

SANDY BAY ROWING CLUB

OPERATING A RESCUE BOAT

1. All operators of rescue boats must be licensed as required by MAST. Operators of rescue boats should be confident in their handling capability so that manoeuvring in a rescue situation can be undertaken without delay.
2. The primary purpose of rescue boats is the safety of all water users within the rescue boat's area of operation for the duration of the rowing activity. Rescue boats are not primarily conveyances for coaches. Rescue boats should retain as many spaces on board as possible to enable rowers to be brought aboard if necessary.
3. Rescue boats should be:
 - Quick, manoeuvrable and designed so as not to create excessive wash
 - Have adequate capacity to be capable of carrying injured athletes back to the boatshed quickly and safely
 - Properly equipped and well maintained.

CHECKLIST

4. Before going afloat check:

- **That the launching ramp is safe for use – check slipperiness**
- Personal and boat buoyancy
- Mobile phone including contacts other coaches and emergency services
- Check bungs are in
- Alternative means of propulsion (i.e oars and rowlocks)
- Bucket or other bailer
- Fuel
- Torch and navigation lights
- Ladder for recovery over the stern of the boat

5. When afloat

- PFD must be on before engine start
- Keep a good lookout at all times
- Be aware of the presence of rowers from other clubs
- Do not overload the boat – keep as many spaces as possible for possible rescues
- Do not sit on PFD's – they are safety devices
- Obey speed limits and adjust speed in the vicinity of other rowers
- Think about how your wash will affect others
- Follow the travel corridors; stay to the right in your direction of travel
- Keep an eye on the weather – conditions can change quickly on the Derwent. South easterly weather in particular can become dangerous quickly
- Keep clear of the wharf when any shipping is moving in the river and obey any directions from pilot or security boats. Ships under pilotage have ABSOLUTE right of way.

6. Recovering rowers from the water

- The only time any high speed manoeuvres should be used is when making approach to the scene of trouble or when taking injured rowers back to the boatshed. Care must be taken not to cause additional trouble for other rowers, and not to cause further injury to rescued rowers.
- Approach to a rower in the water **MUST** be made carefully and at low speed, to enable an assessment of the situation, and not to alarm the person in the water, who will already be distressed.
- On approach talk to the person in the water. Make sure they understand what you intend to do and what you want them to do.
- Approach from downstream or downwind, so that control of speed and steering can be maintained
- When bringing a person aboard, the engine must be turned off so that any chance of propeller injury is avoided. The propeller guard can be used as a step up.
- When bringing a person aboard, the safest method is over the stern. Use a ladder if provided. Attempting to bring persons aboard over the side can lead to instability, and danger to those in the rescue boat
- If the rower requires urgent first aid, it should be provided before moving.
- Where there are several rowers in the water, priority should be given to injured or younger rowers. Call for assistance. Rowers in the water should be reminded to remain holding the boat – it will not sink.
- If a rowing shell is also being recovered, use a seat/sponge or unused PDF to cushion hull on the rescue boat and stop it sliding off

Complete safety incident form and submit to Club Captain

7. Returning to sheds

- Make sure engine is up to avoid damage to skeg when placing on trolley.
- Check and stow safety equipment
- Release bungs and hose out hull – leave boat in position to drain.
- Report any safety equipment issues, engine operation issues immediately.