



UK NATIONAL CADET CLASS MAJOR YOUTH EVENT SAFETY STANDARD OPERATING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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1. RYA Safety Boat Management Manual



1. Introduction

RRS Rule 1 and 4 as well as standard safety sailing Instructions confirm that a boat accepts that it is entirely responsible for her own safety. Nevertheless, the RYA has developed these operating procedures as guidelines for good practice in the overall management of the safety of all those competing in RYA-organised events where the competitors are under 18 years of age.

This document sets out the procedures to be used as the basis for managing the Safety resources in order to reduce the inherent risks associated with sailboat racing to a level as low as reasonably practical (ALARP).

These procedures are intended for use in UK National Cadet Class events and are not intended to be used for events organized by bodies other than the UK National Cadet Class events. Nevertheless, other race organizers may wish to refer to the UK National Cadet Class events procedures as set out below and adopt or adapt such provisions as they may consider being appropriate for their particular events.

2. Objectives

The objective of the Safety Fleet is to provide efficient, competent safety cover at the event to allow competitors and all those involved maximum enjoyment whilst minimizing the risks to the safety of the sailors and boats.

3. Overall Organisational Structure

Overall safety management at an event is the responsibility of the Event Director/Principal Race Officer and Event Safety Officer (ESO) from the time the first participant is permitted to go on the water until the time that all the competitors are off the water and have been accounted for.

The Event Director and ESO have absolute authority to employ all the resources available to them as they see fit, and to direct the work of all those assisting.

The ESO will prepare the Risk Assessment and Safety Plan for the event.

The ESO will liaise with Beachmaster, the Motherships allocated to their course, the mark layers, jury boats, selector boats and any unofficial support boats on their course. It is the ESO's responsibility to decide where the motherships should be anchored.

The Safety Fleet will consist of dedicated Safety Boats with any associated motherships. At the request of the ESO to the PRO, the mark layers, pin end boats and jury boats may be brought into the Safety Fleet. They should then operate under the direction of the ESO until the need passes, where after they should be released back to the PRO.



The PRO will have operational responsibility for the safety of competitors on their course. The PRO should work with the ESO to communicate the safety cover plan with their race and safety team.

The ESO will define and manage how cover should be handled on the course and will manage the movement of their competitors from shore to the course area.

The ESO will host a safety briefing for all the Safety Fleet drivers and crews at the beginning of the event. They should also attend the competitors briefing and give the competitors a safety briefing. The ESO will attend the daily Race Management briefing and should thereafter brief the Safety Fleet before sailing to ensure adequate communication of weather data, daily organisational plans, etc. The ESO should also brief the Motherships as to their role – particularly with regard to retiring competitors.

The ESO is responsible for the overall management of the Safety Fleet both on and off the water. This should include delivering the organisational structure, adherence to this document, and management of the Safety Fleet infrastructure (e.g. boat allocation, boat resourcing, refueling, mooring, etc.).

The ESO would normally set up a VHF Radio Control Base (Bridge) where applicable for the event and venue, often ashore when there are a number of radio channels to monitor. This location should have a facility for a Base radio to monitor all calls on each channel and keep a record of all important information. Instructions from the PRO and ESO are often passed through bridge to ensure that all stations can hear and the information is correctly logged. Bridge may also control shore based flag signals and launching through the beachmaster who may be on a separate channel to the safety fleets.

At smaller events the Beachmaster and his assistants may well fulfill the role and land based communication point as referred to later in this document as Bridge. The Beachmaster will however always keep its call sign Beachmaster when performing this role.

All Safety Boats and all other Official Boats should radio in daily to Bridge and the ESO to inform them of their intentions to be on the water or back ashore. A schedule of the names of all safety crew afloat should be kept, usually through the event office. The ESO or Bridge may perform a radio check with each boat in their fleet as it leaves the shore. The ESO should decide when there is sufficient safety cover for his/her course and then advise PRO/Bridge/ Beachmaster and ask for their fleet to be launched once the Event Director has given permission.

Bridge/ESO should then advise that the launch flag is displayed and the competitors may leave the shore after the Beachmaster has tallied them out. The ESO will then manage the fleets for that day's sailing from launch to return ashore at the end of the day.



At the end of the day, the ESO should escort their fleet ashore. The Beachmaster should tally the fleet in and inform Bridge when the whole fleet has been accounted for. The ESO will inform the Event Director usually via Bridge when the fleet is ashore. The ESO should communicate with Bridge and release each Safety Fleet when they are no longer needed.

