

DALE YACHT CLUB

Sailing - Risk Assessments and Procedures

Section 1 - Introduction

Any form of sailing, especially on the open sea, carries an element of risk. Dale Yacht Club members take part in sailing and in any events organized by DYC at their own risk. The decision as to whether or not to sail on a given day rests entirely with the crew of the boat. DYC, however, has a responsibility to ensure that safe sailing is promoted at all times. These guidelines are based on a risk assessment of DYC's principal activities and build on the accumulated evidence of people who have sailed at Dale over the years.

The following document includes risk assessments and operating procedures for DYC. All members should read the appropriate sections before sailing or taking part in club races. Safety Boat Helms (SBMs) and Race Officers (ROs) must be familiar with all sections of this document.

Due to the nature of the Club, sailors are not required to provide evidence that they have read this document. However, the Club has the right to remove a member from any activity if they are not following these procedures.

This document covers all dinghy sailing, dinghy races and events managed by DYC within the stated areas.

Other regattas may take place further afield, using DYC as a base but not managed by DYC and these are not subject to the Club's risk assessments. DYC may organise one or more Cruiser races on behalf of other Clubs but the risk assessment for such races will be provided by the other Clubs. DYC may organise a race series in addition to the normal programme (e.g. a national/ regional championship or RYA Dragon event), in these cases a specific risk assessment will be carried out.

Junior Sailing, organised by Windswept, is covered by their procedures.

This is an active document and should reflect a true account of what happens and will be reviewed every year. Members who wish to comment on the risk assessments should contact a member of the committee.

Definitions and abbreviations used in this document

RO – Race Officer, SBT - Safety Boat Team including SBH – Safety Boat Helm and SBC – Safety Boat Crew, PFD – personal floatation device (buoyancy aid or lifejacket).

Hazard	The potential for something to cause harm
Risk	The consequences of the hazard
Risk factor	The product of the likelihood and the impact of the risk being realised
Control measure	The method used to control the risk factor. The guiding principle should be to implement strategies that reduce risk factors as low as is reasonably practicable.

Section 2 – Recreational Sailing i.e. not racing and without safety boat cover

Risk Assessment for all club sailors and those assisting them e.g. parents or carers, ROs, safety boat teams and instructors

All members please be advised - DYC is run by the members for the benefit of the members. We all have a responsibility for our own health and safety and the safety of others, particularly our junior members. No guidelines can replace the core responsibilities of all members who sail, to support each other on and off the water. It is the member's responsibility to follow the advice and guidance laid down in this risk assessment and not to engage in any activity that puts you or others at risk of injury.

Hazard	Risk	Advice and/or Control Measure
Weather e.g. sea state, wind, tide, sun, thunderstorm and lightning	Inability to cope with conditions potentially causing many of the hazards and risks listed below	Club sailors should be confident that they are capable of handling the expected conditions. In some conditions you may be asked to head for shore by a Club Officer, another responsible sailor or instructor or Port Authority staff. Club sailors must cooperate with such a request.
Immersion in cold water	Shock Difficulty breathing Drowning	All Club sailors should be aware of the consequences of entering cold water on hot days or after exercise. All Club sailors should be aware that if they enter water unexpectedly they should try to relax, breath normally and have confidence that their buoyancy aid will keep them afloat Afloat A PFD and appropriate clothing should always be worn.
Dinghy capsize and inversion	Immersion Injury	Mast-head floats should be considered for double-handed boats while training. RYA techniques for avoiding and recovery from inversion should be followed.
Collision	Injury Immersion as above	All Club sailors should keep a look out at all times, paying particular attention before changing direction. They should follow the 'Rules of the Road' (International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea and Racing Rules of Sailing)
Snaring in mooring area by ropes and submerged buoys	Injury Immersion	Club sailors should be observant if sailing through the area of moored boats to avoid becoming accidentally caught up in ropes/chains/buoys associated with moorings.
Hot weather	Dehydration Hyperthermia	Appropriate clothing should be worn. Water should be carried in hot weather.
Cold weather/water	Hypothermia (Drop in Core Temp) Confusion fatigue	Weather forecast and water temperature should be checked prior to sailing. All Club sailors should wear a PFD and appropriate clothing.
Entrapments by harnesses, rigging etc.	Drowning	Ropes etc. should be kept tidy and equipment in good order. For trapeze boats, quick-release harnesses should be considered. All trapeze systems must have a rope component close to the harness that can be severed with a knife.
Equipment failure	Shock, drowning, injury	All Club sailors should make visual checks prior to use of their equipment. All PFDs should be serviceable.

