

HALIFAX SAILING CLUB

Description of Duties (Last updated April 2017)

When you applied for membership you undertook to do these duties, if you cannot attend you must find another member to swap dates with you; club officials cannot do this for you.

During the course of the year you will be asked to help in the running of the club by either manning the rescue boat or by helping to run the races.

The duty rota is compiled twice a year and you will be sent a form beforehand asking when you are not available. **If you fail to return this form it will be assumed that you are always available.**

Dinghy members may be asked to do either OD duties or man the rescue boat; windsurfers will generally be asked to man the rescue boat. New members will be paired with more experienced members. The following sections describe what is entailed for both duties.

The Club is now required to keep a record of usage of the facilities by it's members. The Duty Officers should as far as it is practical ensure that everyone present on that day has entered their name in the signing-in book which is kept in the main clubroom.

Rescue Coxswain (Cox)

Remember that you are the senior member present, represent the club and are responsible for security of premises and members. If on shore in the absence of officers or committee members you should be available to assist other members and members of the public with any enquiries they may have. At all times you or your assistant must keep watch for craft in difficulties.

As you are responsible for opening up and locking the club premises after sailing, make sure that you have the appropriate keys and combination numbers for the locks and are familiar with the boat store security system. If in doubt contact a Committee Member BEFORE your duty date.

You have the authority to cancel all sailing if conditions appear dangerous or you are not confident that you can carry out your rescue responsibilities in the conditions on the day. Raise Flag N (Abandonment) with 3 sound signals on the main flag mast to stop all sailing or to bring back ashore anyone who is already on the water. Remember that your main responsibility is to man the rescue boat and you and the assistant rescue cox should NOT assist the Officer of the Day in race management.

- (1) It is assumed that you are already familiar with the operation of the boat and engine. If not, ensure that you ask someone at the club before your duty day. Arrive 60 minutes before the start of racing. Share the following duties with the Assistant Cox to ensure that they gain experience. Ensure both of you are wearing buoyancy aids and appropriate wet weather gear. It is advisable that at least one of you should be prepared to enter the water to assist anyone in difficulty. If necessary unlock the clubhouse and turn on the gas just inside the door.
- (2) Unlock the Rescue Boat store after cancelling the security system, verify that the petrol tank is full (petrol only) and that the oil bottle in the engine housing is full to the level mark. Connect the petrol tank to the engine. Fit the stern drain plug to the innermost of the two drain holes. Check that the Rescue Boat has an engine cut-off "kill-cord". Check that the equipment includes the rescue line, a mud anchor, a towrope, a first aid container and that the shroud cutters are in the toolbox.
- (3) When conditions warrant it take the radios from the cupboard in the clubhouse; give one to the OD. Verify the batteries are in order and check that the system works.
- (4) Launch the Rescue Boat with the Assistant Cox and moor at a jetty to avoid chafing and dinghies.
- (5) Starting the engine.

Read the instructions on how to start the engine and to use the electric tilt mechanism. These are located in the boat store and in the main clubroom. Allow the engine to warm up and then take out onto the water to check that everything is working correctly, especially that you can change from forward to reverse smoothly.

Before moving away from the jetty, ensure that the helm is wearing the engine "kill-cord" securely attached to his/her leg.

WHEN UNDER WAY PRIOR TO GOING FROM AHEAD TO ASTERN PAUSE IN NEUTRAL TO ALLOW THE ENGINE TO SLOW DOWN BEFORE ENGAGING THE OTHER GEAR. DO NOT LEAVE THE ENGINE RUNNING WHEN THE BOAT IS NOT IN USE.

- (6) If the OD decides that a water start in normal club racing is necessary the rescue boat must not be used as the Committee boat.
- (7) Attend to craft in difficulty as appropriate. It is good practice to be on the water during all racing. Take the rescue boat up to the windward shore and watch from there. If cruising

around be aware of all boats racing and do not obstruct them. Be available when any craft is sailing. Be alert to calls from the other radiotelephone user who may prioritise your attention to sailors in difficulties. **REMEMBER THAT HYPOTHERMIA IS A RISK ON THIS WATER! NO CREW SHOULD GO UNATTENDED IF SEEN TO BE IN DIFFICULTIES. The Rescue Cox is authorised to compel any person to abandon their craft and to get into the rescue boat.**

