



SILVER WING SAILING CLUB

SAFETY BRIEFING

v1 Final

2 November 2021

SAFETY BRIEFING INFORMATION PACK

SWSC wants to provide its members a safe environment where people can enjoy the club and its facilities. The safety briefing is a way to help all duty teams provide **consistent and reliable safety cover**, particularly for those crews that are less experienced. This information pack contains what needs to be done, such as the use of flags, and **guidelines** of things to discuss in the safety briefing.

There is a lot of information in here, but don't stress out. **If you need help on the day, just ask.** If you feel overwhelmed by the conditions, let the team leader know what your concerns are.

Remember that everyone on the water takes **personal responsibility** for their own safety. The safety crew is a volunteer crew that is there to help.

SAFETY COVER FLAGS

A new change is the introduction of flags to signify to all users of the water that safety cover is in place, and more importantly, when it is not. It is a good way for the entire duty team to book-end the days work when your responsibilities begin and end.

- Where are the flags?
 - Flags are in a plastic box in the (first) safety boat
 - Please return all items back to the box ready for the next crew
- What do I do with the flags?
 - Hoist the flags on the main clubhouse flag pole
 - Sound the hooter when hoisting **and** lowering the flags.
- Hoist the flags after the briefing
- Drop the flags before taking the safety boat off the water
- **When the flags are up, you are on duty**

NORMAL COVER

Normal cover is when risks are low and users of the water in difficulty are likely to be able to take care of themselves for long periods.

- ★ • Club pennant and a green flag
- ★ • Calm to moderate conditions
- Water is not freezing cold
- There are few juniors and beginners
- A single safety crew is sufficient



CAUTIONARY COVER

Risks are high and the safety crew is expected to be busy dealing with many capsizes and rescues.

- ★ • Club pennant and a Y flag
- ★ • Windy or gusty conditions
- Cold water
- Many juniors and beginners
- An additional safety boat should be out or at least considered by the duty officer



The Y flag is in the World Sailing rules signals for 'Wear a personal flotation device' Rule 40

BRIEFING

The briefing should not be boring, onerous, or drawn-out. Make sure that you quickly cover what is necessary and get on the water.

- ★ • Keep the briefing short. Only a few minutes, and perhaps a bit longer if there are difficult conditions - where more discussions are needed
- ★ • Have the briefing as late as possible, once you have a better idea of the course and the fleet.
- At the end of the briefing hoist the flags. The flags on the mast is the final check.

A tilted image of a 'Safety Briefing Checklist' form. The form has a dark blue header with a white checkmark icon and the title 'Safety Briefing Checklist' in white. Below the header, there is a list of items to be checked, each with a small square box to its left. The items are: Familiarity, Expectations, Conditions, Course, Fleet, Non-racing activities, Safety boat checklist, Communication, Hand over, and Final Check. Each item is followed by a horizontal line for notes. At the bottom of the list, there are four more empty square boxes without text labels, also followed by horizontal lines for notes.

