

Skipper & Crew Briefing, 2008

These notes do not replace attending the briefing but are meant to supplement it

This Briefing is accepted by the MCA as the required “on-going training”.

Operations Manual

READ YOUR OPERATIONS MANUAL BEFORE THE SEASON

There are no changes to the Operations Manual this year.

Remind skippers and crew of a number of things in the Manual which are at times forgotten:

- Do not leave the windlass on the paddle gear; if the ratchet fails the windlass will be thrown off with some force.
- When operating locks, crew must pay full attention at all times to the skipper and boat. Talking to passers by is secondary.
- Always wind the paddle down with the windlass, do not let it run through your hands.
- When locking down, never put the free end of a mooring rope around anything (cleat etc) as it may jam. It must be held free in your hand.
- When a mooring rope is let go and brought inboard it must be coiled up properly before being left.
- If the eye splice in the end of a mooring rope is too large, make it fast to the cleat so that it cannot fall off.
- Skippers are reminded that the engine must be running until the boat is made fast and before it is let go – you must have control at all times
- Crew briefings must be carried out by every skipper on every occasion they go out or when there is a change of crew during the day.
- Passenger safety briefing is just that and should be no more, except to welcome the passengers on board and say who the skipper and the crew are. Ensure all the points required in the Manual are covered.
- The stern gland greaser should be screwed up both before and after every day’s cruising.

The new Engine

With the new engine having been fitted there are some changed procedures:

- Before starting, there are no engine checks required (i.e. oil and water - it is a water cooled engine). There are alarms that will show for low oil pressure and overheating. Obviously if either of these is activated, the engine must be stopped and the situation investigated.
- To start the engine from cold, pull the Morse control lever to the left to disengage the gears and push it forward to give some throttle. Turn the key to the left and hold it for about 5 seconds, then turn it to the right to start for a maximum of 30 seconds. If it does not start by then, repeat the procedure with more throttle. Once warmed up, the engine should start by just turning the key to the right without the need for additional throttle.
- To stop the engine, press and hold the “stop” button, then turn off the ignition. If the ignition is turned off before the engine has been stopped, when it stops the electronic rev counter will remain at whatever revs were being done at the time and will revert to zero when the ignition is next switched on – it is not stuck!
- There is also an emergency fuel cut-off knob mounted on the control panel. Do not pull this unless it is absolutely necessary as it may require bleeding of the fuel supply before the engine can be restarted.

- There are now 2 battery keys, one for the engine and one for domestic services. Both should be inserted and switched on for use and both removed at the end of the day.
- The normal revs for operation are 800 – 1000 for the short trips and 1000 – 1200 for the longer trips. But always watch for excessive wash on the banks and reduce revs accordingly.
- The engine room windows no longer need to be open during operation and it may be best to leave them closed to avoid any chance of damage.

Miscellaneous

- Special Instructions must be checked by skipper prior to EVERY trip. Pass any relevant information to crew.
- On ZK, children may not sit or stand on midships steps during trip.
- Limited number of people may go out forward PROVIDING acceptable to skipper and crew but NOT during locking, turning or berthing.
- Skipper is responsible for everything that happens on board. This does not relieve the crew from doing their jobs without being told.
- During a trip, 1 crew member must be at the forward end and 1 within the cabin, normally by the steps.
- The door between the engine room and main cabin MUST be kept closed whenever passengers are on board.
- When poling to assist in turning the boat or pushing it off the bank, only push on it. Do not use it as a lever – it will break.
- At the end of the day, ensure that the boat is fully closed up with everything away. There have been instances of boathooks being left out, doors not being locked and battery keys being left in and “on”. It is the whole crew’s responsibility to ensure everything is done, not just the skipper.
- At end of day’s cruising, ALL lock gates to be left closed. Padlocks locked. Only close top gates between trips in a day if serious leaks noted in bottom gates. Check bottom paddles FULLY closed before opening top paddle. At present, BKL bottom gates are rather stiff and the towpath side bottom gate paddle must be wound down fully to a position where the hole for the old padlock is visible.
- Care with extended door hatches – do not drop them. May need 2 people to close to avoid dropping the hatch which is dangerous.
- Do NOT “rip” windows when opening, but use care to avoid damage to the new Velcro.
- Skipper must ensure logbook is completed fully at the end of his trips - note last column is ONLY for serious mechanical problems. As there are now no engine checks, the column that was used for that is now to be used to record the accumulated engine running hours at the end of each day, from the dial on the engine panel. (It has a decimal point before the last digit).
- Accident report form MUST be completed and a WAEL Director notified in event of any accident involving passengers or crew. Any item used from the First Aid kit must be reported to Ops Manager, Rosie Sugar.
- There are 3 mooring ropes on board, 2 for use kept in the engine room and 1 spare in the midships locker. The overnight mooring lines must be left attached to the shore.
- Skippers, check your BML is still valid and ensure you carry it with you when skippering. The MCA now require First Aid certs to be valid at the time BMLs are renewed (they last 3 years).
- Skippers are expected to crew at least once during the season to obtain a view from “the other end”.
- There will be a number of audits done this year.