

ST. MAWES SAILING CLUB

SAFETY POLICY - SAILING

1. Decision to Race/Sail

It is a fundamental principle of maritime law that the skipper is responsible for the safety of his vessel and its crew. It is not possible for race organisers to guarantee that an event will be safe, still less that it will be safe for every boat and crew. Rule 4 of The Racing Rules of Sailing states that “A boat [skipper] is solely responsible for deciding whether or not to *start* or to continue *racing*”.

2. Helping those in danger

The first of the Racing Rules states “A boat or competitor shall give all possible help to any person or vessel in danger”.

3. Officer of the Day

For Club racing events there will always be an Officer of the Day /or Race Officer. Ideally these persons should have completed a Race Officers Course or have suitable experience. It is that person’s responsibility to allow the event to start /or abandon where necessary.

4. OOD’s Decision to Race

In making the decision to start /or abandon the race, the Officer of the Day must bear in mind his/her experience as an OOD, the type and seaworthiness of the boats involved, the experience and age of the participants, the scale of the event, the weather and sea conditions, the rescue facilities available and other relevant conditions e.g. shipping movements.

5. Safety Boat Cover

For Club Racing, excluding those races exclusive to Cruisers, the Club will attempt to have two rescue boats available, but a minimum of one boat is required for racing to continue. No rescue cover = No racing.

6. Manning of Safety Boats

Whenever possible, safety boats will be manned by two people of ages 16-70, with the proviso that one of the pair should be 18 or over. At least one rescue boat must be double manned. If a rescue boat is single manned, it should be by someone who is at least 18.

A combination of Paid and Volunteer crew will be used, and the qualification requirements will be as follows:

Volunteers: Drivers: trained on a Club Powerboat course or have the RYA Powerboat 2 qualification or equivalent.

Crew: Club Powerboat course or appropriate experience preferable.

Paid: RYA Safety Boat course required and basic First Aid encouraged.

Where there is a Paid person on board, that person will normally do the driving.

No crew or driver will be under 16.

In general, a junior under 16 is allowed on safety boats, but only in addition to the normal safety boat crew.

7. Lifejackets/Clothing/Kill-cords

The rescue boat driver and crew must wear life jackets/buoyancy aids at all times on the water and be ideally dressed for the conditions. The kill-cord must be attached to the driver at all times.

8. Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment will be carried out on the Club's Racing/Sailing activities to be approved annually by the General Committee. Copies will be kept with the Hon. Secretary, Rear Commodore Sailing, the Race Office and the Club Administrator.