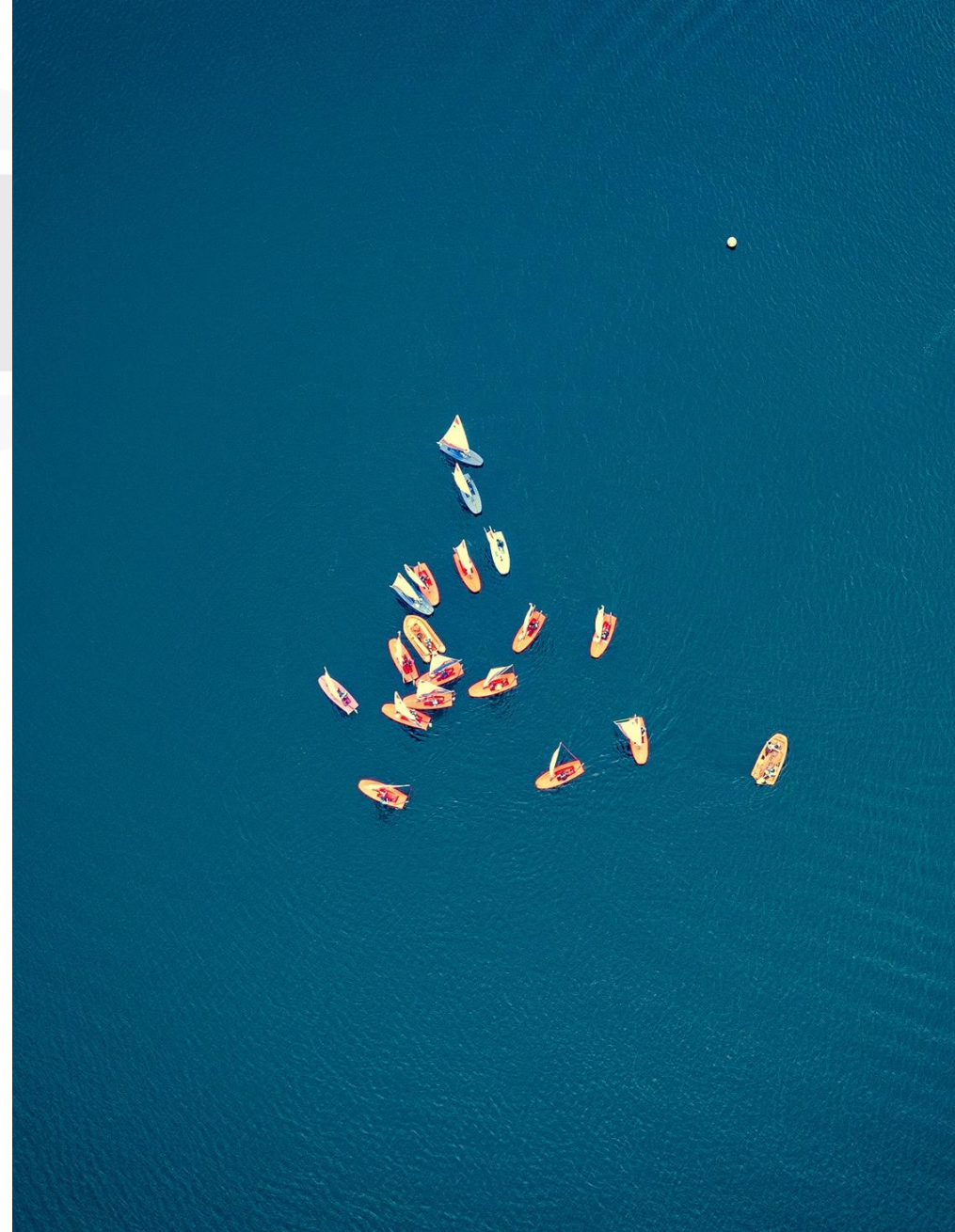
 **Safety Briefing Checklist**

- ☐ Familiarity
- ☐ Expectations
- ☐ Conditions
- ☐ Course
- ☐ Fleet
- ☐ Non-racing activities
- ☐ Safety boat checklist
- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Hand over
- ☐ Final Check
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐

FAMILIARITY

It is unlikely that everyone has been on a team together before. Take time to introduce yourselves and discuss sailing and safety experience. Make sure that you are clear on capabilities of the safety crew, and don't be shy to admit that you may not have the strength to recover someone from the water.

- ★ • Introductions
 - ★ • Who is who, and what are their roles
- Training
 - PB2, Silver Wing safety training, First aid (RYA or other)



FAMILIARITY

- Experience
 - ★ How frequently do you use a power boat?
 - ★ Have you towed a dinghy?
- ★ Capabilities
 - ★ Can you recover someone from the water?
- What do you do when attending a capsized boat? Discuss the approach, when to switch off the engine, what to look for, etc.
- Should role changes be made?
 - Switch assistants if necessary



EXPECTATIONS

Remember that the safety boat is not only there to rush to racing capsizes. People at the club engage in all sorts of activities with confidence in reasonable safety cover. Make sure that you are there for all users of the water.

- ★ ★
 - Flags up mean that you are 'working'
 - ★ • When the safety cover flags are up, users of the water expect good safety cover.
- Physical ability
 - People in the water expect to be able to be pulled out. The crew needs the strength to perform rescues.
 - Tying off lines or righting boats can be strenuous



EXPECTATIONS

- Eyes on the water
 - Users of the lake expect the safety crew to be constantly looking at the water. It only takes a few minutes for something to go wrong.
- Practised helm
 - The safety crew is expected to be a practiced helm and not increase the danger by bashing into rescued boats.
 - The safety crew should be familiar with the equipment that they are using
- Race Officer support
 - Running a race can be stressful and busy, and the RO expects the safety boat to be taking care of safety, and not to be directed by the race team.



