

**INSURANCE RECOMMENDATION
TRAINING AND SKILLS ASSESSMENT FOR
JOHN & JANE DOE**

Purpose:

Peter Pisciotta, USCG 100 Ton Master and owner of SeaSkills Personal School of Seamanship, was retained by John and Jane Doe to provide close quarter training. This document reviews training provided and assess proficiency to document their training for insurance purposes.

SeaSkills Personal School of Seamanship:

SeaSkills Personal School of Seamanship was founded in 1999 to provide personal training services on marine education topics. SeaSkills regularly appears at West Marine Trawler Fest events, Cruising World Safety at Sea seminars, and is a frequent contributor on seamanship skills topics to national magazines including Power Cruising and DIY Marine.

SeaSkills has taught approximately 250 clients the finer points of close quarter maneuvers and is frequently retained as subject matter expert (including expert witness) for vessel handling in tight quarter discussions.

SeaSkills is endorsed by NASBLA and West Marine, and is a member of the National Safe Boating Council.

Training considerations for John and Jane Doe:

15 days (approximately 150 engine hours plus 16 hours discussion) of hands-on, underway training was provided to John and Jane aboard *Retreat*, a recently purchased Slow & Sturdy 45 trawler yacht. Training was two part

1. **In-harbor close quarters.** Conducted in and around the harbors of Dana Point and Newport Harbor over a 4-day period from May 19th to May 23rd, 2004.
2. **Offshore skills.** Conducted between Dana Point, California and Elliott Bay, Seattle Washington during a 10 day "teaching delivery" from July 2nd to July 12th 2004.

Like many SeaSkills clients, John and Jane have some prior boating experience on smaller sailboats but are not comfortable handling a large, heavy trawler yacht in close quarters. The largest boat John had docked was a 35' sailboat; Jane had only driven a boat in open water, never docked one prior.

A training curriculum was specifically designed to fill gaps in their education, primarily concentrating on close quarter maneuvers to fulfill insurance requirements. Additional training will be conducted during a "teaching delivery" when Capt. Peter Pisciotta accompanies *Retreat* 1000 nms north to her home berth of Elliott Bay, Seattle.

Conditions:

Close Quarters and in-harbor instruction:

- **Winds:** mostly light though many both John and Jane successfully several docking maneuvers in winds estimated to be close to 15 knots
- **Traffic/Congestion:** Training was conducted Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Both East Point Bay and North Point Cove harbors were heavily congested with recreational and commercial vessel traffic.
- **Offshore:** Transit conditions between Dana Point and Newport Beach (2 hours each way) was mild, 3' – 4' swell with light wind chop.

Offshore Skills "Teaching Delivery"

- Standard July conditions: Afternoon winds to 30 knots building seas of 8' at about 7 seconds.

- Maximum Extreme Conditions: 7' wind chop on top of 8' swell, 35 knots wind.
- Anchored three nights: Cojo (Point Conception), Stillwater Cove (Monterey), and Drakes Bay (25 miles north of San Francisco entrance).
- 5 harbor entrances/bar crossings: Morro Bay, Fort Bragg, Crescent City, Coos Bay, Grays Harbor
- 3 overnight runs.

Curriculum:

SeaSkills has developed a fast-start program that rapidly moves students into realistic close-quarter situations. The first two hours of training is basic maneuvering skills and systems overview, the following 22 hours are close quarter drills in as many docking permutations possible. Specific training for John and Jane included:

Close Quarter Maneuvers

- Departing a slip
- Adjusting turn diameter using back & fill
- U-turn in a narrow fairway (approx. 70' between two rows of boats) without use of thrusters
- Side-tie landing (t-head), both on preferred side (single screw) and on non-preferred side. Both with and without use of thrusters
- Docking bow-to in a slip
- Backing into a slip
- Aborted dockings – how to back away or recover bad landings.
- Heavy traffic – managing heavy traffic, hold the vessel relatively stationary while traffic clears, etc.
- Springlines – maneuvering a vessel without thrusters in close quarters using long warping lines
- Anchoring – anchored in crowded anchorage. Discussed concepts and skipper/crew communication techniques.
- Thruster techniques – tips and tricks on using bow thruster.
- Dock lines – selection, use, order, care.
- Future practice routine – how to practice, when to practice.
- Backing in a straight line.
- Wing-engine – Maneuvered and docked vessel in heavily congested circumstances with auxiliary “wing” engine to simulate loss of main propulsion engine

Mechanical & Systems

- Pre-departure engine room check
- Pre-departure systems preparation (what systems to have operational)
- Generator operation
- Underway fuel filter changing
- Pump-out of holding tanks
- Changing oil

Emergency Procedures

- COB (crew overboard) recovery in open ocean
- Liferaft overview and procedure
- Equipping and storing an abandon ship bag
- Jacklines – use and rigging
- Flooding – what to check, how to prevent, how to respond
- Fire suppression and emergency response
- Emergency communications – EPIRB, DSC, Mayday

Navigation & Offshore

- Navigation – rules of the road
- Passage planning – departure planning

- Radar
- Charting
- Electronic charting
- Weather – prediction, reading charts
- Heavy weather handling techniques
- Heavy weather preparation of vessel
- Care and feeding of crew
- Crossing bars or inlets
- Communications: harbor patrol, coast guard, harbor master, bridge tender, passing ships, etc.
- Standing watch – responsibilities
- Contingency planning

Assessment:

Both John and Jane take their responsibility very seriously and are extremely cautious. They both have above-average aptitude for close quarter maneuvering skills. Each worked very hard to understand the concepts presented. As a team, they work extremely well together, their instincts are good, and have excellent decision making skills.

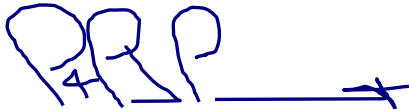
ENDORSEMENT:

As a team, John and Jane demonstrated proficiency in close-quarter maneuvers. In past SeaSkills experience, students with similar competence and background of vessel ownership who have gone on to successful, accident free boating careers. John and Jane consistently err on the side of caution, safety and consideration and will likely enjoy many years of incident-free boating aboard *Retreat*.

Offshore, John and Jane were diligent and well prepared. Safety is clearly a priority for them.

Based upon my observations over 15 days in a liveboard environment, I recommend them as an acceptable insurance risk under the conditions I observed¹.

Please contact me personally with any additional questions.



Captain Peter Pisciotta
Owner, SeaSkills Personal School of Seamanship

¹ **Disclaimer:** Training was provided in good faith and this assessment is presented as a subjective assessment by an experienced professional stating the subject student(s) have demonstrated knowledge of skills known to reduce damage and injury to mariners. However, accidents do happen (even to highly trained professionals) and it is not possible to guarantee an accident-free future for anyone. This statement is an opinion only and makes no material statements of fact. It should be considered in unison with other evidence of insurability.