



Instructions for Support Boat Duties

You should be there and be ready to go afloat at least an hour before the first start - and two hours before Out of the Harbour races. This is especially important for the Dolphin crew which has to follow the Committee Boat closely, to lay the start line marks.

- You must **attend the Race day and safety briefing** before going afloat (usually at 8.45am)
- You should **wear a lifejacket** or buoyancy aid at all times in an ISC Support Boat, RIB or Displacement
- You should **bring your own lifejacket** with you as the club does not have any to loan.
- You should be dressed appropriately for the conditions and the length of time you will be afloat. There may be a need for you to enter the water to conduct a rescue.
- **Kill cords must be worn at all times whilst afloat in a RIB.**
- The Club is not responsible for your personal effects or valuables. Valuables may be left, at your risk, with the Club Office.

Ashore – On Arrival at the Club

1. Report to PRO/Sailing Manager for instructions, and briefing at 8.45am.
2. You will be allocated a crew / driver , specific boat and role on the water.
3. Collect the Safety bag and check that it contains the following:-
 - Radio (and if allocated to a RIB a knife as well). You are required to sign for receipt.
 - First Aid kit
 - Flares
 - Harbour Chart with racing marks
 - Instructions how to shorten/change a course
 - Instruction folder, compass, tape and whistle
 - The special eurotherm bag, waterproof notepad, pen and pencil
4. Read weather report, forecast and tidal conditions. Consider likely courses, start times and any special sailing instructions that the PRO requires, during and after the briefing.

Afloat – at the jetty

1. At the boat, the:- starting the engine, check the fuel tank.

2. Before you depart, check:
 - with the PRO whether your boat should have either the starting marks (generally carried in Dolphin) or a floating special mark (generally carried in one of the RIBs).
 - you have towing lines, balers, and a bucket.
 - your radio is working. Radio check as follows:
 - Call Betivuka or the Club and say “This is [boat], radio check please - over”.
 - Hang the radio around your neck. It is the only place that you can be sure to hear it when your engine is running. The radio is not waterproof, so try to keep it dry. SBC should act as radio operator. When called, you should answer immediately.

3. **Ferry the keelboat crews out to their boats and check**

Dealing with Emergencies

Does the casualty require immediate professional medical or paramedic intervention? If YES, treat as a Serious Incident; if NO treat as a Less Serious Incident.

Serious Incident

The primary duty of anyone at the scene of an accident or incident is to take immediate action to save life, give help to those injured or to limit damage. The first boat on the scene will take control of the situation and will call the Coastguard on Channel 16 using a MAYDAY call as follows:

MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, This is (name of vessel repeated 3 times)
MAYDAY, (name of vessel spoken once)
MY POSITION IS (give your position using Navigational marks not racing mark)
I AM (state problem),
I REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE
NUMBER OF PERSONS REQUIRING ASSISTANCE
OVER

Wait for Coastguard to respond. If there is no response with 15 seconds, call 999 on your mobile phone and ask for the Coastguard.

If there is a suspected spinal injury do not move the casualty unless the casualty is in further immediate danger.

The Coastguard will ask for more details of the casualty and respond with the action it intends to take to render assistance. It is essential that you remain in communication with the Coastguard on Channel 16, or 67 if ordered by them. You must remain with the casualty. The Coastguard will provide advice on how to care for the casualty until help arrives. The Coastguard/rescue helicopter will instruct you on what action to take to indicate your position to the rescue services. The rescue helicopter will instruct you on how to prepare for the casualty evacuation using Channel 16. You may be asked to take a casualty to a landing point to be met by an ambulance. The PRO should be informed as

soon as possible, after the initial action has been taken. Betivuka maintains a listening watch on Channel 16.

As a guide, the normal response time for a rescue helicopter or the inshore lifeboat to reach an incident in the harbour is about 15 minutes. The harbour patrol boats, which maintain a listening watch on Channel 16, will be alerted to the incident and will respond.

Less serious incident

Administer first aid to the casualty, keep the casualty warm and provide reassurance. Take the casualty back to Itchenor SC where there are trained first aiders, who can care for the casualty and can decide if further medical assistance is required. Inform the PRO and the Office the situation and the action which you are taking.

No two emergency situations will be the same. It is impossible to plan and anticipate every situation, but you must be familiar with these procedures. It helps to have thought about what might happen given the weather, tide and racing conditions on the day.

Support Generally

1. All Support Boats should notify the Committee Boat of any dangers or other incidents on the water.
2. Each type of Support Boat has advantages and disadvantages:
 - The displacement boats (Dolphin and Fisher Boat) are slower than the RIBs. They can tow keel boats off the mud more effectively than the RIBs.
 - The RIBs are fast, but remember you are subject to the Harbour Speed limit - 8 knots, except in cases of emergency. Beware of other Harbour users.
 - The RIBs may tow dinghies, and are particularly useful for righting overturned dinghies.
3. Only the nominated driver and crew should be in a Support Boat, together with anyone rescued.
4. The overriding responsibility is to the support of those who are sailing, and thus recovery of boats or their gear is of secondary importance
5. Both driver and crew must keep a constant lookout for people in trouble.
6. It should not be necessary for several Support Boats to attend a boat in trouble. If two or more boats find themselves at a scene, they must decide quickly which is to attend to the boat in trouble. This releases the other boat for patrol; several problems may be occurring at the same time!

