



## SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA (Inc)

### EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

### **INCAPACITATION of BOAT CAPTAIN**

#### **(APPENDIX A)**

The following procedures have been written up as a guide to assist those who may have to handle the boat in the event of the captain becoming incapacitated.

Preferably a boat licence holder should be identified to handle the boat prior to leaving the ramp and be given a general run-down on the procedures necessary for the boat he/she is a passenger in.

This is a recommended procedure on all boat dives.

1. Where the emergency, safety and operational equipment items are located on the vessel. e.g. First Aid box, water, Flares, Fire extinguisher, Radio, Bailing bucket and lanyard, Oars, Spare Ropes, Spare anchor, Signalling mirror, Matches or lighter, Tools, Life Jackets etc.
2. The vessel call sign and the vessel name with vessel registration with the Sea Rescue Squadron or the Volunteer Coast Guard.
3. Starting procedures for the motor/s (Choke, tilt/trim, neutral start, reverse, battery switch.)
4. Spare fuel tank/s and fuel change-over procedures.
5. GPS and how to operate it (This may be difficult to take in at one instruction)
6. Navigation lights and anchor light operation switch.
7. Bilge pump operation. (If not automatic)
8. Anchor retrieval and storage.
9. Dive flag, Mermaid line and Shot line storage.
10. Vehicle registration and description and where the car keys are stored on the boat.

#### **BOAT STARTING AND RETURN TO SHORE**

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1. *ENSURE ALL DIVERS ARE BACK IN THE BOAT*
2. *REMEMBER, YOU ARE NOW IN CHARGE, NOT THE DIVE LEADER.*
3. *Retrieve the shot line and the mermaid line.*
4. *Start the engine in neutral, Retrieve the anchor and store securely.*
5. *Make sure all dive gear is secured and not in the way.*
6. *Instruct all passengers not involved in necessary procedures to sit where they do not obstruct operations*  
*(It is surprising how many people will try to help when not instructed to do so and get in the way. Standing passengers can obstruct the view of the boat operator)*
7. *Check compass heading for return trip or GPS "go to" setting for the ramp.*
8. *Check around boat for divers from other boats before putting motor in gear and travelling slowly until well out of the dive area.*

9. Call on channel 27.88MHz (Channel 88) (or VHF Channel 16) to Sea Rescue or Coast Guard.  
*“(vessel name or call sign)-calling Sea Rescue (Coast Guard) over” wait for a response from Shore base.  
They will usually say “(vessel name or call sign), please go 91 (or 86)”*
10. Change radio frequency channel from 88 to 91 (or 86) and call again.  
*“(call sign) calling Coast Guard”  
Wait until they reply-“Go ahead (call sign)”  
Reply-“(call sign) returning to (boat ramp) from (dive site), will call again at ramp to log off”.*  
*Wait for response from Coast Guard or Sea Rescue.  
Go through the same procedure again when at the ramp to log off from Shore base.*
11. DO NOT forget to thank them for their coverage; it makes their voluntary job worthwhile when appreciation is shown.

## **BOAT RETRIEVAL**

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1. Have someone ready at side of boat to fend off at ramp
2. Check wind direction and use wind to assist in bringing boat in towards ramp walkway.
3. Bring boat in as slowly as possible to avoid damage but enough to allow steerage.  
(This tends to be difficult for the beginner who usually tends to bring the vessel in too fast. Use reverse gear if available to slow vessel)
4. Stop motor and raise to the trail position (This has been forgotten many times and can damage the motor gearbox if not strictly adhered to)
5. Turn off radio, GPS, echo sounder etc. (After logging off)
6. Tie off boat to the walkway or have others hold the vessel while the vehicle is located and brought to the ramp. (Don't forget vehicle keys)
7. If unsure of backing trailer, then get someone who can do it. (Don't be embarrassed at the ramp and hold up other users.
8. Back trailer into water sufficiently to be easily able to winch boat on.  
(Try to keep as much of the vehicle as possible out of the water.)
9. Winch boat onto the trailer, secure boat to the winch post with turnbuckle or chain.
10. Remove the winch handle and store in vehicle, if not fixed to the winch.
11. Drive vehicle to a safe place to remove drain plugs, lower radio aerial, lower motor and using flushing muff and water hose turn on water and run motor for 2-3 mins to remove salt water from water galleries.
12. Stop motor, turn off water, remove and store muff.
13. Wash down boat with hose and that part of vehicle that might have been in the water. Remove and store hose and coupling.
14. Raise and lock motor into the trail position. (Not “tilt/trim”)
15. Check trailer lights-indicators, stop/tail and proceed to tow boat to secure storage.

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Being a boat captain is a huge responsibility and needs a great deal of concentration.  
Knowledge comes with practice.

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