



THE INTERNATIONAL OPTIMIST DINGHY ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND

**Guidelines for Safety Procedures  
At an Optimist Dinghy Event**

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## **Introduction**

This document provides a set of guidelines prepared by IODAI for the information and guidance of clubs responsible for the organisation of Optimist Dinghy events. It is not prescriptive and does not intend to be an instruction manual to override tried and tested systems and procedures already in place by organising clubs. Organising committees may choose to ignore some of the finer details of IODAI recommendations provided that their own procedures satisfy the general principles of the guidelines.

## **Part I**

### **Safety Guidelines for clubs hosting an Optimist event**

The following are Safety Guidelines for clubs hosting Optimist events to assist in providing safe sailing and creating a structure to manage an emergency on the water should it arise.

These guidelines are intended to supplement the Rules as noted in paragraph 1 of the current **IODAI Major Event Sailing Instructions**. Where there is conflict these Racing Rules should apply.

“The responsibility for a sailor’s decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is his or hers alone”. Therefore, in the case of Optimist sailing events, it is the ultimate responsibility of the parents/ guardians to determine whether or not the sailor for whom they are responsible may sail.

### **IODAI General Principles**

With the primary objective of striving to provide safe and enjoyable sailing, the Principal Race Officer (PRO) has the overall authority to restrict various categories of sailors from launching or continuing to compete.

The objective of the Safety Officer and the fleet of Safety Boats is to endeavour to maintain that all sailors are safe at all times. For any sailing event, the event organizers should ensure that they are comfortable with the safety procedures in place prior to launch and for the duration of the activity on the water. This confidence regarding safety afloat is most effectively achieved with good planning prior to the event.

### **Who is in charge?**

Normally for IODAI supported Optimist events there should be a PRO and Safety Officer appointed to the Main Fleet and a PRO and an on-the-water Head of Rescue appointed to the Regatta Fleet.

The Regatta Fleet Head-of-Rescue should normally be the Senior Instructor attending the Regatta Fleet and will report to the Safety Officer any emergency incidents or requirement for

additional Safety Boats to attend the Regatta Fleet. (Regatta Fleet ethos explained later in this document).

Safety Boats should be free of any other duties such as mark-laying or jury duty. Safety Boats should be on a different VHF Radio channel to that of the PRO and mark-laying boats. Safety and rescue procedures and preparation prior to an event will be the Organising Committee's responsibility.

The Organising Committee should nominate a Safety Officer to take charge of on-the-water safety at Event Planning Stage. The Safety Officer should be a full member of the Organizing Committee and be responsible for all Safety Boats, Motherships, safety equipment and the briefing of all safety crews prior to and during the event. The Safety Officer should be waterborne on a RIB for the duration of the day's sailing activities. During the event the Safety Officer is directed by the PRO.

### **Sailor Tagging**

Experience has shown that in an emergency situation the priority is to account for sailors as opposed to boats and IODAI now require a sailor tagging system to feature at all events. Optimist sailors (both regatta and main fleet) should be familiar with the system and should know their responsibilities.

The following instruction is included in the IODAI Major Event Sailing Instructions:

#### **Safety Regulations**

##### **1.1 Tally System**

*This tally system shall be used for all IODAI events.*

##### **1.2 A tally board will be situated as described in the Supplementary Sailing Instructions.**

##### **1.2 Before going afloat, each competitor shall take his / her allocated band number and place it on their wrist.**

##### **1.2 At the first reasonable opportunity after coming ashore, which is normally immediately, each competitor shall ensure that their band is returned to the tally board.**

##### **1.1 A boat that retires from a race shall notify the race committee as soon as possible.**

IODAI will provide sailor tagging bands, a tagging board and integrated table for loan at the event, should it be required /requested in good time. (Event organisers will provide all other tags) In practice, sailors are allocated a tagging number for the event. At registration; they will be given two tags to be attached to their boat and trolley respectively.

When launching competitors should be required to pass through a "Safety Gate" where they will be issued with an elastic wrist band from the IODAI tagging board, the number of the band will correspond to the number of the boat and trolley tags. When coming off the water, they will again be required to pass through the Safety Gate and return their wristband to the Beachmaster or assistants who will attach it to the board in the appropriate position.

