



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST



Request Number: F-2009-03627

Keyword: Human Resources

Subject: POLICE TRAINING IN WATER SAFETY

Request and Answer:

Question 1

Does your Force have a water-specific safety policy and procedure, which provides for the needs of all personnel? If yes please provide a copy.

Question 2

Does your Force issue a standing order not to enter the water?

Question 3

Does your Force provide individual officers with water safety/water emergency training?

If yes does this training cover:

- A. Dynamic 'Aquatic' Risk Assessment
- B. Effects of temperature
- C. Effects of current (Hydrology)
- D. Effects of Poor Visibility
- E. Effects of Depth
- F. Effects of Drowning Casualty Behaviour
- G. Combined effects of all of above
- H. How much contact training time is allocated to water safety per person?
- I. Does this training include a practical session/s including reach and throw techniques?
- J. Is this training regularly refreshed?
- K. Is this training provided in-house?
- L. Is training verified? i.e. is competency checked?

Question 4

Are your officers provided with water safety equipment? If so what equipment are they provided with?

Answer

Please find attached documents which outline the Police Service of Northern Irelands current Policies and Procedures.

Question 5

Do you train officers to perform resuscitation? If so to what standard?

Answer

Yes, officers are trained to European Resuscitation Council guidelines.

Question 8

How many staff recognition awards for rescues from water have you given out for the above years?

Answer

2006 - 4 awards

2007 - 1 award

2008 - 27 awards

2009 - No awards to date.

Question 6

How many Water based emergencies have your officers attended for the years 2008/2009, 2007/2008 and 2006/2007?

Question 7

How many of these emergencies required in water rescue action?

Answer

The cost of complying with your request for information with regard to Questions 6 and 7 would exceed the "appropriate limit" as stated in the Freedom of Information Regulations 2004, which is currently set by the Secretary of State at £450

The Police Service of Northern Ireland receives approximately 26,000 emergency incidents per year to which police personnel would be tasked. Upon conclusion the Command and Control database is updated using the term "Concern for Safety". The PSNI's database does not divide such emergency incidents up into the type. Due to the nature and way this information is held each of the 26,000 emergency incidents would have to be identified and examined to ascertain whether or not the emergency was water based and whether water rescue action was required and it has been estimated that at a minimum of 5 minutes per incident this would take in excess of 216 hours to complete therefore exceeding the "appropriate limit" of 18hrs laid down by the Secretary of State.

I have also considered whether I can be of assistance in terms of helping you refine your request in regard to questions 6 and 7 to bring them under the cost limit but unfortunately due to the nature and structure of this information this is impossible.

If you have any queries regarding your request or the decision please do not hesitate to contact me on 028 9070 0164. When contacting the Freedom of Information Team, please quote the reference number listed at the beginning of this email.

If you are dissatisfied in any way with the handling of your request, you have the right to request a review. You should do this as soon as possible or in any case within two months of the date of issue of this letter. In the event that you require a review to be undertaken, you can do so by writing to the Head of Freedom of Information, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, BT5 6LE or by emailing FOI@psni.pnn.police.uk

If following an internal review, carried out by an independent decision maker, you were to remain dissatisfied in any way with the handling of the request you may make a complaint, under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act, to the Information Commissioner's Office and ask that they investigate whether the PSNI has complied with the terms of the Freedom of Information Act. You can write to the Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. In most circumstances the Information Commissioner will not investigate a complaint unless an internal review procedure has been carried out, however the Commissioner has the option to investigate the matter at his discretion.

Please be advised that PSNI replies under Freedom of Information may be released into the public domain via our website @ <http://www.psnipolice.uk/>

Personal details in respect of your request have, where applicable, been removed to protect confidentiality.

Police Service of Northern Ireland

For Internal Use Only

HO Ref: OPS 231/95

Service Procedure: 26/2000

File Box: D

Date: 6 April 2000

Sub Head: (a)

Amended and Reissued:

26 February 2007

27 November 2007

POLICE RESPONSE AT WATERWAYS AND USE OF THE BALCAN EMERGENCY LIFE LINE (B.E.L.L.)

1. BACKGROUND

- (1) It is not uncommon for police officers to attend the scene of 'near drowning' incidents, given that the province has over 300 miles of coastline, is host to the largest fresh water lake in Europe and has numerous major river systems. This is also accompanied by the fact that water borne activities and water sports are steadily on the increase.
- (2) These incidents can be caused by accident, where for example a person falls into the water either from a jetty or bridge, or intentionally where a person jumps into the water as a prank and becomes distressed, or enters the water with the intention of committing suicide. The list is virtually inexhaustible.
- (3) Police officers in the past, upon arrival at the scene of such an incident, have felt the need to enter the water in an attempt to effect a rescue. This is normally motivated by the officers moral responsibility to attempt to preserve life, however it is appreciated that there can also be pressure brought to bear on police by onlookers to 'do something'. The course of action chosen must be based on the best possible assessment of the risks and the options available at the time. There will be situations where only those present can decide upon the right actions to take and assess the risks primarily to themselves and others.
- (4) This General Order provides guidance to the Service on the use of equipment available and appropriate action which can be taken to protect as far as is reasonably practicable the health and safety of the police officer attempting the rescue.
- (5) Providing all other alternatives have been tried, and then only in extreme circumstances should police officers consider entering the water. Before such action is taken the relevant Police Communications Control Room must be informed by R/T or other means if appropriate.
- (6) It may be that the risk to the officer's life is too great to enter the water under any circumstances and this too should be considered a suitable course of action.
- (7) Alternatives to physically entering the water are primarily:
 - (a) **REACH** If possible, remain on dry land and by lying down if required to extend the distance, reach out to the victim. Consider using any article such as sticks, ropes and clothing to further extend the distance reached.
 - (b) **THROW** If the victim cannot be rescued by reaching as the distance is considered too great, then consideration should be given to throwing either a rope to the distressed person and pulling them to safety, or if a rope or rescue throw line is not readily available, consider throwing a buoyant object such as a lifebelt, or other article which will float and provide buoyancy to the victim.
 - (c) **WADE** After an assessment has been made of the condition of:

- (i) the banks/edges of the area of water;
- (ii) ensuring that the bottom is solid enough to support the weight of a person;
- (iii) testing the flow of water ensuring that it is not strong enough to wash away the rescuer.

