

# **2016 SINGLEHANDED TRANSPACIFIC YACHT RACE**

## **Communications Plan**

**Release Date: 10 Dec 2015**

The following describes the communications procedures for the 2016 Singlehanded TransPac. This Communications Plan is hereby incorporated into the Sailing Instructions. The Race Committee (RC) reserves the right to amend this communications plan as required.

### **Key Points of Contact**

Email: [transpac@sfbaysss.org](mailto:transpac@sfbaysss.org) (seen by West Coast and Hawaii RC members)

Phone: 510 565 0636 (Brian Boschma, RaceChair)

RC MMSI on Kauai: MMSI 338089285 (Please enter this in your VHF list of MMSI numbers for use in hailing the committee)

### **Starting Line Procedure**

Each yacht shall check in with the Race Committee on VHF Channel 69 prior to the warning signal for its division's start. Yachts shall monitor VHF Channel 69 while in the starting line area and until they have passed Pt. Bonita. Yachts are required to monitor VHF Channel 16 throughout the race. Yachts are encouraged to monitor VHF 12, offshore vessel traffic control, until west of the western approach buoy, north of the northern approach buoy, or south of the southern approach buoy.

### **Finish Line Procedure**

Each yacht shall contact the Race Committee on VHF Channel 69 when it is within radio range of the finish line. If possible, each yacht shall establish VHF communications no farther than 25 miles or closer than 10 miles from the finish line. An alternative method of calling the committee is the use of an individual DSC call. This will alert the committee with an audible alarm. Once communications with the Race Committee have been established the Race Committee will instruct the skipper regarding further communication while approaching the finish line and entering Hanalei Bay. Note, if you find you are SE or SSE of the finish line, island terrain blocks VHF communication with the committee, even over very short distances. Communication may not be possible until you are very close.

The Race Committee will have DSC equipped radio with a long range antenna. The potential coverage range is approximately 80 miles along a line of 40 deg M from Hanalei Bay. As you approach Hanalei Bay, an individual DSC call to **MMSI 338089285** will alert the committee with an alarm.

When a vessel is within 10 miles of the finish line the DeLorme Tracker (DT) will switch to a 15 minute tracking mode and the displayed tracking data will go live on the tracking page. This allows the RC and spectators to see the final approach of race boats.

The Race Committee will also be monitoring AIS positions with a range of about 25 miles from Kauai. This will provide live position data, if your vessel is equipped with a Class B AIS transponder, **and it is turned on.**

### **Delorme and Pinnacle Software Trackers for Daily Check-Ins**

Race tracking, position reports, and evidence that the racer is still alive are all accomplished using a DeLorme satellite tracking transceiver. Racers may rent these devices from the RC (provided by our tracking service Pinnacle Tracking), or provide their own purchased unit. If provided by the racer, either the DeLorme inReach SE or DeLorme inReach Explorer must be used. A privately owned unit can be used, with normal data rates applied as arranged with Delorme. Use of rented units for other services will incur additional data charges.

#### **Note:**

Use of racer-provided DT's in general, or using the rented Pinnacle DT's for any communication other than the pre-programmed transmission of position data will result in a drastic reduction in battery life. Racers using the DT in this fashion assume responsibility for keeping the DT charged. This will require opening the DT to expose a USB connector and connection to a USB power source. Repositioning can result in satellite connection failure. One must keep the DT in full view of the satellite constellation. Metal, carbon fiber, solar panels, and thick fiberglass panels will block satellite communication, or cause excessive ping attempts and rapidly deplete the battery.

Private DT's should be upgraded through Delorme to the latest software revision to assure the lowest power drain. The rented Pinnacle units have proprietary software that reduces power to an absolute minimum, something Delorme will not support in private units as certain features are disabled. If you are using your own DT expect to recharge several times over the course of the race.

## Daily Position Reports – Mandatory Check-In

Check-in Summary after start	1900 GMT (0900 HST, 1200 PDT)	2000 GMT (1000 HST, 1300 PDT)	0800 GMT	25 miles from finish	Comment
Racer action		Begin DT check-in window. Roll call. Monitor 16 and SSB channels	End DT check-in window. Roll call.	Racer to begin check-in call with RC.	Follow DT instructions on push button sequence.
Comm boat action	Receive daily report	Begin roll call, report position data to fleet.	Begin roll call		Check in with Comm boat if DT has failed.
RC action	Issue daily report	Comm boat issues email with any urgent boat status data.		Monitor VHF audio and DSC	

Each racer is required to issue a daily position report, an indication of life aboard, via the DeLorme Tracker (DT). The exact button push procedure for DT operation will be reviewed no later than the Skipper's Meeting. The DT display will indicate a MANUAL position report has been enabled. The check-in time is **2000 Hours GMT (1000 HST, 1300 PDT)** and up to **12 hours** later. The latest check-in time is 0800 GMT. This action serves to inform shore-side contacts, and the RC that all is well aboard the vessel. The lack of this signal will start a communication emergency sequence by the RC. Failure to make a required position report will also incur a penalty per the Racing Rules and Conditions. The Communication vessels and shore side contacts will receive an email notification of the non-responding vessel. An emergency procedure will be enabled to attempt a reconnection with the vessel. This will consist of asking the COMM boat and racers to keep an active radio lookout for the vessel and if said vessel has a sat phone, communications will be attempted by that means. **The RC strongly suggests that the vessel check in each morning at the prescribed radio check-in period.** If the racer has doubt about the operation of the DT he/she can choose to check in via SSB or VHF with the COMM vessel during the roll call period and within the check-in time window. The racer should state their position, and status data, directly to the COMM vessel by VHF, or SSB. A relay via VHF or SSB can also be employed for forwarding to the COMM vessel. A vessel could also check in with their shore side contact and have that person relay to the committee by phone or email to [transpac@sfbaysss.org](mailto:transpac@sfbaysss.org). All vessels are required to monitor channel 16 during the roll

call period in case a relay is requested. Alternatively the racer could alert their shore side contact and have that party notify the RC by email to [transpac@sfbaysss.org](mailto:transpac@sfbaysss.org).