- (8) The Rescue Cox should take every opportunity to train the Assistant Cox in the use of the rescue boat. This should include the starting procedures for the engine. The Assistant Cox should be encouraged to practice handling of the rescue boat using a spare race mark as a substitute "casualty".
- (9) At the end of racing and other sailing, take the Rescue Boat trailer to the slipway. Recruit a team of members to assist with pulling of the Rescue Boat to the boat store. Remove the drain plug from the inner drain hole so that the water drains as it is hauled up the slipway.
- (10) Recover the radios from the OD/other user. Place all items in the cupboard in the clubhouse. Check that all members are out of the clubhouse and off the site. Make sure that the generator and that the water purification system has been switched off. Shut off all gas heaters in changing rooms, clubhouse and kitchen. Turn off the gas main tap. Lock rescue boat store, containers (if used), all clubhouse doors and windows, compound gate, security barriers and top access gate.
- (11) If there are any problems with the rescue boat, engine or closing up the clubhouse, contact a Committee Member as soon as possible so that any problems can be rectified before the next sailing session. This is particularly important if the problem occurs on a Wednesday evening when there may be a training course running on the next Saturday.

RYA Guidance Notes for Safety Boat Drivers

Driving a club safety boat is vital to the safe running of dinghy racing and sail training within clubs. In an ideal world all safety boat drivers would be qualified, at the minimum, to RYA powerboat level 2 and RYA safety boat qualified. However this is not always practical for a club and its volunteers so, wherever the club can reinforce “best practice”, prior to a duty, both to those who are powerboat qualified and those who are not, this is a good thing.

Remind safety boat crews about your club’s policy.

Whenever possible, safety boat crews should be reminded of the club’s policy for safety boat drivers. This could be as simple as a summary card reminding individuals of their duties as they sign out the key and killcord.

Some top tips for safety boat drivers.

- Always wear a kill cord.
- Keep your hands on the throttle and wheel at all times when moving.
- Always switch off when dealing with a person in the water.
- Wherever possible keep your boat speed to a minimum so that you do not create unnecessary wake, and make it easier for people to anticipate the safety boat intentions.
- When approaching a capsized dinghy, it can sometimes be best approached bow first, from up wind, keeping the prop away from the boat hazards and crew.
- Avoid steering directly astern of those who are racing, in case they capsize, fall out or alter course unexpectedly.
- If it is necessary to come alongside, it is best to do this when a sailing boat has stopped on a close reach and the safety boat can come in on the windward side of the dinghy and hold the shroud to keep them close. Once in place turn the engine off if necessary for ease of communication.
- If approaching a moving dinghy let the helm know your intentions, communicate clearly, approach from the windward side.
- Always have an escape plan up your sleeve, know which way you’re going to turn to get out of a situation before things go wrong – sometimes just dropping into neutral will do it.
- Above all maintain a good look out around your safety boat at all times.

Refresher training

It’s worth bearing in mind that many safety boat drivers only take the controls once or twice a season, so they can often be pretty rusty. One idea is to have a pre-season “blowing the cobwebs away” half day or evening followed by a BBQ or curry. Invite club members along and remind them about the club’s safety boating policy, advising them of any new procedures and refreshing on-water skills.

Officer of the Day (OD)

These guidance notes have been prepared to assist members who may be un-familiar with the procedures for running Club Racing. They are designed for use at normal Club Series racing and cover all the situations that you may encounter. If you are in doubt over any aspect, check with other members who may be more experienced in the application of the Racing Rules, the Sailing Instructions and these guidance notes.

At times during the season, the Club holds special events or modifies the sailing programme, for example Open Events or back-to-back racing. For these events, additional guidance notes will be available in the Clubhouse.

Read the Sailing Instructions before the day of your duty and ensure that you have a watch capable of reading seconds. Arrive at the club at least 45 minutes before the start of the first race. If you have not done an OD duty before it is recommended that you assist an experienced OD before your duty date. If you are not confident in handling the starting procedure on your own, get some help from other members who may not be racing.

The Rescue Cox and Assistant Rescue Cox must be in attendance before any racing can take place. If the Duty Cox or Assistant Cox has not arrived and no one can substitute, you must postpone or cancel all sailing and racing – safety is of paramount importance. **They are not permitted to assist you in race management. Their priority is safety on the water and they should be in the rescue boat.**

There may be times when due to very high winds it is considered unsafe for any sailing to take place. The Rescue Cox is the senior officer present and it should be his decision whether to cancel or postpone sailing. In his absence you are also permitted to make that decision. Use Flag N (Abandon sailing) or the Answering Pennant (Postpone racing) to indicate to the members that no sailing is to take place.

