

## **WATER SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT FOR CHRISTCHURCH SAILING CLUB**

- Responsibility for the safe operation of the Club rests with the members. The Policy will ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, that safe conditions are maintained and that any risks associated with sailing or any other Club activities are minimized.
- Club members have a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to avoid injury to themselves, Club members and other water users and to prevent damage to Club and private equipment. Members participate in all activities at their own risk.
- It is a fundamental principle that the skipper is responsible for the safety of his/her vessel and its crew.

### **GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS**

1. This Safety Policy shall be kept in the Club Office and made available in the clubhouse and on the Club website.
2. This Policy and associated matters shall be reviewed annually by the Sailing Committee.
3. Risk assessments will be carried out for relevant Club activities and by all the recognised sailing Class Captains covering their areas of operation and will be kept in the Club Office. In particular, each set of class instructions will specify construction requirements, minimum safety equipment to be carried and the wearing of obligatory clothing - lifejackets/buoyancy aids etc - taking into consideration the relevant weather and time of year. These requirements shall be brought to the attention of all Club members participating in such activities. Instructions will be issued for Race Officers, timekeepers, escort boat crews, and for those taking part in Junior/Youth events.

### **APPLICATION**

4. Accepting that any 'action' sport involves risk, the Club seeks to minimise risks as far as is reasonably practical. The following procedures and rules detailed in this document are designed to mitigate, as far as possible, all risks associated with the Club's activities.
5. Activities at the Club may be broken down into three distinct areas, each influencing the degree of the Club's responsibilities.
  - i) Use of the Club for independent sailing or cruising.
  - ii) Club organised and supervised events, e.g. racing, group cruises.
  - iii) Training.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SAFETY**

6. Water Safety Policy is the responsibility of the Sailing Committee and its Chair, as is the management of racing in general. The Committee currently delegates day to day

responsibility, supervision and implementation of Water Safety Policy as follows:

- i) Day to day decisions and implementation of the Water Safety Policy: The Commodore, any other Flag Officer or the Sailing Secretary.
  - ii) Escort boats and equipment: The Summer / Winter Bosun.
  - iii) Conduct of a current race or event: The appointed Race Officer (RO) or Event Lead.
  - iv) Training courses: The RYA Principal.
7. The Race Officer (RO) may, in the light of weather conditions or for any other reason, advise one or more boats not to race and may postpone or cancel a race. (*See also para. 10.*)
8. Any specific water safety issues and/or deficiencies in Club equipment should be reported immediately to a Flag Officer or the Sailing Secretary and, where applicable, reported in the relevant log book or the Club's accident book.

**Note.** *Health and Safety on land is the responsibility of the General Committee, which delegates it to the Club Safety Officer and House Management Sub-committee.*

#### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS**

9. i) A boat's helm and crew are entirely responsible for their own safety whether afloat or ashore and nothing, whether in the Notice of Race or Sailing Instructions or anywhere else, diminishes this responsibility.
- ii) It is for the boat's helm to decide whether the boat and crew are fit to sail in the prevailing weather conditions. By launching, the boat's helm confirms that the boat is fit for the prevailing conditions and that its crew is competent to sail and compete.
- iii) The boat is required to be covered by adequate insurance and, in particular, to hold insurance against third party claims to the sum of at least £2m.
- iv) Nothing done by the organisers will reduce the responsibility of the boat's helm and crew nor will it make the organisers responsible for any loss, damage, death or personal injury, however it may have occurred, as a result of the boat taking part in the racing. The 'organisers' refers to everyone helping to run the race and the event, including the organising authority, the Sailing Committee, the Race Officer, escort boats and Beach Masters.
- v) The provision of escort boats does not relieve the sailing vessel's helm and crew of their responsibilities. Although reasonable efforts will be made to provide Club escort boat cover, competitors are reminded that, particularly in extreme weather conditions, cover should not be relied upon. In addition, race participants are reminded that they can only be given such assistance as can be practically provided in the circumstances. This is particularly relevant

in winter and spring sailing where the risk of hypothermia is at its highest.

