

WHO WE ARE:

Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources

Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 6782000

Irish Coast Guard

Leeson Lane
Dublin 2
Tel: (01) 6782324
Emergency Tel: Ring 999
or 112* and ask for Marine
Emergency

Irish Water Safety

The Long Walk
Galway
Republic of Ireland
Tel: (091) 564400

ISA

Irish Sailing Association
3 Park Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2800239

RNLI

Royal National Lifeboat
Institution
15 Windsor Terrace
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2845050
Registered Charity No.
CHY 2678

BIM

PO Box 12
Crofton Road
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Tel: (01) 2841544

WHAT WE DO:

We are the Government Department responsible for the safety of life at sea and the prevention of pollution from ships.

We are the Division/Service of the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources responsible for search and rescue, intervention in shipwreck and casualty and response to pollution at sea. We provide commercial marine communications and maintain 50 coastal rescue stations manned by volunteers available to respond to marine emergencies.

We as a statutory body have a responsibility to promote through education a nationwide water safety awareness.

We are the governing body representing sailing, windsurfing, powerboating and personal watercraft in Ireland. We can advise on all aspects of boating safety. We have a network of clubs and recognised teaching establishments that operate training courses for all types of leisure craft.

We are a registered charity that saves lives at sea. We provide, on call, the 24-hour service necessary to cover search and rescue requirements to 50 miles out from the coast of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, and a beach rescue service on 43 beaches in the south west of England. The RNLI depends entirely on voluntary contributions and legacies for its income.

We are the principal development agency for the seafood industry and promote safe working practices for the industry which involves Fisheries Training for both new entrants and practitioners, developing codes of practice, production of training materials and trials of preventative measures against risk on board fishing vessels.

MAN OVERBOARD PROCEDURES FOR PLEASURE CRAFT



SAFETY ON THE WATER

* New European standard emergency number

Department of the Marine
and Natural Resources

Roinn na Mara agus Acmhainní Náúrltha

Irish Coast Guard
Garda C6sta na hEireann



Foreword

This booklet has been produced by the Marine Safety Working Group which has representatives from the following Government Departments and National Institutions:

Department of the Marine
Department of the Environment
Irish Coast Guard
Irish Water Safety
Irish Sailing Association.

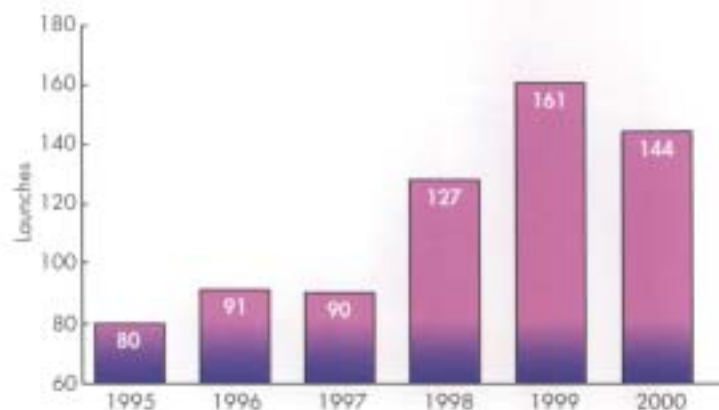
Department of Education
Department of Enterprise and Employment
Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht
Royal National Lifeboat Institution
Bord Iascaigh Mhara

The purpose of the booklet is to provide basic guidance on preventing and, if necessary, dealing with man overboard situations. The intention is to cover the principles so that readers can develop them for use aboard their own boats where equipment and circumstances will differ.

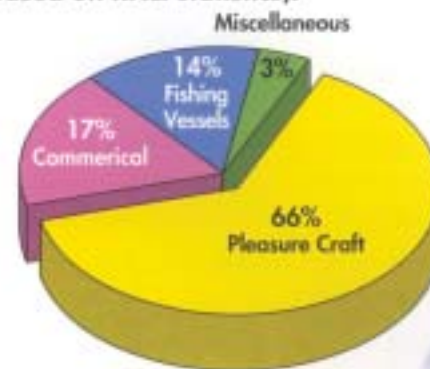
Further copies are available from any of the organisations/agencies mentioned above. See back page for addresses and telephone numbers.

THE STATISTICS

Man Overboard - An Increasing Problem!



All launches to Man Overboard incidents.
(Based on RNLI statistics).



Don't become one of
these statistics!

Learn the basics - Your life may depend on it! The ISA run courses for yachtsmen which include Man Overboard procedures.

(01) 2800239



PREVENTION



- Guardrails should be continuous around the upper deck. The ends should be secured with lashings or quick release slips so that you can cut or release them to recover a person from the water.
- Treat any slippery areas with either non-skid paint or stick-on strips. Pay particular attention to the tops of hatches and sloping coachroof sides which become walkways when the boat is heeled.
- Use harnesses in rough weather and at night. Make sure they are adjusted to a tight fit or you can fall out of them.
- Fit suitably placed harness attachment points close to the companionway so that you can clip on before coming on deck and on both sides of the cockpit. Rig jackstays on both sides of the boat so that you can walk the full length of the deck without having to unclip. Flat webbing straps are in some ways better than wire because wire tends to roll underfoot when you stand on it.