Hazard	Risk	Advice and/or Control Measure
Lifting heavy objects	Injury	When it is necessary to lift/move heavy objects, e.g. dinghies up the slip, the basics of correct manual handling should be followed.
Pontoon slippery when wet	Slipping causing injury to self or others	Club sailors should wear non-slip shoes and should not run on pontoon if it is wet.
Interference with other pontoon users e.g. children, swimmers and other boats	Causing an accident and injury to self or others	Club sailors should keep clear of the pontoon unless they wish to come alongside. They should warn others of their intentions and the consequences as non-sailors are often unaware of these issues.
Road traffic accident	Injury to self or others	Club sailors should check for traffic when crossing the road particularly when moving dinghy. Young children should be supervised at all times crossing the road.
Slip Way Slipperiness Stones left on slip way Edge of the slip invisible	Injury from slipping Injury from tripping Injury falling off edge	Club sailors should wear suitable footwear. Club sailors should be aware that green on slipway indicates slipperiness. Club sailors should always remove stones used for chocking wheels after use. Club sailors should be aware of where the edge of the slip is.
Uneven ground on front and beach	Injury to feet or sprains	Club sailors should wear appropriate footwear for a stony beach.

Section 3 - DYC Club Racing Operating Procedures and Responsibilities

These must be read in conjunction with Sections 1 and 2.

No guidelines can replace the core responsibilities of all participants in club racing to support each other on and off the water, including: -

- Signing on for races so that the RO can keep track of all sailors and rescue boat crews
- Arriving in good time for races so that everyone can launch their boats with appropriate assistance
- Wearing appropriate clothing and personal buoyancy
- Assisting other members, particularly those who are less experienced, in launching and landing boats
- Giving priority to landing boats and removing them from the slip or beach before de-rigging
- your own
- Ensuring that their boats and sailing gear are in good order and adequately insured
- Reporting dangerous (or potentially dangerous) occurrences to DYC officers

DEFINITIONS

Operating Area

Dale Bay, extended at times to include Watwick Bay & Sandy Haven – Dale Bay, up to a line drawn from West Blockhouse Point to Dakotian cardinal mark to Stack port-hand mark to Stack Rock to South Hook Point so keeping out of shipping channel.

Sailing Instructions

These are listed in the Programme (supplied to all members), and are available on the website, in the Starting Hut and in the Bar.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAILORS

All sailors considering taking part in any race must understand Rule 3 of the Racing Rules of Sailing – “The responsibility for a boat’s decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.”

Sailors must sign on at the Race Hut at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start of the first race of the session.

All sailors should be aware that there is NO Safety Boat cover until 15 minutes before the start of a race. Safety Boat cover ends when all competitors have finished or retired and are ashore, or close to shore, and the RO stands down the Safety Boat. Sailors wishing to sail before or after this period of cover do so without Safety Boat cover.

All sailors taking part in Club races must familiarise themselves with: -

- DYC Risk Assessment for Sailing and the Risk Assessment for Racing
- Racing Rules of Sailing

Experience and ability

Sailors should be up to the standard of RYA Level 2 or Stage 3.

Most importantly, they must be able to:-

- Launch/recover their dinghy correctly
- Sail on all points of sailing
- Tack and gybe with confidence
- Recover from a capsize and total inversion
- Know the importance of keeping the boat tidy to prevent entrapments.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RACE OFFICER (RO)

1. An appropriate First Aid kit shall be available in the Starting Hut.
2. A mobile phone, with signal, shall be available in the starting hut for every race and emergency phone numbers shall also be available.
3. The RO must obtain an up-to-date weather forecast including wind strength and direction, sea state and visibility before deciding on any aspect of a race.
4. The RO must consider all other water users before deciding on a course
5. The RO, in taking account of the conditions and the participants, is empowered to
 - make a decision about whether some boats/sailors should not race
 - limit the number of participants
 - discuss with the SBH the number of safety boats required
 - discuss with the SBH whether the safety boats should be crewed by more than one person.
6. The RO must set an appropriate course having particular regard to the ability of the safety boat to respond to an entrapment within a very short time to all participants wherever they are in the fleet.
7. The RO must make visiting sailors aware of this document. (See hand-out)
8. Regular head counts must be made during the race and the RO should remain on duty until all the participants are on land.
9. The RO must ensure that he is able to communicate with the SBH at all times during the race
10. The RO must keep the SBH informed of the number of boats on the water, i.e. any retirements etc.
11. The RO must remain vigilant for the duration of the race, monitoring all participants and alerting the SBH to any problems as soon as possible.
12. The RO shall stand down the Safety Boat at the end of the race and record:-
 - the RIB or RIBs used
 - the SBH
 - the SBC
 - any faults or inadequacies reported by the SBH

Conditions and Ability Limitation

A discussion must be had between the RO and the SBH to check the course and to ensure that the number and crewing of safety boats is appropriate for the sailors' abilities on the water.