The Beachmaster should be aware of the topography of the event site and in addition to the "Safety Gate" put in place procedures to account for sailors who may come ashore at a point other than the main slipway or separate from their boat e.g. at a convenient nearby jetty.

No sailor should be permitted to pass the Beachmaster's Safety Gate or other control points without handing over his or her wristband. Remember, it is the sailor that is accounted for, not the boat.

### **Safety Boats**

A Safety Boat is a boat dedicated to the safety of sailors and all other persons on the water in connection with the event. The helms and drivers will have the necessary Safety Boat training and will be briefed as to their duties by the event Safety Officer.

Support boats, Jury boats and mark-laying boats are NOT Safety Boats. The helms and crews may or may not have the appropriate qualifications to fulfil the role of Safety Boats, however, in the event of a waterborne emergency; the PRO and Safety Officer may call upon them for assistance.

### **Mark-laying boats**

Mark-laying boats are for the purpose of mark laying and other on-the-water tasks associated with the event. They will be under the direct control of the PRO.

### **Jury boats**

Jury boats are for the supervision of racing and will have their own responsibilities under the rules of sailing.

### **Support boats**

Support boats will generally be manned by parents of sailors. They are there as spectators and to support sailors in between races. At certain events some Support Boats will be staffed by coaches. All Support Boats should be briefed prior to racing as to their responsibilities especially with regard to non-interference with racing. This will include, encroachment onto the racing area, creating wash and getting too close to the action. They will be further briefed to display a flag as directed by the organisers, to monitor a specified radio channel and to assume the role of a Safety Boat and follow directions when called upon to do so by the Safety Officer.

### **Motherships**

Motherships form an essential element to safety on the water. Rather than spend time towing stricken sailors ashore, Safety Boats can deposit them on a Mothership where they can be plied with hot drinks, warmth and comfort. Their boats can be daisy-chained off the rear of the Mothership or convenient mooring buoy for later collection by Support Boats.

Motherships should be anchored at different points close to the course as specified by the Safety Officer. Since the mothership is often used for toilet facilities it should be anchored in such a position which enables the sailor to reach towards the starting line after using the facility. The recommended position is just slightly behind a transit to the starboard end of the starting line and no closer than half the length of the starting line away".

Advice should be taken on this to ensure that Motherships are not too close to the Starting or Finish Lines to neither interfere with racing nor be located at a point near the course which is difficult or impossible for the sailors to get to between races.

Motherships should be clearly identified on the water (usually by a unique distinguishing flag carried on the shrouds or forestay). The form of identification should be communicated to all competitors at the daily briefing.

Motherships should be equipped with a working toilet, standard first aid kit, blankets and facilities to make hot drinks.

Motherships should have a floating towline not less than 50 metres long with a fender attached to the end. This towline should have tie-on loops at approximately 5m intervals.

A mixed crew of male and female is required on Motherships.

### **Ratio of Safety Boats to Sailors**

The recommended ratio of Safety Boats to Optimist sailors is 1:8 during an event. It would be well nigh impossible to muster a fleet of 15+ Safety Boats solely dedicated to safety duty for an Optimist event. So, to meet this ratio, should it be required, Support Boats are requested to confirm in advance, at RIB registration, their acceptance to support the Safety Boats if requested by the Safety Officer at any time during the event. This level of cover is normally only required if there is a rapid deterioration in weather and/or a decision has been made by the PRO to bring the fleet in off the water quickly. The PRO and Safety Officer may also call upon Jury boats and mark-laying boats to assume the role of Safety Boats. In these circumstances, the Safety Officer must be aware that personnel on these boats may or may not have the necessary skills to perform any given task with regard to safety and should assign them accordingly.

### **Support Boat Registration**

A Support Boat Registration system should be in place to inform the PRO and Safety Officer of the number of Support Boats on the water during the event. There will already be dedicated Safety Boats, mark laying boats and jury boats which are likely to remain consistent throughout the event.

### **Safety and Support Boat Identification**

All Safety Boats, Support Boats, Mark Laying Boats and Jury Boats should carry a numbered flag on a flag pole placed prominently to enable easy identification for the duration of the event. Each category of boat should have different coloured flags. The Safety Officer's Boat flag should be different to all others and be clearly demonstrated at the briefing ashore.

### **Safety Equipment**

All Safety Boats should carry safety equipment (See Appendix 1)

### **Facilities ashore**

There should be a doctor on call for the duration of the event.

