



Training syllabus for Safety Boat Helmspersons and crews. (2008)

Note: The syllabus should be covered in one classroom session of about 2 hours. The session may be repeated or extended as needed. In addition there should be a practical session of about 2hrs.

- Participants should each have a copy of the safety-boat 'checklist' to keep, and a copy of the current WSC course-card with plan of the river, showing location of buoys.

The classroom session should draw attention to :

- The five main parts of the checklist
 1. Introduction
 2. Being prepared
 3. Before launching
 4. During the race or other event
 5. After the race etc.
- Basic First Aid relating to immersion, cold and trauma. This is not a full first-aid training, but a recap of important points.
- Key parts of the Practical Session, including: Man Overboard; Recovering a Casualty; Recovery from a Lee-Shore; Righting a Boat; Towing.
- The methods adopted can include:
 - Cover each of the points on the overheads
 - Give opportunity for questions and discussion wherever needed.
 - Use visual methods to illustrate practical topics.
- The sailing Secretary should keep a note of all who attended, and any points of interest or concern.

1. Introduction

- This course is designed to give a basic minimum of guidance for club members and others who are taking club safety boats 'Ravens 1&2' or the workboat 'Viking' or any other boat out to accompany a race or other event.
 - There is a great deal more to learn; much of it can be learned by experience, but it is very worthwhile spending some time with the RYA Safety Boat Handbook by Laurence West and Grahame Forshaw. A copy is kept in the Starting Hut, and another on the library shelf in the clubhouse.

Club Policy

- There will be two people in a Safety Boat:
- The Helmsperson will be an adult who has completed the club's training and has appropriate experience, to the satisfaction of the Sailing Secretary and OOD.
- The crew must be aged 16+ and act under the direction of the helmsperson.
- In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the OOD, one person may man a safety-boat.

2. Being Prepared

- All crew must wear a buoyancy aid whilst on the water.
- Crew should bring whatever personal gear they need– something to drink, warm clothing, waterproofs, comforts – and store it in a locker.
- One crew member should be prepared to go in the water if necessary – but ONLY as a very last resort. You need to discuss this in advance and decide who will do it if it should be needed

Checkin:

- Arrive at least 75 minutes before start time.
- Check in with the Officer of the day, find out about:
 - the course,
 - the weather conditions,
 - the crews and boats taking part in the event.
- Get keys to the boatshed, fuel store etc from the entrance to the club.

3. Before launching:

- Check the condition of the boat.
- Tilt engine slightly when moving the boat.
- Get sufficient fuel from store and extra fuel if needed.
- Check the engine oil.

- Check the engine 'kill-cord' is in place, and that it works.
- Check all controls working (steering, throttle etc.)
- Start and run engine with fresh water to check circulation.
- Check radio is present and working.
- Fully inflate all tubes of each boat.
- Check the **essential kit** is all present : Spare kill-cord; survival blanket; First Aid kit; pump; oars; boathook; whistle; sharp knife; Anchor, line, buoy; throwing and towing lines.

Only launch the boat when you are satisfied all is working correctly, all kit present, the crew are competent and properly briefed.

- Get help to launch and to recover – at least 4 people per boat.
- Launch at least 20minutes before start of the race.

4. During the Race (or Other Event):

- **Focus** on what's going on in the fleet. Avoid unnecessary activities and distractions. Things can happen quickly, and once someone is in the water you may not spot them easily. Scan all around, frequently, and particularly behind you.
 - The helmsperson should keep one hand on wheel, one on throttle/gear lever.
 - The Crew should check that helmsperson is attached to the kill-cord.
- Communicate your intentions and actions regularly and frequently – to your crew, to other boats, and to the Base station.
- Position one boat where you can see most of the fleet. If there is a second boat, it should go to the most hazardous place (eg gybe-mark), and see the fleet through.
- Take account of the different skills of sailors – pay close attention to the least skilled, most vulnerable.
- If necessary send a tired/cold sailor home.

- You may cancel or shorten a race, in consultation with OOD if weather conditions dictate (e.g. above Force5/6)
- You are there to **attend to the safety of people taking part**; only attend to recovery of boats and gear if there are no more urgent demands on your time and attention.
- In a rescue or recovery situation, always be aware of **the danger presented by the safety-boat's own propellor**. Switch off the engine when at close quarters with a person in the water.
- Avoid making a wake or wash as far as possible – it s a nuisance and can be dangerous.
- Stay clear of other boats – pay attention to special lights/ shapes/sound signals displayed by commercial vessels – in general stay clear.

5. After the race

- Haul the safety boat out only when you are in agreement with the OOD that all boats have been accounted for/are home.
- Tilt engine slightly when moving the boat
- Switch off radio.
- Get help – at least 4 people needed.
- Flush engine with fresh water for several minutes.
- Clean out the boat.
- Check all gear is present – report anything missing, lost or broken.
- Slightly deflate tubes.
- Remove all fuel to the store – report on amount of fuel remaining.
- Check with the OOD that all is done, and for any feedback on the race.
- Put the boat away in the shed, tidy up, lock up and have a nice cup of tea.

Thank you for your help!

Basic First Aid.

Review what to do after recovering a casualty if:

They have been underwater a long time

They are unconscious

They appear to be suffering from cold/extreme cold

They have suffered a traumatic injury – a wound or broken/damaged bone

Review:

Resuscitation

The Recovery Position

Keeping the casualty warm

Basic care for traumatic injury

Recognising and describing common signs of injury

Use the radio, other communications to inform OOD and to request help/ alert them to standby.

Get the casualty to shore as soon as possible.

Ensure the fleet know what you are doing.

Boat handling

Review with pictures/diagrams:

Man Overboard procedure.

Recovering a Casualty

Recovery from a Lee-shore.

Righting a Boat.

Towing.