

CODE OF PRACTICE - MARINE ACTIVITIES

• PART I • SEA-GOING VESSELS



NRA

National Rivers Authority

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NRA HEALTH & SAFETY

POLICY STATEMENT

It is the National Rivers Authority's firm Policy, in all of its activities that all reasonably practicable measures will be taken to safeguard the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected.

Directors, Regional General Managers and all other managerial and supervisory staff have delegated responsibility, for matters within their control, to ensure that health and safety are given the fullest consideration at all stages of work.

In turn, all other employees are expected to co-operate in the carrying out of this Policy and to ensure that they do not endanger themselves and others by their actions.

In practice each person has a part to play in the promotion of safety and the prevention of accidents and ill-health at work.

NRA CODE OF PRACTICE

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MARINE ACTIVITIES

It is the policy of the NRA in its marine activities, both sea-going vessels and smaller boats, to take all reasonably practicable steps to safeguard personnel and provide safe equipment, safe systems of work and trained competent crews, in a safe working and living environment.

In the case of all NRA vessels/boats the Master/Skipper has delegated responsibility for all matters within their control, to ensure that all health and safety matters are given the fullest consideration at all stages of work.

In turn all other employees forming part of the crew both permanent and temporary are expected to co-operate in the carrying out of this Code of Practice and ensure that they do not endanger themselves or others by their acts or omissions.

CLASSIFICATION OF VESSELS

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- Type I - Survey Vessels
Fishery Patrol Vessels
(permanently crewed and to Department of Transport specifications)
- Type II - Boats capable of operating in coastal waters up to and including the six mile limit.
- Type III - Boats operating in inshore waters and estuaries up to the tidal limits.
- Type IV - Boats operating in non-tidal rivers and still waters.
- Type V - Low powered and non-powered boats for use in still waters and other river locations.

NB Boats chartered for use by NRA staff should meet the minimum standards in this Code of Practice.

• PART I •

SEA-GOING VESSELS

1. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MASTER

- 1.1 The Master is accountable to the Regional General Manager for all health and safety matters within his control.
- 1.2 The Master is responsible for the overall safety of his vessel and of all those on board, and for operating the vessel within the Department of Transport “Code of Safe Working Practices for Merchant Seamen” and in accordance with the relevant “M” notices, statutory instruments and IMO legislation.
- 1.3 The range of responsibilities within the Master’s control will include:-
 - 1.3.1 Implementing the local arrangements for carrying out the NRA’s Health & Safety policy.
 - 1.3.2 Ensuring that crew members (both permanent and temporary) are allocated work at sea according to their ability and for which they have been given the appropriate information, instruction and training (consult the Marine Survey Officer).
 - 1.3.3 Ensuring that all crew members understand the nature and extent of the work to be undertaken, the hazards that are associated with boat work and the precautions to be taken.
 - 1.3.4 Ensuring that the necessary protective clothing and safety equipment is worn or used.
 - 1.3.5 Ensuring that emergency drills are practised and that all crew members readily understand the appropriate safety rules, emergency procedures and safe methods of work whilst on board.
 - 1.3.6 Reporting and investigating all accidents and dangerous occurrences in accordance with both the NRA’s and Department of Transport reporting procedures.
 - 1.3.7 Maintenance of the vessels log book in accordance with the Regional policy and the Department of Transport Guidelines.

- 1.3.8 Liaising as necessary with the National and Regional Safety Adviser on matters of general health and safety.
- 1.3.9 Ensuring that gangways conform to the design specifications laid down by the Department of Transport.

2. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CREW

- 2.1 Each individual member of the crew has a duty to ensure safety in those matters within their own control, whether supervising or carrying out a task or in reporting or remedying defects which might impair safety.
- 2.2 All crew members should understand the emergency drills appertaining to their vessels and regularly practice them under the direction of the Master/Skipper or his delegated officer.
- 2.3 Take care of the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- 2.4 Co-operate with the vessels' Master/Skipper so far as is necessary to enable them to perform or comply with their legal duties.
- 2.5 Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided by law in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- 2.6 Comply with the provisions of specified statutory regulations so far as they relate to matters within an employee's control.
- 2.7 Report to the Master/Skipper or delegated officer any hazard, accident or dangerous occurrence which have or might have caused injury or plant damage and to co-operate in any accident of dangerous occurrence investigation.
- 2.8 Adhere to agreed procedures for safe working, observe any on board safety rules or instructions relevant to particular work and to use protective clothing and safety equipment provided.

