



Safety Bulletin 06 of 2018

To: Operators and Masters of all commercially operated RIBs

Pre- Departure and on-passage assessment of “Favourable Weather” conditions by the Operators and Masters / LKE holders of Commercially Operated RIBS.

Advice:

Commercially operated RIBs are only permitted to operate in accordance with their Small Commercial Motor Vessel Certificate which ensures compliance with the Small Commercial Vessel Code and restricts commercial operations to daylight and in “*favourable weather*” conditions.

In this context “*Favourable weather*” means wind, sea and visibility conditions which are deemed by the master to be safe for a small vessel to operate within the limits applied to it; for clarity this means conditions existing throughout a voyage or excursion in which the effects either individually or in combination of swell, height of waves, strength of wind and visibility cause no hazard to the safety of the vessel, including handling ability.

In making a judgement on favourable weather the Master should have due regard to official weather forecasts for the service area of the vessel or to weather information for the area which may be available from Jersey Coastguard or similar coastal safety organisation.

In addition, it is the owners’ responsibility to ensure passengers are secure in the vessel and wear protective clothing and headgear, appropriate to the speed of the vessel and weather and sea conditions likely to be encountered in the intended operating area.

Vessels that are operated at high speed carry additional risks. It is incumbent upon the operator to ensure that the Master has the necessary skills & experience to ensure the safety of passengers by thorough briefing & by assessment of the physical capabilities of passengers to safely experience the voyage, with due regard to the ambient sea conditions.

These capabilities must be continually assessed throughout the voyage.

It would be prudent to raise such issues and, in particular any potential health issues, at the point of booking.

It is stressed that the responsibility for the decision as to whether a particular passenger may be carried in the prevailing circumstances must be that of the master and not that of the individual passenger.

These vessels are also required to be commanded by suitably qualified individuals holding a Local Knowledge Endorsement by the Harbour Master following examination in which the above points are covered and the requirement to comply with the operators standard operating procedures as well as his/her responsibilities towards his/her passengers are stressed.

Particular care is needed in local waters where the effect of strong currents in opposition to wind and swell generated waves can, in known areas, increase the size and steepness of waves encountered above those forecast in the shipping forecast and on weather forecasting sites.

Ports of Jersey

St Peter, Jersey, JE1 1BY

T +44 (0)1534 447788 E enquiries@ports.je



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Such areas need to be treated with particular caution and the assessment as to how to transit such areas or avoid them needs to be part of the pre-voyage assessment as to whether the voyage can be safely conducted. If the voyage is to proceed such points must where relevant be included in the passage plan and in all cases in the continual appraisal of conditions on passage.

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Capt. Stan Richard-dit-Leschery RD AFNI

HQSE Manager & Pilot

Ports of Jersey

Maritime House / St Helier / Jersey / JE1 1HB

T +44 (0) 1534 447780

M +44 (0) 7797753254 (work)

E stanley.richard-dit-leschery@ports.je

W www.ports.je