10. If, in the view of the Race Officer (RO), adequate escort boat cover is not available for the boats participating, the event will be cancelled.
11. All members have a responsibility to co-operate with the Sailing Committee, Officers and R.O. to achieve a safe environment.
12. Owner members must ensure their boats are seaworthy and properly equipped before going afloat. Cruiser racers must comply with the cruiser safety requirements. Dinghies must conform to class buoyancy requirements which should be regularly tested. Equipment and clothing requirements should be as specified by the appropriate class risk assessment. Bungs and hatches to buoyancy tanks should be checked and secure.
13. **Alcohol & Drugs.** No one is to be on the water under the influence of alcohol or banned substances.
14. Children must wear buoyancy aids or life jackets when on the pontoons and slipways. Children under the age of 12 must at all times be supervised by an adult Club member whilst on Club premises or taking part in Club activities.
15. Members must treat Club equipment and premises with care and keep them in a safe condition. Any damage must be reported to the person responsible i.e. a Flag Officer or the Sailing Secretary and logged in the appropriate logbook.
16. Members should return Club and their own boats and equipment to their correct place. Trolleys and boats, in particular, must not be left in such a way that they present potential hazards or obstructions to others.
17. Members undertaking Club duties should brief themselves so that they are informed and up to date during the period of the duty. Training and refresher courses are organised regularly for escort boat crews and Race Officers. See the website, notice board and Club handbook.

#### **WHEN AFLOAT**

18. When in a position to do so without endangering his/her own boat or crew, every helm shall render all possible assistance to any vessel or person in peril.
19. Adequate lifejackets or personal buoyancy must be carried for all crew members in compliance with paragraph 3 of this document.
20. Dinghies taking part in Club events are required to carry a floating tow-rope at least 8 metres long and at least 8mm diameter.
21. Competitors must wear suitable and correctly fitted lifejackets or buoyancy aids when flag Y is flown. At other times it is strongly recommended that such are worn. (See also class rules and any special sailing instructions.)
22. **Clothing.** It is strongly advised that adequate clothing for the prevailing (and

forecast) conditions should be worn. Even in summer, a windproof top over a wet suit should be used. It is strongly recommended that wet suits, dry suits or steamers are worn by all members of a dinghy crew before the end of May or after the end of September. (See also class rules and any special sailing instructions.)

23. A crew not confident in water and crew with any disability which could impinge on the safety of the boat should ensure that the RO knows, so that the escort boat skipper can be informed.
24. When entering races or other events, all participants must agree to be bound by the Racing Rules and all other rules that govern the event and the use of Club facilities. In particular they should have read paragraph 9 of this document and confirm that they agree to its provisions and that the boat will conform to its requirements throughout the event.
25. Single boats and, particularly, solo sailors sailing when nobody is about, e.g. Sunday evening, should ensure someone ashore knows they are out and when they get back.
26. Cruisers, day boats and dinghies over 5m with no built-in buoyancy should carry flares.
27. **Emergency Recall.** If it is necessary for all boats to return to the Club, a series of short blasts will be made by horn and the N over C flags will be raised.

#### **NOTES OF CAUTION**

28. **Beware of the ferries and other harbour and river users** which may have restricted manoeuvrability in a narrow channel and/or be constrained by their draught.
29. **The Club slipways are prone to accumulate mud and slime. Beware of slipping on them.**
30. **Tides run strongly.** Take this into account before sailing in light winds.
31. **Council Byelaws.** All members should comply with the Christchurch Council Byelaws when using the harbour, rivers and within the speed limit zone marked by yellow buoys in Christchurch Bay. In particular, the speed limits in operation should be complied with at all times except as allowed for in an emergency.

#### **CRUISING YACHTS AND DINGHIES OFFSHORE**

32. It is the responsibility of the skipper to ensure the seaworthiness of the vessel and that any voyage undertaken is within the capability of the skipper with his/her crew
33. Every vessel shall carry adequate life-saving equipment for all persons on board, one item of which shall be ready for immediate use. (See cruiser safety rules.)

