



SID Club Safety Policy 2025

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Sailing in Dublin Club puts the safety of its members, guests and other people above all other considerations at all times, in all club activities.
- 1.2 While club members must take all possible care to protect club equipment from damage, the safety of people must take priority in all decisions.
- 1.3 All members agree to abide by the club's Safety Policy.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 Captain and Vice-captain (or VC) are club ranks, conferred on and held by members of the club at the sole discretion of the club committee in accordance with processes set out here for [Keelboat Captains¹](#) and [Keelboat Vice-Captains²](#), or who have been assessed as suitable by the SID Dinghy Sailing Secretary.
- 2.2 A sailing session refers to any daysail, practice exercise, race, delivery trip or cruise leg undertaken with club vessels.

3 Conduct of sailing sessions: Captains

- 3.1 Every sailing session must have a single designated captain, hereafter referred to as the session captain.
- 3.2 The session captain makes the decision whether to leave the shore, at his or her sole discretion, giving consideration to:
 - The ability and wellbeing of the crew
 - The condition of the equipment
 - The weather and tidal conditions
- 3.3 The captain should ensure that someone ashore is aware of the intended destination and expected arrival time.
- 3.4 Having made the decision to sail, the session captain assumes responsibility for the safety of the crew and equipment and the reporting of any incidents that occur during the session.
- 3.5 If weather or sea conditions deteriorate, the captain should consider altering or curtailing their sailing plan.
- 3.6 The session captain remains the primary decision maker during the entirety of the sailing session, except in the event where he or she is unable to perform his or her duties due to incapacitation, whereupon the vice-captain assumes the role of captain.
- 3.7 For keelboat sailing sessions, the session captain assumes the role of vessel skipper.

- 3.8 For dinghy sailing sessions, the session captain may variously assume the roles of helm or crew on either safety boat or any sailing dinghy, provided he or she is at all times satisfied that all vessels can be safely handled.
- 3.9 All captains and VCs must be familiar with ColRegs. When in or near shipping channels, they should maintain a listening watch on VHF channels 12 and 16, and observe Dublin Port or other local regulations, seeking permission to cross from Vessel Traffic Services.

4 Conduct of sailing sessions: Crew

- 4.1 Club members on a sailing session are expected to give their full support to the session captain in the safe operation of the vessel(s) and follow any reasonable commands promptly and efficiently.
- 4.2 Members must avoid any action that could endanger themselves or other people.
- 4.3 Members on deck will maintain a good lookout, and alert the helm or the captain/VC to any danger.
- 4.4 Members on a cruise, delivery or overnight race should make the captain aware of any medical conditions, or medications that they use, the knowledge of which may be required in case of emergency. The captain should temporarily record such information in a safe place, untouched except in case of emergency.
- 4.5 It is the responsibility of all members to draw attention to any decision, behaviour or equipment they believe to be likely to pose a danger to the vessel or any person.

5 Incident Reporting

- 5.1 For the purposes of reporting, an incident is defined as:
- Any person overboard (POB) occurrence
 - Any event resulting in the injury of a club member during a sailing session
 - Any event causing damage to club property
 - Any event causing damage to third party property
 - Any collision between club vessels and third party vessels, whether made fast or underway, and whether or not any injury or damage has been sustained.
 - Any other event where it is deemed the safety of club members was at risk.
- 5.2 Where an incident has occurred, the session captain must file an incident report with the club safety officer within 7 days of the incident using this [template³](#).
- 5.3 Where a collision occurs between two SID dinghies taking part in a race, an incident report is only required where injury or damage has been sustained.
- 5.4 All incident reports will be reviewed by the club committee to ensure follow-up actions are completed, and to inform policy changes.

6 Dangerous behaviour

- 6.1 Any member displaying behaviour or operating a vessel in a manner likely to endanger him/herself, or any other member, or club equipment should in the first instance have the behaviour drawn to his/her attention by the session captain in order to assist the member in operating more safely.

- 6.2 A member who is unable to correct unsafe behaviour, despite having it drawn to his/her attention, should be reported to the Safety Officer.
- 6.3 A member reported to the Safety Officer may receive written advice co-signed by the Safety Officer and Commodore, describing any required improvements in behaviour. The consequences of continued unsafe behaviour would be dealt with under the Club's [Complaints Policy](#)⁴.

