

3. CREW

This section considers the real 'engine' of the boat - the team that will sail onboard. Your crew may be family or friends that you sail with regularly, or new people onboard only for the rally. It is important to consider how the team will work together, training they may need, and the logistics for getting crew to the right place.

Need crew? Visit OceanCrewLink.com



Useful Crew Checklist

Questions for the Skipper	Notes
Who will be sailing onboard?	
Have you booked the correct number of crew places for the rally?	
Have your crew completed their online registration and 'Declared'? See pages 5-7	
Does your insurance policy cover you for this number of people onboard for the rally route?	
Do you need to find more crew? See page 38 for suggestions or visit www.oceancrewlink.com	
If you have crew who haven't sailed together before, have you arranged a get together and/or test sail?	
What will you do if some of the crew don't like each other?	
Is your liferaft large enough for the proposed number of crew? See pages 22-25	
Do you have enough lifejackets/PFDs onboard, one for each person? Do crew need to provide their own lifejacket/PFD? If so, are they aware of the additional components including sprayhood, personal AIS beacon and compliant safety tether?	
Do your crew need training in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First aid • Sea survival (liferafts etc) • Communications equipment • Navigation • Sailing skills 	
It is recommended that the skipper and at least one crew have undertaken formal training in the past 5 years (page 20) More information on crew training on page 41-43	
Do any of your crew have special needs? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diet? • Allergies? • Health or medical issues? 	
How will you manage any special needs during the rally?	
Will any of your crew be flying in to join the boat in port? See Skipper's Letter on page 39	
Do any of your crew require visas or vaccinations? Are their passports in-date? See the country pages in the Local Information section for more details	
How will costs be shared onboard, and have all crew been informed? What happens about unexpected costs, like breakages?	
When will crew be arriving onboard? When will they be leaving the boat?	
Will hotel accommodation need to be booked for any ports?	

Choosing Crew

Inviting new crew onto your boat is exciting and can lead to long and fruitful friendships. If things aren't managed carefully, there is also the possibility of misunderstandings and arguments, so think carefully about what you want to do.

Define your crew needs

Decide the **level of sailing experience** you are looking for in potential crew - an 'expert' or a willing learner? Don't forget that you will all be living together in cramped conditions, so personality can be as important as sailing skills.

Be honest about your own sailing skills, cruising ambitions and the quality of your boat.

Little things are important too. If you don't like people smoking on your boat, or only prepare vegetarian food, then make this clear up-front.

Check the paperwork – make sure your boat insurance policy covers you for the right number of crew, and that crew joining and leaving the boat overseas have the correct visas and onward flight tickets. If you are charging crew for the passage rather than just sharing costs, then check that your insurance company doesn't consider you to be commercially chartering

Consider all aspects of safety carefully. Is the liferaft big enough, and do you have the correct number of lifejackets? Define your rules about wearing lifejackets and make sure new crew are familiar with all the safety equipment and that you practice man overboard and other drills.

Define crew responsibilities – will everyone be expected to cook, clean and stand watches?

Get Together

Getting along with all the crew is vital for everyone on board. The best way to get to know people is to have a trial sail together before starting the voyage. If it isn't possible to sail together first, then try to meet up, or at the very least Skype so you can 'see' each other. Have lots of phone conversations to get to know each other, and to answer all questions.

Most new crews end in long term friendships, but sometimes people just don't get along. If this happens, address issues in an open and fair way before problems start. Having written agreements in advance can help in some cases. Above all, be prepared to be flexible and adaptable!

Money

Agree the financial arrangements in writing before setting sail. Most crews agree to share living costs such as food, fuel and mooring fees, with individuals paying their own travel and onshore costs, whilst the owner pays for maintenance and repairs. But sometimes the owner pays for everything, and sometimes the crew pay a passage fee. The financial agreement may affect how the crew works together – if a crew pays a passage fee or daily rate, are they part of the crew or on holiday? If the owner pays for everything, are the crew effectively employees?

