

an acceptable opinion of themselves, but this suggestion is just a touch on the élitist side for my liking.

As for recklessness and foolhardiness on putting to sea, no amount of books, knowledge, capability or wealth has prevented motorists breaking the speed limit, so why should it stop the evident foolishness at sea?

REFERENCE

- ¹ Barlett, T. (1995). 'Conflicts in inshore waters' – a yachtsman's view. *This Journal*, 48, 154.

'Conflicts in Inshore Waters'

From A. W. Jones

Having followed the debate on the above subject with interest, I would like to comment on the contributions from Captain Sven Gylden¹ and Mr A. T. C. Millns.²

Captain Gylden clearly believes all yachtsmen are idiots, so there is little hope for constructive debate there. The answer as to why no less than eight consecutive yachts turned to port when he 'blew the whistle for them' while overtaking, may be that a single blast means 'I am turning to starboard'. Turning to port to get out of his way seems reasonable to me.

Mr Millns claims to write in 'full support' of Commander Booth's article³ which proposes a complete ban on yachts from large areas of the Solent but, in so doing, he is surely contradicting his last paragraph emphasising the value of tolerance and 'a deeper understanding of good seamanship' which seems to me to be the obvious answer.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Gylden, S. G. (1995). 'Conflicts in inshore waters'. *This Journal*, 48, 314.
² Millns, A. T. C. (1995). 'Conflicts in inshore waters'. *This Journal*, 48, 439.
³ Booth, P. (1994). Conflicts in inshore waters. *This Journal*, 47, 208.

'Conflicts in Inshore Waters'

From Tim Bartlett and Dag Pike

Our two responses^{1,2} to proposals by the QHM Portsmouth³ to control and restrict yachting in the Solent in order to facilitate commercial and naval shipping movements have prompted numerous replies, of which the majority attack the alleged irresponsible behaviour of yachtsmen.

We feel this one-sided view needs balancing.

The casualty pages of *Lloyds List* and the reports of the Marine Accident Investigation Branch show that both sides of the commercial/leisure divide include individuals who are ignorant, incapable, inexperienced, who 'couldn't care less' or in whom familiarity has bred contempt. We have been at sea with drunken ships' captains as well as with drunken yachtsmen.

Personal accounts from individuals on one 'side' which purport to demonstrate widespread incompetence amongst individuals on the other are plentiful, but of very limited value: in most cases they serve only to demonstrate that in incidents at sea – as in accidents on land – those most directly involved almost always want to believe that it was someone else's fault.

It has also been suggested that commercial shipping should have priority at all times because it is earning money, but this begs the question: 'Money for whom? The operators, shareholders, and port authorities?' It should not be forgotten that although yachting is a leisure activity for most of its participants, it may well provide more employment than our declining shipping industry, and that, as well as generating revenue for port and marina operators, yachtsmen spend more in the towns they visit than do the crews of commercial ships.

So let's have less of the argument that the yachtsman is a second-class citizen at sea. Most are highly responsible in their chosen activity, just as professional seamen are, so if there has to be an 'us and them' situation, it should be between those who know and respect the rules, and those who don't.

Before we end up with the sea equivalent of 'road rage', let us find a balanced view that leaves room for all who live with, work on and enjoy the sea.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Bartlett, T. (1995). 'Conflicts in inshore waters' – a yachtsman's view. *This Journal*, 48, 154.
- ² Pike, D. (1995). 'Conflicts in inshore waters'. *This Journal*, 48, 153.
- ³ Booth, P. S. (1994). Conflicts in inshore waters. *This Journal*, 47, 208.

KEY WORDS

1. Port and harbour operations.
2. Small boat navigation.
3. Safety.
4. Collision avoidance.

Editor's Note

This topic has had a good airing since Commander Booth's original paper in May 1994. A number of contributions have since been published, some of them controversial. The plea for tolerance and mutual understanding contained in the article by Bartlett and Pike seems a good note on which to end. For the time being, discussion of the topic in the pages of the *Journal* is closed.