It may then be possible to wade into the water to a depth not greater than waist deep in an effort to extend the reach to the distressed person. If feasible the rescuer should consider attaching themselves by whatever means to the shore.

- (d) **ROW** If the victim is at a distance that is too great for any of the above alternatives to be effective, and there is a boat available, then this can be utilised to effect the rescue. However, it must be borne in mind, the use of a boat or other watercraft may in fact increase the risks to the health and safety of both the rescuer and the victim. These risks are outlined in the attached generic risk assessment (see Appendix 'A'). They include capsizing the craft and striking the victim with the craft or the means of propulsion (propeller/oars)

2. EQUIPMENT

In consequence of the above, the Balcan Emergency Life Line, (B.E.L.L.) will be issued to all stations. The emergency rescue throw line enables the rescuer to reach and rescue people in danger of drowning at the greatest possible distance without endangering the life of the rescuer by expecting them to enter the water.

3. ISSUE AND DEPLOYMENT

- (1) One rescue throw line will be carried in the boot of the primary station patrol vehicle and should be listed in the vehicle logbook along with all other ancillary equipment.
- (2) It is essential that a six monthly inspection is carried out of the lifeline and the details recorded in an appropriate register specific for the purpose. This is to ensure compliance with Health and Safety instructions
- (3) It is strongly recommended that each member familiarise themselves with the B.E.L.L. and the means of deployment. Throwing instructions are printed on the side of the emergency lifeline as are unpacking instructions.
- (4) To deploy the Balcan Emergency Life Line:
 - (a) pull off blue tab with opposite hand to throwing arm;
 - (b) fix loop around this hand;
 - (c) throw capsule with strongest throwing arm in the direction of the victim;
 - (d) the emergency lifeline can be thrown either over arm or under arm;
 - (e) aim past the victim;
 - (f) before throwing, attempt to position thrower 'up wind' or 'up stream' of victim to further enhance the throwing distance. This may not always be possible.
 - (g) the line and casing will float, pull in while victim holds securely;
 - (h) ensure victim does not pull the rescuer into the water;
 - (i) wear issue gloves to prevent risk of rope burns;
 - (j) if deploying from a boat ensure rescuer is wearing a personal flotation device (P.F.D.) or lifejacket;
 - (k) after deployment, ensure the B.E.L.L. is washed and dried and inspected for damage to either the lifeline or the casing;

- (f) ensure the user thoroughly washes and disinfects their hands and any other parts of the body that have come into contact with the water.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

- (1) These instructions should be read in conjunction with the attached Generic Risk Assessment at Appendix 'A'.
- (2) It must be stressed that the attached risk assessment is not a complete assessment of police response at the scene of incidents at waterways but merely an assessment of the risks associated with deploying a rescue throw line. Each DCU will be required to prepare site-specific risk assessments relevant to their own areas, covering all aspects of predicted incidents at waterways, using the attached as a generic.
- (3) Depending on the location of the station it may require other control measures to be in place eg local assistance from the 24hr call out boat from the Lagan Weir, Fire and Rescue Service. Although these aforementioned issues generally refer to rescue situations, hence the use of rescue throw lines, there may also be occasions where a body or other item has to be retrieved from water. In such situations consideration must be given to tasking the Underwater Search Unit.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS/EQUALITY/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/INTEGRITY

This General Order is deemed to be Human Rights compliant. It has been screened for Section 75 considerations and meets integrity standards. It is suitable for public disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

6. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Chief Inspector, Operations Policy and Support, is responsible for reviewing the contents of this General Order on an annual basis.

Service Procedure No 26/2000, File Box D(a)

Index Entries/

- 'B' - Balcan Emergency Throw Lines (B.E.L.L.)/Police Response at Waterways**
- 'R' - Rescue Throw Lines (B.E.L.L.)/Police Response at Waterways**
- 'P' - Police Response at Waterways and use of the Balcan Emergency Lifeline (B.E.L.L.)**

RISK ASSESSMENT

PSNI
Appendix 'A'

Form RA3

Risk assessment:
Use of Balcan Emergency Life Line (B.E.L.L.)