Owners charging a fee rather than shared costs could legally be considered to be chartering, which could have implications for boat insurance and the level of safety and communications equipment onboard. This can also have serious implications for entry charges and other constraints in some countries. Check with your insurance broker and your national sailing organisation.

Changing crew and travel plans

Select crew who can be flexible in case of a delayed start or longer than planned passage. Beware of air tickets that cannot be changed.

Secure crew at least 6-8 weeks before departure and have some alternatives. Crew details and documentation may need to be provided to an advanced deadline and some authorities will charge for late receipt of documents or changes to them. These charges will be passed on to participants at cost.

Circulate an itinerary and contact information among crew and their families. Plan crew changes to avoid long transfers and extra costs and if you change your plans, keep everyone informed in a timely manner.

Finding Crew

Use www.oceancrewlink.com to find sailors interested in ocean passage-making. It is free to register a crewing opportunity, and you can filter the crew by level of experience, nationality etc. You can also ask in your local sailing club or get referrals from sailing friends.

Whatever method you use, get to know your crew before setting sail!

Pre-Departure Safety Briefing

No matter how experienced your crew, a safety briefing by the skipper is an essential part of crew training prior to the start of any sailing voyage. **Skippers will be required to sign a declaration prior to departure stating they have conducted a pre-departure safety briefing with all crew members**, considered possible contingencies, and methods to avoid, minimize or cope with emergencies.

The pre-departure safety briefing must include:

- training drills for man overboard, abandon ship, dismasting, fire, flood, loss of rudder/steering and the use of storm sails;
- stowage and use of all safety equipment (in particular lifejackets, flares, EPIRBs, fire extinguishers, liferaft, MOB equipment, first aid kit, grab bag);
- the procedure for making a correct MAYDAY call, including giving the yacht's position;
- passage and pilotage plan for the crossing.

In addition, it is recommended that the skipper should:

- discuss the Safety Equipment Regulations with the crew;
- discuss who takes on the skipper role should the skipper be incapacitated or victim of a man-overboard incident;
- review the medical status of crew members taking medication, including seasickness remedies;
- assign a ship's medic;
- review safety harness, life jacket and safety line procedures to be used, issuing each crew member with their own lifejacket and ensuring it is fitted correctly;
- review cooking stove and other fire and explosion hazards;
- review flooding control procedures;
- review man aloft (mast climbing) procedures;
- urge each crew member to constantly think about safety and the consequences of every action.

Immigration Issues

Skipper's Responsibility

Crew arriving by boat at a destination are the responsibility of the skipper. This means that if your crew are leaving the boat, they need to have an onwards air ticket or funds available, otherwise the skipper will be responsible for the cost of repatriation. This is particularly important if you decide to pick-up casual crew on the dock just before departure.

If crew are leaving the boat, they should be 'signed-off' so they are no longer the skipper's responsibility. This is done by visiting the immigration authorities with the crew member and his papers, including passport and onwards tickets.

Skipper's Letter

Crew arriving by air on a one-way ticket may need proof that they will be leaving the country on the boat. This is easily done by providing a 'skipper's letter' for crew to present to the immigration authorities on arrival.

This letter should state that the named person is joining the named yacht in a specific port, and that the skipper/master accepts responsibility for that person leaving the country onboard the boat. The letter should be signed by the skipper. [Log on to the website worldcruising.com](http://www.worldcruising.com) (See [Member's area > Documents & Info > Crew Advice](#)) to download a pro-forma 'Skipper's Letter'. Don't forget to give the signed letter to crew before they fly.

Passports

While passports are a personal responsibility for each crew member, the skipper needs to check that all passports are in-date and comply with immigration requirements of any countries to be visited, as crew arriving by boat are the responsibility of the skipper.

