

SOLAS V regulations relevant to pleasure craft under 150 GT:

Voyage / Passage Planning

Regulation 34 - Safe navigation and avoidance of dangerous situations

*1. Prior to proceeding to sea, the master shall ensure that the intended voyage has been planned using the appropriate nautical charts and nautical publications for the area concerned, taking into account the guidelines and recommendations developed by the Organization. **

2. The voyage plan shall identify a route which:

2.1. takes into account any relevant ships' routing systems.

2.2. ensures sufficient sea room for the safe passage of the ship throughout the voyage.

2.3. anticipates all known navigational hazards and adverse weather conditions; and

2.4. takes into account the marine environmental protection measures that apply, and avoids, as far as possible, actions and activities which could cause damage to the environment.

**Refer to the Guidelines for Voyage Planning, adopted by the Organization by Resolution A.893(21)*

The MCA Guidance Notes for this regulation state: For small vessels and pleasure-craft the degree of voyage planning will be dependent upon the size of vessel, its crew and the length of the voyage. The MCA expects all mariners to make a careful assessment of any proposed voyage taking into account all dangers to navigation, weather forecasts, tidal predictions and other relevant factors including the competence of the crew.

RYA Note: Skippers should note that this regulation changes the status of passage planning on small boats from simply good practice to a requirement under UK law for vessels proceeding to sea (proceeding outside of 'categorised waters' see [MSN 1837](#)).

However, the MCA says, "Although regulation 34 only applies when proceeding to sea, small craft users should adhere to the voyage planning principles when also sailing in categorised waters".

The RYA strongly recommends that you always have a plan. This needn't be complicated but an element of planning is required for even the simplest, and shortest of journeys.

The MCA has provided further pleasure vessel specific guidance in [MGN 599](#) paragraph 7.3.