- 1) Check that all flags are in the flag box or on canes and the hooter is working. Receive a radio from the Cox and verify that it is working.
- 2) Hoist the Club burgee and the Red Ensign on the flag mast.
- 3) Head up a race entry form for each race. Ensure course slips are available in the clubhouse. Prepare stopwatch, and have pencil and spare paper for recording intermediate lap information as well as final finishing times and details of any boats that start incorrectly.
- 4) Setting the course: The course should be set by the senior officer present, a member of the sailing committee or the OD at least 20 minutes before the first start time. If it has not been set, verify the wind direction and select a course from the list of standard courses and decide on where the start and finish lines will be. Ideally, the start line should be set square to the wind giving a beat to the first mark. If course nine is set it must be displayed in writing on the course board in the Clubhouse. Use the string on the course board to indicate the course and set the appropriate course, start line and number of laps indicators (see 8 below).
- 5) The OD must determine (if in doubt ask the senior officer present) the format of the start (see Sailing Instruction 5.2). For normal club series racing, a single mass start is used. If there are sufficient numbers of boats with the same handicap a separate start may be organised. It has also been decided by the committee, as a means to encourage more people to participate in racing and where there are sufficient numbers a separate start will be introduced for boats with junior/novice sailors. It is the responsibility of the OD to advise all participants by notice on the course board of the starting sequence and flags to be used. Irrespective of whether a single start or separate starts are used, all boats are competing in the same race and only one finish is used. The results are to be recorded in the normal manner.

- 6) Start lines: The OD can choose between the fixed red, blue or white lines, or use a water/special land based start line. It is generally recommended that the fixed lines are used for all normal racing unless there are exceptional circumstances. Try to choose a fixed line which will give a beat to the first mark.
- 7) Finish lines: The fleet includes boats of widely differing performance, from dinghies sailing two laps in a forty-five minute race to boats which may sail as many as four or more laps. The results are calculated on an average lap basis. Therefore, the laps should be of an equal length. This means that the finish line **MUST** be the same as the start line. If using a water start then the Committee boat must stay on station to act as the finishing line at the end of the race.
- 8) As there is such a wide variation in boat speed between the various classes in a typical race, it is highly unlikely that all boats will sail the same number of laps when targeting each race to last between 45 minutes and 60 minutes for all competitors. It is recommended that you set the number of laps on the clubhouse race board at 7 and then be prepared to shorten the course as necessary to meet the desired time limit (see 14 below). If you are confident that ALL boats can complete a defined number of laps within the desired time frame then it is permissible to set a fixed number of laps for everyone to complete.
- 9) Copy the course details onto a slip of paper and optionally put the course boards onto the rack at the side of the OD's cabin in the correct sequence at least 10 minutes before the first warning signal, together with the board that shows the start line in use and the number of laps to be sailed. If there is a discrepancy between the course information as shown in the clubhouse and that shown at the OD hut, then the clubhouse information takes precedence.

Take the flag box and hooter to the Starter's Cabin (or committee boat if using a water start). Prepare the following flags :-

Warning signal for single start - **Class flag H**
 Warning signal for 2nd start – **Class Flag X** - (if required);
 Preparatory flag – **Flag I**
 Shorten course signal – **Flag S**
 General recall signal – **1st Substitute**

Either put the flags on the halyards on the mast or select the flags on the canes. It is easier to use flags on canes rather than raising and lowering flags on halyards.

- 10) If using the Committee Boat for a water start, achieve a square line by dropping the outer mark at the port end (when viewed from behind the start line), take the committee boat to a position well upwind of the starboard end and drop the mud weight. Let the committee boat drift back to the correct position or slightly downwind. This avoids the fleet clustering at the starboard end of the line.
- 11) Starting procedure for club series races.

For single start races:

<u>Signal</u>	<u>Flag & sound</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Min. before start Signal</u>
Warning	Flag H raised	1	5
Preparatory	Flag I raised	1	4
One-minute	Flag I removed	1	1
Starting	Flag H removed	1	0

When the I flag is removed, the “one minute before the start the round the ends rule” will be in force. This means that if any part of a boat’s hull, crew or equipment is on the course side of the start line in the period after the lowering of the I Flag it must return to the correct side of the start line by sailing around the outer distance mark before starting correctly. Watch out for any boat that tries to return to the correct side by merely dipping back across the line. If any boat does not comply then they have not started correctly and you should mark the race sheet OCS (On course side). Bring this to the attention of the competitor after the race. Continue to time them during the race in case they wish to contest your decision to mark them OCS.