3. HEALTH & HYGIENE

- 3.1 It is each individuals responsibility to maintain reasonable levels of fitness and to look after their own health. High standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained.
- 3.2 All vessels are to be treated as no smoking zones.*
- 3.3 The carriage and drinking of alcohol on board all NRA vessels is forbidden.
- 3.4 On board, simple infections can easily spread from person to person. Thus preventative measures, as well as easily effective treatment, are essential.
- 3.5 Cuts and abrasions should be cleaned at once and given first aid treatment as necessary to protect against infection.
- 3.6 Barrier creams may help to protect exposed skin against dermatitis and also make thorough cleaning easier. Appropriate gloves should be worn when engaged in sampling and survey work.

* It is generally accepted that passive smoking is hazardous to health, therefore all vessels shall be no smoking zones. The carriage of fuel (petrol) also precludes smoking.

4. SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

4.1 Full Time Crew

Both the Master and the Survey Officer should be fit for sea going duties. The Master should be in possession of a valid Master's Ticket (minimum Class 4 Certificate with near continental command endorsements).

The Survey Officer should be qualified to a level equivalent to the College of Maritime Studies (CMS), Warsash (Southampton) high level course.

4.2 Medical Requirement

4.2.1 Both the Master and the full time Survey Officer should be medically examined as high risk personnel annually. The Master is required to undergo a medical by the Department of Transport and must be in possession of a valid Department of Transport medical certificate (Form ENG 1).

4.2.2 Part time crew members eg Marine Biologists, should be medically fit for sea going work and should not be undergoing medical treatment with prescribed drugs during sea voyages.

4.3 Swimming

4.3.1 It is essential that all crew members should be competent swimmers to at least the ASA Bronze Award in personal survival or an equivalent standard.

5. TRAINING OF PERSONNEL

- 5.1 All permanent crew members should be trained to the Department of Transport. Merchant Shipping Notice Number 1256 Personal Survival at Sea and M1328 Small Vessels' Navigation and Radar Training course.
- 5.2 All part time crew members should be qualified to the College of Maritime Studies (CMS) Warsash (Southampton) or Inflatable Boat Handling course or be in possession of a current Royal Yacht Association Level I and II Certificates.
- 5.3 All crew members should be trained and qualified in VHF radio transmission theory for small boats.
- 5.4 Electrical safety is the responsibility of the Master whilst on board and the Survey Officer should be trained as an appointed person to carry out running repairs to survey equipment within defined limits.
- 5.5 On board training shall be given to all crew in the use of winches, cranes, gantry, generators and pumping systems, under control of the Survey Officer, with the Master's approval.
- 5.6 The Master is responsible for continual assessment of level of competence of crew members for sea-going duties.
- 5.7 The Master and crew should be trained in the correct procedures to be adopted to ensure safety during bunkering operations.

6. MANNING LEVELS

- 6.1 For sea-going duties the minimum manning level shall be three, the Master and trained crew. For harbour use only the Master may use his discretion. (DTp are currently reviewing manning levels which will increase the minimum levels to three.)
- 6.2 For sea-going duties with untrained crew the ratio of trained to untrained crew shall be 2:1.

7. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- 7.1 An appropriate amount of Department of Transport approved life jackets and immersion suits are available in a central location, usually the wheelhouse. All crew and visitors must familiarise themselves with the correct donning and wearing procedure, launching of life rafts, use of fire extinguishers and other emergency equipment. Instruction shall be given by the Master or the Survey Officer. There is a statutory requirement to carry sufficient DTp approved safety equipment to meet the DTp design specifications and certification.
- 7.2 All crew must wear their personal life jacket when working on the decks or for small boat use away from parent vessel. Life jackets should be automatic inflatable twin chamber type ie Crewsaver "Seafire Solas".
- 7.3 Adequate life rafts should be stowed in an accessible location as per the design specifications. All crew and visitors should familiarise themselves with the manual launching procedure as per the instruction plate displayed adjacent to the life rafts.
- 7.4 All communications are under control of the Master and/or the Survey Officer.

8. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- 8.1 All crew members must provide their own personal issue waterproof clothing and protective equipment (to the relevant British Standard) whilst on board. The vessel must be kitted out with survival equipment, this is for use in emergency situations only.
- 8.2 Personal protective equipment should, depending upon use, comprise of the following:-
 - 8.2.1 Hard hat with chin strap and thermal liner.
 - 8.2.2 Eye protection ie goggles to grade 2 impact.
 - 8.2.3 Gloves to chemical resistance standard.
 - 8.2.4 Aprons to chemical resistance standard.
 - 8.2.5 Safety footwear (wellingtons with built-in toe protection to the relevant B.S.).
 - 8.2.6 Hearing protection is provided on board.
 - 8.2.7 Personal life jackets to NRA approved specification ie twin chamber automatic inflatable - Crewsaver "Seafire Solas".

SAFETY NOTE

The wearing of chest waders in main, tidal rivers, estuaries and coastal waters is absolutely forbidden.

9. HAZARDS

9.1 All crew should be aware of the potential hazards on board vessels and take all necessary precautions to avoid the risks presented by the hazards. The following list of hazards is not an exhaustive one:-

- 9.1.1 Noise from machinery - engine compartment.
- 9.1.2 Chemical, Biological and Bacterial hazards associated with sampling procedures.
- 9.1.3 Hazards from electrical equipment.
- 9.1.4 Moving machinery ie winches, ropes etc.
- 9.1.5 Unfenced areas.
- 9.1.6 Confined spaces - access prohibited.
- 9.1.7 Deep water.
- 9.1.8 Climatic conditions giving rise to hypothermia/hyperthermia.
- 9.1.9 Slips, trips and falls.
- 9.1.10 Fire.
- 9.1.11 Radiation hazard from radar and radio antennas.
- 9.1.12 Sharp objects ie knives, spikes etc.
- 9.1.13 Sudden or violent motion of vessel.
- 9.1.14 Hygiene related hazards.
- 9.1.15 Sea sickness.
- 9.1.16 Handling, transfer and storage of fuel.

Remember, if in doubt ask the Master/Skipper or Survey Officer.

10. USE OF TENDERS (TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL BY BOAT)

- 10.1 The Master shall be responsible for launching the tender (rigid inflatable craft) for shallow survey work.
- 10.2 The craft shall be adequately and reliably powered with sufficient fuel for the duration of the task plus additional as a safety margin.
- 10.3 The craft shall be crewed by not less than two experienced and qualified crew, at least one should have experience in handling the craft. Life jackets shall be worn at all times and if necessary suitable protective clothing should be worn by all on board.
- 10.4 A safety rope should be available for all personnel ascending or descending overside by ladder. Boarding and disembarkation should be carried out under direction of the Master or the Survey Officer. An even distribution of passengers will ensure a stable platform whilst underway.
- 10.5 Communications should be established with the parent vessel by means of the on-board VHF radio and/or a portable cellphone. If visual contact with the parent vessel is not maintainable then radio contact should be maintained at set intervals at the discretion of the Master.
- 10.6 The craft should carry the following emergency equipment.
 - 10.6.1 A suitable anchor and warp (the warp should be correctly made fast to the craft and be ready for use at all times).
 - 10.6.2 A painter attached to the bows.
 - 10.6.3 Alternative means of propulsion. Oars/paddles (in case of engine failure).
 - 10.6.4 A knife, spike and pliers in an appropriate case for use in an emergency to cut mooring, or to clear a fouled propeller.
 - 10.6.5 Flares as per DTp schedule, emergency froghorn.

- 10.6.6 A throw line.
- 10.6.7 Waterproof torch.
- 10.6.8 A baler, permanently attached to craft.
- 10.6.9 A compass (in case of poor visibility).
- 10.6.10 A VHF radio.
- 10.6.11 A chart of the operational area, adjacent waters and coastline in a waterproof wallet.
- 10.6.12 First aid kit. (Offshore RYA First Aid Kit available from local suppliers).
- 10.6.13 Waterproof watch.
- 10.6.14 Tool kit which should include, spark plugs, shear pins, spanners, thrust washers and emergency repair kit for inflatables.
- 10.6.15 Air pump.

11. REPORTING PROCEDURE

11.1 Prior to commencing sea-going or river activities the Master/Skipper will report in to the appropriate Harbour Authority, Coast Guard and Regional Control Room, possibly indicating the following information (for type III, IV and V boats the Skipper should report into the appropriate regional control room):-

- 11.1.1 Crew list.
- 11.1.2 Route plan/area of operation.
- 11.1.3 Estimated time of arrival.
- 11.1.4 Next report in-time.
- 11.1.5 Activity.

