

Water Rescue General Boat Guidelines Information Sheets

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References:

Chapman's Piloting

"Swiftwater Rescue Technician Advanced", Rescue 3 International, Elk Grove, CA, 2000.

"Rescue Boat Operations, Instructor Guide", Office of State Fire Marshal / State Fire Training, Sacramento, CA, September 1998.

Information Sheet #1

TOPIC: BOATING TERMS

INTRODUCTION: Overview of some boating terms.

Restricted Visibility – Fog, Heavy Rain, Snow, Smoke, ...
Night is Not Considered Restricted Visibility Under the Rules

Not Under Command – Unable to Maneuver (Usually Dead Engine or Steering Malfunction)

Whistle – Air Horn, Electric Horn, Whistle, ...

“Stand On” Vessel – Vessel that Has Right of Way

“Give-way” Vessel – Vessel that Does Not Have Right of Way (Must Take Necessary Action to Stay Out of Way of “Stand On” Vessel)

“Danger Bearing” – Risk of Collision With Other Vessel Exists if Compass Bearing of an Approaching Vessel Does Not Appreciably Change

Lookout – Person Using Human Sight and Hearing for Other Boats or Obstructions

Overtaking – Coming up on Another Vessel from Behind (can see stern lights or corresponding area by day)

Fishing Vessel – Vessel Fishing With Nets, Lines, Trawls or Other Fishing Apparatus that Restricts Maneuverability (Sport Fishing is Considered Ordinary Power Driven Vessel for Right of Way)

Port – Left Side of Boat When Facing Forward

Starboard – Right Side of Boat When Facing Forward

Information Sheet #2

TOPIC: RIGHT OF WAY PROVISIONS

INTRODUCTION: Overview of right of way for water vessels (based on maneuverability). Taken from US Inland Navigation Rules (designed solely to prevent collisions between vessels).

General Priority of Right of Way

- Not Under Command
- Restricted Maneuverability
- Restricted to Channel Water Depth
- Commercial Fishing
- Under Sail Alone
- Power Driven

Any Vessel that is Overtaking Any Other Vessel Must Always Give Way and Keep Out of Way of Vessel Being Overtaken

Head on Meeting – Pass to Port (Turn to Starboard so Port Sides of Boat Pass)

Crossing Boats – Boat that Has Other to Starboard Side is Give-way Vessel

Power Driven Vessel Going Downstream Has Right of Way Over Other Power Driven Vessel Going Upstream (Upstream Travel More Maneuverable)

Information Sheet #3

TOPIC: GENERAL BOATING GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION: Overview of rules and guidelines

Skipper Is Responsible for Knowing and Following Relevant Navigation Rules

State and Local Regulations May Be Different from Federal – Usually Follows Federal
Most States Do Require Operating at “No Wake” Speed Within 300 ft of Boating
Piers, Launching Ramps, and Other Marked Areas

Exclusion Zone of 300 ft of Diver Down State Flag

Most Common Type of Boating Accidents

Most Common – Collisions Between Vessels
2nd Most Common – Running into Fixed Object

Most Common Reasons of Boating Accidents

Most Common – Improper Lookout
2nd Most Common – Other Vessel at Fault

Safe Speed Depends

Visibility, Traffic Density, Maneuverability, Wind, Sea and Current Conditions
Proximity of Navigational Hazards
Boat Draft in Relation Water Depth
Presence of Confusing Shore Lights or Backscatter From Own Vessel Lights

In Fog (Can't See) Slow Down

Stop Dead and Reverse Engine if Close to Another Vessel and in Doubt

If in a Stand On Vessel and On a Collision Course (Danger Bearing)

Phase 1 – Maintain Course and Speed
Phase 2 – If Give Way Vessel Getting Too Close: Maneuver (Don't Turn to Port)
Phase 3 – If No Action By Give Way Vessel; Take Any Action to Avoid Collision

Information Sheet #4

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR CASTING PERSONNEL

INTRODUCTION: Method for personnel to leave boat into water

Prepare Boat to Cast Person (Driver Verifies Swimmer is Ready)

Driver Turns Boat Into Current

Motor Straight Ahead with Idle Setting (Do Not Change Throttle While Casting)

Swimmer Sits On Aft Tube

Swimmer's Feet Facing Inward, Hold Onto Boat

Port Side on RIB, Starboard Side on Firby

Communicate With Driver When Ready to Cast (Nod to Confirm Ready)

Swimmer Changes Position to Cast

Driver Signals Swimmer to Rotate (Whirl Finger Upwards, Elbow Bent)

