

# Skipper Safety Brief

## Fire extinguishers

### Location and mode of operation:

- ☐ There should be several in the salon and one in each cabin
- ☐ Teach the P.A.S.S. technique to operate the fire extinguishers

## Life jackets (PFDs)

- ☐ Know where they are and make sure you have the correct count
- ☐ Make sure to request kid PFDs if necessary

## Radio and distress call procedures

- ☐ Everyone should know the basic procedures and how to make a call
- ☐ Channel 16 and also cell phone with emergency numbers
- ☐ Explain squelch - turn it up before making a distress call
- ☐ I bring a laminated copy of this VHF Guide from SAIL Magazine
- ☐ For non-distress calls, hail on 16 and then switch channels. Be brief

## Other safety topics

- ☐ Pay close attention to redlined areas and other local knowledge from the base staff
- ☐ Know the location of other safety gear - through hull plugs, flares, speaking trumpet, etc
- ☐ Everyone is a lookout - don't assume that the helmsman sees the fishing buoy, other boat
- ☐ One hand for you and one for the boat
- ☐ Prop safety - no one goes on the front of the dinghy
- ☐ Swim with a buddy, three is better
- ☐ Always use the dinghy kill switch - learn about a tragedy in BVI as a sobering reminder
- ☐ Describe fire coral and warn of consequences - better yet, avoid all contact with any coral
- ☐ No human fenders when docking
- ☐ Have a backup plan for your overnight anchorage or mooring field

## Other skipper briefing topics

### Routine daily checks

- ☐ Bilge
- ☐ Engine oil, belts, and impeller
- ☐ Generator
- ☐ Water and fuel levels

### Underway

- ☐ Everyone gets a chance to help sail - it's a team effort
- ☐ Explain write-of-way concepts for vessels under sail and power
- ☐ Reefing - explain the concept; reef early
- ☐ Beware of the boom on certain boats - explain accidental jibe
- ☐ Don't uncleat a loaded sheet - get several wraps on a winch first

### Mooring ball procedures

- ☐ Approach from downwind
- ☐ One person to port and starboard with the lines and another with the boat hook
- ☐ You can also involve one more person to point at the ball and direct the helmsman
- ☐ Run two lines through the pennant eye, lines go on outside of railing
- ☐ If you miss, no big deal, swing around and try again

### Pre-departure checklist - daily

- ☐ Close hatches
- ☐ Make sure there is not too much water in heads
- ☐ Secure the rest of the boat for sea - sink is a good catch-all for bottles
- ☐ Check for lines in the water
- ☐ Swim ladder up
- ☐ Dinghy raised
- ☐ Generator and lights off

## Evacuation routes

- ☐ If primary exits are blocked by smoke, use the overhead hatches
- ☐ Have a plan to assist older or younger crew members evacuate
- ☐ Do a head count once you evacuate

## Man overboard procedures

- ☐ Alerts the crew and points at them - don't take your eyes off
- ☐ Throw the life ring or anything that floats into the water
- ☐ Someone will help me get the sails down as fast as possible, and we'll motor for the pickup
- ☐ Someone is designated in advance to make a man overboard MAYDAY call
- ☐ Don't fall off the boat! The 'head' on the back of the boat might be closed

## Sinking procedures

- ☐ I will grab someone to go below and find the leak. Take towels and plugs with you.
- ☐ Know the location of the through hulls - most likely place for a leak
- ☐ Someone else is designated to make a distress call on 16
- ☐ Another person to the manual bilge
- ☐ Depending on the severity of the leak, other crew members will prepare to abandon ship - water, handheld radio, life jackets, go-bag, and get the dinghy down if conditions allow

### Try to get everyone involved by assigning roles

- ☐ Dinghy captain, who can cook (others clean), chief engineer, bartender, etc

### Conserving water aboard your sailboat

- ☐ Explain what a navy shower is or take showers off the back of the boat
- ☐ Washing dishes can burn up a lot of water
- ☐ This is important even if we have a water maker - they do break!

### Anchoring

- ☐ 5 or 7:1 scope - proximity of other boats, how they are anchored, and weather forecast
- ☐ Anchor captain controls the windlass - the helmsman might have the counter information
- ☐ Agree on hand and arm signals