12. PROCEDURE FOR THE REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES

The reporting of accidents and dangerous occurrences is a statutory requirement under the Merchant Shipping (Safety Officials and Reporting of Accidents and Dangerous Occurrences) Regulations 1982.

To comply with the above legislation the procedure for reporting is as follows:-

- (a) All accidents resulting in personal injury, however slight must be recorded in the B1 510 Accident Book. These books will be kept on all vessels.
- (b) All accidents regardless of injuries suffered must be reported to an NRA Safety Adviser within 4 days of the occurrence. Alternatively, if the absence from work is delayed after the accident then the Report of Accident, Form ACC1, should be sent at the start of the absence from work. A further copy of Form ACC1 should be sent to the relevant line manager. ACC1 Forms will be kept on all vessels.

This must apply whether or not the Authority is in any way responsible and must include not only our own employees but also those of a contractor working on our behalf or a member of the public affected by our activities.

- (c) Any accident which results in incapacity for work for more than 3 consecutive days, not counting the days of the accident but including any days which would not have been working days should be notified to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch, 5 - 7 Brunswick Place, Southampton, SO1 2AN on Form ARF/1 as soon as possible keeping a copy for record purposes. These forms will be kept by the Regional Marine Survey Officer at base location (applies only to Class I and II vessels).
- (d) Any accident resulting in death or major injury or any dangerous occurrence as defined in Appendix A must be reported to an NRA Safety Adviser immediately by telephone and one copy of the Report of Accident Form ACC1 should be sent to him as soon as possible.

The above incidents should be notified to the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (see item C) immediately by telephone followed up by completing an ARF/1 Form in consultation with the relevant line manager.

It will be the responsibility of the Master of the vessel (or, if incapacitated, the 2nd Officer,) to inform the relevant Senior Manager who will then inform the Regional Manager and Regional General Manager as appropriate.

Outside normal working hours the Safety Advisers can be contacted via the Regional Communications Centre, Telephone.

- (e) Trade Union appointed Safety Representatives must be advised of accidents and dangerous occurrences to enable them to carry out their statutory right of investigation of the circumstances. A copy of the ACC1 Form should be forwarded to the trade union appointed safety representative whose name and location should be listed in the pad of ACC1 Forms.
- (f) The aim of investigating accidents and dangerous occurrences is to ascertain causes and prevent recurrence. All accidents and dangerous occurrences must be thoroughly investigated by management with the assistance of a Safety Adviser and regular inspections of work places will be carried out to ensure compliance with the Safety Policy.

13. EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

- 13.1** The Master/Skipper should carry out an assessment of the emergency and as a result will follow a course of action, commensurate with the assessment. Assistance may be required of the emergency services as follows:-
- 13.1.1** Medical
 - 13.1.2** Lifeboat
 - 13.1.3** Fire Brigade
 - 13.1.4** Navigation assistance
- 13.2** In all cases the Master/Skipper should contact the following agencies as appropriate during emergencies:-
- 13.2.1** Coastguard
 - 13.2.2** Harbour Authority
 - 13.2.3** Regional Control Room
 - 13.2.4** Police
- 13.3** All Masters/Skippers should develop on-board emergency procedures to cover the part-time crews and visitors and these procedures should form part of the Master/Skipper's Standing Orders. All emergency procedures including man over-board drills should be regularly practiced and recorded in the appropriate log book.

14. INSPECTION OF EQUIPMENT

- 14.1 All items of lifting tackle should be inspected by the Master on a quarterly basis with the results recorded in the Log Book and an F91 register.

The Department of Transport will carry out an annual inspection as part of their statutory duties. Records to be kept in the F91 register.

- 14.2 All portable electrical equipment should be inspected in accordance with the NRA Code of Practice for Electrical Safety by the Master or Survey Officer at _ yearly intervals. There may be a need to consult the Regional Electrical Adviser for assistance in training and/or inspection.
- 14.3 All communication equipment and instrumentation both fixed and portable should be inspected for physical defects and in-use calibration by the Master and the Survey Officer. Annual calibration of instrumentation is carried out by the Department of Transport Inspectors.

15. PERSONNEL RECORDS

15.1 All trained crew should be in possession of a personal log book covering the following activities.

15.1.1 Courses attended - qualifications.

15.1.2 Medical examination dates.

15.1.3 First aid training.

15.1.4 Test dates and results.

15.1.5 Marine activity log.