CONDITIONS

On mild days the safety crew potters around quietly with nothing to do. On windy days a single crew may not be able to cope. The conditions determine the volume, level, and urgency for safety teams, and need to be discussed - particularly as they relate to experience.

- ★ Cold

- ★ It is more dangerous for people in the water when it is cold.
- ★ Sailors may not have the right gear, even if they don't go swimming

- Wind strength

- Stronger winds generally mean more capsizes and boat damage.
- Recovery and towing is more difficult in strong wind



CONDITIONS

- Wind Direction

- Some winds directions are more gusty, so have more capsizes (such as southerly wind that blows over the trees)

- People may need to be rescued from the shore with grass and trees.

- Are you comfortable with this?

- Don't be brave, if it is too windy for you, speak up.

- Is there enough safety cover?

- Be prepared to cancel or get volunteers to crew additional safety boats



COURSE

Safety crews may need to help move marks and set the line. The course also influences manoeuvres, such as gybe marks, which can be a capsize hot spot.

- ★ • What is the course?
 - ★ • Discuss the course even if is not set yet
 - ★ • Where the start line is likely to be
 - Which areas of the lake will be sailed in
- The start
 - Is the safety boat needed to set the 'W' mark?
- Wind shadows
- Do any marks need to be moved out of the shadow of the trees?
- Capsize hotspots
 - Are there any gybe marks?
 - Is it gusty? Look for strong gusts coming down the lake and over the trees. They will often cause capsizes near the windward mark or on dead runs.

FLEET

Take time to understand the fleet. The size and makeup of the fleet will impact rescue activities.

- Beginners
 - ★ Make a mental note of who the beginners are and keep an eye out for them on the water.
 - ★ Beginners capsize more frequently and can struggle to right their boats
- Juniors
 - ★ Juniors are a special category of beginners that may need extra help. It might even be a good idea to follow juniors around the course.
- Fleet Size
 - On windy days a large fleet may mean that there are more capsized boats than can be attended to.
 - Large fleets spread out quickly, making it more difficult to keep an eye on everybody



NON-RACING ACTIVITIES

Safety cover is provided to all users on the water. Take notice of who else is using the water.

- ★ • Non racing water users
 - ★ • It is easy to focus only on the racing and not see others using the water, particularly near the club house.
 - ★ • Look for sailors that launch after racing has started.
- Training
 - Training will have it's own instructors, but you will need to be aware of where they will, or should, be sailing.
- Don't expect instructors to provide safety cover for your fleet. They may not be able to leave their groups.
- SUPers, paddlers and swimmers
 - Be careful with your wake
 - Keep an eye out for people in the water that may not be near a sailing dinghy.

SAFETY BOAT CHECKLIST

This checklist should be standard PB2 and RYA safety boat checklist items. Because the safety boat is often launched by someone other than the safety crew, it is important that the safety helm makes sure that the checks are done.

- ★ • Check the first aid kit
- ★ • Check that there are tow lines
- Check the fuel
- Check that the steering is free
- Start engine
- Check for the cooling water tell-tale
- Check that the kill cord stops the engine



COMMUNICATION

Good communication with the duty team and users of the water is necessary to keep things running smoothly

- ★ • Radios
 - One radio per boat
 - ★ • Test to make sure that it works.
 - ★ • Make sure that you know how to use it
- Flags
 - The flags are important communication to everyone at the club
- Look for people on the water trying to get attention
 - Not all emergencies are visible capsizes



HAND OVER, DUTY HOURS AND END OF COVER

The duty team needs to understand when they are on duty, because that is when they are responsible. Often, such as when there is Wing Cadets in the afternoon, safety boats are kept out, but safety cover ends.

- ★ • Understand the duty hours
 - Tuesday
 - ★ • Sunday
- Handover
 - If handing over to another safety team, be explicit that you are handing over all cover.
 - If you are being asked to leave the safety boats out, but cover still ends, drop the flags and sound the horn.
 - If you are handing over, make it clear to the other team that they need to drop the flags
- Safety cover can end earlier than the scheduled duty hours because of an early race finish, no wind, etc. Drop the flags and pack the boats away.

FINAL CHECK

A final check before heading out on the water

- ★ • Do you have all your personal gear?
 - ★ • Buoyancy aid, spray top, jacket
- Have you checked the radio?
- Do you know the course?
- Have you checked the safety boat?
- Are the flags up?

