



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

TOURISM RISK MANAGEMENT SECTION

**MULTI HAZARD PREPAREDNESS
EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION
FOR RISK REDUCTION**

SOP GUIDELINES

GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR LEISURE BOAT OPERATORS

General information and useful tips

- Leisure boat operators should ensure that the boats they embark passengers on for marine leisure activities are licensed, are in very good condition and that they have on board all the floatation and safety equipment (individual life jackets, lifebuoys and rafts, reliable fire extinguishers, first aid kit etc..) including radio alert communication systems necessary in an emergency and as required by law.
- All boat charter operators should ensure that they have appropriate insurance policy for the type of business operation. The insurance should cover all passengers and crew.
- It is also important for leisure boat operators/skippers to verify if there are any passengers with certain health/medical conditions before leaving the shore to go out at sea.
- Ideally all persons who are unable to swim should wear life jackets while on the water.

Useful tips

- Leisure boat operators/Skippers should pay close attention to weather reports before going out at sea.
- Ensure that communication network system(e.g. VHS, GPS etc.) is in good working order before leaving to go out at sea
- Leisure boat operators/skippers should grasp information in advance through news and weather forecast by liaising with the Meteorological service office to get necessary information before leaving to venture far at sea
- If the weather forecast and condition is not too favourable do not venture too far at sea (you must be able to see the land from afar)
- Ensure you are wearing or have the correct clothing for the activity you are undertaking (wetsuits/wet weather jacket) and that you have a waterproof watch to keep track of the time.
- Ensure that you have contacts of all key emergency responding agencies if the situation gets worse.
- Advise family, friends (whom you see or communicate with regularly) and or authorities (Maritime Safety Administration, Coast Guard and the Harbour Master Port Authority) of the area, location and or destination you intend to sail. Should you have a problem this will reduce the area rescue services need to search. Also should plans change, advice the same person/authorities of your plans to avoid the rescue services receiving conflicting information.
- Before sailing visually check all equipment to ensure it is in full working order. Sail around the start location to check equipment is continuing to work correctly before venturing further afield.

Guiding Procedures (Accident at sea)

Possible scenarios are follows: **Person overboard, while in water** and **abandon ship**.

➡ **Person overboard:**

Procedures

- It is important to remain calm and act quickly. The first person who notices shouts: “Person overboard!” (En dimoun i’n tonm dan delo!).
- If the person overboard is visible a fellow passenger or a member of the crew should throw a lifebuoy as close to the person as possible.
- A life vest can also be thrown to the person if s/he hasn’t got one on.
- If attempt to rescue the person fails, the captain/ skipper should immediately sends out MAYDAY messages to alert the authorities and seek assistance.
- Whoever jumps overboard to rescue the person must wear a life jacket and must have a rope tied to her/his waist, with the other end secured to the boat.
- The captain or skipper must take a compass reading immediately to determine the location of the person overboard; in rough seas it is easy to lose sight of the person.
- The captain or skipper will then take immediate action to turn about and rescue the person.
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→ **While in water:**

Procedures

- Members of the crew should verify if all passengers in the water have their life jacket on them.
- Members of the crew will instruct passengers to hold on tightly to lifebuoys or life rafts
- Members of the crew should instruct them to make a minimum of movements so as not to tire themselves out and in rough conditions to turn their backs to waves to avoid getting water and spray in their nose and mouth.

→ **Abandon ship:**

When a boat is sinking or has caught fire and the lives of the passengers and crew on board are at risk

- This is a very difficult decision to make and it will have to rest with the captain or skipper of the boat
- Once the decision is made the crew must ensure that everyone puts on their life jackets.
- The captain/ skipper sends out MAYDAY messages to alert the authorities and seek assistance.
- S/he will note the exact position of the ship/boat before putting out life rafts or dinghy.
- The crew should I instruct everyone to jump directly into the raft or dinghy if possible (to minimize the possibility of having to swim).
- Once in the life boat/ raft collect rain water for drinking whenever it rains



Tsunami/Sea Swell, Winds, Rains and Tropical Storms

Procedures

→ Tsunami

- As soon as there is a tsunami alert warning depending on the location where you are and the number of hours announced before the tsunami reaches your location, if you have time, get back to the shore with your passenger and crew immediately.
- If not, immediate contact should be made with the maritime emergency responders for further advice and guidance on what you should do. Normally during a tsunami if you are very far from the shore the boat should be taken to deep water, the deeper the better, about 150ft
- Instructions given by maritime emergency responders should be adhered to at all times.

→ Rains, Strong winds and Tropical Storms

- Whilst at sea watch out for signs of approaching storms.
- If you notice approaching storms, strong winds and waves move all passengers and crew away from the deck and seek refuge in the cabins
- Make immediate contact with local authorities including maritime emergency responders and provide them with your exact location
- If you are close to any shore/land move all passengers and crew out of the sea and come ashore and seek refuge from the winds and storms. Make sure you also inform the authorities/and emergency responders of your location.