

# NFS POWER AND SAFETY BOAT INSTRUCTIONS

## INTRODUCTION

NFS has two power boats, Jaffa and Tango. These are both Pioneer boats and very similar and both may be used as a safety boat or as a power boat, most commonly to take sailors on trips round the lake or to shadow sailors with their carer(s) on board.

However, the needs of one sailor should not be allowed to monopolise power boat usage to the detriment of the whole fleet and taking account of the availability of volunteers. Each case must be properly risk-assessed and consideration should be given to the best use of the boats or Spinnaker Club boats, the decision being the responsibility of the OOD.

We are permitted to borrow the Spinnaker Club RIBs or rigid power boats if required for our safe operation, however, we are now charged for this use above 8 times a season so it should only be done exceptionally. Each use requires permission from the Spinnaker staff on duty. This would generally be a decision made by the OOD and the same manning requirements set out below for our boats should apply. The Spinnaker operating instructions must be followed.

## OPERATION AND MANNING

### 1. Safety boat use

By safety boat we mean a power boat that has been designated as responsible for covering the safety of the New Forest Sailability sailing fleet for any sailing session.

- a) At any time when members of the fleet are sailing, there must be at least one designated safety boat. The designation and monitoring of this is the responsibility of the OOD.
- b) The safety boat may be either of the New Forest Pioneer power boats or a power boat borrowed from Spinnaker.
- c) At all times whilst on duty as the safety boat the crew must be on station on the boat or nearby with sight of the lake and the sailing fleet. They must not leave this station, even for a brief visit to the clubhouse, without appointing a replacement crew. It is generally advised that the safety boat carry out its duties out on the lake, giving a better ability to monitor the fleet.
- d) As part of their monitoring of the fleet, the safety boat should be aware of the number of sailing boats in the fleet that are out and regularly re-count them, remembering that parts of the lake may be out of sight.
- e) The skipper/helm must maintain a proper lookout at all times and be aware of their surroundings, including possible hazards.
- f) The safety boat must be manned at all times by a minimum of two people. At least one of these, who will be the skipper and designated safety boat driver, must hold the RYA Safety Boat qualification as a minimum and have been signed off by NFS as a trained Safety Boat Driver. Only in exceptional circumstances is single-handed manning permitted with the consent of the OOD although in the event of an emergency anyone should consider going to assist regardless of qualification or manning levels.
- g) One of the key requirements of any power boat driving is to properly wear a kill cord at all times when the engine is running (not only when the boat is under way). Normally the kill cord should be attached above the knee and clipped back onto itself. Should you for any reason not wish to attach the kill cord around your leg, attach it securely to your personal buoyancy. In either case it should not foul the steering or gear controls. The kill cord should always be clipped back onto itself. It should not be clipped onto an item of clothing or attached to any other location where the clip would

release from the driver rather than detach from the console as the console end must detach for the kill cord to stop the boat.

- h) All crew are encouraged to hold an RYA or equivalent first aid course.
- i) All crew members should be familiar with the use of the walkie-talkie radios and one should be carried on board.
- j) All crew must undergo the refresher training each season including familiarity with the operation of the bow ramp. A record will be maintained of those that have completed training.
- k) All crew and any passengers must wear appropriate buoyancy aids and the general rule is that these should be buoyancy aids rather than life jackets. An automatic life jacket will inflate if exposed to water and this could occur inadvertently and thus impede a rescue operation.
- l) The primary role of the safety boat is to be able to assist a sailing boat and its crew if they get into difficulty. Such assistance may, for example, be the towing of a boat away from the shore or when grounded, righting of a capsized boat, recovery of a sailor from the water, who may be severely disabled or unconscious, and all of this may occur in extreme weather conditions. Consequently, the safety boat driver as skipper must be satisfied that the two crew (the safety boat driver and assistant crew) have adequate fitness and strength to carry out a rescue. The safety boat driver will generally have to remain in control of the boat as driver, for example a rescue may involve complex manoeuvring, and thus the fitness and strength of the assistant crew may be more important. For the avoidance of doubt, it is acceptable for a disabled volunteer to man the safety boat provided the safety boat driver is satisfied that this fitness and strength requirement is met. There is the remote possibility that a rescue would justify entering the water to assist a victim already in the water. Those manning the safety boat should consider whether they would be willing and able to do so.
- m) Other passengers may be taken on the safety boat at the discretion of the safety boat driver but this must not include a carer required to shadow a sailor in a Hansa dinghy. This is because the safety boat must be free to go to the rescue of any boat, anywhere on the lake, which would mean leaving the dinghy being shadowed.

Special arrangements will be put in place for programmed events such as when hosting the Hansa Travellers Trophy races.

## **2. Other power boat use**

This is most commonly to take sailors on trips round the lake or to shadow sailors with a carer on the power boat. Trips round the lake are only to be made on an NFS Pioner.

