

Fitting a Replacement Seadog windscreen

Do one side at a time in order to keep the centre pillar in the correct place. Remove all the press stud screws and interscrews along the top of the frame. Then take off the centre cap and carefully remove the top piece of the frame without distorting it, the rest of the framing can stay in place. (Give any tight screws a tap with a mallet on the end of the screwdriver, whilst applying torque, to loosen them without sheering them off). Start at the centre of the boat and work to the edge taking care not to damage the teak capping on the cockpit edge.

Carefully remove the old perspex without bending the corner brackets (they might bend out OK but will snap when you try and bend them back). If you do break one of the corner brackets, make a new one with some aluminium bar bent to shape. Do not use other metals as you will have problems with electrolytic corrosion and certainly not mild steel which will rust. The existing brackets are fixed so that you cannot get at the screws without removing the whole frame so if you do break one, leave the remains where it is and drill and screw the new one on top of the broken bit with self-tapping screws and cut the perspex back to fit round it.

Now is a good time to clean up the framing inside and out. Do not use abrasives that will remove the anodising. Carefully remove any old silicone mastic (a piece of scrap acrylic is useful for scraping) then give the frame a good scrub using a nylon washing-up brush or similar.

Measure the new perspex against the old. As the centre pillar of the screen is not always dead-centre. I have made the new windows slightly overlength. Cut back the wide end, using a jigsaw with a 1-4mm thick metal-cutting blade, to fit. Keep the perspex held firmly against the edge of a flat surface, e.g. clamped to a "workmate", whilst cutting.

When the perspex is a good fit peel back the protective coating on the acrylic about 1.5 - 2 inches (40-50mm) all round on both sides and tape it back out of the way with masking tape. Don't take it right off yet, it will help to protect the screen in case you drop a screwdriver or get mastic on it.

Fit the smaller rubber channels to the bottom (type IRS 270) and vertical edges (IRS 506) of the perspex. You may need to trim the back edge of the rubber at the ends to allow room for the frame corner brackets.

Lubricate the vertical rubber with Fairy Liquid or a silicone lubricant and push the perspex into the centre pillar as far as it will go whilst pushing it downwards into the bottom channel. Bend the perspex round, pushing it down into the channel as you go. If the rubber comes off the perspex you will probably find it easier to take the window out and start again than get the perspex into the rubber again whilst it is in the channel. Make sure the Perspex fits easily inside the aluminium corner bracket at the pointed end. If it is a tight fit you run the risk of cracking the window when you tighten the screws.

When the Perspex sits well, apply the rubber channel (IRS 271) to the top edge, lubricate it, and fit the aluminium over the top (you may need to tap it on with a mallet or rubber hammer. Where you have removed the press stud screws make sure all the holes are clear: You can drill through the rubber but if you try and drill right through the perspex whilst it is curved and under tension it is very likely to crack. Mark where the holes are to be drilled in the perspex, disassemble the screen again, lay the perspex flat and drill very carefully with a block of wood behind to support it or file in from the edge with a round file if the hole is very close.

Reassemble and screw the top frame back in place.

Repeat the process doing the other side.

Fit the hood press stud fixings. Trim off any exposed rubber seal with a Stanley Knife (new blade) or a scalpel. Try not to mark the Screen.

Clean off any excess lubricant. Mask off the perspex about 0.25 inch (5mm) away from the frame all round with masking tape. Pump Black or Grey silicone mastic sealant into the joint all round (I recommend Arbo cleaner No17 and Arboseal mastic 1081). Then using a suitable rounded implement smooth off the sealant to leave a neat finish between the edge of the frame and the masking on the window. Clean off the excess mastic from the frame whilst it is still wet (paper towel or similar).

When the sealant is dry you can peel off the masking tape to leave a neat edge on the perspex. Also peel off the protective film on the Perspex. Job Done!