Location: Various locations throughout PSNI area
Reference: PSNI GRA -

Completed by:
Date completed: 29.2.07
Review date: 28.2.08

Other relevant risk assessments: None

Work activity: description	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H/M/L)	Control measures required	In place (Y/N)	Further action required	
					By when	Person responsible
Use of Balcan Emergency Life Line (B.E.L.L.) By: Police Patrols/Underwater Search/PSNI Boat Section	1. Drowning by rescuer.	H(S)	Training in use of B.E.L.L. Issue of Force instructions.			
	2. Slipping/Tripping/ Falling in to water.	M	Compliance with FO and issued instructions on use.			
	3. Cuts, rope burns.	L	Issue of PPE (gloves).			
	4. Pulled into water by victim.	L	Training in use of B.E.L.L. and issue SOPs.			
	5. Infection from polluted or contaminated water (Leptospirosis).	M	Issue PPE (gloves). Issue SOPs on washing and hygiene			

Work activity: description	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H-M-L)	Control measures required	In place (Y/N)	Further action required	
					By when	Person responsible
Use of Balcan Emergency Life Line (B.E.L.L.) By: Police patrols/Underwater Search/PSNI Boat Section	6. Hypothermia	L	Issue of adequate thermal and waterproof clothing – standard outdoor/out weather clothing either uniform or unit specific			
	7. Contracting infected oxs disease from victim during first aid.	M	Follow current Force instructions on first aid administration.			
	8. Failing from rescue boat.	M	Wear issued PFDs or lifejacket and follow SOPs.			
	9. Rescue craft capsizes or swamps.	M	Wear issued PFDs or lifejackets and follow current SOPs.			
	10. Victim struck by boat propeller/boars	M	Only qualified 'in date' ooxswain at helm.			
	11. Emergency lifeline of insufficient length.	H	Compliance with SOPs and training instructions			
	12. Emergency lifeline become tangled.	M	Compliance with instructions and training. Care to be taken when re-boarding after inspection. Follow instructions printed on emergency life line casing.			
	13. Victim unconscious.	H	Compliance with G.O. Only as last resort enter water.			

Work activity: description	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H-M-L)	Control measures required	In place (Y/N)	Further action required	
					By when	Person responsible
Use of Balcan Emergency Life Line (B.E.L.L.) By: Police patrol/Underwater Search/PSNI Boat Section	14. Wind/Tide/Current too strong to allow B.E.L.L. to reach victim.	L.	Throw line from up-wind/tide position (SOP)			
	15. Arm/Shoulder injury from throwing action.	L.	Compliance with G.O and training methods			

Signature of assessor:
Name and rank/grade:
Date: 29.2.07

Signature of local safety representative:
Name and rank/grade:
Date:

Signature of head of Branch/DCUI Commander:
Name and rank/grade: Date:

Police Service of Northern Ireland

HQ Ref: TRIM 06\733

SP 56/2004

SERVICE PROCEDURE

USE OF BOATS WITHIN THE POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1. SERVICE PROCEDURE IDENTIFICATION

SERVICE PROCEDURE TITLE: Use of Boats Within the Police Service of Northern Ireland

PROCEDURAL OWNERSHIP:

DEPARTMENT Operational Support Department
BRANCH Operational Policy and Support

AUTHOR Sergeant, 17849

PROCEDURE APPROVED BY: Superintendent, Operational Policy and Support

CCF REF/OTHER
DATE OF APPROVAL 2 June 2009

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: 17 December 2004

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2. AIM OF SERVICE PROCEDURE

This Service Procedure sets out the arrangements pertaining to the use of boats.

3. INTRODUCTION

(1) Executive Summary

- (a) The use of boats by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) enables the Service to maintain its policing role onto the main watercourses within Northern Ireland and coastal regions.
- (b) At present there are a total of 9 boats in use by the Service. The majority are allocated in a support role to District Commanders and all have the potential for operational use in an emergency.

(2) Application

This Service Procedure applies to all police officers and staff involved in the use of boats either directly or indirectly.

4. LEGAL BASIS

This Service Procedure is not linked to any legislation.

5. POLICY LINKS

This Service Procedure is not linked to any other Service Procedure or Policy Directive.

6. CONSULTATION

Consultation has taken place with the following:

- (1) Combined Operational Training (COT) Boat Training;
- (2) Special Operations Branch;
- (3) 'F' District Commander;
- (4) PSNI Diving Co-ordinator;
- (5) Rural Region [Tactical Support Group (TSG) Co-ordinator];
- (6) Urban Region (TSG Co-ordinator);
- (7) Information and Communication Services (ICS);
- (8) Road Policing Development.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS/EQUALITY/CODE OF ETHICS/FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

This Service Procedure is deemed to be Human Rights compliant. It has been screened for Section 75 considerations and is compliant with the PSNI Code of Ethics. It is suitable for public disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

8. PROCEDURE AND/OR GUIDANCE

(1) Boat Types

(a) 6.5 metre RIB (Rigid Inflatable Boat)

The 6.5 metre RIB is governed by Code 'B' – Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Codes of Practice for Police Craft. They are restricted to inland waters and tidal waters up to 12 miles to sea from land. The maximum number of persons permitted to be carried on each boat is 10 including coxswain.

The 6.5 metre RIB should not operate beyond 1 mile to sea unless the following apply:

- (i) authorised by the TSG Commander for a specific operation; and
- (ii) coxswains and crew members are wearing immersion suits, lifejackets and protective helmets. Only officers in possession of the required protective clothing and trained in sea survival will be used to crew these specific operational patrols; and
- (iii) it is accompanied by at least one other Code 'B' vessel which is crewed by officers suitably trained and in possession of the required protective clothing.

Patrols to sea up to 12 miles from land **will not** be a routine occurrence. It should be noted that the protective equipment required for this type of patrol is only issued to coxswains. Therefore, patrols of this nature will require to be totally crewed by coxswains. The protective equipment will not be issued to other officers as a matter of course.

(b) 11 metre RIB (Lady Grey II)

The 11 metre RIB is governed by Code 'D' – ACPO Codes of Practice for Police Craft. It is supported by one 3-metre inflatable carried on board the vessel and is restricted to inland waterways. (Coxswains will require further training on the Lady Grey II.)

The normal patrol areas for the Lady Grey II will be Upper and Lower Lough Erne.