FURTHER RESPONSIBILITIES OF RACE OFFICER

1. To ensure that SBHs are appropriately qualified and competent power boat drivers i.e. Minimum of PBL2 with sufficient training by a suitably qualified or experienced person. RYA Safety Boat qualification strongly recommended. First Aid qualification is desirable.
2. To ensure that all SBTs are appropriately briefed.
3. To ensure in consultation with the Safety Boat Manager that Safety Boats are properly maintained and equipped with properly maintained up-to-date gear
4. To set up a rota of SBHs to cover all races.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SAFETY BOAT TEAM (SBT) - HELM (SBH) AND SAFETY BOAT CREW (SBC)

Overview

SBHs must be experienced powerboat drivers (See Responsibility of Race Officer, item 1) and they are in charge of the operation of a powerboat providing safety cover during Club Racing. Depending on the weather conditions and other considerations the SBH may operate alone or with a SBC.

SBH must have knowledge of appropriate rescue techniques for sailing dinghies.

General procedures

1. SBH should make themselves available to discuss safety issues with RO prior to each race. Key to fuel store and VHF radio to be collected from Start Hut.
2. SBH to check Safety Boat and equipment before each race.
3. SBH should always discuss any concerns about safety of sailors in a pending race with the RO.
4. SBH and SBC must operate in a safe and responsible manner keeping a constant lookout and attending/observing any capsize or signals for assistance
5. Priority should be given to capsized (especially inverted) boats and persons separated from their boats. The welfare of people must always be put before the welfare of boats and equipment.
6. Any physical or verbal assistance given to a competitor requires the competitor to declare this, but no longer requires them to retire from the race.
7. Safety boats should be positioned appropriate to the areas likely to need attention (ie. To cover downwind legs or gybe marks) and must not impede those racing
8. SBHs must call the RO for advice as early as possible if:
 - Racing or non-racing water users require attention that they cannot give without compromising the safety of the competitors
 - If they are unable temporarily to cover safety for any reason (e.g. boat in tow)
 - If the situation is deteriorating (for example worsening weather or the rate of capsizing is increasing).
9. SBH is able to end their duty when, after the race has ended, all the competitors have returned to shore and RO has released them via radio.

10. SBH should always pass on any concerns about the equipment to the Safety Boat Manager via the RO.
11. SBH should always pass on any concerns about safety issues regarding courses or conduct of a race to the RO.
12. SBH should always pass on any concerns about the safety of a child to that child's parent or guardian as soon as is practicable unless there is an underlying safeguarding concern in which case the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be consulted urgently.

SAFETY BOAT OPERATING PROCEDURES

Ratios

As a guide, the maximum ratio of safety boat to dinghies is to be taken as 1:12. This can be increased by the RO, in discussion with the SBH, taking into account the conditions, experience, and course. Reasons shall be recorded by the RO. It may be preferable to have 2 single-manned safety boats rather than one double-manned safety boat. Two Safety Boats will normally be kept afloat for the busy part of the season.

The RO has full authority to limit the number of competitors.

Additional Safety Boats may be required if a race is over an extended area.

Drivers (SBH) Equipment

1. VHF Radio.
2. Knife – readily accessible, but stored in yellow box.
3. Appropriate clothing and PFD.

Procedures

- The SBH must check fuel and the presence of safety kit in Yellow Boxes before Safety Boat use.
- KILL CORDS AND PFDs must be worn at all times.
- Kill cord and key must be separated for use.
- Engines must be switched off when bringing persons on board from the water.
- No planing in minimum wake areas unless rescuing or to ensure sufficient visual contact is maintained.
- Engines must be left up when boats are left moored, even for a short period of time.
- For Club racing the Safety Boat must be manned and operational 15 minutes before the planned start of the race and until released by the RO.
- There must be NO RUBBISH left on board the boats, fuel, safety kits, anchors and paddles must be secured at all times.
- There must be no smoking on board the Safety Boat.
- Tow lines and painters must be tied and stowed during boat use,
- SBH must take care in shallow water and tilt engine appropriately.
- The VHF radio should be switched to Channel M2 (P4 on Icom radios).
- For information:-
 - Windswept uses Channel 77,
 - Harbour Control is on Channel 12 and
 - Coastguard is on Channel 16.
- Key and kill cord (clipped together for convenience) must be stored in the yellow boxes when not in use.

