



Incident: Overheating of Merrilyn's engine	Location: Off Gurnard Head	Date: August 2022
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Summary of incident:

Motor sailing on aftmain in light conditions North of Gurnard Head heading eastbound. Mate was helming, asked for engine to be turned on as crew and AG were dropping sails. After five minutes the mate noticed a change in engine sounds who alerted the skipper who at the same time, noticed black smoke coming through the hatch from the engine room. Revs were approx 1600.

Rehoist of Yankee #2 and formain was called. Engine was put in neutral and then turned off. Skipper and Watch Officer remained below decks to investigate the issue with the engine. Mate maintained the deck and cleared the vessel from danger off Gurnard Ledge buoy and got the vessel sailing back towards the channel. Skipper called Jason and then called a PAN PAN with Solent Coastguard, as the light winds could have escalated the situation.

A safe anchorage was planned for the night and Jason provided spares in the morning.

What lead to the incident?

The cooling water intake became blocked and the plastic exhaust muffler box had melted. This was caused by an unusually large amount of weed in the raw water strainer.

Was it avoidable?

There was an unusually large amount of seaweed in the raw water filter due to high volumes in the sea at the time, which was unavoidable.

Key lessons learned:

This was not a reportable incident as it did not, according to the MAIB definition, lead to the disablement of the vessel and the repairs were concluded quickly.

The mate and skipper were quick to recognise there was a problem and took immediate and appropriate steps to address it, safely and calmly. Excellent communication was maintained on the vessel, between the vessel and the office and the vessel and the Coastguard which ensured the safe passage of the vessel and conclusion of the repairs.

Key recommendations:

Continual visual inspection of the water filter on every log raw water strainer, particularly when significant amounts of weed are visible.