Swimmer Rotates to Feet Facing Outwards (Maintain Sight of Driver)

Swimmer Cast Into Water

Driver Signals By Straightening Arm Outwards

Swimmer Rotates to Feet Downstream and Slides Off Tube into Water

Bend at Waist, Minimal Depth of Body Below Water

Slightly Push Away From Boat as Enter Water

Hold Lifejacket Down With One Arm

Signal OK When Safely in Water

Swimmer Clear of Boat

Swim / Drift Away From Boat Before Driver Applies Power to Boat

Swimmer Maintains Defensive Swim Position As Needed

Note – Hand Signals Are The Same As for Helicopter Water Entry

Information Sheet #5

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR BOAT SELF RESCUE

INTRODUCTION: Method for entering boat from water

Put Engine in Neutral or Turn Engine Off

Firby

Turn Engine Off If Unsafe or Get Away From Boat If Unsafe
Approach From Side of Boat
Grasp Side Rope With Both Hands
Push Self Down Into Water (Floatation Will Help Lift Body)
As Bob Out of Water Scissor Kick While and Pull / Push Into Boat
Wiggle Body Into Body

RIB (Engine Turned Off, Preferred Method)

Approach From Rear of Boat
Put Engine In Down Position If Engine Is Up
Step On Prop Guard
Grasp Front Cover of Motor
Step Up and Grab Rear Grip Bar
Step Into Boat Using Rear Grip Bar for Balance

RIB (Engine Running, Method Is More Difficult)

See If Can Shut Off Engine or Get Away From Boat If Unsafe
Approach From Midsection of Side of Boat
Grasp Side Rope With Both Hands
Push Self Down Into Water (Floatation Will Help Lift Body)
As Bob Out of Water Scissor Kick While and Pull / Push Into Boat
Wiggle Body Into Body

Information Sheet #6

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR BOAT ASSISTED AND BOAT BASED OPERATIONS

INTRODUCTION: Method for use of boats in surface support of water operations

Conduct Risk Assessment for Use of Boats

Mitigate Hazards as Needed
Determine Cost Benefit Before Use of Boats

Use Standard Systems – DART Water Rescue Guidelines

Communications	Operations Section, Groups, Communications Guidelines
Medical	Operations Section, Groups, Medical Guidelines
Rope Systems	Operations Section, Groups, Swiftwater Guidelines
Boat Handling	Operations Section, Groups, Boat Guidelines
PPE	Operations Section, Groups, PPE Guidelines

Boat Positions – One Person In Boat

Coxswain	Commander, Directs Activities of Boat Crew
Deckhand	Boat Crew, Rescuer, Support Operations
Rescue Swimmer	Boat Crew, In-water Contact Rescue
Passenger	Person Not Trained to Water Rescue Operational Level

Minimum Three People Required for Operations

One Boat With Two People + One Shore Support
Two Boats With One Person For Each Boat + One Shore Support
One Person In Boat (Non Powered, On Rope System) + Two Shore Support
Note: Three Person Minimum Does Not Apply for Training

Powered Boat Operations

Leave Engine Running If Safety Not Compromised
Engine in Neutral During Contact With or Nearby Personnel in Water
Exception – Swiftwater Pickup or Unsafe to Put Boat In Neutral

Information Sheet #7

TOPIC: GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING BOAT ASSISTED AND BOAT BASED RESCUES

INTRODUCTION: Method for use of boats in performance of water rescues

Use Guidelines for Boat Assisted and Boat Based Operations (Info Sheet #6)

Assess Victim Condition

- C-Spine Potential (May Require Packaging)
- Ability of Victim to Help in Rescue (Understand Simple Instructions)
- Severe Hypothermia Potential (May Require Parbuckling Extraction)

Make Contact With Victim (In Order of Preference)

- Reach Extend Paddle or Grasp Victim and Pull to Boat
- Throw Use Throwbag or Boat Line To Victim and Pull to Boat
- Row Move Boat to Victim
- Go Enter Water and Retrieve Victim (One Rescuer Stays In Boat)

Prepare Victim for Pickup

- Explain Process of Pickup
- Packaging or Stabilization of Victim as Required

Victim Pickup (In Order of Preference)

- Victim Steps Into Boat (Rescuer Assists)
- Victim Extract From Water Directly Into Boat (Non Moving Water)
Operations Section, Groups Medical Guidelines (Info Sheet #2)
- Swiftwater Pickup (Moving Water and Required for Safety)

Treatment of Victim as Needed