

## **Patrol Boat Launching and Recovery**

### **Deciding to Launch**

The OOD will make the decision on whether conditions allow a Patrol Boat to be launched and which one. The rib will need at least 8 people, including the crew, to be available for recovery (i.e. committed to stay until the rib is recovered and to be prepared to get wet), unless it is clear that there will be no waves at the time of recovery. If there are not sufficient people available, the Jeanneau should be used instead.

The waves on the slipway increase during the last hour of high tide, but normally have reduced again by one hour after high tide. The anticipated conditions at the time of recovery must be considered when a decision on which Patrol Boat to use is made. If the waves are higher than expected at the time of recovery to the extent that it may be unsafe to recover the boat, consideration should be given to waiting until at least an hour after high tide or, as a last resort, taking the boat to Cardiff Yacht Club (instructions and information are in the patrol boat console).

Prior to leaving the compound ensure that someone is nominated to take the lead and that all participants in the launching are briefed as to the procedure ensuring that everyone is aware of the hazards of being trapped between the boat and the uprights of the trailer frame/boat guides. It must be stressed that the boat must only be handled from in front of the front upright or behind the rear upright.

Before leaving the compound the engine should be run to test that it will start, unless there are no waves.

### **Launching**

Ensure that the engine is in the fully lifted position before leaving the compound. There must be at least 6 people to control the initial descent unless the lead person is confident of the strength of the people involved or a rope or block and tackle between the trailer and the eye inside the compound is used to hold the weight (in which case the minimum number of people is 4). Both the ratchet strap and the rope clipped between the boat and the trailer should be holding the boat for the steep part of the descent in case one should fail.

Remove the ratchet strap before launching, making sure that the boat is held on the rope/clip. This is so that the ratchet handle does not spin out of control and injure someone.

The patrol boat crew should get in the boat prior to launching and the driver must then attach the kill cord and the driver and crew should sit on the seats to maintain the correct trim. Do not use the trailer frame to climb into the boat as it is not designed to take the weight and may suffer damage. Ensure that there are still enough people kitted up to push the boat into deep water.

Someone should be nominated to watch that the trolley is pushed down the center of the slipway and doesn't veer off to one side risking the trailer coming off the slipway and stopping short.

The boat should be pushed into the water and when floating the designated person must pull the string on the clip attached to the rope holding the boat – this will release the boat. The engine can then be lowered until the prop guard is covered and the boat reversed out. In waves there is a chance that a wave will dump the boat back onto the slipway so at least two people must be at the

back of the boat (one each side, standing well clear of the engine) ready to pull the boat away from the trailer as it floats off. Under no circumstances must those at the front of the boat, especially those near and between the frame uprights, try to push it through the frame.

The patrol boat driver must engage reverse gear by pulling the throttle lever back. If the tide is over 10 metres or so down the concrete below the bend in the slipway, reverse the boat out in line with the lower part of the slipway until, ideally and if practicable, you are nearly in line with the yellow buoy, so that you keep clear of the rocks which run to the east of the launching area. In any case, don't put the engine fully down until out past the yellow buoy.

If the tide is near the bend in slipway be aware that there are rocks in line with the upper part of the slipway. Reverse out with the engine part way down until you know you are clear (halfway to the yellow buoy). Remember to put the engine right down once clear (over halfway to the yellow buoy).

If you think you can't reverse far because waves are breaking over the back of the boat remember that it will still remain afloat even if brim full with water and if you put the engine into forward gear with the boat facing the shore it will head towards the shore!

## **Recovery**

### *Patrol Boat Crew*

The rocks are in the same place.

If the tide is more than 10 metres or so down the concrete below the bend in the slipway raise the engine so that the prop guard is just covered when you are out by the yellow buoy. Otherwise when about 50m out.

Maintain a position at least 50m out and in line with the lowest visible part of the slipway. Wait until the trailer is in the water and you are given the all clear. Approach the trailer in line with the lowest visible part of the slipway. If the tide is at the bend, the shore party should indicate to come in along the line of the lower part.

As the shore party grabs the boat, cut the engine, lift the engine fully and stay sitting in the boat.

### *Shore Party*

The following describes the best way to recover the boat in waves. In a flat calm many of these precautions are unnecessary but it is strongly advised to follow the full process so that everyone is drilled on the correct actions in case of adverse conditions. In waves it is especially important that the boat comes onto the trailer and out of the water as quickly as possible; if practicable between waves.

There should be at least six people in the shore party. Three in the water: two to windward, one to leeward all well behind the guide frames to catch the boat and line it up then to push it; and three at the front: one to attach the clip and two to pull the boat (both from in front of the guide frames).

The trailer must be pushed into the water until the rollers are well below the water so that the boat can float up to the front guide frame. When all are in position the boat crew should be called to

approach (and if necessary reminded to lift the engine so that the prop guard is just below the surface). The engine should be stopped and fully lifted when the shore party has grabbed the boat. The crew should remain seated in the boat. Those behind the trailer should guide it into the frame and start pushing. The boat should float forward until it hits the front guide frames and then those at the front of the trailer should grab the rope loops at the front of the boat and start pulling. Once the boat is clear of the water the person assigned should attach the clip and announce that the boat is now secure. Only then should the pulling/pushing stop. The boat crew can then disembark.

If there are no significant waves and fewer than 6 people are available on the shore the patrol boat crew should disembark either before the boat goes onto the trailer or after it has been clipped onto the trailer in the water. Under no circumstances should the crew attempt to leave the boat while it is between the guide frame uprights unless the boat is secured to the trailer.

The ratchet strap should be attached to the boat before moving up the slipway in case the rope should fail.

The boat is now ready to be pulled up the slipway.

In calm conditions fewer than 6 persons may be required to recover the boat. The OOD or the nominated person in charge of patrol boat recovery should make the decision and, if necessary, wait until enough people have come down the slipway before calling the patrol boat in. Consideration should be given to the number of people required to push the boat up the slipway. Under normal circumstances this is 8, but depending on the ages, weight and fitness of the members present, and if a rope or block and tackle are used at the top of the slipway this could be reduced. It is possible with correct use of a rope or block and tackle to get the boat up the slipway with 4 people, but this should only be done under the supervision of someone who is trained or experienced. If there are not enough people to recover the boat and get the boat up the slipway the crew should be directed to Cardiff Bay Yacht Club (see above) or, if the tide permits, the boat could be left on the slipway, suitably secured, until more volunteers have been summoned, e.g. from home.