



Guidelines for Safety at Designated Regattas

Introduction:

Injuries and death have occurred during competitive sailing events. These injuries may occur during the course of sailing on an individual craft or as a result of collision between competitors or spectator craft. The risk is likely to increase with the size of the regatta fleet, environmental conditions and unexpected activities of spectator boats. The introduction of disabled sailing events has raised the level of awareness of responsibilities for sailors' welfare during the sailing event.

Designated Events:

These guidelines apply to events which are considered to be National or International events. These guidelines may also form a framework for consideration at club events.

Responsibilities:

The event organizer should be responsible for providing an adequate level of medical care for sailing events. This responsibility extends to all persons present on the racing field, including spectators. A local event convener should prepare a medical contingency plan for each sailing event. The local event convener is responsible for fulfilment of all elements of the plan. All participants should be familiar with the medical contingency plan. The convener is also responsible to inform participants of the plan and make it available to them.

Special need sailors:

The organising committee should appoint a medical officer for the event responsible. This medical officer will be responsible for execution of medical care and elements of the plan during event. The medical officer should be a medically trained person with appropriate knowledge of medical problems and injuries that may occur in sailing events.

There should be a system of conveying prompt information from the racing field to the medical officer. The convener should secure an effective means of communications between all participants providing medical care including conveying prompt information from the racing field to the medical officer.

Medical cover for sailing events:

Medical contingency plan should address following 4 elements:

1. Acute assessment on the sailing course

The event organizer should ensure that there is a qualified person present on the sailing course that is able to assess the gravity of the medical problem that occurs and competent to make a decision whether evacuation to shore is necessary or whether the problem can be solved on the course.

In off shore races where there is no possibility to provide such a person on the sailing course, the organizer should secure a qualified consultant via "radio medico". This radio consultant may give advice to a crew member who delivers the first aid. This arrangement should be stated in the medical contingency plan.

2. First aid on sailing course

The event organizer should secure that on the sailing course there is a medically trained person capable of providing medical help to at least the first aid level: Model course I, IMO-Model Medical Training Courses for Seafarers Merchant Shipping Minimum Standards Convention. 1976 (No.147).¹

Organizer should secure prompt transport of a sick/injured person from the racing field to the medical person responsible for providing medical help on sea, or that medical person to the injured participant on the field. Organizer should provide that that person is equipped by appropriate equipment and medical supplies, taking into consideration the number of participants, type of boats and possible gravity of injuries that can appear in that type of event.

In the case of offshore events boats should be equipped with appropriate medical kit and each boat should have a person trained to provide medical help via means of radio-medico at least to the level of training of Model course II (Model course III for ocean-crossing events).¹

3. Retrieval to land

The medical officer will decide if it is necessary to evacuate sick/injured participant onshore. Organizer should secure prompt transport of sick/injured person from the racing field to the designated medical facility on shore.

In the case of offshore events, where it is not possible to organize such a service by organizer, available SAR organization can be used. If so, that should be written in medical contingency plan.

4. On shore treatment and transfer to an emergency department

Organizer is responsible to make appropriate arrangements regarding admission of sick/injured participant to the designated medical institution on shore.

Documentation:

The contingency plan should be in written form and contain all necessary information to affect the plan e.g. telephone numbers and addresses of designated medical facilities, medical doctors, ambulance services, and radio medico stations. The medical contingency plan should be signed by the president or head of the organizing committee of the event.

The medical contingency plan should also have an Appendix – Report. This report is a log of all medical problems which occur during the event and all entries should be signed by the responsible medical officer. The medical contingency plan with Appendix must be retained by the event convenor in a secure file for two years. It is advisable that each National medical commission collects and analyzes data from reports in order to survey medical problems and create appropriate preventive measures.

These guidelines are a suggested minimum standard and does not exclude the right of organizer to set higher level of medical care, provided that it complies with this guideline (policy). Fulfilment of requests stated in this set of rules does not exclude obligations of organizers to comply with other the standards of safety at sea.

¹*Maritime Labour Conventions and Recommendations, 4th Ed. Geneva International Labour Office, 1998:15.*