- Radio(s), yellow box(es) and fuel store key to be returned to the RO.

SAFETY BOAT EQUIPMENT

Yellow Box Contents

Survival bag
First Aid Kit (waterproof)
Inshore flares (and glove/cloth)
Sharp knife
Sound signalling equipment e.g. whistle or horn
Spare kill cord
Hazard marking tape

Other Equipment

Fuel (half tank covers 1 hour race)
Paddle / oar / boat hook
Throw line
Tow line
Bailer / bucket
Anchor, chain and warp
VHF radio (to be collected from Start Hut)
Fire extinguisher (in separate yellow box)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES - Accident on water

- INFORM RO IMMEDIATELY BY VHF who should contact Emergency Services if necessary.
- USE “SCOOP AND RUN” procedure - Return the casualty to shore AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE and ensure that appropriate first aid is carried out.
- If possible/appropriate return to Safety Boat duties.
- Any re-call from shore by RO will generally be carried out by radio and/or continuous blasts on air horn to signal the emergency re-call to shore
- After any dangerous or emergency situation, even if avoided, there should be a discussion between the RO, SBH and any other appropriate person so that procedures are reviewed so that any similar incidents are avoided
- ANY TREATMENT UNDERTAKEN, HOWEVER MINOR, MUST BE RECORDED IN THE ACCIDENT REPORT BOOK.
- If an incident results in a fatality or serious injury, then a Flag Officer of DYC and the RYA must be informed at the earliest opportunity. The DYC Commodore is (or may deputise a Committee Member who is) responsible for dealing with any media enquiries.

Section 4 - DYC Dinghy Racing - Risk Assessment

Hazard	Risk	Advice and/or Control Measures
Poor coming alongside / mooring procedure	Injury to sailors, pontoon users, SBT	All SBHs must be aware of the correct procedure for coming alongside and mooring safely and securely.
Rubbish and fuel spilt on boat	Slipping, tripping etc causing potential injury to sailors & SBT	SBT should ensure that the boat is kept clean and is cleared of rubbish after each use
Ropes etc not stowed tidily	Tripping over rescue lines, towing lines and painters etc – potential injury to sailors and SBT	SBT should ensure that all rescue lines, towing lines and painters are kept in good repair and stowed appropriately on the boat.
Loss of control of engine	Injury to sailors other water users and SBT	The quality of the Kill Cord must be checked before use. The Kill Cord must be attached to the driver, around the leg only, at all times while the engine is running.
Flares do not work because out of date	Inability to alert others of significant risk to life of sailors or SBT	Ensure that all flares are within date and stowed appropriately on the boat.
First Aid needed on water	Injury not treated immediately - Sailors and SBT	Ensure that there is a usable basic first aid kit on board kept in a waterproof container.
Capsize or MOB	Drowning Hypothermia Exhaustion Risk to Sailors and SBT	SBT to follow RYA MOB guidance SBC must as far as is practicable be aware of the location of all participants at all times when on/in/near water. Buoyancy Aid or Lifejackets must be worn when on water.
Entrapments	Sailors	Due to the use of trapeze harnesses and ropes on dinghies all safety boats must carry knives.
Collisions	Potential injury to sailors, other water users and SBT	SBT should alert sailors and RO to collision hazards
Participant becoming separated from boat.	Drowning Hypothermia Exhaustion	RO must ensure all participants are identified before the race and know exactly how many should present. SBT or RO must stay within visual range of all participants at all times. RO and SBH must monitor all participants at all times. Regular head counts must be made during the session by RO and SBT
Non-compliance with personal medication	Health deterioration eg coma Risk to Sailors	Any participant who may require medication while sailing shall inform the RO. Appropriate measures must be taken to ensure the medication is quickly available. These details should be kept by the RO.
Deteriorating weather	Unexpected conditions causing potential risk to Sailors and SBT	RO and SBT must remain vigilant throughout race. Both should report to each other any new concerns via radio

Hazard	Risk	Advice and/or Control Measures
		Monitoring every participant particularly those young or inexperienced. Frequent headcounts should be carried out. SBT (or RO) must stay within visual range of all participants at all times.
Other boat users not taking due care and attention of sailors	Injury to Sailors	SBT to be aware of potential danger from other boat users. If other boat users acting dangerously or in contravention of local guidelines SBT to inform them and ask them to modify their behaviour.
Sailors unaware of swimmer or not taking due care	Injury to swimmer	SBT to alert Sailors to the presence of the swimmer and advise on precautions to be taken.