No Safety Boat may go ashore until released by the ESO/Bridge.

4. Radio Callsigns

The ESO will allocate call signs to each Safety Boat, Medic Boat, Mothership and other safety related individuals as well as to race committee boats (committee boats, mark layers, pin boat, jury boat etc) and should produce a comprehensive list of boats and their call signs and identification flags that should be given to each member of the Safety Fleet. This list should include mobile telephone numbers.

5. Radio Procedures

The Event Director will allocate radio channels for safety, race and emergencies which should be used by the Race and Safety Teams for that course. If there is a separate Safety Channel this should be used by all the course Race and Safety Teams, Event Director and ESO, in the event that either the Event Director or ESO declare a fleet wide emergency covering all fleets. The emergency channel can be monitored by all.

Bridge should monitor all channels and should have at least one radio operator for every two channels.

The Beachmaster should be in communication with Bridge and may monitor the fleet or safety channels and be able to communicate directly with any safety boat coming into the launching area.

The Event Director and ESO should be contactable via the Safety Channel, but can call up the PRO and safety teams on their appropriate channels. The Event Director/PRO, ESO, Safety teams and Beachmaster should also have mobile telephones available to all.

The Motherships and support boats should monitor and be contactable on the Safety Channel.

NB. Radio transmissions should be kept to a minimum to prevent clutter.

6. Safety Boat Identification

All Safety Boats should carry unique identification flags. They must be returned to the Event Office or allocated transport Rib at the end of the event.



7. Positions of Safety Boats during a Race

Each Safety Boat should be allocated a position/zone on the course that they should assume for the duration of the race. These positions should be allocated in advance but can be modified by the ESO as necessary.

8. Personnel and Equipment

All Safety Boats should normally have a minimum of two competent adults aboard, one of whom should be dressed to enter the water to aid a rescue. There will be no maximum number of crew but Safety Boats should not be overloaded with crew and should be able to accommodate a minimum of 5 additional sailors. It should be unusual for a Safety Boat to have more than three crew members. The ESO may withdraw a Safety Boat from the Safety Fleet if he/she feels that it is inappropriately crewed.

It is not normal to require on-the-water medical support to a standard above that of First Aider. However, the ESO should attempt to have a Doctor or trained paramedic at the event that can be used for initial rapid response in the event of a medical emergency.

Essential Equipment which should be carried by all Safety Boats:

1. Adequate fuel for approx. 9 hours on the water use.
2. Fully functional VHF radio which should operate for 9 hours (this may require spare batteries). A spare handheld VHF if using a fixed set installed to a RIB
3. A sound generator (whistle or fog horn).
4. Compass
5. Anchor and warp suitable for the race area.
6. Sharp knife, preferably serrated and easily accessible.
7. **Kill cord** and spare, **which must be used by the driver at all times when underway.**
8. Personal buoyancy for the crew, to be worn at all times.
9. Safety Tape to identify abandoned boats (to be issued by the ESO).
10. Paddles and bailer.
11. Drinking Water.
12. Tow rope (preferably made of floating line) and towing bridle.
13. Waterproof first aid kit and survival bag or thermal protective aid.
14. Distress Flares:- 2 orange smoke and 2 pinpoint red or 2 day/night flares.



Desirable Equipment, which should be carried by at least two Safety Boats on each course:

