

## **SAFETY OFFICER INSTRUCTIONS (also ASSISTANT SO)**

You are part of a team undertaking the duties for the day, so if in any doubt about anything or if you need assistance, then consult with the OOD, or any of the other members of the duty team.

Powerboat and Safety Boat use is subject to the rules as listed in the Club Rules included in this Guide, (and also accessible via the Club website).

Safety cover is to be provided for all sailors on the water during the duty hours. These are 10.00 to 17:00 during British Summer Time. (Or until final race is finished if this is later than 17:00). During winter months, cover is only provided for race times. But it is important to remember that safety cover is provided for all those sailing at Whitefriars NOT just for the racers.

You need to come prepared for all weathers. It is usually much colder than when sailing. In addition, you (or, more likely, your crew) may need to enter the water to assist a casualty. It is important that you are dressed appropriately for this eventuality.

When fetching a Safety Boat, tie the rowing boat up on the starboard side of the boathouse ensuring the oars are secure. Undo the combination lock on the rear quarter of the Safety Boat that locks it to the boat house. Untie the Safety Boat mooring rope on the corner upright and the Safety Boat should drift backwards out of the cover. Never try and go into the cover. Once the Safety Boat is out of the cover, transfer the fuel tank into the Safety Boat and climb in yourself. Connect the fuel tank, undo the tank vent and ensure you lower the engine before attempting to start it, to prevent the engine overheating.

Fit the kill cord to the ignition and secure the kill cord around your leg BEFORE attempting to start the engine. Once the engine has started, check the water cooling is operating and with the drive in neutral release the mooring bow line from the boat and secure it on the boathouse cleat in readiness for putting the boat away. Always prepare at least one other Safety Boat for use in case of breakdown or if another crew is needed.

### **You must use a kill cord at all times when driving a safety boat.**

Once you have brought a Safety Boat to shore from the boathouse, ensure that all the necessary equipment detailed below is aboard each Safety Boat.

- Fire Extinguisher
- Anchor crate
- Waterproof container containing safety items
- 1x Throwing Rope
- 2x Towropes
- 2x Paddles
- Ladder
- VHF Radio (at least one per safety boat in use)

Check the operation of the radios with the OOD and AOD. Make sure the radios work, and that everybody knows how to use them. The handsets should display Channel P2 (the newer handsets display M2), and the base station in the Start Hut should display Channel M2. These are the only channels we are allowed to use. If the display shows any other channel, contact Pat Green, Pat Ward or any of the Powerboat Instructors to have it corrected. Keep the radios with you throughout the duty, and make sure they are put back on the chargers at the end of the day.

At all times, other than when attending a rescue, keep to a sensible speed to avoid creating unnecessary wash.

To fully man a single Safety Boat, with a driver and assistant, will take both the duty safety officers, so if conditions are sufficiently bad, volunteers should be sought to man a second Safety Boat (or to crew each boat). A list of members qualified as SO is posted in the Start Hut.

Under normal conditions, the Safety Boat should be on the water at all times. If the wind speed is less than 5 mph, it is acceptable for the crew to be on the quayside by the Start Hut. The OOD and AOD will also be watching the water during the races at least, and should communicate with the safety officers using the radios if an incident is spotted.

Obviously you will need breaks during the day, these should be organised with the OOD and AOD so that safety cover is maintained at all times. It is equally important that one of the safety crew should be keeping a watch on the lake between races when fewer boats may be on the water.

You are expected to take charge of any incident on the water that compromises safety. So the safety crew should attend ALL incidents. Do not assume that, because the sailor is experienced, they do not need help. If there is doubt then the assumption should be that they do.

Safety cover is specifically provided for people, not for boats, but you are expected to help out with recovering the latter where possible. If necessary, abandon capsized boats to attend more pressing incidents. This may mean abandoning a boat after having rescued the occupants, to get the sailors into the warm or to go and check on or assist somebody else.

You should advise the OOD if you feel that you cannot maintain a safe environment (i.e. you are overstretched). This may be because of

- the conditions, or
- the general standard of sailors' boat handling, or
- personal safety equipment not being equal to the conditions, or
- you feel you are unable to provide the service that the situation deserves.

The OOD will make any decision to abandon racing or other sailing.

The Senior Instructor on site determines training activity.

You have the power to order boats off the water or crews to abandon their boats if you feel they are causing a danger to other sailors by 'hogging' the Safety Boat(s).

The safety officer should be aware of the course set by the OOD for any races, and ensure that any hazardous parts of the course are covered. Consider positioning the Safety Boat near any gybe mark if the wind is strong. If a course is set that takes boats out of sight, for instance up the 'cut', then the Safety Boat should be positioned to keep boats in sight at all times.

During quiet times, by all means practise your powerboat skills, collect weed or generally assist with the day's events, but always ensure that someone is keeping a watch on the lake and that you are ready to drop everything to go and assist people in need of help.

At the end of the day, before putting the Safety Boats away, you should make absolutely sure that any boats still on the water are aware that safety cover is ending. By all means use a sound signal and lower the flags, but you should also visit any boats out on the water and make sure they understand what these signals mean.

Enlist someone on shore to watch as the last Safety Boat is put away in case difficulties are encountered in transfer to the rowing boat or rowing ashore.

With the help of the other members on duty, tidy and clean out the Clubhouse and changing rooms at the end of the day.

Every person who has achieved the Safety Boat Driver Minimum Qualifications is encouraged to keep their driving skills up to date by practicing their driving skills on the Water with the permission of the OOD when a Safety Boat is not required for safety purposes.