Emergency telephone numbers shall be readily accessible at all times in the Race/ Event Office.

### **Communications**

All Safety Boats shall have operating VHF radio and appropriate checks made to ensure efficient communication when on the water. A dedicated channel for Safety Boats and Motherships should be assigned by the Safety Officer. In an emergency all communications

shall be on this channel. The Beachmaster / host club's onsite senior Onshore Event Official (OEO) shall be equipped with a VHF radio to enable communication with the PRO and Safety Officer.

### **Safety Boat Duties**

While competitors are on the water safety crews are required to keep constant watch on the fleet. All capsizes should be attended to immediately to ascertain the wellbeing of the sailor. Such attendance is particularly important in the case where the dinghy has turned turtle to ensure the sailor is clear of all impediments and above the surface of the water.

The first thing is to ask the competitor if they are OK to continue. Many competitors will want to continue. The Safety Boats should provide close supervision without interference until the competitor resumes sailing or requires assistance. Safety boats should also be mindful not to impede other competitors. In an emergency the Safety Boat's activity takes priority.

If a sailor requires assistance which involves towing ashore, it may be prudent to hand this task over to a Support Boat thus allowing a dedicated Safety Boat and crew to remain on the race course. The safety priority is the sailor – not equipment. Only when sailors are safe can equipment be recovered.

Safety Boats should not leave the race area until racing is over unless permitted by the Safety Officer. If circumstances dictate the Safety Officer may also require all Support Boats to similarly remain on the water.

**There should be one Safety Boat tracking the back third of any fleet racing.**

**The Safety Officer and Safety Boat crews should be aware that in stronger sailing winds it is usually the sailors from the middle to the back of the on course racing fleet that require the most support.**

### **Launch**

The Beachmaster has the option to undertake a safety equipment check to ensure compliance with class and IODAI equipment rules (See Appendix II for general guidance to parents/guardians as to what is regarded as appropriate for clothing and equipment). The Beachmaster should ensure sailors and boats are correctly tagged and recorded prior to launch.

He should not allow competitors to launch until he has permission from the PRO and Safety Officer. The Safety Officer should ensure that there are a sufficient number of Safety Boats in the water.

Safety boats should be positioned to cover the launch area and route to the race area. The Beachmaster should inform the PRO of the number of boats launched and the sail numbers of any boats who have not launched.

### **Towing Optimist Dinghies**

All Safety Boat operators should understand and be capable of towing a number of dinghies in a “daisy chain” format.

If there is a sailor in the dinghy under tow, the mainsheet should be unclipped from the boom, dagger board raised, and the sailor should sit aft in the dinghy.

Where the sailor is not suffering from cold or other injury, it is advisable to let him or her remain in their boat while under tow. When they arrive at a point of safety, they can be merely unhitched and paddle or indeed sail the remainder of the way to shore. Unmanned optimists are unwieldy craft to manhandle without an on-board sailor.

If it is necessary through injury or cold to remove the sailor from dinghy under tow, the daggerboard, spars and sail should be taken into the Safety Boat, and the rudder placed into the daggerboard case with the tiller pointing forward.

It is not always necessary to tow a sailor fully ashore and every effort should be made to utilise the facilities of Motherships and Support Boats to minimise downtime of Safety Boats. The onus on Support Boats to assist in this regard should be emphasised at briefings. Safety Boats should not leave the race area for a task that can be performed by a Support Boat.

### **Upper wind limit for Optimist events**

There is an upper limit of 25 knots for starting Optimist dinghy events. However the PRO may decide not to race in wind conditions less than this. Factors such as weather forecasts, temperature, sea state, visibility and the capability of his safety procedures to ensure safe racing should all be taken into consideration. The PRO may also consider his observations of the sailing skills of the competitors in any racing that has already taken place.

