

Calling all safety boat Drivers and Crew

Driving the club's safety boats is vital to the safe running of dinghy racing and water sports within the club. In an ideal world all safety boat drivers would be qualified, at the minimum, to RYA powerboat level 2 and RYA safety boat qualified.

However, this is not always practical for a club and its volunteers so, wherever the club can reinforce "best practice," prior to a duty, both to those who are powerboat qualified and those who are not, this is a good thing.

Whenever possible, safety boat crews should refresh themselves of the club's policy for safety boat helms and crews as these can change in a regular basis.

Some top tips for safety boat drivers:

1. Always wear a kill cord. No kill cord No launch.
 2. Keep your hands on the throttle and wheel at all times when moving.
 3. Always switch your engine off when dealing with a person in the water.
 4. 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.
 5. 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.
 6. Avoid steering directly astern of those who are racing, in case they capsize, fall out or alter course unexpectedly.
 7. 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 or gunwale to keep them close.
 8. Once in place turn the engine off if necessary for ease of communication.
 9. If approaching a moving dinghy let the helm know your intentions, communicate clearly, approach from the windward side.
 10. 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!
 11. Above all maintain a good look out around your safety boat at all times! There are lots of small buoys littering the harbour.
 12. Check your radio works and has a fully charged battery.
 13. Know the basic radio procedures.
 14. Know your limits, don't launch if you believe the conditions are too severe for your level of competence.
 15. Don't go out to sea through the run unless you have been trained by an experienced helm as this can be very tricky at times.
- The run changes each season and details on its course will be examined by our senior helms before sea racing commences.
16. Fuelling the ribs should take place between the rib shed and club building and try to keep members of the public away. Signs are available. Fire extinguisher are in the rib shed.
 17. On return ensure boats and engines are washed down and run through with clean water before being put back in the shed.
 18. Rigidflex fuel tank should be returned to the fuel locker.
 19. Always take the correct yellow safety box with you and remind yourself of its contents.
 20. Finally enjoy yourself and always find time to practise your skills when ever possible.

Refresher training:

It's worth bearing in mind that many safety boat drivers only take to the controls once or twice a season, so they can often be pretty rusty. Due to CV most of us will be very rusty this year. We plan to have pre-season "blowing the cobwebs away" training days where all safety helms and crew can come along and familiarise themselves on the boats and the club's safety boating policy along with any new procedures.

HSC Safety Boat Quick Guide

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S Safety Box, marks, buoy flags and keys.
A Anchor with chain and rope * tied to boat*
F Fuel, petrol, plus spare tank, air vent open
E Elephant Tube tied up, bungs in
T Tell tale of exit water, Trim Up/Down ok
Y Yank kill cord and check engine stops

B Buoyancy aids on
O Overboard rescue lines and Oars
A Air Waves - check radio ok
T Tubes inflated on ribs ok

Radio Channels

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Ch 16	Distress, Safety and Calling channel
Ch 65	NCI Hengisbury Head Tel. 07851672540
Ch 67	Solent Coast Guard, small ship safety
Ch 6,8,72,77	Ship to ship
Ch 23,84,86	Coast Guard information
Ch 80	UK Marinas
Ch13	Bridge to Bridge
Ch M, P1,37a	Club safety boats and Race officials. NB1
Ch M2 or P4	Club safety boats and Race officials. NB2

NB1: All the same frequency 157.850 MHz

NB2: All on same frequency 161.425 MHz

*** Do not use Ch 70, for digital communications only ***

Communication Procedures to follow.

Bosun HSC