



Richmond River Sailing and Rowing Club

P.O. Box 963 Ballina 2478

Website: <http://www.rrsrc.com.au/home/>
Enquiries: Phone or email Committee members

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. Introduction

Richmond River Sailing and Rowing Club (RRS&RC) conducts club sailing events with the main sailing season between September and June each year on the Richmond River. A social sailing program also runs between June and August without a designated rescue boat. All sailing involves some risk and the RRS&RC objective is to conduct events in a manner where the risks are minimized. At the same time, we endeavor to allow as many members to sail each weekend as possible, often using volunteers, family and partners to man the Control Tower and/or assist on the Rescue Boat.

In all racing situations there are 2 dedicated rescue boats available.

1) Rescue /start boat manned by two persons. This boat is continuously on the water at all times during racing. The operators are in constant radio contact with race tower. There is also a backup mobile phone carried by both regular rescue boat operators. These phone numbers are documented in the tower in vicinity of club telephone. Both these operators have access to race tower operator's telephone number.

2) Rubber Duck on beach and prepped ready to be used in event it is required. In rescue situation this boat is manned by 2 persons. This boat also has contact with race tower by way of hand held radio.

Inexperienced sailors are never on the water without at least 1 rescue boat available. These sailors are commonly in small numbers and in situations where the size of the group outweighs control by 1 rescue boat (such as during sail training courses) there will be a second rescue boat either immediately available with dedicated crew or on the water.

All sailors are advised regarding inexperienced sailors on the water at formal pre-race briefing.

No person sailing or operating rescue vessels at RRSRC enters the water without being attired with an appropriate floatation device.

Inexperienced people may be required to help in an incident. This can be successfully achieved as we will always have at least two experienced members of the club involved in managing each race and any incident.

The main objective of this Incident Management Plan is to ensure that the appropriate response is taken to any incident that does occur. To assist in achieving this goal, this document outlines who does what, when and how the clubs resources are to be used in any incident.

2. RRS&RC Sailing Committee

The Sailing Committee consists of the following people:

- Vice Commodore (Chairman)
- Rescue Boat Skipper
- Commodore and may include
 - Handicapper
 - Duty Officer
 - Class Representatives

The Sailing Committee decides on the course to be sailed for the day. They also choose an *Assistant Incident Manager* for the day if the season appointed *Assistant Incident Manager* is not available. This person is declared at the briefing if required.

3. Race Management

There needs to be a quick and seamless transition from race management to incident management when the need arises. We thus start with a brief discussion of race management. This should be read in conjunction with the club's *Sailing Instructions*.

Communications

A member of the *Sailing Committee* is responsible for obtaining the latest weather update and current wind speed. This is to be communicated at the briefing along with any warnings.

An *Assistant Incident Manager* may be appointed for the season. If the appointed *Assistant Incident Manager* is not available, then another Club Member shall be chosen before the briefing of the race to be the *Assistant Incident Manager* and given a portable radio if they do not have one on their boat. (It is preferable that this member sails a boat with a motor available.)

Radio communications must be established between the Tower and the *Rescue Boat Skipper* and the *Assistant Incident Manager* before the start of racing.

It is the responsibility of the *Tower Operator* to relay any messages or weather warnings to the *Rescue Boat Skipper*. The *Tower Operator* may also be required to contact the Police or Ambulance if outside assistance is required or a major incident has occurred.

Worsening Conditions

Racing should be postponed ashore or abandoned where the *Rescue Boat Skipper* or *Assistant Incident Manager* considers it necessary for the safety of the competitors. As a guide, racing should be postponed or abandoned if the wind consistently exceeds 25 knots or short duration gusts exceed 30 knots.

A decision to abandon the race will be signaled on both the *Rescue Boat* and the *Assistant Incident Manager's* boat by the "Race Abandoned" flag. From this point on the *Incident Management Committee* takes charge of proceedings.

The *Rescue Boat Skipper* may delay the abandonment of a race substantially underway in order to finish the fleet approaching the finish line and if there is no indication of conditions substantially deteriorating and the remaining racing craft are not being overwhelmed by the conditions.

Retiring Boats

All sailors are required to sign on prior to participating in any race. In order for all boats to be accounted for at the end of a race: Race instructions also advise all sailors they must sign off if they do not finish the race/pass through the finish gate directly in front of the race tower.

It is the responsibility of individual sailors to make the race tower aware if they have withdrawn from a race. The tower operator will also endeavor to take note of any boats retiring from the race and returning to the club.

