



OPERATING PROCEDURE No. 23

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Support Boat Skipper – Responsibilities, Competencies and Guidance

PURPOSE

This Procedure defines the responsibilities of a Support Boat Skipper and provides some guidance on operating a Support Boat during a Session. It must be read by all Volunteers nominated as Support Boat Skippers

Support Boats provide assistance to Sailing Boats leaving and entering the creek and standby ready to assist boats during a Session. They may also be used for Training or Trips.

Responsibilities

The Skipper is responsible for the safety of themselves, their crew and passengers, and their vessel.

They are responsible for checking their boat is properly prepared before leaving the pontoon (see Op Proc 12). This role may have been undertaken by the pontoon party but skippers should also do a final check before setting off.

They should abide by the ColRegs, especially the need to keep a good look out (particularly for other river traffic including the leisure trip ferries) and maintain a safe speed for the conditions (note: the river speed limit is 6 knots).

They are responsible for ensuring radio traffic is kept to a minimum and conforms to good radio etiquette.

Competencies

All powerboat skippers must be approved by the Chief Powerboat Instructor with advice from the Senior Management Team.

The minimum standard for a skipper is as contained in the RYA Start Powerboating course ('PB2'). Skippers for the ARC and Safety boat will have experience over and above this basic level.

In addition, skippers should be competent in performing the man overboard procedure used by Dart Sailability to recover disabled sailors from the water as well as being able to safely tow a Hansa dinghy alongside.

Guidance

During a sailing session the support boats will act under the control of the OOD on the Safety boat who will allocate an area to patrol and/or any dinghy requiring close observation.

They are responsible for:

The towing of dinghies from the pontoon out of the creek to clear water.

The release of dinghies for sailing and the checking that rigging is functioning properly.

The assistance of any dinghy in difficulties. Eg rigging, reefing, steering issues.

Act as directed by the OOD when required to respond to an incident. (See Op Proc 17 Man Overboard Recovery Procedure and Op Proc 19 Incident Management)

The immediate attendance at any capsized incident.

The relaying of messages from the OOD to the sailors who do not have radios.

The return of any dinghy to the pontoon if the sailor(s) indicate they wish to go in.

The de-rigging and towing the dinghies back to the pontoon at the end of a session.

The Skipper is responsible for securing the boat as defined in Operating Procedure 12.

Report any defects with the boat so that they can be rectified ready for future sessions (See Op Proc 20 Defect Reporting)

If the session has more than adequate safety provision, a support boat may take time off-station to practice on water manoeuvres. This may only be done with the explicit permission of the OOD and may be curtailed at any time if the support boat is needed back to safety cover.