(c) 3-metre Inflatable

Restricted to inland waterways such as lakes, quarries, rivers etc.

(2) Deployments and Management

- (a) The deployment and management of boat patrols within Territorial commands will be under the control of the respective TSG Commanders. The Operational Support Department (OSD) Inspector will manage this aspect on their behalf.
- (b) The deployment and management of the boats allocated to 'F' District will be under the control of the 'F' District Commander.

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- (c) TSG Commanders/'F' District Commander/Head of SOB will maintain trained coxswains and crew to meet operational requirements. Maximum levels for coxswains and crew are as follows:

Coxswains:

Urban Territorial	-	5 coxswains;	
Rural Territorial	-	10 coxswains;	
'F' District	-	5 coxswains;	
Special Operations Branch	-	4 coxswains.	

Crew (Boat Familiarisation):

Urban Territorial	-	12 officers trained per each TSG;
Rural Territorial	-	12 officers trained per each TSG;
'F' District	-	15 officers trained;
Special Operations Branch	-	12 officers trained per each unit.

- (d) The initial allocation of boats will be as follows:

Operational Support Department	-	Four 6.5 metre RIBs and one 3 metre inflatable;	
'F' District	-	One 11 metre RIB (Lady Grey II), one 6.5 metre RIB and one 3 metre inflatable;	
PSNI Diving Co-ordinator	-	One 3-metre inflatable.	

- (e) The current location of boats is as follows however any change in location will be at the discretion of TSG Commanders/'F' District Commander/PSNI Diving Co-ordinator:

Operational Support Department	-	Lisnasharragh/Mahon Road/Enniskillen	
'F' District	-	Enniskillen;	
PSNI Diving Co-ordinator	-	Lisnasharragh.	

- (f) District Commanders/SOB units/PSNI Diving Co-ordinator requiring the services of boats should task the appropriate OSD Inspector's office in accordance with normal working practices in their area. District Commanders should ensure that the neighbouring commanders and operational military personnel are aware of the deployment and the use of boats on particular operational duties.

- (g) Such liaison will ensure that there is no duplication of tasking or other areas of operational conflict associated with the use of these boats. Insertion/extraction of foot patrols to/from high risk or otherwise inaccessible locations are pertinent taskings.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

(3) Management Information

- (a) To ensure that the use of boats is closely aligned to the needs of the PSNI the following information should be recorded in conjunction with the normal logbook entry:
 - (i) duration in hours;
 - (ii) total working hours to provide patrol;
 - (iii) number of officers;
 - (iv) duties, ie:
 - (aa) patrol area/purpose/objectives of patrol;
 - (bb) purpose/objectives achieved;
 - (cc) arrests/prosecutions – offence, brief details.
- (b) The information concerning the total working hours includes the preparatory time for a patrol and the patrol itself, for example, in respect of a TSG it will include parading for duty at their parent station, organising equipment and briefing, travel to patrol area, the patrol, return to station, debrief etc.
- (c) The management information should be recorded in the logbooks. It is the responsibility of the officer in charge of the patrol to ensure that this aspect of the instruction is complied with.

(4) Administration and Local Accountability

- (a) 'F' District Commander/TSG Commanders should appoint senior coxswains and assistant senior coxswains from the list of those who have successfully completed the coxswains course to assist in the administration and accountability directions below. The PSNI Diving Co-ordinator will perform this function for the boat issued to this role.
- (b) Each boat must undertake an annual inspection as outlined in the ACPO – Codes of Practice for Police Craft. It is the responsibility of the senior coxswain at each boat centre to ensure that the boats are kept in the required condition and that the certificates remain valid. Operational patrols or training will not be performed in uncertified boats.
- (c) It is the responsibility of the senior coxswain at each boat centre to ensure that each boat fitted with a marine VHF radio has in force a valid radio licence covering all marine band radios carried thereon.
- (d) Each boat and ancillary equipment will be treated as a police vehicle under the current motor Service Procedures and instructions. The Transport Liaison Officer (TLO) in conjunction with Transport Services Branch will have overall responsibility for the provision of and servicing of such craft.
- (e) 'F' District Commander/TSG Commanders/PSNI Diving Co-ordinator with responsibility for boats will be responsible at local level for the use, control and maintenance of the boats allocated to them.
- (f) This responsibility, which includes the day-to-day administration, maintenance, use and care of the boats, may be delegated to the senior coxswain if considered appropriate. A vehicle logbook, suitably amended, will be brought into use in respect of each boat and details of all journeys, servicing and repairs, and inspections will be recorded therein.

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- (g) Life jackets are issued on a scale of 10 per boat and must be worn by all personnel on board. Immersion suits and safety helmets will be issued to each coxswain on successful completion of the Coxswains' Course and remain on issue so long as employed in that capacity. When no longer employed as a coxswain, the immersion suit and safety helmet will be returned to COT. The nature of the equipment requires it to be stored under lock and key in a dry environment.
- (h) Alterations to any craft, fitted equipment, police name plates, PSNI badge and retrofits will not be carried out without the authority of the TLO. Any alterations or retrofit suggestions should be forwarded to the TLO for consideration. To ensure that the corporate image is maintained, any such approved change must be universal throughout the fleet.

