



OPERATING PROCEDURE No. 17

Issue 2 April 2025

MAN OVERBOARD RECOVERY PROCEDURE

PURPOSE

This procedure defines a process which has been developed by Dart Sailability to recover a person from the water where they cannot assist themselves. It makes use of the bow ramp on the Safety Boat. If the Safety Boat is not available, other means of recovering people from the water, as defined in RYA Safety Boat guidance will need to be used. (Annex A)

This procedure should be read and practiced by all Volunteers nominated as Safety Boat Skippers and those nominated as Support Boat Skippers.

WARNING

There is a potential hazard with the bow door on the Safety Boat which could cause crush injury to a rescuer/casualty's hands or feet. There is no consistent or reliable way to prevent this possibility and extreme care should be taken when the ramp is lowered. The likelihood of this occurring is made worse by large waves or wash from passing vessels.

[When the bow door of Safety is lowered there is a risk of water getting on to the deck of the boat. The risk is reduced by operating stern to waves. Water on deck can create a free surface which can significantly reduce stability of the boat. If water starts gathering in the boat immediate action must be taken to remove it. Actions can include:](#)

- [Trimming boat aft and operating bilge pump](#)
- [Trimming boat forward so that water flows out over the ramp](#)

PROCEDURE

Any skipper observing a capsize should make the alarm call on the session working channel:

- **SAFETY – SAFETY – PRIORITY MAN-OVERBOARD – BLUE HANSA** (or yellow or red etc as appropriate).

They should then endeavour to make contact with the casualty and support them in the water.

SKIPPER OF BOAT MAKING CONTACT WITH CASUALTY IN THE WATER MUST ENSURE THAT THEY ARE BETWEEN THE CASUALTY AND THE PROPELLOR AT ALL TIMES WHILE ENGINE IS RUNNING.

UNLESS THERE IS AN OVERRIDING REASON NOT TO, ENGINES MUST BE SWITCHED OFF WHEN BOAT IS IN CONTACT WITH A PERSON IN THE WATER.

The Safety Boat acknowledges the call and proceeds to the MOB location with all due speed, but taking care not to endanger life.

On the approach to the casualty, SLOW DOWN and EVALUATE the situation.

Assuming a Support Boat has made contact, independently or after your direction, with the casualty, but not recovered the individual(s). Advise your crew and the Support Boat of your intentions and carry out the following drill.

Manoeuvre to bring Safety Boat head-on to the Support Boat – bows-to-bows (head-to-head) and SLOWLY move forward to make contact.

Safety Boat Crew take the bows of the other craft (Support Boat) and pass it to the appropriate side of the SAFETY BOAT to form an overlap and secure the other craft by its painter or appropriate line. The crew will report when the line is secure.

The Safety boat driver will very slowly reverse the pair of boats to ensure that they are clear of obstructions and safely back-to-wind and/or tide and under control. The direction (control) of the rescue will remain with the Safety Boat Driver.

The Safety boat crew lowers the ramp and prepares to take the casualty when ready.

The crew of the other boat moves the casualty forward towards the Safety boat in readiness to pass to the crew of the Safety boat.

The Safety boat crew will need to stand on the ramp to lower it while also taking hold of the casualty, preferably under the arm pits. It is then helpful to call the Support boat crew on board the Safety Boat so that two people can lift/draw the casualty up the ramp. Alternatively, they may be able to help from the other boat.

The Casualty is pulled up into the Safety Boat and made comfortable and any necessary First Aid treatment commenced

As appropriate the other boat's crew returns to their boat or remains on Safety to assist with the Casualty.

As soon as the other boat has started its engine and crew is aboard, if not remaining on Safety they are let go.

Safety Boat returns immediately to base or an alternative evacuation point as may be instructed by the OOD.

Figure 1

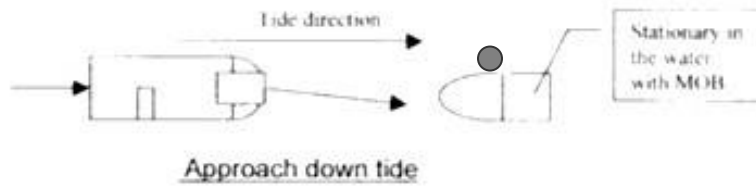


Figure 2

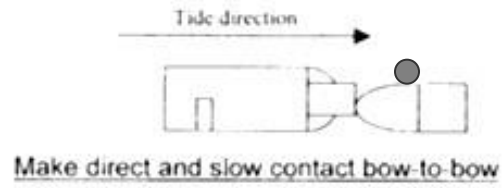
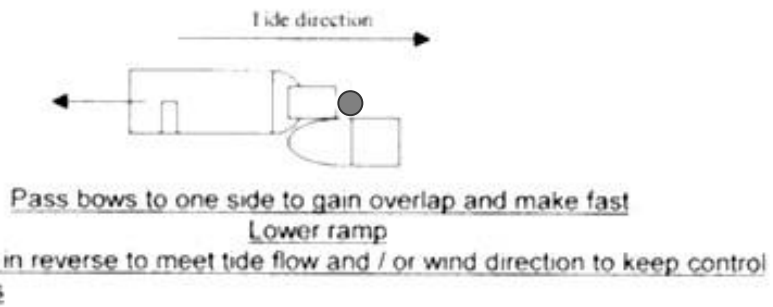


Figure 3



Note: *If wind is stronger than tide then the wind is reversed into rather than the tide.*

ANNEX A

Alternative Man Overboard Recovery Techniques

In the event that the Safety Boat is not available eg at sea, alternative techniques for recovery of a person from the water must be used. The option to be used will be influenced by the ability of the person in the water to assist themselves, their weight, any physical limitations and the strength and physical fitness of the crew.

Once in contact with the person in the water the crew should ascertain what the person is capable of doing and any limitations in how they might be recovered eg the risk of injury to them. ENGINE MUST BE TURNED OFF WHEN IN TOUCH WITH SOMEBODY IN THE WATER.

Options for recovering a person from the water include:

- Hoisting in over the side face first. Two crew each take the person being rescued under the arm pits to lift them and then pull them in by the bottom of their life-jacket or buoyancy aid. Check that the life-jacket/buoyancy aid is securely fitted. Take care to avoid hurting face/head as the person comes aboard.
- Putting a strop over the side that the person in the water can get their feet on to help them stand and roll forward into the boat.
- Rolling in over the side. With person lying on their back in the water get arm and leg up on to sponson then reach over to outboard arm and leg and roll the person face down over the sponson taking care of their face.
- Using ropes under the arm pits and legs as a sort of cradle to help roll the person into the boat
- The person can use the anti-ventilation plate above the outboard propellor as a step to help them climb in over the stern with assistance from the crew.
- One of the sponsons on a Support Boat can be deflated to make it easier to roll a person into the boat. Once in the boat simply hold up the deflated sponsons to protect the person from waves. The boat can be safely operated with a deflated sponson while returning to shore.
-