### **Phased stand down of fleets**

PRO's may consider standing down some fleets of sailors. IODAI have a phased order of stand down of fleets as follows:

1. Junior Division - Silver Fleet
2. Junior Division - Silver Fleet and Senior Division - Silver Fleet
3. Junior Division - Silver Fleet; Senior Division - Silver Fleet and Junior Division - Gold Fleet
4. All sailors

The following sailing instruction is incorporated in the IODAI Major Event Instructions

## **21. Adverse Weather Conditions**

1.1 *The race officer may, at his / her absolute discretion, decide to abandon racing for certain Fleets and / or Divisions.*

1.1 *The race officer will abandon racing for the Fleets and Divisions in the following order:*

1.2 Junior Division – Silver Fleet

*Flag “N” over “Numeral Pennant 1” displayed with three sound signals either ashore at the place specified in the Supplementary Sailing Instructions or on the committee boat.*

1.2 Senior Division – Silver Fleet

*Flag “N” over “Numeral Pennant 2” displayed with three sound signals either ashore at the place specified in the Supplementary Sailing Instructions or on the committee boat.*

1.2 Junior Division – Gold Fleet

*Flag “N” over “Numeral Pennant 3” displayed with three sound signals either ashore at the place specified in the Supplementary Sailing Instructions or on the committee boat.*

1.1 *A boat for which racing is abandoned under this Sailing Instruction shall be awarded average points for the races sailed after allowing for discards.*

1.1 *The application of this sailing instruction shall not be grounds for redress.*

### **Return of fleets to shore**

Occasionally, a scenario develops during a race where a number of sailors overestimate their ability to handle the conditions. In this case the PRO (in consultation with the Safety Officer) may make a decision to stand down some fleets of sailors. Other fleets may continue racing. A decision in advance of the event should be made as to who has overall responsibility for the co-ordination and control of the returning of a fleet to shore once the PRO has confirmed the decision to abandon racing for some or all fleets. Usually it will be the Safety Officer as the PRO may still have to perform race duties. Such responsibility may be transferred during the implementation of the fleet return to shore from the PRO or Safety Officer to another person depending on circumstances. In such instances, the transfer of overall responsibility must be clearly communicated to and accepted by the person taking charge of overall responsibility.

### **Regatta Fleet**

Regatta Fleet Racing is for beginners and unranked sailors - usually from age 8 upwards. The focus of the Regatta Fleet is on having fun and there is a Regatta Fleet element at most major Optimist events. Sailors should be capable of completing a triangular course of approximately 250m leg, in light to moderate winds, before entering to participate in the Regatta Fleet.

It's not taken too seriously and only appointed IODAI and host club coaches are allowed to give advice during racing. To maintain the Regatta Fleet ethos coaching is not permitted other than by the coaches appointed by the event organizers.

Regatta Fleet gives the younger sailor the experience of doing circuit events without the pressures of racing way out to sea over long courses. There are often around 50 boats.



The Regatta Fleet race area will generally be close to shore or in a harbour or sheltered area. They will usually launch after the main fleet, may return to shore for lunch, and be off the water before the main fleet finish racing.

They should only be launched in light to medium airs but the Senior Instructor will be well aware of their capabilities and will liaise with the Regatta Fleet PRO as to whether they should launch.

If the Regatta Fleet do not launch or have all been returned ashore the organizing club's Safety Boats allocated to the Regatta Fleet should assist at the Main Fleet after direction from the Safety Officer.

## PART II

### Emergency Plan

Organising clubs are advised to consider the following extract from the Recommendations of the ISA Events Working Group Report 2008:

*“A comprehensive emergency plan should be in place for every event. This should take account of the fact that communication with the PRO may be difficult or impossible. Having all radios enclosed in waterproof bags has been shown to reduce wind noise. Support craft should be included in the emergency plan, and support craft crews (usually parents) should be briefed on their responsibilities in the event of an emergency – e.g. they may be tasked to tow boats ashore in order to free up safety craft.”*

### IODAI Recommendations

IODAI would recommend that all clubs should have an Emergency Plan for implementation in the event of an emergency. Such a plan is the responsibility of the club organizing the event. Emergency plans will be unique to each club, its location and the facilities available both at the club and in the area.

