



OPERATING PROCEDURE No.26

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ARC Skipper – Responsibilities, Competencies and Guidance

PURPOSE

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

RESPONSIBILITIES

The skippers first responsibility is 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 is conforms to good radio etiquette.

COMPETENCIES

All powerboat skippers must be approved by the CPBI 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

Safety Precautions

If the stability of the ARC does not feel right eg she heels easily one way or the other she should NOT BE USED until the double bottom has been checked for water. Report to OOD and Boat Guardian.

Water can get on the deck through the seals around the bow door or by other means. This can be dangerous. Slow down to stop water coming in and move weight aft. Ensure that water is cleared through the drain holes aft or bailed out.

Generally, sailors should not be strapped in on the boat or on their wheel chairs. However, some sailors may need to be strapped into their wheel chairs for their own safety and comfort. In this case their carer and the ARC crew must ensure that they know how to release the straps in the event of an incident where there is a risk that the sailor could end up in the water. They should ensure that at least one of them is alongside the sailor at all times whilst afloat. In addition, the crew member should remove the safety knife from the Safety Box and keep it on their person for use if needed.

Loading

The ARC skipper is responsible for the safe loading of the ARC:

The maximum load is 2 crew + 10 passengers

If wheelchairs are to be loaded then this number is reduced. In particular numbers must be reduced with powered wheelchairs (which are heavy). No more than 3 powered wheelchair users with accompanying carers should be taken on board.

Loading wheelchair users at Dartside Quay will generally be done using the short ramp with hand rail. ARC should be positioned so that the door is opposite the ramp fixings on the pontoon. Besides fore and aft lines the ARC can be secured with the midship line rigged in a triangle via the two pontoon cleats. This provides a simple forward and aft spring without blocking the access door. The ramp slots into the two holes on the pontoon. Fit the handrail with long end at pontoon end. After boarding the ramp can be left on the pontoon. After disembarkation take the ramp on board before returning to centre pontoon.

At other boarding locations the folded ramp which is stored across the bow of the ARC can be used. Ensure the ARC is securely moored with bow/stern lines and a midships line. The ramp is unfolded and laid across the gap between the pontoon and boat with the rope end on the pontoon. The pontoon end should lie as flat as possible to avoid a step. The rope is then attached to a firm point on the far side of the pontoon to prevent the ramp from

slipping. Beware that this can create a trip hazard. Most wheelchair users are capable of negotiating the ramp themselves - it is important that the chairs are central to the ramp and that the wheels are not in danger of coming off the side.

Loading should ensure the boat remains balanced side to side and with more weight towards the stern.

Where possible the ARC should load and leave the pontoon as soon as practicable so as to free up the pontoon for Sailability dinghies and other marina users.

If it is not possible to moor beam on to the pontoon for loading, the ARC can be loaded via the bow ramp on the slipway. This may need the use of the Blue Container ramp as an extension piece to the ramp. Instructions for operating the bow ramp are in Operating Procedure 12.

Passage

The ARC will normally motor outside of sailing area A.

At all times the safety and comfort of the passengers is essential. Particular attention should be given to becoming wet from spray and overall warmth of the passengers.

The skipper is responsible for agreeing planned trip with OOD and notifying Safety of proposed route, number of persons onboard, and likely passage duration.

Explicit permission from OOD is required if motoring beyond the castles (at the river mouth).

VHF communications with OOD/Safety will be lost when motoring up or down river. The skipper/crew should ensure they have a mobile phone and OOD mobile number as well as the standard VHF radio.

An Emergency Action Plan is contained within the safety box.

On return the skipper should liaise with the Pontoon Master to ensure there is space to dock and disembark passengers.

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)