



Safety Policy for Rigid Inflatable Rescue Boat (RIB) and Pioneer Multi – to be read in conjunction with the Risk Assessment

Introduction

The Safety Boats are a rigid Hulled Semi-inflatable length 7.2m (Nitro) which is powered by a 90 hp outboard engine, and a Polyethylene Pioneer Multi which is 5.2m in length (Lunchbox) with a 75 hp outboard engine. We also have a 5.4m RIB (Osprey) which is not in use at present.

These are used by AUS to provide safety cover for water activities (sailing, canoeing and kayaking) and to give participants an experience of travelling across water at speed under controlled conditions. They are also used to support expeditions as transport for equipment such as tents etc.

The main function of the Safety boat is to safeguard other activities, ie sailing or canoeing/kayaking. It is vital that the safety boat remains in close contact with the activity, and at all times maintains visual awareness of what is happening, as well as VHF communication. The safety boat should however not come so close to the activity as to create a wash which potentially could cause a capsize or 'man overboard' situation.

The boats are equipped with navigation lights, flares, pump, fire extinguisher, throwline or life buoy, paddles and a first aid kit. VHF radios are also carried on both vessels.

Conditions of use

Powerboats are potentially very dangerous and therefore must be treated with extreme care. Due regard must be taken of the Safety Boat Risk Assessment.

Persons driving the RIBs must hold the RYA National Powerboat Level II Certificate as minimum qualification, hold a valid First Aid certificate and be approved by the Directors. Use of the VHF radios requires an appropriate licence.

All instructors and volunteers must be familiar with this document and the associated risk assessments for using the RIB.

The following general safety procedures must be observed at all times;

If a RIB is to be launched from its trailer the correct procedures must be used (see Risk Assessment).

Before use check engine oil, adequate fuel, and check that cooling water is coming from the engine. Drain or pump out any accumulated water (this can be done by driving the RIB with the 'Elephants

Trunk' lowered. Check correct inflation of sponsons. Also check for trailing ropes, and correct stowage of anchor, and any baggage, before setting off. At any time if the engine warning lights appear the engine must be stopped and checked. (see trouble shooting laminated guide on board)

Extreme care must be taken when driving the RIB, and especially when travelling at speed. **The 'kill cord' must be worn by drivers at all times and should be connected around the thigh of the driver.**

An appropriate briefing must be given to passengers. In particular draw attention to the need to sit and hold on at all times, stay away from engine area, keep arms and legs inside boat when leaving / approaching jetties etc, and action in case of a 'man overboard'.

The maximum number of passengers to be carried is 6 in 'Lunchbox' and 8 in 'Nitro'. Except in an emergency speeds should be restricted and sharp turns avoided. In addition speed must be adjusted according to the number of passengers and conditions. In Nitro passengers should sit at all times on seats and must hold grab handles. In Lunchbox passengers must sit on the floor, not on the sides or front. When passengers are boarding or leaving the boat the engine should be off.

At no time should a RIB be left unsupervised with young people on board if the engine is running. If it is necessary to leave young people on board for a short time unsupervised the ignition key and kill cord should be removed.

Young people may drive the RIB under **close supervision** of an appropriately qualified adult, at slow speeds only. **At all times the kill cord must be worn by the supervising adult.** Young people should not be allowed to use the VHF radio.

Lunchbox has a front loading ramp which is lowered using a winch handle in the starboard front locker. This can be used to allow wheelchair users to access the boat. When the ramp is lowered on water it will float. Great care must be taken not to allow anyone to put hands or feet between the ramp and the sides of the boat which could result in an entrapment. The wheelchair user should wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket with maximum buoyancy according to their needs. They should not be strapped to the wheelchair, and may need additional persons to support them once afloat.

Pionner Multis do not ride into waves well. Care should be taken to avoid 'slamming' over waves. With a following sea or on a lee shore the boat will easily swamp in moderate sized waves.

Refuelling Policy

There have been a number of incidents where a fire has occurred when RIBs are being refuelled due to static electricity. The Pionner has removable tanks, so these should always be refilled away from the boat on land. Wherever possible Nitro should be refuelled at a time prior to starting the engine and allowing any vapours to escape before the engine is turned. Whilst refuelling a fire extinguisher should always be readily available.

Please inform the Directors immediately if there are any problems or issues with the powerboats.

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