



Aide Memoire for Duty Teams – Safety Boat

Safety boat procedures

- In windy conditions a safety boat should be on the water and manned at all times – teams should take account of the experience of the sailors but generally this should be when average wind speeds exceed 12mph or conditions are gusty
- When cadets are sailing a safety boat should be on the water and manned at all times with the engine running
- In extreme conditions or where there are many boats on the water, teams should deploy two safety boats and seek additional help from other members of the club
- The safety boat should wherever possible be driven by a member of the team who has RYA power boat Level 2 certificate and together with the crew should wear properly secured buoyancy aids. One of the two must be dressed and committed to enter the water to assist if necessary
- The above person must carry a sharp serrated blade knife on a lanyard attached to buoyancy aid or similar
- Strops are available to help recover people from the water and should always be secured on the safety boat
- The boats should have 2 kill cords and the one in use must be attached to the driver above the knee of the leg nearest the engine
- The engine should be properly secured and the fuel tank tied to the boat, oars and rowlocks should be easily accessible and a first aid kit available
- When attending a capsized boat or any boat in difficulty the first priority is the safety of the crew
- If in the water they should be retrieved and if necessary taken ashore before attempting to recover the boat
- In the event of injury treatment should only be given on board if it is immediately necessary. In all other circumstances casualties should be landed for treatment.
- The use of mobile phone may alert the team to call for assistance
- When approaching a capsized boat and where crew are in the water care should be taken to ensure that they are protected from the propeller, and the engine should be turned off as soon as firm contact is made
- If there are several capsized craft requiring assistance, then if necessary, the race should be abandoned to facilitate recovery
- Safety boat crews should not drink alcohol whilst on duty
- Always keep your hands on the throttle/tiller or wheel at all times when moving
- Wherever possible keep your boat speed to a minimum so that you do not create unnecessary wake, and make it easier for people anticipate the safety boat intentions
- Avoid steering directly astern of those who are racing, in case they capsize, fall out or alter course unexpectedly
- If it is necessary to come alongside, it is best to do this when a sailing boat has stopped on a close reach and the safety boat can come in on the windward side of the dinghy and hold the shroud to keep them close. Once in place turn the engine off if necessary for ease of communication
- If approaching a moving dinghy let the helm know your intentions, communicate clearly, approach from the windward side
- Always have an escape plan up your sleeve, know which way you're going to turn to get out of a situation before things go wrong - sometimes just dropping into neutral will do it!
- Above all maintain a good look out around your safety boat at all times!
- Always turn your engine off when dealing with a person in the water.
- When approaching a capsized dinghy, it can sometimes be best to approach bow first, from up wind, keeping the prop away from the boat hazards and crew