




Maritime &
Coastguard
Agency


Chief Executive
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Spring Place, 105 Commercial Road,
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www.gov.uk/mca

29 January 2025

Mr Henry Charles

Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton Coroner's Office
Castle Hill
The Castle
Winchester
SO23 8UL

Dear Mr Charles

Subject: Regulation 28: Report to Prevent Future Deaths

I am writing to you in response to your Regulation 28 Report to Prevent Future Deaths following the tragic accident involving Emily Jane Lewis.

We received the MAIB recommendations on 17 November 2023 ahead of the final report being published on 14 December 2023. By that time, there had already been significant developments in the draft of the Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code to address concerns you have raised, such as improved requirements for seating in vessels undertaking this type of operation, greater use of vessel Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) and a new mandatory requirement for owners and operators to implement a safety management system.

Staff at MCA have prioritised work to replace the Small Commercial Vessel and Pilot Boat Code as annexed to MGN 280(M) (Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure Workboats and Pilot Boats – Alternative Construction Standards). We are focussing on bringing forward new legislation and an updated Code of Practice for Small Vessels in Commercial Use for Sport or Pleasure (the "Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code") as soon as practical, in line with the required consultation and Parliamentary processes.

The findings and recommendations of the MAIB Investigation Report have informed the development of this draft Code, and we can report that the Parliamentary process of that legislation

is currently at the midpoint of a 12-week public consultation running from 4 December 2024 until 25 February 2025. It should be noted however, that any interim measures that could be considered to manage risks of high-speed RIB experience rides would not be able to be implemented any sooner than the revised Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code would come into effect.

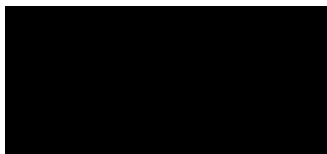
Furthermore, the MCA has begun the procurement process to commission an anthropometric assessment of the design and operational requirements for small high-speed passenger craft safety and the protection of passengers and crew provided by the craft with respect to whole-body vibration and sudden decelerations in the event of a horizontal impact. This will require, among other things; assessment of the full anthropometric range of passengers and crew, the operational profile of the vessels, including the range of speeds, as well as crash protection and general protection of the seating arrangements including the design and use of handholds and restraints

This research project will commence by April 2025, and then the final report is likely to be available in late spring/early summer 2026. The outputs of this report will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the next version of the Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code. We will also use the information and data gathered to provide updated guidance to the wider pleasure vessel sector on passenger safety information.

As well as the proactive steps to improve small commercial vessel safety with the amendments made in the draft Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code we will continue to work to ensure that owners and operators take seriously their responsibilities for ensuring the safety of those onboard their vessels.

I remain at your disposal.

Yours sincerely

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Chief Executive Officer