See the Local Information section for more details, or go to the country pages on www.noonsite.com

Visas

Details of visa requirements are covered in the Local Information section of this Handbook. www.noonsite.com is also a comprehensive resource, or contact the closest embassy or consulate of the country concerned.

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Crew Training

Proper training is good preparation for any sailing voyage. Skippers should ensure that their crew are properly prepared for the ocean passage. If the crew is prepared, the skipper will experience less stress during the passage and everyone will have more fun. The skipper has a duty of care towards his or her crew. No matter how much gear you put on your boat, it's the experience of the skipper and crew that makes for a safe voyage.

Formal Training

Formal qualifications or specific crew training classes are not required to participate in our rallies, however it is **recommended that the skipper and at least one of the crew have undertaken a range of formal training in the last five years.** This should include:

- Giving Assistance to Other Craft
- Personal Safety Gear, theory and practice
- Care and Maintenance of Safety Gear
- Fire Precautions and Firefighting, theory and practical
- Crew Overboard Identification and Recovery
- Hypothermia, Cold Shock and Drowning
- Crew Health
- Marine Weather
- Heavy Weather - crew routines, boat handling, drogues
- Storm Sails
- Damage Control
- Search and Rescue Organization
- Pyrotechnics and Signalling Gear, theory and practical
- Emergency Communications, theory and practical
- Liferrafts and Abandon Ship, theory and practical

Sea Survival Training

Safety and survival at sea can be achieved with careful planning and preventatives. Formal sea survival and sea safety training is about considering the worst-case scenario, and learning damage limitation skills and emergency management.

The one or two day World Sailing sea survival course is an excellent introduction on how to use a liferaft correctly and how to handle an emergency situation at sea. The basic sea survival for small craft course is offered in many countries, and a full list of recognised courses can be found on the [World Sailing website](#).

The training will include man overboard and abandon ship procedures; a practical session with a liferaft and other safety equipment is invaluable. The experience will give you greater confidence in an emergency situation and in the capabilities of your safety equipment. If possible, join a course with a practical session in a swimming pool so you can learn about using lifejackets and liferafts.

Maritime First Aid/Medical Training

When heading off on a lengthy offshore passage, a cruising sailor needs to focus on 3 key areas:

- Basic medical skills
- Communications
- Medical supplies (see [page 69](#))

A number of training centres offer a range of medical training geared toward the offshore sailor. These courses aim to familiarise you with handling emergencies like lacerations, burns and fractures. In addition, you will learn about marine-related emergencies, such as hypothermia and drowning. Training will provide you with the confidence and skills to treat common ailments as well as life threatening emergencies, including how to stabilise a crew member with traumatic injuries, and take history and observations using a first aid and medical care system.

With a knowledgeable crew, safe and effective treatment can then be made with assistance from Radio Medical Advice via SSB radio, VHF relay, or satellite communications. Contacting the MRCC (Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre) **Radio Medical Advice** provides the opportunity to liaise with a doctor 24/7.

Carry a good medical book designed for sailors, such as the Ship's Captain's Medical Guide (ISBN 9780115537318) which will guide your first-aider through the treatment process.

Training Centres

There are hundreds of yachting training schools worldwide offering blue water training, both theoretical and practical. To aid you in your search for the right course we have listed below relevant international websites and addresses.



Training in the UK

Hamble School of Yachting is our UK-based training partner, and they offer special courses and discounts for rally participants.

Hamble School of Yachting

www.hamble.co.uk T: +44 (0)23 8045 2668

Royal Yachting Association

www.rya.org.uk T: +44 (0)23 8060 4100

The RYA website has a complete list of UK establishments offering a variety of yachting associated courses, including courses with affiliated centres in Europe, North America and Australia.

Training in the USA

US Sailing

www.ussailing.org T: +1 (401) 683 0800

US Sailing offers a range of training from basic cruising to offshore passage making.

www.sailingcertification.com

Note: The classroom-only Safety at Sea Seminars are not the same as the World Sailing Sea Survival course, and the additional second day of practical training is highly recommended.