Laying the Starting Line marks

1. This is done under the direction the PRO, usually by the crew of Dolphin, but not always.

2. The Outer Distance mark (an Orange Flag) is laid by motoring slowly up tide across the starting line at the required distance from the Committee Boat, with the mark in tow. The mark should be in the water with the crew holding on to the anchor. The PRO on the Committee boat, should give you arm signals to tell you where and when to drop.
3. At a signal from the PRO release the anchor.
4. If an Inner Distance mark is required (Flag O), the procedure is the same and it is likely to be laid about 2 lengths from the Committee Boat, and just “up course” of the line, at the direction of the PRO.
5. Remember that it may be necessary to stand off nearby the Committee Boat, in case the PRO needs the mark moved because of a wind shift, for example.

Before the Start

1. You should receive instructions from the PRO, who will advise you where your boat should best be placed.
2. If you have no instructions, wait until after the start sequence has finished and then call the PRO.
3. In the meantime, keep away from racing boats manoeuvring near the line. Either well back behind the line or forward of it and to the side of the channel.
4. Note the course displayed for each class on the side of the Committee Boat.
5. Maintain radio silence unless there is some urgent need to communicate, especially within the 6 minute period within the starting sequence(s).
6. You may be called to the committee boat to collect a set of flags, as follows:
N and H and A (abandonment sequence), M (missing mark), C (course change)
S (shorten course), First substitute (general recall), Itchenor burgee

After the Start

1. The PRO will tell you where to patrol. You will either follow a group or fleet of any one of the classes, or you may be stationed at a point and check boats rounding a mark.
2. Remember if you have no instructions, ASK the PRO. Don't just cruise around aimlessly!
3. The PROs find it helpful to be told of where the boats in any class are, what marks are being rounded, and news of any boats at the end of their fleet. Listen for other Support Boats giving information. Use your discretion about reporting in to the Committee Boat!
4. Dolphin will be instructed to pick up the starting marks when the PRO decides. RIBs may be instructed to pick up special marks. Listen for instructions.

Dealing with Capsizes

1. On sighting a capsized boat, close in and lie a short distance away.
2. Establish whether or not the crew can right the boat and sail on (either home or to continue in the race).
3. If anyone is cold, tired or in any way injured, you will need to take action.
4. If there is any doubt, the responsibility for the decision is *yours*.
5. The crew may be concerned about your ability to deal with them or the boat. Reassure them, if you can.
6. You may need to get one of the crew into your Support Boat. This may help later.
7. You will need to ensure that the boat is head to wind as it cannot be righted otherwise. Take hold of the bow, or alternatively the top of the mast, and move it round.
8. If any person is in the water, turn your engine off unless you have to manoeuvre your boat, in which case maneuver with the greatest of care.
9. Most dinghies can be righted with the sails hoisted, lower the spinnaker.
10. High performance dinghies are usually self-draining and can be sailed with water in the cockpit, otherwise help may be needed with bailing out.

Broken Mast, etc.

1. If broken above the shrouds the boat can still be sailed under jib.
2. If broken and/or the boat is rudderless, once the crew are safe and the boat is upright you can check for instructions from the PRO, this may be either to tow the boat home, or for the dismasted boat to wait for another Support Boat to tow it home.
3. Retrieving unessential gear when it is adrift is fine as long as it does not interfere with the task of rescuing people, or otherwise put them at risk.

Heavy Weather

It may be necessary to lower one or both of the sails. If it cannot be undone at the shackle, it may be necessary to cut the halyard at the masthead. You should have a knife but there is one in the bag. The knife provided for the RIBs includes a shackle key.

Towing

1. Bail out the boat first, if it is full.
2. The tow line should be taken with 2 turns around the boat's mast, and held by the crew, so that it can be slipped quickly.
3. A rudderless dinghy can be made more manageable if the tow line is kept close to its stem by another line round it and made fast to the stem.
4. The boom can be used as a jury rudder.
5. RIBs are not generally suitable for towing the keel boats if they are aground, unless it is clear that only a short pull will enable the boat to swing clear. If in doubt do not endanger the equipment, if no-one is in danger. It is usually more effective when there is a tide running if the Support Boat pulling a keel boat aground takes the tow over its bows. Care should always be taken in case the tow rope breaks and flies back and injures the crew.
6. If towing a boat off a shallow lee shore, drop anchor upwind/tide of the boat aground and run back on the anchor with the engine stopped and raised.

Tell the PRO if you have left a person in a disabled boat, or are out of action towing.

Finally

1. The PRO and only the PRO can allow you to leave the race area. Obtain permission to leave, or wait to be stood down!
2. Ferry members from their boats on the moorings, back to the Club jetty.
3. **Tie up ribs in correct location, remove the rubbish and trim the engine**
4. On your return to the Club, return the bag, complete with all its contents, and radio, to the Club Office.

Remember – Always tell the Race Officer what you are doing!!

Thank you for supporting the club and giving time to do your duty as support boat crew.

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Carolyn Brigg

Rear Commodore - Sailing