4. Incident Management Committee

If there is a sailing incident then the *Rescue Boat Operator and the Assistant Incident Manager* shall be in charge of managing the incident. If the Rescue Boat Operator is not available or not experienced, then *one Committee Member* will be chosen on the day to make up the *Incident Management Committee*. The *Assistant Incident Manager* is chosen by the *Sailing Committee* before the briefing of each race.

5. Risk Assessment

Responding appropriately to circumstances is first of all dependent upon a quick and accurate assessment of the situational risk. This is to be carried out by the *Rescue Boat Skipper* in the first instance or the *Incident Management Committee* if necessary. He may receive input from various sources.

4.1 Risk Analysis

In order of the severity of outcome combined with the urgency of the needed response, the more important risks are:

Risk	Severity	Response
a) Crew trapped in a capsized and pinned underwater This is an extremely rare occurrence. This makes it difficult to generalize about the type of boat or circumstance that may occur. The risk should never be underestimated for boats where only children are aboard.	Moderate Major if medical attention required	<u>Attempt recovery immediately.</u> Check for injuries. If injured/unconscious a member of the <i>Incident Management Committee</i> to ask <i>Tower Operator</i> to call Water Police for assistance and evacuation. If uninjured, determine ability to continue or return to club.

b) Member suffering sudden onset of severe illness (eg. Heart attack) This is probably more likely for adults, although allergic reactions or food poisoning could occur for younger sailors. The onset of the problem could bring about a capsize.	Major	A qualified person is to render first aid. A member of the <i>Incident Management Committee</i> to ask <i>Tower Operator</i> to call Water Police for assistance and evacuation if needed.
c) Injury through a collision or on board incident This may sometimes manifest itself in a capsize. It may also involve a collision with a fisherman or other river user.	Minor to Major	Check for injuries. If injured/unconscious <i>Rescue Boat Skipper</i> to call Water Police for assistance and evacuation. If the collision is with a bystander or fisherman's boat, even if there is no injury sustained, the Water Police will need to be called by the <i>Rescue Boat Skipper</i> .
d) Man overboard or separated from unmanned boat. Capsized boat and crew not visible.	Minor to Major	Go to incident immediately and assist if necessary.
e) Strong Wind/ Storm Arrives When the wind increases to regularly exceed 20 knots it is likely that a number of boats will require assistance at the same time.	Minor to Major	Storm Imminent - <i>Incident Management Committee</i> to make the decision on whether to postpone the start or whether to abandon a race in progress. Racing should be abandoned where the <i>Incident Management Committee</i> considers it necessary for the safety of the competitors. As a guide, racing should be postponed or abandoned if the wind consistently exceeds 25 knots or short duration gusts exceed 30 knots. The <i>Incident Management Committee</i> may delay the abandonment of a race substantially underway in order to finish the fleet approaching the finish line and if there is no indication of conditions substantially deteriorating and the remaining racing craft are not being overwhelmed by the conditions.

6. General Principles of Incident Management at RRS&RC

5.1 Incident Management Committee

If an Incident occurs during racing then either member of the *Incident Management Committee* may call it into action and this committee will take on responsibility for deciding whether to continue the race or not and what actions are to be taken to ensure the safety of club members.

5.2 Priorities

In an emergency, the priority is to ensure the safety of COMPETITORS NOT BOATS. Drifting or anchored boats can be picked up later. If a member of the *Incident Management Committee* believes that 'crews are at risk' he may override the sailing instructions and issue a directive that the crews in question are to be rescued.

5.3 Rescue Boat to Remain Available in a Worsening Situation

When there are multiple capsizes or boats on the rocks or the situation looks like getting worse, the Rescue Boat is to avoid tying itself up in a lengthy boat retrieval operation. The rescue boat should remain available for urgent rescues. If there is a second rescue boat available, this can be sent to assist. The *Incident Management*

Committee should check on the condition of as many competitors as reasonably possible before deciding who has priority and is to receive the first help. Major and Moderate incidents have priority and should be assisted immediately. Adult skippers can often hold their capsized boat off the rocks for some time without danger to themselves or boat, for example. Children in the water may require assistance more quickly.

5.4 Prioritize Assistance

If no major or moderate incident has occurred, and the *Rescue Boat Skipper* is confident that further more serious incidents are unlikely he can prioritize assistance to minor incidents. Establishing each competitor and boat in a safe position should be done in the way that requires the least time. See 5.5 and 5.6 for examples.

5.5 Abandon or Anchor Boat

The boat may be left in the water for attention later. If necessary, and if a suitable anchor is available, the boat may be anchored in the river for retrieval later. Racing buoys may be available for this use if an anchor is not available.