(5) Accidents, Servicing and Repairs

- (a) Any damage which necessitates repairs to boat hulls and/or engines will be treated as a police accident and will be dealt with in compliance with the terms as set out in the Procedures and Guidance link as contained in the Roads Policing and Development page of PoliceNet. A copy of the Message Handling System (MHS) required, suitably amended will also be sent to COT Enniskillen, (LDA) and also Transport Services (Accident Section) (AAB). (See Appendix 'A' for MHS layout).
- (b) The following definitions will apply in respect of boats:
 - (i) Minor Accident: A minor accident comprises minor scrapes and scratches to the hull or engine of a police boat where such damage is sustained only by that boat and which is not due in any way to the manner of use of the boat and where the circumstances do not indicate the commission of a disciplinary or criminal offence by any officer involved;
 - (ii) Major Accident: A major accident is where the inner or outer skin of the hull has been punctured or cracked, or where damage other than minor scrapes or scratches have been occasioned to the hull or engines, or where injury is caused to any person or damage is caused to the property of any person, and includes circumstances where such damage or injury may be caused during the commission of a disciplinary offence by a police officer, or a criminal offence by any person involved.
- (c) The District Commander, before making a final decision on the file, may, if it is considered appropriate, seek the views of the TLO and Chief Inspector, COT concerning remedial action or further training which may be required. Consideration may also be given by the District Commander to submission of the file to the area PPS for their views. In the case of serious injury or loss of craft, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) will be notified at the time of the accident. MAIB are primarily involved in the investigation of accidents involving commercial or pleasure craft. They are not an enforcement or prosecuting agency and will only make recommendations for the prevention of future accidents. [See Service Procedure No 7/07 – Role of Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB)].
- (d) All boats and engines on issue to the PSNI will be serviced and repaired in accordance with the manufacturers instructions and in strict compliance with the terms of Service Procedure No 13/08 – Servicing/Mechanical Repair of PSNI Official Fleet Vehicles. Only authorised servicing and repair agents will be used to carry out such work. Coxswains will be authorised to carry out emergency repairs to enable its safe return from any patrol.
- (e) Each Senior Coxswain will be responsible for ensuring that coxswains qualified in the 'Safety Inspection' procedure conduct checks every six months on lifejackets held at their location. Records of these inspections will be maintained and a copy of the findings forwarded to COT Boat Training.

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- (f) Repairs to boat equipment and stores will be effected as follows:
- (i) Immersion suits:
repaired by suitably qualified and approved marine business.
 - (ii) Lifejackets:
Repaired by suitably qualified COT personnel.
 - (iii) Other equipment and stores:
These will be inspected before and after use by coxswains as laid down in standing orders. Any defect or loss will be reported in accordance with those standing orders.
- (g) Fuel/Oil/Spare Parts
- (i) Petrol and lubricating oil will be obtained from a police bulk installation. It should be accounted for in the same way as for vehicles – see Service Procedure No 25/07, 'Purchase, Issue and Accounting for Petrol, Diesel and Lubricating Oil'.
 - (ii) Any materials required for the maintenance of police boats will be obtained in strict compliance with Service Procedure No 13/08, 'Servicing/Mechanical Repair of PSNI Official Fleet Vehicles and only from an approved supplier.'

(6) Coxswains – Authorisation for Appointment/Approval

- (a) Guidance on 'Authorised Police Drivers Classification and Authorisation/Appointment/Removal' is contained in Service Procedure No 8/08, and will apply to coxswains. The main differences will be in relation to the training of members for coxswain duties and the colour and format of 'authorisation cards'. (See Appendix 'B'.)
- (b) All applications for appointment as coxswains will be made on Form 51/1. Only when vacancies exist should approved applications be forwarded via District Commanders/Heads of Departments to the Chief Inspector, COT. Only applications from members attached to Districts/Units specified in this Service Procedure will be considered.
- (c) The following points should be considered in relation to applications for appointment as coxswains. Appointment is conditional upon the member attaining the required competencies during the PSNI COT Coxswains' initial course:
 - (i) Service – at least 2 years operational experience and to remain in 'F' District/TSG/SOB for at least 3 years;
 - (ii) Boats/Boating – having an aptitude for and general interest in this area of police operations;
 - (iii) Academic Ability – be able to assimilate knowledge in theory and demonstrate in practice;
 - (iv) Fitness – good general standard of physical fitness, be competent in water and successful in a swimming pool assessment laid down by ACPO - Codes of Practice for Police Craft and approved by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA);
 - (v) Should also be in possession of a current first aid certificate (first aid at work).
- (d) The PSNI Diving Co-ordinator will be trained, qualified and re-qualified as a coxswain by COT.

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NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- (e) On completion of each Coxswains Course the Chief Inspector, COT, will forward to the TLO, a list of those members who have successfully completed the course and indicating the class/es of boat each member is entitled to coxswain. Coxswain authorisation cards will be issued by Chief Inspector, COT. (See Appendix 'B' for layout of Coxswains Authorisation Card).
- (f) The TLO may remove from coxswain duties any member who through negligence causes damage to an official boat or fails to comply with any standing order in respect of boats, or who shows a lack of responsibility in their duties as a coxswain.
- (g) Before a member who has been removed from coxswain duties is reinstated that officer will be required to undergo a re-assessment, subject to the discretion of the TLO.

(7) Boat Training

- (a) Chief Inspector COT will be responsible for providing all training associated with the tactical use of police boats. Training in the main will be divided into two parts ie:

- (i) Coxswain Training

To be provided to personnel to enable them to:

- (aa) Take charge of boats;
- (bb) Handle boats with confidence/safety to a recognised standard;
- (cc) Learn and demonstrate basic seamanship, including navigation, ropework, passage planning and international rules and regulations for prevention of collision at sea;
- (dd) Demonstrate the various general skills associated with a waterborne tactical insertion/extraction of patrols;
- (ee) Recognise and comply with international distress signals;
- (ff) Explain and demonstrate sea survival techniques;
- (gg) Competently operate VHF (DSC) marine band radios.

