

## **The Duties**

All sailing members are required to take a turns at 'OD' and Safety Patrol Boat duties as listed by the Dinghy Captain. If you cannot attend on the date you are allotted, the onus is on you to agree a swap directly with another member, before the day.

The following notes below will help you to understand what these duties entail. There is a lot to learn but full training is available and an experienced member will always be available to help.

### **Safety Patrol Boat Guidelines.**

These notes cannot cover all eventualities they are no substitute for training but they might just be handy. Drivers of the Safety Boat are required to have RYA Power Boat level 2 and Safety Boat Driver qualifications. Training is offered in the club for Power Boat Level 2 and Safety Boat courses to RYA standards. If you want to take training courses make it known to the Training School Principle, the Club Commodore, any Instructor or Committee member and they will make the necessary arrangements.

Please refer to the **Mercury Outboard Manual** for its Usage Instructions.

Prepare & check the rescue boat/s as required, please read notes on safety boat kit and what should be on the boat (fuel, fire extinguisher, paddle, towing lines etc).

Check that a tow for launching is arranged, liase with the OD.

A Safety Boat should have two people on board, one is the helm and the other is to assist by following instructions from the helm.

Do a RADIO CHECK with the OD before launching.

Load the boat with the required marker buoys and position the course buoys in conjunction with the OD.

When you are on patrol watch for a boat capsize or a boat near any rocks. Immediately prepare to go and try to **KEEP THE ENGINE AS FAR AWAY FROM PEOPLE IN THE WATER AS POSSIBLE**. Approach the dinghy so that its bow (front) is in front of you.

Approach **SLOWLY**, having already slowed away from them. Check heads visible in the water, **TALKING** between you and those in possible need of help is **ESSENTIAL** – Capsizing whilst racing is a normal hazard but sailors can get cold or receive a bang, they might have difficulty righting the dinghy, so **ASK** if they are OK, **ASK** if they need help – racers do not usually accept help if they are ok and want to carry on – but Listen to answers or communicate by showing “thumbs up” or “thumbs down” - they should be responsive and you should be wary if they are not.

If there are children in the water with an adult crew as well you should be considering getting the child into the safety boat as soon as possible. If it is between October and June try to do

this immediately. (Hypothermia acts very quickly on children as they have very small body mass and heat loss is rapid).

When help is required, **YOU TAKE CONTROL OF THAT BOAT AND INSTRUCT THEM WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO.**

If the boat is on its side go to the tip of the mast. Hold the tip of the mast. This stabilises the boat and allows rapid righting of the craft, it also prevents inversion and possible trapping underwater.

If the boat is inverted already go to the bow and get your crew member to hold the painter of the capsized boat. Make sure the people in the water are in contact with the boat and slowly manouver to ensure that you are turning their boat "Head to wind", which will assist the righting of the craft.

Instruct them, if they are having difficulty, on how to right the boat. Try to make sure they have released the sail controls, jibsheet and mainsheet are essential to be released. Get spinnakers collected before they start.

If the centre board is not showing then the crew will need to find a righting rope, which could be specially pre-prepared or maybe a mainsheet or jibsheet, or one of them may need to go under the upturned boat and push the centre board up to assist the righting.

If the centre board has snapped or is completely detached and lost then the paddle kept on the safety boat can be jammed into the centre board casing on the upturned boat and used to lever the boat upright. (Take care that the pressure is kept close to the hull of the upturned boat, paddles snap easily!)

It may be necessary for the crew of the Safety Boat to get into the water to help right the boat. **ONLY IF ABSOLUTLY ESSENTIAL** as this reduces the effectiveness of the rescue operation enormously.

When their boat is righted offer them the bucket from your boat to help them bail it out or offer them a tow to allow easy bailing.

If a dinghy is in danger of hitting rocks and the crew is ok then get a line across quickly and **SLOWLY** tow the dinghy to clear water.

If you need to go into a shallow water area then raise the outboard engine propeller leg using the power tilt control (do not raise more than 20 degrees)

To tow a boat...

Secure one end of the tow rope to the Rescue Boat's towing loop at the stern and throw, or pass, the loose end to the stricken craft.

Get the crew member to wrap the loose end twice around the base of the mast and hold the loose end. **DO NOT TIE A KNOT.**

Get them to raise the centre board (if you don't as you begin to tow they could capsize again!) and release all sail controls and probably pull down the mainsail, this can be near impossible on some boats but as long as the sail is "blowing free" it will not affect the towing too much.

Get the helm to steer the boat to follow your engine or raise the rudder.

**TOW SLOWLY.**

Slow down even more as you approach the shore, a boat full of water has huge momentum and will keep going forever.

If possible go into the corner alongside the jetty so that they also go alongside, don't bang into the side.

If you have to get someone out of the water it is much easier if they are able to help themselves! But you can assist by you and your crew being on the same side of the boat then the gunwales will lower down towards water level, roll the casualty into the boat and as they come into the boat the crew goes back across and rights it. If this cannot be done the inflatable tube can be deflated.

Ensure the safety boat is recovered safely ask the OD to co-ordinate assistance and organise towing out.

Wash down the boat and engine and put away as required, complete a usage report in the logbook.