7 Dinghy Sessions

- 7.1 The captain must judge the weather conditions, condition of boats, and crew experience and err on the side of caution, and will ensure that there is sufficient experience on each boat launched.
- 7.2 The captain must provide an appropriate safety briefing for all participants before each session.
- 7.3 All participants must use a suitable personal flotation device.
- 7.4 If there is no safety boat, the session should stay inside the harbour.
- 7.5 If there is only one person in the safety boat the session should not leave the harbour unless the captain judges weather, boat conditions and sailor experience are all suitable, erring on the side of caution.
- 7.6 When a dinghy session takes place outside the harbour participants should stay within the area designated by the captain e.g. Seapoint or Scotsman's Bay.
- 7.7 While on a cruise outside the harbour, dinghies must sail in flotilla and stay close to each other i.e. within 100m of each other.
- 7.8 For dinghy cruises north of the main shipping lane and south/east of Dalkey two people are required in the safety boat and a support boat is required (i.e. a hired RIB or one of the Club's keelboats). The skipper and crew of the support boat must be briefed on their responsibilities and stay in radio and visual contact with the dinghies.
- 7.9 Extreme caution must be taken near shipping lanes, and if crossing the port channel, dinghies must be towed by the support boat.
- 7.10 Cruises should only take place when the sea temp has increased (June to September). Sailors should dress as if it was a season colder i.e. Full wet suit, kag, booties, hat, and lifejacket/PFD. Safety Boat crew will need additional layers. The safety boat should carry snacks.
- 7.11 Before any cruises there must be an equipment safety check and briefing.

8 Keelboat Sessions

- 8.1 For daysails in familiar waters in daylight hours, the captain may sail without a vice-captain if satisfied that the crew have sufficient experience for the expected conditions.
- 8.2 All delivery trips, offshore races and cruise legs must have a designated vice-captain.
- 8.3 Where possible, the vice-captain for delivery trips and offshore races should be of Captain rank.
- 8.4 Everyone aboard will wear a lifejacket when at sea or preparing the boat.
- 8.5 The captain is responsible for the safety of vessel and crew, and should consult the VC when appropriate.

- 8.6 Captains should err on the side of caution in all decisions, and communicate their intentions clearly to the crew.
- 8.7 Before each voyage there should be a crew briefing on the passage plan and safety procedures appropriate to the conditions and the experience of the crew.
- 8.8 In the case of guest sailors (or others with limited experience) the briefing should at a minimum cover:
- Wearing of life jackets and harnesses
 - Cold water shock
 - Boarding and moving about the boat (one hand for the boat, high side, etc)
 - Risks from the boom and traveller
 - Safe use of ropes and winches
 - POB basics
 - Gas/fire risks
 - Use of heads.
 - Sunscreen, keeping warm, handling seasickness
- 8.9 Captains should ensure that the following checks have been made before leaving the pontoon or mooring:
- The engine is working and water comes out of the exhaust
 - Forward and reverse gears engage properly
 - The wheel or tiller is working freely
 - There is sufficient fuel in the tank (not just in the refill jerry-can)
 - The anchor is ready to deploy
 - All sails and lines are ready for action
 - Fenders are in place, or to hand and ready to deploy.
 - Danbuoy and lifebuoy are ready to deploy
 - The VHF is working
- 8.10 At the end of the session, the captain should ensure the boat is clean, tidy, securely moored and properly fendered.
- 8.11 Low fuel tanks should be refilled or reported to the next captain.
- 8.12 Any incidents should be reported to the Safety Officer
- 8.13 Missing items, faults and breakages should be reported to the Maintenance Officer.

¹ https://sailingindublin.ie/Documents/Policies/20241216_KeelboatCaptainSelection.pdf

² https://sailingindublin.ie/Documents/Policies/20241216_KeelboatVCSelection.pdf

³ https://sailingindublin.ie/Documents/Policies/20200815_Incident_Report_form.docx

⁴ https://sailingindublin.ie/Documents/Policies/20241212_Complaints.pdf