

Sussex Sailability Safe Operating Procedures

Introduction

This document is an overall guide to the operation of Sussex Sailability sessions. It is important that the Officer of the Day (OoD) for the day is familiar with it. It will be stored on the website and all volunteers will receive a copy.

Responsibilities

The OoD is ultimately responsible for the organisation and safety of the day's activities taking due regard of the weather/water conditions, the competences of the volunteers available and sensitivities to the needs of the disabled members. He/she will take guidance from the senior Safety boat skipper regarding conditions on the water.

The senior safety boat skipper is responsible for the safety of sailors and boats on the water, and all instructions or requests by the safety boat skipper must be complied with by sailing helms.

General requirements

Sailor registration

All disabled people who want to sail must complete a registration form and risk assessment on their first visit. This assessment will include information on their disabilities, their requirements for accessing sailing activities and any limitations that may have to be placed on their sailing activities. A summary of this information for all disabled people will be available to the OoD.

Disabled sailors may sail with us twice before they have to join as Sailability members of SYC on their third visit. Disabled sailors are encouraged to record the development of their skills and experience through the RYA Sailability log book scheme

Volunteer registration and development.

On their first visit, volunteers will be asked to give an outline of their skills with particular emphasis on RYA qualifications. Sussex Sailability policy is to encourage all volunteers to gain appropriate RYA qualifications. Certificates should be made available on request. Informal assessments are made of all those who are to be allowed to be in charge of a boat with a crew under their control. A register of these assessments will be kept.

Carers

Carers should register on their first visit. Carers continue to have responsibility for those under their care. Carers are encouraged to participate in sailing activities and may be required to accompany disabled sailors where indicated by a risk assessment.

First Aid

The duty first aider will be identified. They will take control of any injured person. If the emergency services need to be called there is a public phone in the SYC lobby. There is an accident book in the back room of the outside store and also one in the SYC

office and with the first aid kit at Southwick. All accidents must be entered in one of these. If the outside books are used then a copy of any entry must be left in the office letterbox. If the emergency services are called the accident must be reported to the HSE via the SYC office within 48 hours.

Pre-Session organisation

Approximately ten days before a Sailability session, an on-line registration form will be issued to all Sailability members and volunteers to register for the upcoming session. In advance of the session and in co-ordination with the OoD for the session, sailors and volunteers who have registered for the session will be allocated to roles and boats.

Sailors will be allocated to boats taking into account special access requirements (eg hoist, seating support), the Sailor's experience and their development objectives. Sailors that have registered for the session will have priority, although the OoD may allocate spare spaces to sailors who turn up at the session without pre-registering.

Volunteers will be allocated to roles on the following bases:

A Reception team

A Pontoon team for each pontoon that will be used. This is to include at least one person trained in use of the hoist. The hoist should only be used by someone who has been trained to use it and assessed as safe to do so.

Sailing boats: An approved dinghy/keelboat helm (ideally Instructor or Assistant Instructor qualified) and a competent crew.

Safety boats: A Safety Boat qualified skipper and a Power Boat Level 2 qualified crew. Crews must be prepared to enter the water.

Escort boats (may be used where sailing boats with independent means of propulsion are being used): A Power Boat Level 2 qualified skipper and competent crew.

Keelboat participation

We encourage SYC members to sail with us in their keelboats.

A list of those who are happy to help will be maintained. Some keelboats will sail from Shoreham. Some may sail from Southwick. The OoD should arrange this ahead of the day.

SYC notification

The use of the slip by Sailability will be agreed for the season when the overall programme is agreed. The OoD should remind the SYC Office when we have a session both to keep the slip clear and to get the mud scraped off. We will also ask them to keep the visitor's pontoon clear (for Sonars).

OoD Pack

The Chairman or other committee member will produce an information pack for the OoD. This pack will contain:

List of sailors and volunteers registered to take part in the session

List of boats available to be used for the session
Proposed allocation of volunteer roles
Proposed allocation of sailors to boats
Volunteers' abilities, qualifications and phone numbers.
Summary risk assessments for disabled sailors
Location of keys
Updated labels for magnetic cards

The OoD will give a contact number for those who have planned to come so they can warn him of any delay to their arrival.

On the day

The OoD

Each Sailability session will be under the overall control of an OoD. He/she will confirm the allocation of volunteer roles and sailing places for those that have registered and ensure that these are put up on the magnetic board in advance of the Sailors' arrival time.

The OoD will plan the activities for the day taking account of the weather and tide and the resources available. The OoD will make a note of this plan on the 'Sailing Session – Risk Assessment' form and retain this form for the records.

Risk assessments for each class of boat are in the OoD Information pack and should be used as guidance. A copy of each risk assessment is held in the SYC Office, as is a copy of these procedures. Risk assessments and Operating procedures are also accessible from the website). The OoD should remind helms to carry out the pre launch checks. The OoD will advise Sailors and volunteers who is responsible for Achievement Log Book updating.

Briefing

The OoD will collect all Sailors and Volunteers together before going afloat to give a briefing covering: allocation to boats, sailing area including the position of Safety Boats, any issues with wind or tide, plans for races, radio communication procedures and a contingency plan in case of problems.