Training Internationally

Most national sailing authorities will offer accredited training courses suitable for offshore sailing. Contact your national authority to find details of training centres close-by.

Canadian Yachting Association

www.sailing.ca T: +1 (613) 545 3044

Deutscher Segler Verband

www.dsv.org T: +49 40 63 20 090

Fédération Française de Voile

www.ffvoile.org T: +33 14 06 03 7 00

Koninklijk Nederlands Watersport Verbond

www.watersportverbond.nl T: +31 30 75 13 700

Norwegian Sailing Federation

www.seiling.no T: +47 21 02 97 10

A full list of recognised courses can be found on the [World Sailing website](http://WorldSailing.com).



Ocean Sailing Seminar

The World Cruising Club Ocean Sailing Seminars are two day courses that provide an in-depth look at the issues involved in planning and preparing for an ocean passage.

Topics include offshore communications, rigging maintenance, choosing sails, AC/DC power management, first aid at sea, windvane and autopilot systems, safety equipment and weather forecasting.

The seminars are not formal training courses, but are an excellent planning aid. They also provide an opportunity to meet other participants, and to have one-to-one discussions with lecturers.

www.worldcruising.com/training

Qualifying Passage

It is a requirement that the skipper and at least one member of the crew undertake a non-stop offshore or coastal passage in the boat that is going to be used for the rally. Details of the length of the qualifying passage are included in the rally Conditions of Entry.

This voyage is a shake-down for the boat and crew, and should highlight any training needs for the crew and work required for the boat. As such, it makes sense for as many of the crew as possible to have undertaken the qualifying passage.



Crew Health

As skipper of a yacht it is your responsibility to know what medical conditions, if any, that your crew may have. It's not just medical conditions like epilepsy, angina or diabetes that are important, but any medication taken on an ongoing basis may affect other drugs that need to be given in an emergency situation.

Food or drug allergies are important on a boat. If these are known, then care can be taken when provisioning, for example, to avoid nuts.

If crew have special medication for known conditions, such as an EpiPen (Epinephrine Auto-Injector) for extreme allergies, tablets for angina etc, then the rest of the crew need to know where these are stored and how to help administer them in an emergency.

Discuss health, allergies and medication with each crew individually, and complete the table below. Include the full name of any medication and its dosage.

If medication is not stored in the ship's medicine box, then note where it will be kept. This table needs to be accessible to all crew in an emergency, but be aware that this is a sensitive subject for many people. It may be a good idea for the affected crew member to explain their condition and treatment to the other crew, to dispel any anxieties or embarrassment.

General Wellbeing

It is worth remembering that for some people being at sea can be very stressful, while for others it is a relaxing experience. This may affect their general wellbeing, or any underlying medical conditions.

Encourage crew to have everything they need when they arrive onboard. Even something as trivial as a spare pair of spectacles can make the difference between an active crew member and someone effectively incapacitated.

Remember time zone changes when taking medication.

Crew Health Form

<i>Crew Name</i>	<i>Condition</i>	<i>Medication/Treatment</i>	<i>Notes</i>



Comprehensive yacht insurance designed specifically for World Cruising Club rally participants

Underwritten by Travelers Insurance, our policy includes the following benefits;

- Cover for piracy, acts of terrorism & associated risks
- No excess for third party claims
- No excess if you are struck by another vessel underway when moored
- Free cover for YB tracking devices
- 12 month policy for the price of 10

Our in-house claims team will also ensure that your claim is dealt with efficiently supported by our global network of marine surveyors and repair specialists.

World ARC participants also benefit from;

- 15 month policy if required
- Search and rescue cover if applicable
- Automatic increase in third party liability limit to AU\$10,000,000 whilst in Australian waters
- Discounted premium for those entering both ARC and World ARC



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