**Scope**

* Use of boats for transport of people, equipment, cargo
* Includes hired boats or use of ferries for transport
* Boat and ferry accidents

**Boat Use**

**BEFORE**

If you use boats as part of your work with XXX you need to follow the basic personal safety points below and be aware of local conditions in the weather and water that might affect your journey. Maintain good communication as you would with any journey, carry your personal security equipment, documents and communications equipment with you.

Ensure the following precautions:

* Make sure the boat is in good condition (and has the appropriate certificates for use if applicable)
* Watch the weather, review river security and plan your trip to ensure you are always one step ahead of a problem
* Conduct travel by boat in the same manner as vehicle travel – appoint a trip leader, monitor staff movements, ensure that there are regular radio checks, and ensure that you are aware of expected arrival/departure times
* The Boat Captain will:
  + Ensure the XXX checklist – boat equipment has been fulfilled.
  + Ensure that oil and fuel levels are sufficient for the planned trip
  + Check that the engine is working properly
  + Communicate the estimated time of arrival to the trip leader.
  + Sign the departure time in the logbook
* Make sure that there is suitable safety equipment on board.
* Always ensure that every person on board is wearing a life jacket. Make sure that straps, buckles and zippers are in good working order – devices that are ripped or in poor condition should not be used.
* Do not go beyond the operating limits for the class of the boat. Small boats are not meant for the open ocean.
* Non-XXX travellers must sign a liability waiver.

**Cargo/Loading**

* Do not overload the boat with people or equipment. The more weight in a boat, the less responsive it is to sea conditions and to control.
* Cargo should be tied down to prevent slipping/movement during the journey.

**Questions to be asked:**

* Does XXX own boats in any locations? Are there safety/maintenance checks to be done that should be listed in a checklist in the Local Security Plan?
* Use of ferries that may not have a good safety track record – do we have a list of 'approved' ferry companies or providers, or ask staff to make their own choice
* Do staff need to be able to swim before using boats?
* Are there any local hazards to watch out for in the water?
* Are there certain types of local boat to use / avoid
* Do you have arrangements with agreed suppliers who are checked for safety requirements

**DURING**

* Be extremely careful when operating in a shipping channel, as large vessels move at considerable speeds.
* Always keep a proper lookout – especially in late afternoon and early morning when other boats and obstacles can be difficult to see.

**AFTER**

Do not forget to communicate to the base that you have arrived safely!

**Boat Accident**

**BEFORE**

To avoid being involved in a boat accident, be sure to have read and taken precautions as per the SOP - Boat use & boat safety.

Questions to be asked:

* What are the most likely boat-related risks in this location, e.g. using small boats for transporting staff, or passengers travelling on large ferries involved in an accident? Are there any specific recommendations related to those risks?
* Are there any local authorities to be called/notified in case of boat accidents?
* If a XXX boat is in an accident with another boat and people are injured or property is damaged, are there any points to be aware of, e.g. need to offer compensation / assistance?

**DURING**

Always bear in mind: The priority is to save and protect lives.

**If you are on a boat**

* If you can navigate back to shore, do so, or if the boat is too damaged, wait for help. Try to plug any holes with anything available, e.g. bags, boxes, wood.
* The last resort in any sinking scenario is to abandon ship – your boat is safer and more visible than a life raft. The call to abandon ship should only be given when it is certain that the boat is going down.
* If you have time, gather all flotation devices, e.g. flotation rings, and gather emergency equipment.
* If you have to get into the water, try to use something to stay afloat.
* If you are in the water, stay together. Stay with the boat if it is safe to do so, or get to land if you assess that is possible.
* If you are in a group, account for all members of the group
* Try to call for help – if communications devices can be used, give an immediate incident report to your nearest base. Be as specific about your location as you can.
* Do not try to retrieve items from the boat if it is going to put you in any danger.
* Treat any injuries if possible / administer first aid.
* If another boat is in difficulty consider the options to assist yourself or to go for help instead – as you would in a vehicle accident. Offer first aid assistance if it does not put you at risk.

**If you are on a ferry/large ship**

* It is even more important to stay calm. Panic leads to pushing, shoving and trampling, which can lead to other injuries, like broken bones or concussion.
* Larger boats take longer to sink, so there should be plenty of time to get everyone into the lifeboats.
* When a large ship sinks it will probably tilt, making it difficult to make your way to the deck. Hold handrails and go slowly to avoid slipping. Also keep an eye out for objects that could be sliding around.
* The captain should give a signal to evacuate - seven short horn blasts followed by a long one.
* The crew of the ship should be the last ones off the boat.

**AFTER**

* If the accident involved another boat, exchange information with the other boat operator. Acquire their name, address, telephone number, and the boat's name if there is one.
* Make a list of any items that have been damaged or lost.
* Complete a full incident report, submit to Country Director and XXX.
* Follow up on any lessons learned or actions to be taken.