Responsibilities of reception team

Disabled Sailor sign in

Members and new people should be signed in using the pre-prepared sheet. If they have not previously registered for the session, they will also pick up their Magnetic card and put it on the magnetic board. New people should be asked to complete an application form; a temporary magnetic card will also be given to them. Those who have been twice should be reminded that they should join the club if they wish to continue to come.

Volunteer and Carer sign in

All Volunteers and Carers should be asked to sign in. If they have not registered for the session they should pick up their magnetic cards and put them on the magnetic board.

Boat allocation

Boat allocation will be displayed on the magnetic board. For sailors that have registered in advance, the allocation will take place before the session and will be put up on the magnetic board before the Sailor arrival time. Sailors and volunteers who have not registered in advance will be allocated spaces if these are available

Equipment allocation

The reception team will ensure that all members have suitable buoyancy aids and weatherproof clothing before they sail. A full self-righting life jacket must be given to those identified in a risk assessment as requiring it. This will be shown on their magnetic card.

The Reception team will ensure that radios are allocated to OoD, Pontoon Manager, SONAR and Drascombe skipper. Safety Boats and reception have permanently mounted radios. Radio Channels: M2 should be used and channel 14 to communicate with Shoreham Port

First Aid

The name of the qualified first aider on duty will be on the magnetic board.
Note. First aiders are identified on the Magnetic cards.

Safety boat helms and Senior instructors are qualified first aiders

Responsibilities of pontoon team

Hoist installation

The pontoon team should install the hoist and ensure that it is working.

Pontoon management

One member of the team will be on duty as *pontoon manager*. They will control the passage of people to and from the Pontoon, and ensuring that there is no more than **one** wheelchair on pontoon at a time, and checking that all personnel on the pontoon are wearing correctly fitted buoyancy aids or lifejackets. A second member of the shore team will act as *loading manager* to ensure the safe transfer of people to and from the boats and to control boats as they depart and arrive at the pontoon. They will organise the transfer of people to boats and ensure safe operation of the pontoon and the hoist. The pontoon team should keep pontoon clear of obstructions and hazards.

Electric Wheelchairs

The pontoon manager should ensure that those in electric wheelchairs are transferred to a manual chair before they come onto the pontoon.

Responsibilities of water based teams

Boat preparation

Rigging – Sailing boats which are required for the session, should be rigged. Disabled sailors should be encouraged to do as much of the rigging as they can by being assigned to specific boats.

Launching

A pre launch check must be done by the skipper before any boat is launched. For safety boats this is as laid down in the L2 course. For dinghies it should include checking paddle, bailer or bucket, bungs and proper rigging of boat.

Safety boats

Safety boats should be in the water before sailing boats are launched. If the plan includes separate areas for different boat fleets (eg 16 footers and Accesses) then each safety boat will be allocated a fleet. The safety boat skipper must ensure that the boats all stay in visual contact with him and with each other. Conventions for communication with the dinghy helms should be defined. Racing marks should be set at the request of the OoD. The sailing area for a fleet must be such that the Safety boat can reach any part in less than one minute. Safety boats should communicate with the harbourmaster on Ch 14 when any boats are to sail in the harbour entrance.

Safe Sailing

The maximum wind-strength is 21 knots (F5) for all Sailability sailing craft.

Access weight limits must be adhered in wind over F3. (100 kg for 2.3 and 160 KG for 303). This is particularly relevant for double seaters. Accesses should be reefed as the wind and competence of the helm dictates. Accesses only operate in the harbour.

16 foot keel-boats (RS Venture, Stratos) should be reefed above F3. Max number on board is 5 in F1 to F3, 4 in F4. In F4 a competent crew is needed as well as the helm. Max number of people in the Drascombe: 8 in F1 to F3 in the harbour, 6 in F4 and above and at sea. Skipper and competent crew required. To operate in the same area as the Sonars.

The Sonars will operate independently but will stay in radio contact and in the areas laid down in the Sonar operating procedures.

Radio procedures

The OoD, Safety boats, Sonars and Drascombe must have radios. Higher power radio channel M2 must be used at all times. Safety boats must monitor this channel at all times. Sonar and Drascombe should radio in at half hour intervals when at sea. Their area of operation should be defined by the radio coverage. Powerboats and Drascombe to radio in 10 minutes before returning to Shoreham so that next crew can be made ready

Recovery and de-rigging

As boats return at the end of the session disabled Sailors and Carers should be encouraged to assist in recovery, washing and derigging. Where sail covers are

available, sails are left on the boats. Any damage or defects to the boats should be reported by e-mail to sussexsailability@gmail.com.
The capstan should only be used by those who have been trained.

Competence assessment

Sailors and volunteers are responsible for recording developing skills in their Sailability logbook. These are available from the Reception team if required. The OoD and skippers should make notes on the developing competence of sailors and these can be signed off by an Assistant Instructor, Instructor or Senior Instructor.

Relation to formal training

Sailability sessions are not to be considered as formal training as we cannot operate all sessions to full RYA standards. We run formal RYA training for Sailability members under the management of the SYC RYA Training Centre.

Degree of conformance.

These procedures have been developed as a guide for the safe and efficient operation of Sailability sessions but the decision of the OoD and of those in charge of the boats is always to take precedence.

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