This course will be conducted by COT. A Coxswain Re-qualification Course will be provided for trained coxswains. The duration of courses can be obtained from COT. Coxswains must attend re-qualification within a period of 3 years or they cease to remain operational as coxswains. Coxswains failing to attend this re-qualification course within four years of initial course will be removed from the authorised list of coxswains.

Chief Inspector, COT, will notify District Commanders/OSD Inspectors/Heads of Departments/PSNI Diving Co-ordinator 6 weeks in advance of the re-qualification course.

It is recommended that qualified Coxswain's are facilitated with a minimum of 6 practice days per calendar year to maintain and enhance their boat handling skills and competencies.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

(ii) Boat Familiarisation Course

To be provided to operational personnel who are required to use boats and are nominated by 'F' District Commander/Heads of Departments/TSG Commanders. It is designed to train such personnel in basic 'boat etiquette' including embarkation, disembarkation, security of firearms, seating, emergency drills etc. Officers should attend a refresher course within 3 years of training. The duration of the course can be obtained from COT. Untrained officers should not be used for pre-planned boat patrols. In the event of an urgent operational requirement for a boat deployment, untrained officers can be used. It will be the duty of the coxswain in charge to conduct a Dynamic Risk Assessment and fully brief all personnel on boat safety prior to commencement of a journey. The Coxswain must keep a written record of actions and associated rationale. This practice will only occur in exceptional circumstances and where all reasonable means have been exhausted or where it would be impracticable to identify trained crew for deployment.

- (iii) 'F' District Commander/Heads of Departments/OSD Inspectors/PSNI Diving Co-ordinator should notify Chief Inspector, COT of requirements for Coxswain and boat familiarisation courses.

(8) Standing Orders

- (a) Trained coxswains no longer involved in police boat operations should return their coxswains authorisation cards and their issue of police boat standing orders/operating procedures to COT.
- (b) All concerned with the handling and use of police boats are to be familiar with the entire contents of standing orders and to comply with same. Standing orders must be kept in a secure environment and never taken out in boats. The person to whom they are issued will be responsible for their safe custody.
- (c) Local Arrangements

Each District Commander/Head of Unit to whom boats are located will prepare local standing orders relative to the use of boats within their area of responsibility and the safe storage of associated equipment.

(9) General

- (a) This Service Procedure updates the operational and administrative procedures and guidance associated with the police use of boats.
- (b) The operational success of police boats will depend on effective use being made of this facility on the main watercourses where their use can assist law enforcement/policing activities generally. The use of boats is appropriate in both anti-terrorist and more general law enforcement matters.
- (c) District Commanders who require advice concerning the use of police boats should consult the respective OSD Inspector's office or Chief Inspector, COT.
- (d) The PSNI do not have a declared water-borne Search & Rescue asset. However, Regulation 33 - SOLAS V (Safety of Life at Sea) *places an International Obligation on any vessel underway, that 'on receiving a signal from any source that persons are in distress at sea, is bound to proceed with all speed to their assistance.'* As part of normal procedures, Coxswains are fully trained in recovery of persons from the water and will at all times provide assistance if operating in the vicinity of the distress.

(e) Police craft should be used to assist at scenes of water-borne incidents if appropriate. However it should be recognised that identifying a coxswain and crew, pre-launch preparation, travelling to a suitable slipway and launching of the craft takes a considerable length of time. It could take up to 2 hours to place a fully operational Police boat at any scene. Realistic times and taskings should therefore be considered when planning Major Incident responses.

(f) Specialist Advice/Guidance

Chief Inspector, COT, should be consulted in the event of there being any operational or other problems requiring specialist guidance or advice.

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- (1) The Chief Inspector, Operations Policy and Support, is responsible for reviewing the contents of this Service Procedure on an annual basis.
- (2) Feedback relating to this Service Procedure should be directed through line management to Operational Policy and Support, Operational Support Department.

Service Procedure No 56/2004

Index Entries/

'B' - Boats, Use of - within the Police Service of Northern Ireland

'P' - Police Service of Northern Ireland – Use of Boats within the

'U' - Use of Boats within the Police Service of Northern Ireland

MAJOR TRAFFIC COLLISION POLICE BOAT INVOLVED

- (1) UDE if collision occurs in Urban Region
- (2) Regional Press Office
 - Londonderry - NYB
 - Armagh - HGC

- For the attention of:
- (1) The Transport Liaison Officer (TLO) UDF
 - (2) Regional Press Office
 - (3) COT Enniskillen LDA
 - (4) Transport Services - Accident Section AAB

1. Time, date and place of collision
2. Police Boat, PSNI No, VRM, Station and function
3. Police Coxswain, Name, Rank, Reg No and station
4. Passengers in Police Boat
 - (A) Police Personnel, Name, Rank, Reg No, station
 - (B) Others - Name, Address, Status, Reason for transportation
5. Nature of injuries and where detained or treated
6. Damage to Police Boat
7. Life Jackets - whether worn at the time of collision and if so were they subject to stress
8. Other article/person/property involved
9. User of other article/property - Name and address
10. Owner of the other article/property - Name and address if different from 9
11. Passengers in other article/property - Name and address
12. Owner of article/property involved
13. Injuries to occupants of other article/persons/animals where treated or detained
14. Damage to other article/property
15. Insurance of other article/property - Name of company, certificate number and effective cover dates
16. Particulars of how collision occurred
17. Name, rank and Reg no and station of officer appointed to investigate
18. Whether Form OMB 2 has been completed as a result of any complaint or allegation made by a member of the public arising out of the collision and if so, substance of the complaint.

