

SECTION 6

SAFETY BOATS SOP & GUIDANCE (OOD & ALL USERS)

The Role of the LSC Bosun

1. Any faults, shortages, use of emergency / first aid equipment, or damage to boats and trailers must be logged in the Safety Boat Log and reported to the Bosun.

Safety Boats

2. The club has two safety boats – both are Rigidflex 400 models and are equipped with powerful 4-stroke outboard engines. They are coded (by the manufacturer) for up to four people in seas up to 2m. They have limited freeboard and will become rapidly swamped in challenging conditions. Helms must operate within their levels of competence and must discuss any known limitations with the OOD. Safety equipment, to the RYA approved scale, is stored in the Bosun's Locker and must be carried when operating in both safety and training roles.

Helms and Crew

3. Ideally, Safety Boat Coxswains (Helms) will be trained to the RYA Safety Boat standard. Helms **are required** to hold at least RYA Level 2 Powerboat Certificates of competence, or have satisfied the club of their experience and competence. The Principal or the CI are both available to assess any individual's competence against the requirement of the RYA.
4. The helm must have a crewman embarked when operating in the safety role. Appropriate total manning has been set at two because the vessels are coded for four people - 2 crew and 2 'casualties.' LSC has adopted the model of pairing experienced and less experienced volunteers to foster experiential learning and to develop future competence.

Allocation

5. The number of safety boats (SBs) launched for regular racing will be controlled by the OOD. The SB requirement will be influenced by prevailing weather conditions, the weather forecast, water conditions in the estuary and the experience of all those afloat. For conditions exceeding F3, the preferred ratios are:
 - a. 1 x SB for up to 10 dinghies
 - b. 2 x SB for up to 20 dinghies
6. Safety boats are to stay at their designated position on the course unless directed elsewhere by the OOD or they see an incident where immediate assistance is required.

Communications

7. VHF radios must be carried when operating in safety and training roles. If they become wet in use, they must be rinsed off and carefully dried before being replaced in the appropriate charger.
8. Radios should be set at low power. Generally, the OOD will determine the channel for use - usually Ch 8. A radio check must be undertaken before proceeding out on the

water to ensure functionality and clarity in both receive and transmit functions. Remember:

- a. The multiplex nature of VHF transmissions – everything you say will be heard by all radio receivers working on the channel.
- b. Use the call signs assigned by the OOD or senior instructor present.
- c. Maintain a good listening watch.
- d. Practice good voice procedure; speak slowly and clearly.
- e. Press the transmit button only to speak and check it does not become stuck on.
- f. Keep radio chatter to a minimum.
- g. Consider dual watch on Ch16 and the designated working channel.
- h. In the event of a major incident, consider calling emergency services on Ch16.

Responsibilities

9. If operating a safety boat arrive early for session and seek out the OOD or Senior Instructor responsible for running the session. Both the OOD and boat crew should be present 1 hour before the planned serial and agree the safety plan
10. Ensure you have suitable clothing. A buoyancy aid is recommended for all crew. An auto-inflate life jacket is not recommended and will only impede the ability to render assistance. One crew member should be in wet / dry suit and able to go into the water to assist casualty if required.
11. Collect VHF radio and test.
12. Check you have full fuel tanks and all required safety equipment.
13. **The Kill Cord to be used at all times.**
14. Launch and lay the race course or training area designated by the OOD or CI. On completion return to the area of the end of the wall to escort craft to and from designated sailing areas as required. Keep an eye out for late comers.
15. **Keep your eye on boats, especially the less experienced or in particular, students going 'solo'.** If coaching or engaged in a rescue ask crew to watch out for the other boats.
16. When assisting at a capsized craft, **stand off and count heads.** Be aware of the risk of inversion /entrapment (crew caught under upturned hull). If you suspect trapped crew, on a small dinghy attempt to lift bow or stern on larger dinghy move in immediately to right the boat. In normal circumstances stand-off and instruct self-recovery. If you are needed elsewhere, provide the required assistance as quickly as possible.
17. If you are recovering crew in the water: **Engine must be OFF. DO NOT ALLOW ANYONE IN THE WATER TO GET ANYWHERE NEAR THE STERN/PROP UNLESS THE ENGINE IS TURNED OFF.**
18. **This year's "lesson learned" related to man handling a young female casualty into the safety boat. If the casualty is unable to recover themselves into the safety boat, please respect their dignity and make sure you have verbal consent to assist them.**
19. In the event of multiple capsize or crews in immediate danger, e.g. entangled in a mooring on fast tide. Abandon the dinghy and take crew into the safety boat. Attempt to anchor the dinghy, ideally mark dinghy with orange tape and advise OOD or CI

20. The priority is always to attend to casualties rather than craft.
21. If in a multiple rescue situation ensure you mark the boat you have abandoned, Tie marker tape (to be found in Safety box) around the rudder fittings to indicate that you have evacuated the crew. Consider notifying the Coast Guard of any boats being left unattended.
22. **In the event of a life threatening emergency, Safety Boat coxswains are authorised to alert emergency services through Coast Guard or May Day call (See Below).**
23. The primary landing point for most racing and training serials will be the Brook at LSC.
24. If the event is taking place in Training Area South and a major incident or medical emergency occurs, consider using the Exmouth Dock entrance.
25. If the event is taking place in Training Area North and a major incident or medical emergency occurs, consider using Topsham sailing Club.
26. Remember in a rescue situation: **You are in charge: not the crew being rescued.**
27. Towing. Either tow on a line taken from the dinghy mast and led through a looped line around forestay or bring dinghy alongside for the tow. **Tow slow, dinghies are delicate.**
 - a) Due to the strong tides, and close proximity of moored vessels there are several considerations that must be made when towing vessels.
 - b) No more than 3 dinghies to be towed astern.
 - c) Up to two dinghies can be towed alongside, one to port and the other to starboard.
 - d) In strong tides, where possible remove spars and occupants.
 - e) Last vessel in tow must have someone steering to follow the vessel directly ahead.
 - f) Attach all towlines to secure points, with quick-release where possible.
 - g) Daggerboards/Centreboards to be raised before commencing tow.
 - h) Rudders to be raised out of water (except last boat).
 - i) If rudder is in water, sailors to steer to follow vessel directly ahead.
 - j) Ideally, towing Safety Boats should be accompanied by a non-towing Safety Boat.
28. **Do not come off station until all participating boats are safely in.** Where crews decide to stay on the water post-race they must be informed that the safety boats are standing down.
29. Please leave safety boats in the condition you took them out. Please fill out the logs and stow the kit correctly. Report any problems, faults or damage to OOD/CI/SI and record details in the logs.