

ST MAWES SAILING CLUB

SAFETY POLICY – SAILING

Revised 18/05/2022

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 2021-2024 states that 'The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone'.

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 (OOD) (also known as the Race Officer (RO)). Ideally these persons should have completed a Race Officers Course or alternatively 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 OOD must bear in mind his/her experience as an OOD, the type and seaworthiness of the boats involved, the scale of the event, the weather and sea conditions, the rescue facilities available and other relevant conditions eg, shipping movements.

5. Safety Boat Cover

For Club Racing, the Club will always plan to have a suitable number of double manned Safety Boats available based on the following principles.

- a. Dinghy racing can ONLY proceed if there is at least one Safety Boat present.
- b. With up to 12 boats racing in suitable conditions, the RO may at their discretion judge one Safety Boat to be sufficient.
- c. If only one, single manned Safety Boat is present, the RO may at their discretion decide to announce restrictions under Flag M (see Notice of Race) or abandon racing for some or all classes.
- d. If no Safety Boat comes on station at the allotted time, the RO may at their discretion proceed with the race for some or all classes provided:
 - i. Weather & tide conditions are suitable e.g. moderate wind and minimal tide risk
 - ii. There are suitable yachts with engines taking part to tow in/act as a mothership
 - iii. The RO can gain the agreement of at least one boat with engine to monitor / support the fleet until all engineless boats are back on their moorings
 - iv. All competitors wear a lifejacket or suitable buoyancy aid.

In such circumstances, the RO will advise competitors by VHF that there is no safety boat and will require acceptance of this by all competitors. Any boat without a working VHF will not be permitted to race.

6. Safety Boat Management

Responsibility for the oversight, management and provision of Safety Boat crews rests with the Class Captain Powerboats. He/she will maintain a list of people authorised to act as helm and crew, and

will issue the Safety Boat manning roster. They will also liaise with the RO to agree the number of Safety Boats required for a particular event and any other requirements. The roster will identify the Safety Boat crews (helm and crew) for each race day.

7. Safety Boat Priorities

The prime responsibility of the Safety Boats is to SAVE LIFE, so their priorities are:

- a. Safety of crews being rescued
- b. Safety of other crews
- c. Prevention of damage to boats and equipment
- d. Recovery of damaged or capsized boats to the shore

8. Safety Boat Manning

Normally, there should be 2 people manning a Club Safety Boat. One crew member will be nominated as the helm and one as crew. Safety Boats may only be helmed by people who have been authorised to do so by the Class Captain Powerboats. In the event of an authorised helm being unavailable, StMSC Chief Instructor is empowered to authorise as suitably competent person to helm for a specific session. A combination of paid and/or volunteer helm and crew may be used. Passengers are normally not permitted to ride in Safety Boats during racing.

Safety Boat helms must hold the RYA Powerboat Level 2 qualifications and have been briefed on the role and should, if possible, hold:

- a. RYA Safety Boat Certificate
- b. RYA recognised First Aid certificate

Safety Boat crew, if possible, should have the same qualifications as helms but unqualified crews can gain experience working with a qualified helm.

9. Lifejackets/Clothing/Kill-cords

The Safety Boat helm and crew must wear life jackets/buoyancy aids at all times on the water and be dressed for the conditions. The kill-cord must be attached to the driver at all times except in circumstances such as picking up a mooring (when the engine must be in neutral).

10. VHF Radios

Each Safety Boat must have at least one working VHF radio at all times; where possible, a spare VHF should be carried on board. A mobile phone should be carried as a backup means of communication. Mobile phone numbers must be shared with the OOD and other Safety Boat crew.

11. Safety Boat Kit List

Anchor & Warp	Float/fender for buoying an abandoned anchor
Throwing/towing line	Fire extinguisher
Paddles Bailer	Footpump
Knife	IC Flags R & S
Spare Kill Cord	First Aid Kit
Survival Blanket	Flare Pack

12. 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.