Benchmark handbook for marina operators

A highly comprehensive A-Z of how to set up, administer and operate a marina efficiently, safely and profitably has been published by marina consultant turned author, Simon Arrol, to fill a much needed gap in the marketplace for the facts as well as the figures.

“I don’t have to tell you how big the marina industry is, and how much value is involved – even before you count the value of the yachts sitting in the marinas,” Arrol tells Marina World. “Yet no one pays much attention to systems, procedures, standards and standardisation.”

With his new publication, The Marina Manual, Arrol embraces all aspects of modern marina operation using clear, concise and simple language. “My aim is to offer marina owners, operators and managers the chance to acquire a complete package of know-how at a cost that is a tiny fraction of what it would cost to prepare from scratch – even assuming such in-house preparation to this degree were possible,” he says.

Worldwide value

The Marina Manual is a benchmark document designed for use by operators and developers around the world. It has been scrutinised by a number of marina professionals and some of the documents included have been the subject of legal review in multiple jurisdictions.

The publication comes in two volumes totalling around 450 pages. Volume 1 contains the main text of about 38,000 words with cross-referencing to Volume 2. The second volume comprises over 100 forms including check lists, standard operating procedures, contracts, guidelines and training sessions.

Key contents for Volume 1 include: quality of service; employment; health and safety; routine operations; accounting; business plans; pollution control; marketing and promotion; general office procedures; berthing contracts and invoicing; computerised management; commercial and legal issues; housekeeping; boatyard; and report generation.

Forms and check lists in Volume 2 encompass areas such as employment; emergencies and safety; administration and finance; daily operations; boatyard issues; and training.

The Marina Manual is written in Microsoft Word and all pages are formatted for printing on A4 size paper. The whole manual is supplied in PDF but the forms in Volume 2 are also supplied in Word so as to be easily customised. A custom-made embossed file is available to hold the hard copies.

Certification and insurance

Recent contact with certification authorities has confirmed that The Marina Manual can form a comprehensive basis for a marina to obtain ISO certification. It also carries insurance benefits having been recently endorsed by London-based marina insurer Underwriting Risk Services (URS).

“I would fully endorse anything that leads to a rigorous approach to Health and Safety and an even more ‘professional’ approach to the day to day operations of the marina industry,” asserts URS director of underwriting, Paul Miller. “If a prospective insured can demonstrate that ‘The Manual’ is being followed, implemented and used day by day we would certainly look favourably on the rating/premium quoted as opposed to a business that does not demonstrate such excellent business practice.”

Cost-effective

Priced at just $11,000, the entire manual costs around the same as a lawyer, accountant or human resources adviser would typically charge to prepare just one of the specialist forms. And the chances are that the professional involved would have little or no knowledge of the marina business.

This, coupled with the potential insurance savings, the easier route to obtaining the additional business value of ISO certification and the time and cost saving of getting things right first time, could well combine to make the publication essential as well as definitive.

Contact Simon Arrol on email: publisher@marinaworld.com and discuss the potential insurance savings with Paul Miller at URS on email: paul.miller@undriskserv.com

About the author

Simon Arrol CEng FICE spent 14 years in the international dredging and marine civil engineering industry before joining Camper & Nicholsons Marinas in 1988 as managing director. He was responsible for their six marinas in the UK and also expanded the company’s role as an international marina consultant and manager. By 2004, he had undertaken assignments in 25 countries on four continents. From 2005 to 2007, Arrol was based in the UAE and co-founded Island Global Yachting Dubai LLC and became involved with the rapidly developing marina industry in that region. In particular, he was responsible for designing and developing Anchor Marina on The Palm in Dubai and Festival Marina at Dubai Festival City.