**In an emergency, the EPIRB is the correct tool for alerting USCG immediately, not the SOS button on the DT.** If the SOS button is pushed an email will go to the RC but the response will not be as immediate as an EPIRB activation. DeLorme watches 24/7 for emergency requests, **DO NOT USE THE DT SOS BUTTON** unless you have no other option to declare an emergency. Bear in mind that if you do find yourself declaring an emergency the DT would be a good item to carry with you as two way communication could be established if necessary, though it is not a replacement for an EPIRB or PLB.

The Race Committee shall cause a daily email to be sent, containing each skipper's position as captured from the DT data stream at approximately 1900 GMT (0900 HST, 1200 PDT) to the COMM boat. This message will also go to the racers with onboard email addresses, and shore side contacts of skippers without onboard email capability. Each skipper must provide their contact's email address. Skippers receiving this position report from a shore side contact will not be considered as having received outside assistance. In the event of a DT failure the last position report received by alternate means will be displayed in the official position data. This data could be as much as 24 hours delayed.

### **DT Failure**

In the event of an entrant's DT failure, the RC shall make contact to the racer via: a) sat phone, b) via a racer's shore-side contact, c) the COMM boat. The comm boat will be informed of the situation. Such persons shall relay this information to the racer who will then be required to a) have their shore-side contact email their position by 2000 GMT (1300 PDT) daily or b) email the RC directly at [transpac@sfbaysss.org](mailto:transpac@sfbaysss.org) with their report, c) contact the RC daily via SSB or VHF during the check-in period.

### **Daily Roll Calls**

Two daily SSB roll calls will be held at 2000 GMT and 0800 GMT. Entrants are encouraged to supply position, and status information at the morning roll call either by SSB or VHF channel 69. **All vessels are required to monitor channel 16 during the roll call period in case a relay is requested.** The COMM boat will read all position reports (as received in the daily position report email) SSB roll call. Skippers may report their positions at the evening roll call. Initially, SSB communications will be on the 4MHz band. Race communications may shift to the 6 MHz or 8MHz band as the fleet spreads out. The Communications Boat shall announce such a change during the prior roll call, or if necessary during the beginning or a roll call. A primary and backup frequency is specified for the three bands. If a skipper cannot raise the Communications Boat or any of the other fleet members on the primary frequency, the backup frequency should be attempted. Yachts are required to relay SSB, or VHF communications when it is apparent a skipper cannot communicate directly with the Communications Boat. Once roll call is completed, the frequency is open for general discussion.

## Receipt of Weather Data

A means of weather data reception is required. This can be satellite based, or HF SSB based. An SSB receiver is required if no other means of weather data reception is aboard the vessel.

## Frequency Descriptions

Comm Channels (SSB all upper sideband [USB])	Primary	Backup
VHF	69	69
VHF	16	16
SSB 4 mHz	4.021	4.027
SSB 6 mHz	6.224	6.227
SSB 8 mHz	8.185	8.191

VHF: Channel 69 is used at the start and finish areas. VHF 16 is monitored by racers during the race.

SSB: Upper Sideband (shown in MHz),

Primary Check-in (short range): 4.021

Backup Frequency (short range): 4.027

Primary Check-in (mid range): 6.224 (6A)

Backup Frequency (mid range): 6.227 (6B)

Primary Check-in (long range): 8.185

Backup Frequency (long range): 8.191

## Informal on-the-water reportage

Yachts are encouraged to send postings for the web site and Skipper Logs to the Race Committee at any time, or to [racereport@sfbaysss.org](mailto:racereport@sfbaysss.org) for posting to the SSS/SHTP forum and website.

## Reminder regarding Outside Assistance

Skippers are reminded that no weather routing information or other outside

assistance (with the exception of the daily OFFICIAL position reports) may be solicited or accepted from shore side contacts, or other sources during the race. Please familiarize yourself and your shore side contacts with the specific items that may be communicated, per Rule 11.02 of the Race Rules and Conditions.

### **Examples of Allowed and Disallowed Information**

Here is a non-comprehensive list of allowed and disallowed information.

#### **Allowed**

- Relay of daily official position report data (not data from the tracking page)
- Radiofax charts from NOAA/NWS received by SSB
- GRIBS (GFS and COAMPS wx models) sourced from government agencies
- NOAA/NWS text reports by any means (NAVTEX, kmtr, buoy reports, etc.)
- The above, via satphone or similar, as received via saildocs or similar
- Spotcast NWS data as received on DeLorme

#### **Disallowed**

- Any position information from the tracker other than the official daily report, by any means
- For-fee weather and tide forecasts (e.g. PredictWind, Sailflow, SailTactics, TideTech, OCENS WeatherNet 4 and MetMapper)
- Verbal or electronic weather briefing from any one on shore, via any means, including relay of NWS data
- For-fee routing or advice of any kind (e.g. Commander's Weather, PassageWeather)
- If you opt to use any data other than that allowed accept the fact that you are no longer racing and should withdraw.

**END OF COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**