## **POWER ESCORT BOATS**

34. In all planing powerboats a **kill cord should be fitted and is to be used**. A spare should be carried along with the first aid kit, fire extinguisher and basic tools.
35. The Club has five escort boats and sometimes borrows or hires others. Except in emergencies, **Club boats may not be used without the permission** of the RO, a Flag Officer or Officer.
36. Both the **helm and the crew must be approved by the Club** and be familiar with the escort boat instructions and procedures. One member of the crew should be prepared to enter the water to give assistance to racers.
37. Escort boat drivers should hold a RYA Level 2 Powerboat certificate or have been check tested by the Training Principal. The RIBs and Juno require the helms to have completed the planing boat course, or to have undergone a check test by the Training Principal.
38. Return and lock up fuel containers and equipment after use.
39. Only Race Officers, escort skippers and crew should be present on boats on Club duties. The boats are not available for joyriding.
40. **Emergency Packs**. Club escort boats shall all have an emergency pack which shall include flares (2 red pinpoint and 2 orange smoke), first aid kit, knife (with serrated blade), line, racing chart, whistle and a foil survival bag. They shall also have a paddle, a bucket, a floating throwing line, an anchor, 25m of warp and a small buoy so that the anchor can be slipped (and subsequently recovered) in an emergency.
41. **Radios**. Each escort boat shall have a VHF radio. In the event of this not being achievable due to unserviceability, then there must be one radio per two craft and a means of attracting attention agreed by the Instructors/escort boat drivers involved. A mobile phone should also be carried by at least one boat for shore contact.
42. **CHILD PROTECTION POLICY and PROCEDURES**, which are held in the office and on the Club website, are always to be followed
43. **JUNIOR and YOUTH ACTIVITIES: See Separate Documentation\***
44. **TRAINING COURSES: See Separate Documentation\***
45. **ON SHORE SAFETY: See Separate Documentation\***
46. **FOOD HYGIENE: See Separate Documentation\***
47. **FIRE PRECAUTIONS: See Separate Documentation\***

*\*The above documentation is held in the Club Office and is available for inspection if required.*

## **FIRST AID**

48. **First aid equipment** is kept in the Club lobby and carried on each of the escort boats. Use of any of the contents of the first aid boxes should be reported to the Club Safety Officer or the Summer/Winter Bosun as appropriate so that the kits can be replenished. Reports of injuries must be entered into the accident book.
49. **A list of trained first-aiders** is posted in the Club lobby.

## **ACCIDENTS and INJURIES**

50. **An accident book** is kept in the clubroom to record any accident or potential accident.
51. The accident book and first aid box will be **reviewed monthly**
52. In the event of a serious incident, the Race Officer, a Flag officer or appropriate adult Club member should make arrangements to inform next of kin. (See Appendix A)

## **Appendix A**

### **Dealing with a Major Incident**

For example: Serious accident or injury requiring hospital treatment, including unconsciousness, broken limbs, hypothermia, severe bleeding, trauma etc.

1. Escort boat and race officials will try to sustain life and summon emergency services.
2. Contact Emergency Services via Channel 16 (Marine VHF) or telephone 999.
3. If mobile phone not available, try nearest onshore location – Hengistbury Head Training Centre, Mudeford Quay, Mudeford Beach Superintendent's office, CSC etc.
4. Transport casualty to rendezvous point arranged with Emergency Services.
5. During the incident, care must also be taken not to endanger the remaining sailors.
6. In the event of an accident, the Race Officer should inform the Flag Officers / Sailing Secretary as soon as possible after the event.
7. Ensure the accident book (held in the clubhouse) is updated with relevant details.
8. No-one should contact or speak to the press or media except the Flag Officers or Sailing Secretary. If necessary, contact will be made with the Health and Safety Executive – 08453 450055 or report under RIDDOR – (*Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995*).

## **Appendix B**

### **Safety Instructions for CSC Dinghy Race Officer and Escort Skipper**

#### **Before the Race**

1. Race Officer to hold pre-event briefing to escort boat crews and assistant RO.
2. Perform risk assessment covering sailing area, boats competing, expected weather conditions, age, ability, ratio and suitability of escort boats, crews and equipment.
3. Brief volunteers on racing area to be used, allocation of tasks, expected weather conditions, radio frequencies (Ch 15 in harbour, Ch 77 in bay) and safety procedures.
4. Check safety equipment, escort boat kits, boats, fuel, engines, radios, mobile phones (including list of phone numbers).
5. Check that all required equipment is available, for example first aid kits, training marks, whistles, flags.
6. Check sufficient escort boats per competitor ratio; adjust according to prevailing weather conditions and local risk assessment.
7. Check names and number of sailors taking part in the sailing activity.

#### **On the water**

8. The **kill cord** must always be used when helming the RIBs and Juno.
9. The escort boat should be on the water when the first boats launch and should follow the fleet as closely as possible before, during and after the race.
10. Escort skippers are to attend to any incidents as quickly as possible. NB. Some boats, including Scows, are difficult to right after capsize and will need assistance.
11. Always watch for signs that competitors are becoming tired and, if necessary, take them aboard the escort boat.
12. Always remember that your primary responsibility is the safety of all participants. Recovery of boats should only be undertaken if the safety of competitors will not be compromised.
13. Do not leave the racing area to tow boats when racing is still in progress.

#### **After the Race**

14. After the racing has ended, assist with towing any boats home but stay towards the back of the fleet.
15. Ensure every sailor is accounted for before berthing the last escort boat.