In the preparation or review of any Emergency Plan it is recommended that clubs consider the following:

- The above extract from the Recommendations of the ISA Events Working Group Report 2008
- The Recommendations of the ISA Events Working Group Report 2008
- The Contents of Appendices 6 and 7 of these guidelines

## **Part III      APPENDICES**

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## Appendix 1 Safety Boat Personnel and Equipment

- At least two crew, one of whom should hold an ISA Level 2 Powerboat Certificate or equivalent. (It is customary that many visiting RIBs are helmed by parents of sailors in the event. Not all the helms are known to have Level 2 Powerboat Certificates., but have a proven helming capability, a lot of experience at similar sized events and understand their role in the event of an emergency.)
- Chinagraph Marker. Paper-wrapped wax marker for use on glass and other high gloss surfaces. (available normally from your local chandlery or online)
- Coloured Ribbon or Coloured Cable Ties  
(Note The Chinagraph Marker, Coloured Ribbons or Coloured Cable Ties can be used in an emergency situation to show that a dinghy has been abandoned and the sailor has been safely taken ashore. The Chinagraph Marker can be used to X the hull if turned turtle, while the cable tie / ribbon can be attached to the toe straps if the dinghy is upright at time of abandoning)
- VHF Radio
- 2 Anchors and warps sufficient for the depths and forecasted operating conditions.
- First Aid Kit.
- Fire Extinguisher.
- 10 metres of warp
- Paddles.
- Crew must have adequate clothing for the current/forecasted weather conditions.

## Appendix 2

### DAILY SAFETY CHECK LIST PARENTS /GUARDIANS

**Sailors who wish to participate in Events run by IODAI are required to comply with the following MINIMUM safety requirements. It is a matter for the *parent/guardian* of a sailor to ensure that these requirements are complied with. Safety may be carried out at an Event and Sailors found not to comply, may not be permitted to launch, or may be penalized on the water under class rules.**

#### Daily Safety Check

Every sailor should obtain a positive safety check from their parent/guardian on each day of sailing prior launching. The safety check should include the following:

1. The sailor of the dinghy must be in attendance for a safety check.
2. Lifejacket must be securely zipped and belted with working whistle attached.
3. Dry suit, if worn, must be in good condition and zip *fully* closed.
4. Bootees with open lacing or similar closures that can get caught on fittings etc are not permitted.
5. Sun protection is necessary in sunny weather. Parents/guardians must note that the sun is much stronger on the water because of reflection etc.
6. A painter must be secured at the base of mast or around the dagger-board casing. The painter must be of a single piece of buoyant rope, not less than 5mm diameter and not less than 8m long securely fastened to the base of the mast or mast step. The painter should have a bowline at the end and no other knots between the mast step and its for ease of daisy-chain towing.
7. The mast must be firmly secured to the dinghy. To ensure the mast is secure an attempt to lift the mast up will test its efficiency and thus avoid potential damage. Either a tie attached to the forward thwart forward of the mast and securely tied around the mast above the kicker jam-cleat or a mast clip securely closed and attached to the mast under the forward thwart may be used. The mast clip must also be attached separately to the base of the mast fitting with durable lashing.
8. Two bailers securely attached. One, at least, being a 2 litre bailer. Overnight water should be bailed from the dinghy.

9. Paddle must be provided and securely tied in.
10. Three Buoyancy tanks/bag must be the correct size (45 +/- 5 litres), in good condition and fully inflated and all secured with three straps on each bag. In the case of Optimists with buoyancy tanks protected by fibreglass casing, the three buoyancy tanks/bags should be visually checked during the event daily check to ensure they are fully inflated.
11. The dagger-board must be secured to the dinghy.
12. There must be a safety clip on the rudder.
13. A snap shackle or similar device, which cannot get caught on the sailors clothing or life jacket, must be used to connect the mainsheet block to the strop. A simple carbine is not permitted.
14. Toe straps must be adequately secured
15. There must be sufficient lashing securing the sail to the spars.
16. The strop (below boom) must be tightened sufficiently so that the gap between Strop and Boom is less than 10 cm
17. Each boat must be tagged with the sailor's Event Registration Number

