

**COVENHAM SAILING CLUB
WATER SAFETY POLICY
11.9.04**

This policy has been devised following consultation with the RYA and takes into account the following documents.

1. RYA: Race Training and Event Management
 2. RYA: Boating safety inland waters.
- And the principles which provide guidance.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF WATER SAFETY

The primary responsibility for safety in boating lies with the individual participant. As such it is the responsibility of individual members of the club to ensure, themselves, that they are sufficiently technically competent to be able to handle their craft. Helms need also to understand that they are responsible for individuals who sail in their craft. This responsibility extends to ensuring that individuals are adequately clothed and wear buoyancy aids. In essence then it is the sole responsibility of each helm or person controlling the sailing craft to determine whether or not they should sail, taking into account their level of competence and measuring this against the prevailing weather conditions.

**COVENHAM SAILING CLUB DOES NOT, THEREFORE, ACCEPT LIABILITY OR
RESPONSIBILITY IN THIS REGARD.**

Notwithstanding this C.S.C. does accept that there is a need to assist club members in ensuring that water borne activities are carried out in the safest possible environment. It is against this backdrop that the following safety policy has been agreed by the membership.

THE WATER SAFETY POLICY

Wherever possible one or more safety boats (dependant upon conditions) will be provided when general sailing occurs (usually Sundays and Thursday evenings) and it will be the responsibility of the members present on the day to ensure that a double manned safety boat is provided on these occasions.

It is the responsibility of each sailing club member to contribute towards the provision of this 'service' when called upon to do so. If a member declines to contribute or fails to attend, without good reason on a time/date agreed, then that matter will be reported to the committee to determine what action to take.

If sailing club members use the reservoir outside of 'general sailing' times (ie. When safety cover is not supplied) it is up to that member to determine his/her own safety cover. The safety boats are available for use and it is suggested, dependant upon conditions, that the following minimum standard is implemented:

- Safety boat is at the top of the slipway and ready for use
- Adoption of a buddy system when sailing

Sailing cover on 'general club sailing' days - what this means -

All members must contribute unless there is a good reason why they cannot. The committee will nominate two people [one with experience] for each occasion. One of these may be the Race Officer.

If weather conditions are considered to be so severe as to warrant the need for a further one or two safety boats to be provided, that decision will be taken by those members present on the day. If a member chooses to sail under these conditions then that decision is his/hers alone.

Whilst every effort will be made to retrieve capsized dinghies/windsurfers it must be stressed that the primary role of those providing the safety cover is the 'preservations of life'. Basically sailing craft are not a priority and human life is.

Those taking part in the safety cover should wear appropriate clothing, dependant upon the time of year and the prevailing weather conditions. One member in each of the 'two person' team must be prepared to enter the water.

There should be no joy-riding in safety boats designated for safety purposes.

The safety cover can be used by the Race Officer with the proviso that safety comes first and racing second ie: if an incident occurs then clearly the safety boat should respond to it.

If conditions do deteriorate to the extent that a second or third safety boat is needed consideration may need to be given to using radios to enable better communication.

The 'Safety Team' if conditions get really bad may well have to make representations, to the Race Officer, to have racing abandoned.

Likewise, if conditions are so bad that dinghy sailing is deemed unsafe the rescue team will inform those on the water that they should no longer sail - However due regard must be given to windsurfers who generally can manage 'heavy weather' conditions far better than dinghy sailors.

Only when conditions are so severe as to threaten the safety of the rescue team will safety boat provision be withdrawn. The safety team may wish to consult an experienced club member before taking this decision. PASSED AT AGM Hon Sec R Watkinson