

Update on Entry and Exit from UK and France

(Updated 7th Mar 2025 - milithgow@me.com) Covers opening times for Passport Stamping at POrt Chantereyne - Cherbourg

UK Entry/Exit

As in 2024, the primary portal for leaving and arriving to/from the UK is the UK Government sPCR - Small Pleasure Craft Report. This is an on-line registration that is laptop, mobile and iPad friendly. It does require you to set up an account ideally well before you leave and populate with your boat details and the details of those with whom you may be sailing. Thereafter it is very easy to create a voyage and add crew members. To register your boat follow use this link - <https://www.spcr.homeoffice.gov.uk/>.

The change for 2025 is linked to how the UK is managing entry/exit for non-UK citizens, having moved across from a paper/passport stamp visa to an electronic visa - Electronic Travel Authorisation. This will only be of importance to you if you have non UK crew on board who are also not UK resident. When you complete the section pertaining to crew and a non-UK resident is listed, the Home Office undertakes an automatic search of its database to identify if they have a visa. If they do not have one you will be sent further guidance.

There is a requirement to fly the Q flag when you enter the 12 mile zone and remove once you have confirmation from Border Force that you are cleared to enter the UK. There is no requirement to telephone the Yacht Line providing you have submitted your sPCR and received an acknowledgement.

Entry into France

The EU has the intent to put in place two systems:

- **ETIAS** - European Travel Information and Authorisation System. An on-line system that collates personal data - address, passport details, occupation and past travel. This is the equivalent of the UK's ETA. It gives you permission to travel to the EU.
- **EES** - Entry Exit System. A biometric system that collects fingerprint and facial data. This is the system that books you in and out of France/Schengen at the 'border'.

The EU have now set new dates for the introduction of both of these systems:

- **EES**. On 5 March 2025 the EU Home Affairs Ministers endorsed Council's General Approach on a progressive start of operations of the EES. Once adopted by the co-legislators, 29 European countries will gradually introduce the EES over a period of six months. This would give border authorities and the transport industry more time to adjust to the new procedures. **It is expected to become operational in October 2025.** However it is thought that member states will be given latitude on how and when it is implemented. There are indications that the current French System of National Protocol Ports will remain in place.

- EITAS. This is expected to be introduced in the last quarter of 2026.
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Process for 2025 (up to October 2025)

The French will operate two types of Ports of Entry/Exit in 2025 - similar to 2024. It is important that you understand the difference between each as you must use the same type to enter and exit - you cannot mix and match between an official port of entry and a National Protocol Port.

- **PPF port (Official Port of Entry)** is operated by either the Police Aux Frontieres (PaF) or Douane/Customs. At these ports you have to complete a Declaration of Arrival or Departure (standard form) and physically visit the Douane or PaF, **with all crew and passports** and have the passports stamped - both in and out.
- **National Protocol Ports - do not require you to visit the PaF or Douane.** You will need to complete and submit, normally by email 24hrs before arrival/departure, the arrival/declaration form but there will be no requirement to have passports stamped or visit the PaF or Douane. You must collect the stamped entry form from the marina office and retain.

An example of the form to be completed for arrival and departure can be found here - <https://bit.ly/4jZ3Cj5> You should note that whilst all the forms are the same, they are 'addressed to' the 'specific' port you are arriving or departing. If you use the wrong one you are in risk of your submission being rejected.

Where you have entered France via an official port of entry and plan to leave at a National Protocol Port, then you are advised to book in and out of an official port of entry and book back into France via a National Protocol Port to enable you to leave from a National Protocol Port. For example if you book into France at St Malo (Official Port of Entry) and plan to leave at Trequier (National Protocol Port), you would be advised to book in and out at St Malo and then book back into France further West - for example St Cast. The same would apply if you first book in at Trequier - you would need to book out of a National Protocol Port before reaching St Malo where you would book in again and out.

Note if you are going to N Brittany via Cherbourg and then the Channel Islands, you must book out of Cherbourg as you leave France for the CI and then book in again.

Crew Arriving and Departing

Crew Arriving in France.

This can be tricky as it is likely that those arriving will have come through an official entry point and hence have their passport stamped. If you leave via an official entry point there is no issue. However if your plan is to leave via a National Protocol Port you may have an issue. There is some evidence from 2024 that the Police and Customs look sympathetically on your position

and allow you all to book out via email. But if you do this make sure the individual has evidence of booking out which they keep with their passport.

Crew Departing in France.

If the crew who are leaving had entered France through an official port of entry then there is unlikely to be a problem as they will be leaving via plane, train, ferry where their passport will be stamped out of France. However if they entered via a National Protocol Port then they should have with them a stamped copy of the entry form submitted at the National Protocol Port which should have been collected from the relevant marina office.