MINOR COLLISION INVOLVING POLICE BOAT

- (1) UDE if collision occurs in Urban Region
- (2) Regional Press Office
 - Londonderry - NYB
 - Armagh - HGC

For the attention of:

- (1) The Transport Liaison Officer (TLO): UDF
- (2) Combined Operational Training LDA
- (3) Transport Services - Accident Section AAB

- 1. Time, Date and Place of Collision
- 2. PSNI No, VRM, Station and Function of Boat involved
- 3. Name, rank, Reg No and station of the coxswain
- 4. Damage to boat
- 5. Damage to other police property - give particulars
- 6. Other article/person/property involved
 - In the case of Article - Description
 - In the case of Property (including animals) - Description
 - In the case of persons - Name, Age and Address
- 7. User of other article/property - Name and Address
- 8. Owner of the article/property - Name and Address if different from 7
- 9. Persons in other article/property - Name and Address
- 10. Owner of any property (including animals) involved
- 11. Injuries to occupants of other vehicles/persons/animals - where treated or detained
- 12. Damage to other article/property - specify
- 13. Insurance of other articles/property - Name of company, certificate number and effective cover dates
- 14. Brief particulars of how collision occurred
- 15. Name, rank, Reg no and station of officer appointed to investigate the collision

MALICIOUS DAMAGE TO POLICE BOAT

- (1) UDE if collision occurs in Urban Region
- (2) Regional Press Office
 - Londonderry - NYB
 - Armagh - HGC

For the attention of:

- (1) The Transport Liaison Officer (TLO): UDF
- (2) Combined Operational Training LDA
- (3) Transport Services - Accident Section AAB

- 1. District and Station
- 2. Date and time damage occurred
- 3. Location damage occurred
- 4. PSNI fleet number and function
- 5. Name, rank, Reg no and station of coxswain
- 6. Details of damage
- 7. Details of any injury sustained
- 8. Brief description of how damage was sustained
- 9. Has any person been made amenable
- 10. Name, rank, Reg no and station of person supplying information contained in this message

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND

Name:

Rank: **No:**

The holder of this card is a qualified competent crew member under the terms of the ACPO Codes of Practice for Police Craft and is authorised to coxswain PSNI Police Craft:

CLASS:

This Authorisation expires on:

Coxswain Qualification expires on:

Date **CHIEF CONSTABLE**

- CLASSES OF POLICE CRAFT
1. Stormforce 6.5 Mt RIB - Operational
 2. Stormforce 6.5 Mt RIB - Non-Operational
 3. 3 Metre Inflatable
 4. Stormforce 11Mt RIB (LADY GREY II)



Making Northern Ireland Safer For Everyone Through Professional, Progressive Policing

RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment: POLICE RESPONSE TO FLOODING INCIDENTS	Location:
Completed by:	Reference: PSNIGRA 78
Date Completed:	Review Date:
	Other Relevant Risk Assessments: PSNIGRA 6(A) Contractors on site PSNIGRA 16(B) Control of persons visiting PSNIGRA 20 Mobile patrol in armoured veh PSNIGRA 24 Foot patrol PSNIGRA 25 Crowd control PSNIGRA 36 Mobile patrol in softskin vehicle PSNIGRA 41 Off duty police officers PSNIGRA 31 Boat duties PSNIGRA 44 Search PSNIGRA 58 Single Officer mobile patrols PSNIGRA 66 PSNIGRA

Work Activity	Hazard	Risk Assessment	Control Measures Required	In Place	Further Action Required	
Description		(H-M-L)		(Y/N)	By When	Person Responsible
<p>It should be noted that no attempt should be made to enter floodwater of any description either on foot or in any vehicle without the assistance of the Fire and Rescue Service. On the rare occasion when an officer might consider entering flood water (e.g. when life is threatened), the individual officer is to undertake dynamic risk assessment, consider the equipment available and the risks/ benefits to undertaking the task prior to taking any action. Open and good communication links between all parties must be arranged and maintained</p> <p>It should be noted that dynamic risk assessment is the continuous assessment and control of risk in the rapid and ever changing circumstances of operational incidents, which could include working near to floodwater. It involves a professional evaluation of the situation, tasks and those at risk in order to achieve an acceptable level of safety.</p> <p>This risk assessment is written to highlight the risks and appropriate control measures when working in close proximity to flood waters.</p>						
The undertaking of operations in flood areas e.g. routine patrols on foot or in vehicles.	Entry into floodwater either by foot or vehicle.		Dynamic Risk Assessment must be carried out continually in each instance, the result of which must be communicated to all personnel at the incident. N.B. risk must be proportional to benefit at all times, for under no circumstances should undue risk to			

Work Activity Description	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H-M-L)	Control Measures Required	In Place (Y/N)	Further Action Required By When Person Responsible	
Rescuing people	<p>Injury/Illness due to poor visual observation of the affected area after dark:</p> <p>Physical Risk of being swept away when driving into flood waters:</p> <p>Risk of drowning /</p>		<p>human life be taken. Fire and Rescue Service should be called upon to respond to a call from a flood victim in need of rescue All non-essential personnel must stay out of the affected area. Constant vigilance is to be maintained at all times in light of the potential for changing circumstances. Officers to keep 'safe side' on 'dry land' side of the water. Control room can gain current local information from the Environment Agency's Flood line on</p> <p>Suitable, sufficient and adequate lighting should be sought after dark e.g. floodlights and strong torches. Under no circumstances should an attempt be made to enter flood risk area after dark without adequate lighting. Officers should be equipped with torches suitable and fit for purpose when attending a flood area after dark. Floodlighting should be arranged where major operation is occurring. Signage, warning tape, traffic roadblocks should be arranged to raise awareness to those in proximity of hazard zone.</p> <p>Due care and attention to be taken when driving in adverse weather/ driving conditions.</p> <p>Under no circumstances should a vehicle be driven into floodwater.</p> <p>Fire and Rescue Service are to be called upon</p>			

