within ten seconds. This may be the same instrument listed in 3.14. For boats with only two crewmembers, this device shall be accessable without having to go below deck.
3.16.2 EPIRB / PLB	A 406MHz EPIRB which is properly registered to the boat, or a floating 406MHz Personal Locator Beacon, registered to the owner with a notation in the registration that it is aboard the boat. This device shall be equipped with an internal GPS. Units regsitered after 2026 shall be equipped with AIS transmit capability.
3.18 Depth Sounder	A permanently installed depth sounder that can measure to depths of at least 200 ft. (61m).
3.19.1 Compass	A permanently mounted magnetic compass independent of the boat's electrical system suitable for steering at sea.
3.20 Charts	Non-electronic charts that are appropriate for the race area.
3.22 Plugs	Soft plugs of an appropriate material, tapered and of the appropriate size, attached or stowed adjacent to every through-hull opening.
3.23 Anchor	One anchor, meeting the anchor manufacturer's recommendations based on the boat's size, with a suitable combination of chain and line.
3.24.1 Searchlight	A watertight, high-powered searchlight, suitable for searching for a person overboard at night or for collision avoidance.
3.24.3 Flashlights	At least two watertight flashlights with spare batteries in addition to the requirement of 3.24.1.
3.25 Medical Kits	A first aid kit and first aid manual suitable for the likely conditions of the passage and the number of crew aboard.
3.26 Radar Reflectors	~~An 11.5" (292mm) diameter or greater octahedral radar reflector or one of equivalent performance.~~
3.27.1 Buckets	Two sturdy buckets of at least two gallons (8 liters) capacity with lanyards attached.
3.28 Safety Diagram	A durable, waterproof diagram or chart locating the principal items of safety equipment and through hulls in the main accommodation area where it can be easily seen.
3.29.2 Emergency Tiller	If wheel steered, an emergency tiller, capable of being fitted to the rudder stock.
3.31 Identification	Retro-reflective material and be marked with the boat's or wearer's name on all lifesaving equipment. The exception would be for new equipment or rented equipment (e.g. life rafts) that would require the unpacking of sealed equipment in order to meet this requirement. The boat name shall be added during the first servicing of any new equipment.
3.33.1 Mainsail Reefing	Mainsail reefing capable of reducing the luff length by at least 10%.
3.35 Halyards	No halyard that requires a person to go aloft in order to lower a sail.

3.35.2 Halyards	A boat shall have a means of hoisting a person out of the water. This may consist of a halyard that reaches the water, a multipart tackle capable of reaching from the water to at least six feet above the boat's upper lifeline, or an equivalent system.
3.36 Boom Support	A boat over 30' LOA (9.14m) shall have a means to prevent the boom from dropping if support from the mainsail or halyard fails.
4	**Skills**
4.1.2 Emergency Steering	Crews must be aware of methods of steering the boat with the rudder disabled.
4.2 Man Overboard Practice	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.
4.3.2 Safety at Sea Training	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 a valid Coastal, Offshore, or International Offshore Certificate from US Sailing, or the equivalent from another national authority.
4.4 Crew Training	As required in 1.2 above the person in charge shall ensure that all crew members know where all emergency equipment is located and how to operate the equipment. In addition, the person in charge and crew should discuss how to handle various emergency situations including Crew Overboard, Grounding, Loss of steering, Flooding, Fire, Dismasting, and Abandon Ship.
4.6 Crew Training	~~Lifejackets as described in 3.1.1 – 3.1.3 should be worn by all crew on deck in any conditions where recovery may be difficult. It is recommended that lifejackets **shall** be worn by all crew on deck unless the person in charge has indicated that they may be set aside.~~ Requirement has been revised and moved to 3.1.4