

7. Safety

7.1. Daily Risk Assessment

A daily risk assessment (Appendix H) is carried out by the sessions lead instructor, this is then reviewed by the senior instructor.

7.2. Communication

VHF radios are essential for safe session management. All staff must be trained in proper use and etiquette during instructor induction.

- Operating channel: P4 (may appear as M2 on some radios)
- Use designated call signs — avoid personal names
- Transmit only essential information, no idle chatter
- Start each call with the station you're calling, then your own. End with “Over”
- Radio checks with the SI must be completed before going afloat

Call Signs

- Bridge – Dabchick
- Slipway / Foreshore – Base
- Grey Zodiac RIB – Oscar
- Orange Humber RIB – Andren
- Orange XS RIB – Roberts
- Instructor in dinghy – Use boat type (e.g. “Feva”)

Example: “Andren Andren, this is Oscar Oscar, over.”

Radio Allocation Priority

1. Safety boats
2. Instructors out of sight of a safety boat
3. Instructors teaching private lessons

The Senior Instructor must carry a radio on their person at all times.

Radio Care & Storage

- Radios are kept on the bridge
- After use, radios must be:
 - Rinsed with fresh water (not submerged)
 - Dried thoroughly
 - Returned to the charging station
- Report any faults or damage to the SI or CI

7.3. Safety Boats

Authorisation & Qualifications

- Safety boats must only be helmed by individuals who:
 - Aged over 16
 - Hold RYA Powerboat Level 2
 - Have been approved by the CI

Provision of Safety Cover

- A safety boat must be afloat and manned before students are permitted to launch and remain afloat until all students have landed.
- If dinghies are operating with an instructor on board who is carrying a VHF radio, a safety boat may remain at the pontoon, ready to deploy immediately if required.
- Safety boat ratios
 - Up to 6 dinghies – 1 safety boat
 - 6 to 15 dinghies – 2 safety boats
 - More than 15 dinghies – 3 safety boats

Command & Redeployment

- Safety boats operate under the direction of the SI at all times.
- They may be reassigned to assist with other incidents, including those outside their designated area

Manning & Passengers

- Boats should be manned by a helm and crew where possible.
- Avoid carrying additional passengers unless operationally required

Kill Cord Use

- The kill cord must be worn around the helm's leg at all times while the engine is running.
- One formal warning will be given for non-compliance. Further breaches may result in termination.

Rescue Protocol & Conduct

- People come first. The safety of individuals takes priority over boats and equipment.
- Approaches to people in the water must be made bow-first, with the engine in neutral. The engine must be fully stopped before contact.
- In complex rescues (e.g. mass capsizes, entrapments), the safety boat must contact the SI to coordinate additional support.
- When unsure, safety boat crews should communicate early with the SI or other safety boats.

See Appendix C: Safety Boat Operation Guidance Notes for further details

7.4. Masthead Floatation

- All double handed dinghies or boats with shrouds must carry a mast head float.
- In the case of advanced race coaching mast head floats may not be used at the discretion of the SI considering weather conditions and student ability.
- The large double handers: 2000s, Wayfarer and H15 must use the larger 40L mast head floats.

7.5. Personal Clothing and Equipment

All instructors and students must wear clothing appropriate for weather, activity, and safety.

- Instructors must model appropriate dress — unsafe, impractical, or unprofessional clothing is not acceptable
- Instructors must have a safety knife, whistle, watch and spare piece of rope on their person whilst afloat.

Buoyancy Aids

- Buoyancy aids must always be worn by students and instructors when on the water, launching or on the pontoon.
- Students with unsuitable buoyancy aids will be required to use a club-approved one or remain ashore
- Instructors must ensure all buoyancy aids are fastened and fitted correctly.