



# HAMPTON PIER YACHT CLUB SAFETY BOAT HELM GUIDANCE

## HPYC Safety Boat Helm Guidance

### Qualification

HPYC Safety Boat drivers are required to be PB2 qualified. The Club also strongly recommends new Safety Boat drivers gain **the RYA Safety Boat** and First Aid qualifications. **Copies of certificates should be held by the club.** To drive a club safety boat you will also need to be approved by the club assessment process. The value of time spent on the water and experience in all conditions cannot be overestimated for safety boat handling and safety techniques. **The club age restriction is 18 or over for club races and open events; PB2 qualified drivers under the age of 18 may operate in training and other sessions under the supervision of a Senior Instructor.**

### Before the Race / Event

- Please arrive 1 hour 30 minutes before a club race start. You need to meet with the Race Officer, your crew for a briefing. The safety boat needs to be checked and fuelled before launch, marks and ground tackle identified and loaded, courses agreed, and there needs to be time for the physical process of laying the course before the race officer can begin the start sequence.
- Meet with the Race Officer to determine the safety requirements. This will depend on weather and tide conditions, length of the course, experience of the sailors, number of dinghies, disparity of fleets, obstructions and availability of safety boats. Agree your station with the RO (e.g. gybe mark / windward mark, off the danger zone, general patrol)
- If not already known to each other, get to know your crew. The crew may need instruction on the use of VHF radio, the kill cord and what to do in the event of the loss or incapacity of the helm.
- Secure fuel tank, coil lines, stow loose equipment, collect first aid bag and handheld VHF radio, check buoys with warp, chain and anchor in separate containers.
- Carry out pre-start checks as per the pre-start check list (found in the boat/on the garage wall)

### Basic Driving Safety

- Attach kill cord to leg before starting
- Check for engine cooling tell-tale
- Check steering is free and easy
- Ensure the crew is comfortable in the boat; always communicate intentions to the crew, e.g., “turning left”, “speeding up”, “hold on”
- Observe 8 kn limit and rules of the road
- Keep a good look out, especially when at speed
- Drive seated, one hand on wheel, the other on throttle lever



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## Operational Requirements

- Laying and Recovery of buoys as race marks
- Safety cover in your station area and being the safety ‘eyes and ears’ for the RO
- Righting a capsized/inverted boat as best for the class of boat – single handers, double handers, other craft, dealing with masts stuck on the bottom with appropriate technique
- Recovering people from the water; casualty care and first aid; guiding rule of “scoop and run” the casualty back to shore
- Solving entrapments
- Solving disabled boats; leave boat anchored and marked “crew safe”; or crew if able sails boat to shore
- Towing – advantages and disadvantages of towing astern / towing alongside / carrying a small dinghy on board

## Recovery of Safety Boat and putting away

- Essentially the reverse of the pre-start checks plus wash down, flush the engine, ensure VHF radio is switched off and handheld VHF radio returned to race tower

## Key points

- Wear the kill cord before you switch on the engine and at all times when the engine is on
- Capsized / Inverted boat - Count heads
- Recover people before kit
- To talk to a capsized sailor, get close, preferably upwind, boat positioned with yourself between the person and the engine, and turn engine off so both can talk without raising voices
- Always turn the engine off when in contact with someone in the water
- Look after your crew
- Best VHF communication is brief and to the point; never fail to request RO’s permission to leave your station

Thank you for taking on this essential role to ensure safe sailing.