What Happens if I Ignore the Process

Worst case is a fine or in an extreme case confiscation of your vessel. However what is more likely is a warning and there is some evidence that you are then placed on a watch list which significantly increases the risk of being boarded at sea where you will be subjected to a full document check and boat inspection. Whilst no-one including the French are entirely happy with the process, they are trying to find ways to make it work and avoid the full impact of EES. The more we cooperate the more probable they will be successful in maintaining their National Protocol Ports; if we abuse the more likely that life will be increasingly difficult for all of us!

Documents and Other Information

Documents

The Douane or PAF have a right to ask for boat papers/documents and whilst it is rare for this to occur you should carry the following - all should be original:

- Registration Document. Make sure it is in date - you will be fined if it is not.
- Third Party Insurance
- Ships Radio Licence
- Radio Operators Certificate
- Passports - remember they should have a minimum of 6 months remaining at the point to leave France - not arrive
- ICC - International Certificate of Competence. You can get this free from the RYA if you are a member. However RYA Day Skipper certificates etc are acceptable.
- CEVNI - '[Code Européen des Voies de Navigation Intérieure](#)' is required for use of Inland Waterways
- Health - either travel insurance of GHIC or EHIC which are still being accepted

Equipment Certificates

Whatever equipment you have on board - life jackets, life rafts, flares, fire extinguishers etc should be in date with the appropriate certificates.

Red Diesel

You should not carry red diesel in containers. To do so will invite a fine if you are inspected. The Cruising Association recommend that you carry 12 months worth of red diesel receipts for the red diesel in your tanks. However there is no evidence that these have ever been required. It is accepted that boats from UK will have some red diesel in their tanks but will not be forgiven for having it in containers. Retain receipts from refueling in France where you are not allowed to use red diesel and can prove you filled up with commercial diesel.

Foods

Providing that you do not take any of your food ashore you should be okay.

Restricted Drugs

Restricted drugs, if found, will usually result in your vessel being impounded. Some countries define codeine as a restricted drug. If you do have to carry specialised medication and equipment, including needles and drugs for diabetes, then carry a statement or medical certificate from your doctor making it clear their medical necessity.

General Comment

The above is rarely asked for unless you have got yourself on a Border Force list by not booking in/out. When boarded these are the items they are going to go through and fine you if you are non compliant - usually asking for cash payment!

List of Official Ports of Entry and National Protocol Ports

The list of ports for the Normandy and N Brittany Coast are listed below - note these are still to be confirmed for 2025 and updates will be provided once more detailed information is available.

In all instances double check the details and to find the correct form to complete go to the website of the port you intend to book-in/out. **But remember you must book in and out via the same type of port PPF or non-PPF you cannot mix the two.**

Port of Entry Exit	PPF (visit PaF/Douane)	National Protocol Ports (submit form any email)
Dunkirk	PPF	
Calais	PPF	

Port of Entry Exit	PPF (visit PaF/Douane)	National Protocol Ports (submit form any email)
Boulogne	PPF but note not a recommended port of entry. You have to travel to Calais to have passports stamped)	
Dieppe	Douane PPF	
Fecamp		Email
Le Havre	PPF	
Honfleur	PPF	
Deauville		Email
Dives Sur Mer		Email
Caen-Ouistreham	PPF - by ferry terminal	
Coursuelles-sur-Mer		Email
Port-en-Bessin		Email
Grandcamp-Maisy		Email
Cherbourg	PPF (PaF). May visit marina	See note below for visiting times to Marina Office
Dielette		Email
Carteret	PPF (ferry terminal)	
Plouër-sur-Rance		Email
Granville	PPF	
St Malo	PPF	
Plouer-sur-Rance		Email
Isigny		Email
St Cast		Email
St Brieuc/Legue	PPF (40min walk up long hill!)	
Binic		Email
St Quay Portrieux		Email
Paimpol		Email
Lezardrieux		Email

Port of Entry Exit	PPF (visit PaF/Douane)	National Protocol Ports (submit form any email)
Pontrieux		Email
Trequier		Email
Perros-Guirec		Email
Roscoff	PPF (ferry terminal)	
L'Aber-Wrac'h		Email

Notes:

1. The ports of St Vaast and Carentan appear to have different processes so if planning to use these for arrival or departure we currently recommend direct contact in advance of a passage.
2. Cherbourg Port Chantereyne - Police visiting times to Marina Office:

Month	Monday - Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
May, June, September	1030hrs	1030hrs and 2015hrs	1030hrs and 1915hrs	1030hrs and 1830hrs

Month	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
July, August	1030hrs and 2015hrs	1030hrs and 2130hrs	1030hrs and 1830hrs	1030hrs and 1915hrs	030hrs and 2015hrs	1030hrs and 1915hrs	1030hrs and 1830hrs

Questions

Any questions please feel free to reach out to Michael Lithgow Member of RSrNYC Cruising Committee - milithgow@me.com 07720625745.