

BYC Racing Safety Plan

March 1, 2014

The decision to hold a race or to postpone or abandon is the decision of the Race Officer (see RRS 27.3, 32.1).

The decision to participate in a race or to withdraw is the decision of each boat captain (see RRS 4).

Go / No Go

Approximately 90 minutes before first warning signal¹, the Race Officer will review the weather forecast with attention to approaching squalls, thunder storms, wind, waves and fog. Where inclement weather exists or is forecast, the Race Officer will consult with fleet captains, **COMMODORES Driver** and experienced racers to gather information and interest for racing under forecast conditions. The Race Officer must consult with the Harbormaster if the intention is to race in high winds, low visibility or potential storm activity.

- Consider postponement at the dock or on the water to allow weather to improve or further assess situation. [AP can be flown any time before the starting signal with two sounds.]
- Weather postponement or abandonment decision should factor in the median skill level and seaworthiness of the racing fleet on a class-by-class basis.
- When weather deteriorates after a start, consider a shortened course [S with two sounds] before outright abandonment [N over A with three sounds]. In extreme situations, you may also abandon a race even after one or more boats (but not all boats) have finished. (See RRS 32.1(e).)
- Communicate with the racing fleets on VHF CH 72 so that each captain has access to all significant weather and safety information.
- Postponement, shortened course and abandonment should be signaled and announced on VHF CH 72.

On-the-Water Emergency Response

The obligation to assist a person or boat in danger is the first obligation of all boats and competitors (see RRS 1.1). The safety of participants is the priority; boats and property are secondary.

- In the event of an emergency on the water, call **COMMODORES** immediately on VHF CH.72.

¹ We discourage mid-afternoon calls on races. Certainly, a Race Officer can make an early call when sustained weather or wind occurs. However, the Race Officer is not obligated to make earlier decisions.

- Participants should be aware that immediate assistance may not be available to them and, therefore, should be prepared to be self-reliant to the maximum possible extent for incidents such as Man Overboard, injuries, medical emergencies, equipment failures, etc.
- Although the Harbormaster is the most highly trained and capable first responder in an emergency, life sustaining measures may be needed prior to the Harbormaster's arrival. **All available means from participants and on-the-water race committee must be deployed.**
- **COMMODORES Driver** will coordinate the response to a person or boat in danger until the Harbormaster has responded or the situation has been resolved. In the absence of life-threatening or serious injury, the **COMMODORES Driver** will stand by as needed and make sure not to make the situation worse by possibly endangering other participants, volunteers or staff.
- **COMMODORES Driver** will report every incident where a person or boat is in danger to the Harbormaster and BYC Base on VHF CH 16, or cell phone if radio hails do not establish communications.
- **In emergencies, if the Harbormaster cannot be reached on VHF CH 16, use 911.**
- Where **COMMODORES**, another race committee boat or other boat on-scene can provide immediate assistance, **COMMODORES Driver will designate the boat to respond.**
- Where a person needs emergency medical assistance, **COMMODORES Driver** will consult with the Harbormaster for direction on transfer of the person to Marion Fire / EMS.
- In the event of an on-the-water safety incident, the **COMMODORES Driver** shall have responsibility for the safety of **COMMODORES**.

General On-the-Water Safety

- The Race Officer should designate an onboard assistant who will keep track of racing yachts visible from **COMMODORES** or visible from a race committee mark/safety boat if used.
- With the exception of (dinghies) Lasers, Optimists and 420's, every competing boat is required to carry a VHF radio tuned to CH 72.
- Before the first warning and when there may be storms, low visibility or high wind, the Race Officer may require all competitors to wear PFDs [Y with one sound].² (See RRS 27.1.)
- If a boat retires from racing, it shall inform the race committee as soon as possible on CH 72 or by hailing the race committee alongside.

² One-design fleets are required to wear PFDs at all times. See BYC Sailing Instruction 16.3.