1. Wire Cutters, to cut away rigging and trapeze wires
2. Tool kit
3. GPS location equipment
4. Torch
5. Spare radios

9. Operational Guidelines

1. ESO should produce a schedule of briefings for Safety Fleet personnel and communicate this to the relevant attendees (Appendix 4).
2. ESO should ensure that all Safety Boats are tallied out and back and ensure that safety cover is provided in a timely manner.
3. ESO may provide appropriate waypoints and bearings to the Safety Boats (Appendix 4). Additionally, each Safety Boat should take its own bearings and satisfy itself that it can independently navigate back to the launch area in the event of poor visibility.
4. ESO may arrange for a radio check to be performed with each boat as it leaves the shore. The ESO will decide when there is sufficient safety cover for his fleet to be launched and then advise Bridge, and will then manage his fleet for that day's sailing.
5. The PRO should advise Bridge when he is ready for the competitors to be launched. Once the Event Director/PRO has given permission to launch the fleets, if Bridge is satisfied that there is sufficient safety cover, he/she should advise the Beachmaster and ESO that the launch flag may be hoisted and the competitors may leave the shore.
6. The Beachmaster should tally all of the competitors afloat and confirms the number of boats afloat in each Fleet and informs Bridge who then informs the ESO. **This is critical to the safety of the fleet.**
7. The Safety Fleet's objective is support a challenging but enjoyable event making it as safe as reasonably practical.
8. All retirements from racing are to be notified to the ESO and Bridge who should keep a record and inform the PRO.
9. Once Beachmaster has informed Bridge that all boats are safely ashore, ESO should inform the Safety Fleet that it can stand down .
10. If the Beachmaster finds that one or more boats are missing, they are to inform Bridge immediately, who will immediately alert the ESO. ESO should direct a number of Safety Boats back to the Race Area to start a search. Meanwhile, Beachmaster should urgently investigate the missing individuals – if they are not accounted for the ESO should be informed immediately and, at this point, should probably declare an Emergency Situation.



10. Procedure to get boats to the race area

One of four methods will typically be used:

1. Hold the boats in separate fleets and then proceed as a controlled group with Safety Boats spread throughout the group.
2. Hold the boats in manageable groups of boats (10-15 boats) and then proceed in groups with a Safety Boat per group.
3. Provide a corridor down which the boats sail with Safety Boats spread out along the corridor.
4. In a particularly safe area and in safe conditions, simply provide safety cover spread out over the route that the boats sail to the race area.

The ESO will confirm the method to be used at the Daily Safety Fleet Briefing.

11. Procedure to get boats back to the shore base

One of four methods will typically be used:

1. Hold the boats in separate fleets and then proceed as a controlled group with Safety Boats spread throughout the group.
2. Hold the Boats in manageable groups of boats (10-15 boats) and then proceed in groups with a Safety Boat per group.
3. Hold the Boats at, but clear of, the Finish Area and, when ready, provide a corridor down which the Boats sail with Safety Boats spread out along the corridor.
4. In a particularly safe area and in safe conditions, simply provide safety cover spread out over the route that the Boats sail from the race area to the Club.

The ESO should confirm the method to be used to the PRO for each fleet.

12. Procedure for retiring boats

1. Retiring Boat informs a Safety Boat and/or proceeds to a Mothership, informs the Mothership of her intentions and stays in the vicinity of the Mothership or boards the Mothership. If Boat informs a Safety Boat, the Safety Boat decides whether to remove the sailor(s) from the Boat. If the sailor(s) is/are removed, the Boat must be taken to a Mothership or attached to a specially laid buoy. Leave the Boat with a plastic tape tied to the pintles. If the sailor needs to receive attention ashore, again leave the Boat with plastic tape tied to the pintles. The Safety Boat or Mothership must immediately inform the ESO or Bridge that the Boat is retiring, confirm its location and that of its crew and identify it by sail number or tally number.
2. ESO or Bridge informs Course PRO.



3. If a group of retirees is formed and they wish to proceed ashore, the Mothership is to request the ESO to provide cover to escort the group ashore.
4. If conditions permit and a Safety Boat can be freed from its duties to conduct the escort, the group is escorted ashore, handed over to the Beachmaster who confirms to ESO that they have been accounted for. If they are not accounted for, the ESO should deploy boats to commence a search.

NB. Under no circumstances are Boats to proceed ashore unescorted!

13. Guidelines for use in fog.

1. If fog arrives prior to the start of a race – Event Director/PRO or ESO postpone racing and ESO requests the Safety Fleet to implement Fog Guidelines. Fleets are informed by ESO and Safety Boats to stay close to the Committee Boat and ESO to consider taking boats in tow.
2. If fog arrives during a race – Event Director/PRO or ESO decide to shorten or abandon racing and ESO requests the Safety Fleet to implement Fog Guidelines. Fleets are informed by the Safety Boats either at the finish or on each leg of the course to stop, stay close together near a known reference point such as a mark or safety boat. Safety Boats count competitor boats near them and report to ESO/Bridge.
3. The ESO calculates the total number of Boats and informs Bridge. If the total number does not equal the total of the boats that went afloat, Bridge will inform the ESO so that a search can commence.
4. ESO makes decision whether to tow home or not. If not towing send ashore in small groups keeping in sight of accompanying RIBs. If boat capsized all group stops whilst boat being righted. If decide to tow then boats instructed to drop their sails if possible and take tows.
5. If a competitor cannot see a Safety Boat or reference point, they are to STOP, stay with any other boats that they can see and use a whistle to attract attention. If they can drop their mainsail it is usually advisable.
6. Boats should be tallied ashore as normal.