- a) It is the OOD's decision whether to run trips or shadowing. This will take account of volunteer numbers, demand, weather conditions etc.
- b) The skipper/helm must maintain a proper lookout at all times and be aware of their surroundings, including possible hazards. They should take particular care with the positioning of passengers in wheelchairs to ensure that they do not obscure the helm's ability to keep a proper lookout.
- c) The power boat must be manned at all times by at least one skipper being a trained NFS power boat driver, who must hold the RYA Power Boat 2 qualification as a minimum.
- d) There should generally be at least one other responsible adult on board as assistant crew, who may be a volunteer or carer. It is the skipper's responsibility to decide what assistance is appropriate taking account, for example, of the abilities of the sailors on board.
- e) One of the key requirements of any power boat driving is to properly wear a kill cord at all times when the engine is running (not only when the boat is under way). See 1 f) above.
- f) The skipper is encouraged to hold an RYA or equivalent first aid course.

- g) The skipper should be familiar with the use of the walkie-talkie radios and one should be carried on board.
- h) The skipper must undergo the refresher training each season including familiarity with the operation of the bow ramp.
- i) All crew and passengers must wear appropriate buoyancy aids and the general rule is that these should be buoyancy aids rather than life jackets.
- j) When being used for trips the boat may also act as a shadow boat carrying a carer to shadow a sailor in a Hansa dinghy.
- k) The boat must be securely moored before passengers board. If wheelchairs are being loaded the boat must be securely moored either to the pontoon alongside the launching ramp for use of the portable metal ramp or bow to onto the pontoon or concrete lakeside.
- l) Sailors should pay the usual fee of £5.00.
- m) The maximum capacity of the power boats is eight people, including the driver. This may need to be reduced at the driver's discretion if powered wheelchairs are being used or for other reasons. It is likely that the heavier powered wheelchairs are too heavy and not appropriate. There should be room for 3 or even 4 wheelchairs.
- n) The skipper should use their discretion regarding the suitability of sailors to be taken on the power boat, possibly in consultation with the carers. It may be appropriate to have the carers on board.

### 3. LOG (one for each boat)

At the start of each period the boat is to be signed 'Out' and at the end of each period the time 'In' entered. (*N.B. The log first page is current page*). Engine hours should be noted (*ignition must be switched on to read this*).

### 4. ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT:

Each of Jaffa and Tango have their own equipment.

- a) Sufficient fuel for the day.
- b) Keys and killcord, (*found on the hooks just inside the NFS hut door & replaced there at the end of sailing*). These are to be retained onboard while on safety standby & positively handed over to successive skippers.
- c) Anchor and line.
- d) Mooring warps.
- e) Towing lines. Throwing line.
- f) Paddles and boathook.
- g) 2-way radio. (*earpiece should be used for audibility above engine and wind noise*)
- h) Safety/First aid container, including a multitool with knife.

### 5. BOAT & ENGINE CHECKS

The first crew of the day is to carry out the following checks prior to the start of sailing:

- a) Inspect hull and engine mounting.
- b) Check engine lift.
- c) **Inspect propeller and underwater unit. [ESSENTIAL to minimize potential damage from fishing line fouling]**
- d) Check steering function.
- e) Release fuel tank breather cap.
- f) Check fuel and oil levels, cooling water function (ensure water is being ejected by the engine once running).

Checks should also be made when securing the boat to ensure that any defects are found and logged. **If fishing line is found around the underwater gear, the engine is to be noted as UNSERVICEABLE. Prompt action is required to minimize damage to the gearbox oil seals.**

## 6. END OF SAILING

The last crew of the day is to secure fuel cap breather and remove keys, killcord and all loose equipment from boat and store in NFS hut. Boat should be left clean and any rubbish disposed of. The only gear left permanently onboard will be:

Anchor and its line

Fuel tank

Mooring lines and the towing bridle.

## 7. SECURITY

Boat to be correctly secured (Bow and Stern lines) and padlocked to the berthing pontoon.

## 8. DAMAGE REPORTING:

Any damage or malfunction noted before, during or after operation **must be recorded in the log and reported immediately to the NFS Bosun or the OOD**. In the event that any defect could affect safe operation or lead to further damage, the boat must be immediately taken out of service and clearance obtained to use one of the Spinnaker boats. Defects to Spinnaker boats must be reported to the Spinnaker Club.

## 9. USE OF SPINNAKER RIBS AND SMALL RIGID BOATS:

We are permitted to use the Spinnaker boats if we require additional safety boat(s), for example if ours are out of service. The decision to do so must be taken by the OOD, who will check that it is acceptable with Spinnaker, generally the senior instructor if present. We are charged for using their boats above 8 times a season.

Use must be only by trained NFS Safety Boat Drivers with the RYA Safety Boat qualification under the same conditions set out in 1. above.

Spinnaker's procedures must be followed and the Safety Boat Driver should be familiar with these, including the location of the safety container, keys and VHF radio and access to and use of the fuel store.

At the end of use the boat must be securely locked and the fuel tank and all other equipment returned to their proper locations.