Work Activity	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H-M-L)	Control Measures Required	In Place (Y/N)	Further Action Required	
Description					By When	Person Responsible
from water	<p>being swept away when entering the water on foot.</p> <p>Slips trips and falls from walking/ wading in water due to hidden hazards below water.</p> <p>Potential risk of injury to officer as a result of inadequate level of protective clothing and / or equipment and training in the use of equipment provided.</p> <p>Potential risk of injury to officer in isolation following a communications failure.</p>		<p>to undertake rescue operation. Continual care and attention must be paid reference submerged hazards, changes of depth and/or strength/speed of current.</p> <p>N.B. Officers are never to jump or dive into water. Officers to undertake dynamic risk assessment at all times and to only enter the water with extreme care whilst continually monitoring the situation to arrange a safe egress. Be aware that manhole covers may have been dislodged. Take cognisance of water damage to radio's and other equipment.</p> <p>Force Uniform Committee/ District evaluate requests for, reports on and tests of all items of clothing and equipment, prior to it being issued Service wide. Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment should be worn at all times.</p> <p>Life lines and extended reach poles to be considered to reach stranded flood victims in preference at all times to having an officer enter the water to attempt a rescue. Ser Procedure 26/2000 - Police Response at Waterways and use of Emergency Life Line (B.E.L.L.)</p> <p>Best possible radio provided and maintained. Fault reporting system in operation. Officers check equipment prior to patrol and carry spare charged batteries if required. Control room aware of officer's location and status. Control and officers aware of poor</p>			

Work Activity	Hazard	Risk Assessment	Control Measures Required	In Place	Further Action Required	
Description		(H-M-L)		(Y/N)	By	When Person Responsible
	<p>Health Hazards are present in waters contaminated with sewage or other biological hazards. Due to the nature of such risks additional safeguards will be required to protect the individual from contamination, infection or asphyxiation.</p> <p>Potential risk of injury to officer as a result of inadequate level of protective clothing and / or equipment.</p> <p>Illness/ Injury due to exposure to sources of infection within the water.</p> <p>Health hazards due to extremes of temperature e.g.</p>		<p>reception areas. Good communication links to be arranged and maintained between Control Room, Fire and Rescue Service. Officers to undertake dynamic risk assessment at all times and to only enter the water with extreme care whilst continually monitoring the situation to arrange a safe egress.</p> <p>Biological/Health risks</p> <p>Total avoidance of stagnant or slow moving water should be adopted due to the health risks that they pose. Officers should not enter storm drains Recognising the potential for infection to enter the bloodstream the wearing of suitable footwear to provide protection and avoid cuts to the feet should be compulsory. Decontamination of personnel following exposure to contaminants in water.</p> <p>Personal hygiene precautions to be adhered to at all times especially following exposure to flood waters. (Personal hygiene is important where crews have been in contact with open water, mud or similar.</p> <p>All personnel must wash and shower as soon as is practically possible after the incident and all equipment should be cleaned, visually inspected, tested and serviced in accordance with the periodic maintenance schedule) All PPE provided should be worn at all times.</p> <p>Officers should take into account the potential for infection and should adhere to strict hygiene procedures at all times. Equipment should be sanitised with disinfectant and replaced where necessary</p> <p>Health screening, advice and support available from Occupational Health & Welfare Unit.</p>			

Work Activity	Hazard	Risk Assessment	Control Measures Required	In Place	Further Action Required	
Description		(H-M-L)		(Y/N)	By When	Person Responsible
	hypothermia and exposure due to cold water emersion.		Sickness / Accident monitoring procedures apply and incident forms should be completed ASAP after flooding incident. Supervisors to ensure that arrangements are made with for a full de-brief after a traumatic incident. Supervisors to ensure that proper meal breaks are taken, shift patterns are monitored and suitable and sufficient relief personnel are made available.			

Signature of Assessor:

Name/Rank/Grade:

Date

Signature of Local Safety Representative:

Name/Rank/Grade:

Date:

Signature of Head of Branch/DCU Commander:

Name/Rank/Grade:

Date:

Work Activity	Hazard	Risk Assessment	Control Measures Required	In Place	Further Action Required	
Description		(H-M-L)		(Y/N)	By When	Person Responsible
7						
Open area search River/Water	Officer slips and falls Drowning		Officer to consider risk. If necessary seek specialist help (i.e. Underwater Search Unit) – Current Police Search Manual refers. Consider use of suitable boats etc – use only suitably trained personnel – Police Dory's etc – General Order 57/00 D(a) Provide safe access and egress (i.e. ladders) – General Order 'Safe Use of Ladders' 63/98 D(a) Consider roping together of trained officers for safety of individuals – use of only adequately trained personnel.			

Work Activity Description	Hazard	Risk Assessment (H-M-L)	Control Measures Required	In Place (Y/N)	Further Action Required	
					By When	Person Responsible
			Provision of suitable & sufficient quantities of rescue aids – BELL throw lines: General Order 26/00 D(a) Members advised to stay away from steep banks/edges etc Only those personnel required to be in the vicinity to be present. If working at heights, consider specialist help – PSNI Search and Rescue Unit. Subject to Current Police Search Manual – the search may be responsibility of HMCG.			
8						
						Not relevant to Request
						Not relevant to Request
						Not relevant to Request