## Appendix 3

### Guideline Safety Information to be included at the Support Boat Briefing

- All Support Boats should be registered by completing the registration form
- All Support Boats should carry a numbered flag on a flag pole placed at the stern for identification
- Give clear identification of the Safety Officer RIB on the water
- There should be a working VHF radio on the Support Boat at all times
- Confirm the VHF Safety Channel for the event
- Reminder that the VHF Safety Channel is for use of the Safety Officer and those persons under the Safety Officer's control.
- Expected duties of Support Boats in the event of an Emergency – primarily to take onboard competitors and tow in dinghies
- Minimize wake on the course
- The kill-cord attached to the outboard engine system shall be worn by the driver at all times whilst the engine is running. (With so many ribs and optimists milling around this is to protect everybody on the water in the event a of freak accident)
- All Support Boats must keep well clear of all participants. Interference with any competitor during a race may result in action being taken by the race committee, which includes, but is not limited to, the imposition of a penalty against the competitor(s) with which the Support Boat crew has a relationship.
- Where possible a unilateral decision to call out the Emergency Services to attend to any participant of the event should be avoided. If any event official/participant feels that such a call should be made they should, if at all possible, first seek the advice of the person with overall responsibility for monitoring the safety of the competitors afloat. (Should the need arise to call in Emergency Services, where possible it should normally be only one of four people involved in the event that actually make the call to the Emergency Services – The PRO, Safety Officer, Beachmaster or OEO. It is imperative that the Beachmaster or OEO is available on site for the duration the sailors are afloat. This provides a clear line of communications to both the event organizers and the Emergency Services for callout verification and on the water interaction)

## Appendix 4

### Guideline Safety Information to be included at the Safety Boat Briefings

- The Safety Boat crews are under the direction of the Safety Officer until they are advised to stand down by the Safety Officer
- Each Safety Boat crew confirms that the items listed on the above **Appendix 1 - Safety Boat Personnel and Equipment** have been checked and are onboard.
- The Kill-cord attached to the outboard engine system shall be worn by the driver at all times whilst the engine is running.
- Position of each Safety Boat at launch and prior to racing
- Confirm which Safety Boat will be in position in sight of the slip and bring the tail end of the fleet to the course.
- Position of each Safety Boat during racing
- Confirm that two Safety Boats act as sweepers at the end of sailing for the day
- Confirmation from the crews of the ability to daisy-chain a number of dinghies to be towed
- Full fuel tank at start of day
- Any safety/ pre-embarkation checks particular to the host club/ event organizers
- Confirm the VHF channel to be used as the Safety Channel for the day/event. Normally the crew should stay on this channel while under the supervision of the Safety Officer
- Do all crews have their VHF radios working and sufficient radio batteries for the day?
- Ensure all water bailed from Safety Boat prior to leaving berth or mooring.
- All Safety Boats need to be on the water in attendance prior to the Beachmaster confirming a fleet launch
- The Safety Boats remain on the water throughout the races and accompany the sailors ashore after the race.
- All safety crews stay on the water until told they can stand down by the Safety Officer
- If any safety crew feels that outside emergency services should be called in, they should make their opinion know to the Safety Officer first. Where possible it should normally be only one of four people involved in the event that actually make call to the Emergency Services – The PRO, Safety Officer, Beachmaster. This provides the event organizers and the Emergency Services a clear line of communications for callout verification and on the water interaction)
- The Safety Officer should ensure that the VHF radio batteries are given a full charge each night. The availability of enough Safety Boat VHF radios and chargers should be checked prior to the event
- Safety crews should ensure they have enough food for the duration afloat to avoid having to leave the race area.



## **Appendix 5a**

### **Points of Safety for which the Beachmaster should be mindful at launch**

- All safety personnel onshore are responsible and report to the Beachmaster
- Each boat must be tagged with the sailor's Event Registration Number
- For the duration of a fleet launch, the prime launch slipway should be clear of all other slip activity. This is approximately 30 minutes per fleet. Multiple activities on the slip during an Optimist fleet launch and recovery will create a high accident risk
- A number of people may be required at the launch gate however one person should have overall responsibility for the Safety Gate and should clearly understand the recording process
- The launch gate must be in position before the decision to launch is made.
- The safety assistants should be wearing an easily identifiable jacket.
- The Beachmaster shall inform the PRO and the Safety Officer of the number of boats launched and the sail numbers of the competitors who do not intend to race.
- It has proven beneficial to have 2-3 strong adults in the water at the slipway (with dry suits or waders if available) to speed up the clearance of dinghies away from the slipway.
- Junior club members not involved in the event can often be utilised for trolley handling.