5.6 Tow Boat to Nearest Shore

If it is necessary to take the boat in tow, don't attempt to tow it back to the club when other boats are or may get into trouble. This takes too long. Also, do not attempt to tow more than two boats at one time unless the situation for all other competitors is stable. If the crew's condition is fine, they may be towed to the nearest beach and left there, quickly freeing the rescue boat up to look after others in need.

5.7 When to Contact Surf Lifesaving Jet Boat

In a situation where so many boats require assistance or towing urgently that it is beyond the clubs available resources then the Ballina Surf Lifesaving Jet Boat should be called in. The *Incident Management Committee* is responsible for making this decision. See Appendix 1 for contact number.

5.8 Tow boats back to club

When the situation is stabilized, boats can be towed back to the club in any numbers.

5.9 Rubber Duck

The club's Rubber Duck is to be kept on the beach during all sailing events if it is not already in use. It is the backup rescue boat. If used, it must be manned by two people wearing approved life jackets. It may be manned by the *Duty officer* or a club visitors or competitors who have returned to the club from the race; whoever is available at the time. All sailing club members should be instructed in its use.

5.10 Trailer Sailors

Trailerable club boats equipped with radio and an outboard may be requested to assist the club rescue boats in incidents involving many boats requiring towing or multiple rescues. A member of the *Incident Management Committee* or *Tower Operator* will contact these if needed in a rescue.

5.11 When to Call the Water Police

When a competitor or bystander has suffered an injury that requires outside assistance or advice the Water Police should be informed immediately as well as the ambulance, if needed. This is to be coordinated by the *Incident Management Committee*.

3.12 Report

If a Moderate or Major incident occurs (as defined by this document) then a written report should be produced by a suitable person from the *Sailing Committee* in conjunction with the *Incident Management Committee*.

APPENDIX 1

CONTACT INFORMATION

Useful Phone numbers

Emergency Services	Dial 000 UHF Ch 16
RRS&RC Club (tower operator's phone)	
Ballina Coast Guard Tower	02 6681 4700
Ballina Surf Lifesaving Jet Boat	0414 777099
Ballina Water Police	02 6652 0257
Ballina Police	02 6681 8699

Bureau of Meteorology

Marine Warning (Phone)	1300 360 427
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Radio Communications

The Duty Officer in charge of the course:	UHF channel 13
Rescue boat Skipper	UHF channel 13
Ballina Coastguard tower	UHF channel 73

Sailing Committee

Vice Commodore	Jonathan Horsley	0412 798 505
Rescue Boat Skipper	Richard Howard	Radio UHF Ch 13
Commodore	Phillip Robbins	0466 668 541

Members:

Duty Officer	As assigned for race	Radio contact Ch 96 <u>13</u>
or duty officer's mobile		
Rowing Duty Officer	Gerald Anderson <u>Graham Hams</u>	
tba		

Appendix 2

GUIDE TO INCIDENCE SEVERITY

RATING

DESCRIPTION

ACTION

MINOR

- Minor Personal Injuries unlikely to require external medical attention eg. Cuts, bruises and abrasions.
- Capsize or damage to boat requiring prolonged assistance.
- Multiple capsize or grounded boats, requiring towing
- Potential threat of storm.
- Sudden storm/gale with threat to boats

- Observe
- Escalate Severity if necessary
- Abandon race if necessary
- Assess priorities and assist most in need
- Tow boats to shore when situation stable

MODERATE

- Personal Injury requiring external intervention or advice eg. Broken bone, head injury – non life-threatening.
- Serious collision with bystander's boat possibly involving injury.

- Liaise with Tower Operator
- Contact Police and Ambulance if needed
- Abandon race
- Co-ordinate others to help
- Assess priorities and assist most in need

MAJOR

- Potential life threatening incident or injury (requiring urgent external assistance)
- Fatality
- Missing Person

- Provide immediate assistance
- Call Water Police
- Co-ordinate others to help
- Assist police

Appendix 3

Rescue Boat Suggested Contents

- *Rescue Boat Skipper* and assistant
- Sufficient fuel for multiple rescues
- Two towropes fitted with throwing ball and spring clip at rescue end and secure loop at other end for fitting over towing mount on the rescue boat.
- At least one spare anchor with rope and spring clip.
- First aid kit.
- Radio (with communication connection to tower tested before start of race)
- Someone to carry a mobile phone as backup to radio.

Appendix 4

This is an advisory list only. Persons listed are not under a duty of care to perform first aid.

A first Aid kit is located just inside the front door of the clubhouse. It is the responsibility of the Safety officer to keep it suitably stocked.

Club Members with First Aid Skills

- Jonathan Horsley
- Nola Hallet
- ~~Norm Hunt~~Colin Woodbry
- Anyone else
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