

Safety Boat Guidelines

Bury Lake Young Mariners



This document is intended to provide guidance to safety boat crews on the equipment needed and their responsibilities on the water to ensure that all participants are provided with adequate safety cover. Safety boat helms are required to be either RYA Safety Boat qualified or hold an RYA Dinghy Instructor certificate. This document should be read in conjunction with the *Entrapment Policy*.

1 Personal Equipment

Every crew member must wear personal buoyancy when afloat as per the Standard Operating Procedures.

At least one crew member on each safety boat should be equipped and prepared to enter the water should a safety situation require such action. This may be necessary to rescue from an entrapment, capsized or unconscious MOB situation.

2 Safety Boat and Equipment Checklist

When equipping the boats at the start of a session the crew must check them over for seaworthiness and safety equipment. The equipment in the boat as a minimum should be:

1. Towline
2. Throwline
3. Anchor
4. Abandonment Marker
5. 2x paddle
6. First Aid Kit
7. Spare Kill Cord
8. Toolkit
9. Bailer
10. Knife
11. Fire Extinguisher

In Addition, every safety boat operator should carry a VHF radio so they can be contacted. Each boat's call sign is displayed on the vessel.

The Kill Cord is probably the most important single piece of safety equipment in a Power Boat.

NEVER try to operate the boat without the kill cord attached to the driver's body (around the thigh)

A full checklist and map of areas displayed in the sailing locker to help you.

Be familiar with the Emergency Procedures which can also be found on the card

Adequate fuel must be carried for the session.

3 Safety Boat Briefings

- All coxswains should attend a briefing that is made by the instructor in charge of the session.
- Make a note of the plan for the session and the numbers attending.
- Be aware of the number of single/double handers participating.
- Dinghies will not launch until safety boats are in position and authorised by the instructor in-charge of the session. This ensure all safety crews are ready to effect a rescue from the start of the activity.

Bury Lake Young Mariners

Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Frogmoor Lane, Hertfordshire, WD3 1NB

Clubhouse: 01923 772 015 | Email: enquiries@blym.org.uk | Website: <https://blym.org.uk>

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4 Responsibilities on the water

The instructor in charge of the session would have tasked safety boats to groups / areas during the briefing.

Ask for clarification from the instructor in-charge of the session if unsure about anything.

- Drive at a safe speed at all times and keep a constant lookout.
- Be pro-active – Do not sit and watch. You are assisting the safe running of the session. Students will benefit from your input and must follow your safety instructions if they wish to sail with us.
- Direct sailors to steer towards specific waypoints such as boats, buoys or landmarks.
- React quickly to boats drifting downwind or failing to tack. Experienced safety boat helms use effective pre-emptive management.
- Tow boats back into sailing areas quickly to prevent them becoming detached from the group. Do not waste time trying to shepherd a beginner upwind if they are stuck in irons and drifting rapidly into other sailing areas
- If dinghies require towing back to shore, do not leave the rest of the group without safety cover. Anchor / moor/ capsize dinghies and take students aboard the safety boat if necessary.
- Mark abandoned dinghies with the marker buoys to indicate that the crew is safe. This can be attached to the transom / traveller. Make sure it is easily visible.
- Monitor the group even when dealing with an incident or towing boats ashore.
- Manage the group when returning ashore. Tell students when it is their turn to return to the pontoons. In difficult conditions safety crews should assist in safe return to shore. Eg. de-rigging afloat and towing in.
- Do not return safety boats to their moorings until all sailors are off the water and the lead instructor has authorised it.

4.1 Communication with students

- Position safety boats close astern or on the windward side of dinghies when you wish to communicate with students. Avoid the need to shout. If safe to do so, switch the engine off for even better communication.
- Learn the students' names quickly. This is easy if you talk to them frequently
- Ask students to lie-to before you come alongside to talk
- Use established whistle and hand signals to make contact with the group over a wider area
- Give verbal and visual (thumbs up / smile etc) feedback as much as possible.

4.2 Capsizes

Part of the fun of sailing and confidence-building is capsizing. Do not stop sailors who want to capsize – manage them. Set a safe area and a specific time when they can practice capsizes and get them to ask permission first so that you can monitor them without neglecting the others.

TURN OFF the engine as soon as you have hands on a person in the water.

Be aware of problems of entrapment – If you suspect entrapment: alert the other safety crews/SI using the 'Indigo' call sign immediately; they will assist.

Please refer to the Entrapment Policy as stated in Section 4 of the Standard Operating Procedures.

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Multiple capsizes are sometimes inevitable but you can evaluate and monitor the whole situation as you work on an individual capsize.

When monitoring multiple capsizes, check:

- Immediate signs of activity following capsize (indicating consciousness)
- Check the number of heads visible. Know which boats are single and which are two-man.
- Are the sailors visible and effectively attempting to recover the boat?
- Are they in any danger from their environment? Water, temperature, rocks, ropes, other boats
- Be aware of capsized boats drifting into a dangerous position e.g. Lee shore in a strong wind.
- Communication - Are there other rescue craft in the area?

When abandoning boats on the water, they should be tagged with a marker buoy to signal this to other water users.

REMEMBER TO PRIORITISE – PEOPLE BEFORE PROPERTY!

4.3 First Aid

AT LEAST one person in each safety boat should hold a valid first aid certificate.

For any sailor who you suspect to be unwell or at risk of become unwell e.g. cut, banged head or hypothermia:

1. Prevent the situation from getting worse – bring aboard, treatment, warm blanket etc
2. Inform the other rescue crews and beach master of the situation
3. Return the sailor to the shore immediately for treatment
4. If a first aid kit has been used – Inform the instructor in-charge that it needs replenishing after the session.

After session – De-brief for whole team in Briefing Room.

Any near-misses, accidents, or other issues? Report to the Senior Instructor, fill in Near Miss/accident form and place in the post-box by Galley.

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