## **Appendix 5b**

### **Points of Safety for which the Beachmaster should be mindful for competitors returning ashore.**

- The Safety Gate should be active for the duration that any competitor is on the water.
- The tagging system is for tagging the sailor not the boat. It is very important to ensure it is the sailor that has come ashore not just the dinghy. This tracking of the sailor is particularly important as there may be a lot of busy confusion if all sailors are requested to return ashore en masse after race abandonment in adverse weather conditions. The person in charge of the Safety Gate should have some experience of what is required and be regarded as reliable.
- For the duration of a fleet recovery, the prime launch slipway should be clear of all other slip activity. This is approximately 30 minutes per fleet. Multiple activities on the slip during an Optimist fleet launch and recovery will create a high accident risk
- The Beachmaster shall inform the Safety Officer when all sailors have been returned to shore so that the Safety Fleet may be stood down
- It has proven beneficial to have 2-3 strong adults in the water at the slipway (with dry suits /waders if available) to speed up the clearance of dinghies onto the slipway.
- It has proven beneficial to set up in advance a team of adults (usually parents) to help clear Optimist on trolleys up and off the slipway each day.

## Appendix 6

### Guidelines for a Waterborne Emergency Rescue

- An emergency is defined as one in which a sailor has been injured, becomes sick, suffers water inhalation or hypothermia to such an extent that medical attention is required.
- **In all cases the rescue objective is to preserve life. Accordingly, the Principal Race Officer (PRO), the Safety Officer (Safety Officer) or the Beachmaster / host club's onsite senior Onshore Event Official (OEO) must immediately request whatever additional emergency services that are required from the Coast Guard (via CH 16 or telephone), the RNLi Lifeboat, or other appropriate service.**
- The following rescue principles should apply:
  - Attend to the casualty immediately.
  - Recover the casualty to a Mothership or ashore as quickly as possible depending on the circumstances.
  - Advise the Beachmaster/ OEO, as early as possible, of the condition of the casualty and his medical requirements (doctor, ambulance, cardiac ambulance, etc). Note: The recommendation of a number of medical sources is to call an ambulance as the local hospital A & E is regarded as the most appropriate way of dealing with the majority of injuries/illnesses in an emergency. The decision on how to best deal with a casualty can only be decided by people on site /in communication at the time.
  - The Beachmaster/ OEO should call the appropriate medical service and advise the Senior Club Official on duty of the situation.
  - The Beachmaster/ OEO will coordinate rescue activities ashore and is the 1<sup>st</sup> on shore Point Of Contact. This official will ensure that an accurate record is kept of sailors recovered and returning to the shore.
- **Should the situation arise where it is the view of the PRO in consultation with the Safety Officer that the fleet of Safety Boats (including Support Boats) are considered by the PRO to be insufficient to complete the objective of bringing all competitors safely ashore. The PRO will request that outside emergency services be called to assist.** (If any race official feels that outside emergency services should be called in, if at all possible, they must first seek the advice of the person with overall responsibility for co-ordinating the fleet's return ashore. Where possible it should normally be only one of four people involved in the event that actually make call to the Emergency Services – The PRO, Safety Officer, Beachmaster or OEO. This provides the event organizers and the Emergency Services a clear line of communications for callout verification and on the water interaction)
  - See Appendix 7 for important reminders regarding an emergency rescue plan.

## Appendix 7

### Waterborne Emergency Rescue Plan – Event reminders

- Identify and communicate with, and have contact details at hand for the local Coast Guard liaison person for the event. For planning purposes the Coast Guard require:-
  - Notice of race
  - Names of PRO, Beachmaster, Safety Officer /OEO– with mobile phone contact numbers.
  - Numbers of competitors (if dinghies – age groups )
- Beachmaster to wear high visibility jacket.
- Briefing for all Safety Boat crews and Mothership skippers.
- If an emergency is called, all boats to operate on pre-agreed channel. (Generally the Coast Guard won't approve of the use of CH16 unless there is a major emergency)
- Briefing for all Support Boats
- If outside Emergency assistance is required on the water the Coast Guard should be called on VHF Ch. 16 or land line 999 / 911. If 999/911 is dialled normally the call is transferred to the Coast Guard who then make the decision to call in the local Coast Guard or RNLI or both.
- The person with overall responsibility should be responsible for the initiation of this call. If any race official feels that such a call should be made they should, if at all possible, first seek the advice of the person with overall responsibility at the time for the implementation Emergency Rescue Plan.
- Where possible it should normally be only one of four people involved in the event that actually make call to the Emergency Services – The PRO, Safety Officer, Beachmaster or OEO. This provides the event organizers and the Emergency Services a clear line of communications for callout verification and on the water interaction)

#### Updates:

03/09 – DWD/FC/DF

03/10 – DWD/FC/DF

03/11 – DWD/DF