NB. Under no circumstances are Boats to proceed ashore unescorted.

14. Guidelines for use when strong winds arrive

1. If strong winds arrive prior to the start of a race – Event Director/PRO or ESO postpone racing and requests safety teams to implement Strong Wind Guidelines. Fleets are informed by ESO and Safety Boats to stay close to the RIBs and to lie to or heave to.



2. If strong winds arrive during a race – Event Director/PRO or ESO agree to shorten or abandon racing and ESO requests Safety Fleet to implement Strong Wind Guidelines. Fleets are informed by the Safety Boats either at the finish or on each leg of the course to stop, stay close together and either proceed slowly ashore, to stay close to the RIBs and to lie to or heave to.
3. Safety Fleet should either form a corridor to escort the boats ashore or gather competitors together in groups and once sensible groups are formed, ESO should request each Safety Boat to get the competitors to safely sail ashore. Each Safety Boat should be asked to escort approximately 7 boats in a group.
4. In the event of a capsize, either a nearby safety boat stands by or the group should stop until the boat is righted and ready to sail again or another safety boat takes over looking after the capsized boat.
5. Once ashore, competitors should be tallied ashore as normal.

NB. Under no circumstances are Boats to proceed ashore unescorted.

15. Emergency guidelines

In the event of an emergency occurring (injury to a sailor or anyone at sea supporting the event, structural damage endangering the safety of a boat in the event, etc.), the first boat on the scene should inform all stations using the code words **"CODE RED" and its location**. The safety or mark boats nearest to the "CODE RED" boat's location should immediately proceed to help. All other stations should minimize radio traffic. The ESO, who should immediately assess the situation, may call appropriate support to the scene, assist in stabilizing it. The ESO should decide whether to declare an Emergency Situation on the radio.

Only the minimum numbers of boats are to remain involved with the Emergency, all other Safety Boats are to continue to provide safety cover for the fleet in the normal manner.

Any boat should, if absolutely essential, request the Emergency Services to attend, however this is best done by the ESO or Event Director via Bridge. If necessary, the casualty should be taken ashore in an appropriate boat to the Emergency Drop off point to meet up with the Emergency Services.

ESO should take control the situation as soon as possible to allow the safety team to go back to managing his zone. If appropriate he will make the situation safe then arrange recovery of the crew and boat or hand them over to the appropriate authority.

If the situation is considered by ESO to be hazardous to the rest of the fleet, ESO should request that the PRO shortens or abandons racing. In this event, after the fleets have gathered, they should be instructed to make their way ashore under the control of the ESO, Bridge and the Event Director should be kept fully informed by the ESO of progress.



An Emergency is only declared closed when the situation has been resolved, the danger has been removed, the damaged boat made safe or the casualty evacuated to the safety of the shore. The ESO informs all stations that CODE RED is cleared.

The Safety Fleet is only able to stand down and to return ashore when the Beachmaster has confirmed that all boats and crews are safely ashore and permission to stand down is granted by the ESO.

16. Private Support and Coach Boats

At some events there are private support and coach boats that provide assistance to specific sailors. These will be out on the water both during racing and at other times. They will often tow competitors to and from the race area and will provide safety cover for their sailors.

It is important to manage these boats so that they do not interfere with other sailors or the racing and also so that they can be brought into the tactical reserve to provide safety support in case of emergencies, which will allow racing to be run when otherwise it would not be possible.

It is best practice to have a Sailing Instruction that requires non-official boats to keep a long distance away from the race area otherwise sailors linked to that boat will be penalized.

Private support boats can then be registered, supplied with these instructions and asked to display flags or national insignia and allowed with a reasonable distance of the racing (100m). It is sensible for the ED/ESO to meet with these boat skippers discuss any problem areas and agree a communication system.

Appendix 1

List of Abbreviations

ESO	Event Safety Officer
ALARP	As Low as Reasonably Practical
ED	Event Director
PRO	Principal Race Officer
BRIDGE	VHF Radio Control and Monitoring Base.