If you have opted for two starts (see 5 above) then the above starting procedure is extended by adding a second series of signals after the first start. At the “Starting” signal for the first start when Flag H is lowered, simultaneously raise Flag X which will signify the Warning for the 2nd start. Follow this with the Preparatory, One-minute and start signals as previously.

Individual Recall Procedure: If any part of a boat’s hull, crew or equipment is over the line at the starting signal or has not complied with the I Flag rule (round the ends) and you can clearly identify them, then make an additional sound signal and raise the class flag (Flag H for single start, or Flag X at the 2nd start) until the offending boat has returned to the correct side of the line by rounding the outer mark. When they have started correctly, lower the class flag. If they make no attempt to return to the correct side of the line after a couple of minutes, lower the flag and mark the race sheet OCS and inform the competitor after the race. Continue to time them during the race in case they wish to contest your decision.

General Recall Procedure: If one or several boats are over the line at the starting signal and you cannot identify them, then make two extra sound signals and raise the 1st Substitute flag. This has the effect of cancelling the starting procedure and the whole process has to be repeated with a new Warning signal for that start. Keep the 1st Substitute flying whilst you prepare the flags for the new start. When you are ready, make one sound signal and lower the 1st Substitute. **Exactly one minute later**, make a new sound signal and raise the Warning flag for the new start. The normal starting sequence as outlined above will then commence. If the General Recall applies to the first start in a two start race, then the restart of the first race must take place after the second start has been completed.

- 12) Start races at the official start time as published in the Sailing Programme. The hoisting of the flags defines the moment of the start; the sound signal draws attention to the flags. **Start your watch on the first warning signal.** Depending on the type of stop watch that you are using, this may cause the finishing times to be over recorded by 5 minutes which must be deducted before the handicaps are applied. If there are two starts the watch should be kept running and the time of the second start must be recorded. Note these times on the entry form.
- 13) During the race record the times of every boat crossing the finishing line at the end of each lap on a separate sheet of paper in order to monitor the progress of the race. This will assist the OD in determining how many laps need to be sailed by each class/boat to finish within the required time frame.
- 14) Finishing the race: Races should last between 45 and 60 minutes for all competitors. If you set a defined number of laps and the leading boat will cross the line between those times, then finish the race as the leading boat crosses the line with a sound signal. If you set 7 laps, then by monitoring the individual lap times, decide when it is appropriate to shorten the course so that the first boat to finish will cross the line at approximately 45minutes. Before the first boat to be finished reaches the last leg of the course, make two sound signals and hoist code flag S, making sure that all

preceding boats have crossed the finish line and are on their next lap. Remember that the boat you have chosen to be the first finisher may not necessarily be the fastest or leader in the race. Finish all boats as they next cross the line, noting their time to the nearest second and number of laps sailed. Ensure that you have timed and finished every boat, even those who you might consider to have incurred a starting penalty. As each boat crosses the line, make one sound signal to signify the end of the race for that boat, except that if a boat started incorrectly or did not sail the proper course then do NOT give it a finishing signal (but still record the time in case of dispute).

- 15) Time limits. Any boat that has not crossed the finishing line within 30 minutes of the first boat to finish will be deemed to have retired. Mark the race sheet accordingly. If no boat has crossed the finishing line within one hour of it's starting signal or within 15 minutes of sunset (eg due to light or no wind), the race will be abandoned.
- 16) If a crew is seen to be in difficulty and this has escaped the notice of the Cox, use the radio or any other means to draw his attention to that crew. **Remember that Hypothermia is a risk on this water! No crew should go unattended if seen to be in trouble. If conditions are such that it is unsafe for racing to continue, hoist flag N (found in the flag box) with 3 sound signals. All racing is then abandoned and boats should return ashore.**
- 17) Calculate the handicap results immediately after the end of the race. Use the calculator board in the clubhouse which shows how to calculate the corrected average lap time for each boat. Put the completed race sheet in the box on the course board or hand to the Hon Sailing Secretary.
- 18) In the event of a protest, contact a Senior Officer or member of the Sailing Committee for advice.
- 19) On conclusion of your duty ensure that all the flags have been removed from the halyards and furled or in the event of them being wet laid out to dry in the clubhouse. Return the radio to the Cox for securing in the clubroom. Return the hooter to the clubhouse.
- 20) Report any faulty gear to an officer of the club.
- 21) Before leaving the club check that someone with keys will secure the club.