- Wear suitable protective clothing and a lifejacket preferably fitted with retro reflective tape and a light.

Remember that if you do go over the side, at night or in bad weather, there is a high probability that you will not be recovered.

- Have the necessary safety equipment to hand so it is ready for immediate use:

Horseshoe lifebuoy – fitted with:

- **A drogue** to prevent drifting.
- **An automatic light** – a continuous beam is considered most effective.
- **A danbuoy** – fitted with a flag 2 metres clear of the water which assists in marking the position of the lifebuoy.

A buoyant heaving line may be necessary in heavy seas if it is difficult to come alongside the person in the water.

- Practise Man Overboard Drill regularly – This can be achieved by using a fender and bucket as your casualty.

Practice Makes Perfect!



ACTION



- When you first discover that someone has fallen overboard, the most important thing to remember is **Don't Panic!**
- If the person overboard is on a lifeline, stop the boat immediately and then recover them using the lifeline/harness as necessary.
- If you are well prepared and have practised the drill regularly, you will automatically know how to react.

Check List

- Immediately throw a lifebuoy and attachments overboard.
- Raise the alarm by shouting: **"Man Overboard!"** (Even if you are the only one left aboard, shouting "Man Overboard" may provide reassurance to the person in the water).
- If there are others on board, instruct a crew member to watch the person in the water and point continuously.



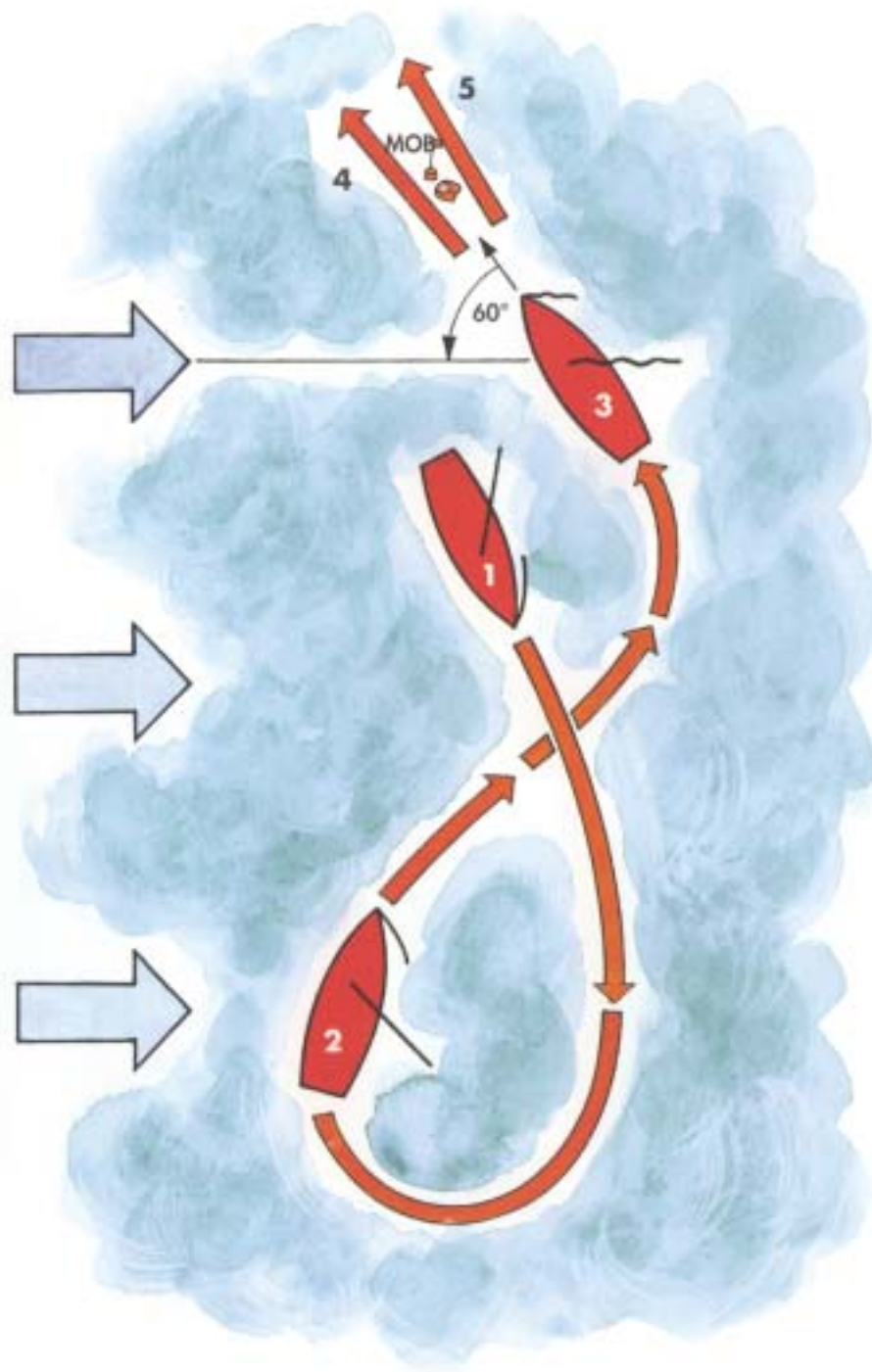
- Start your recovery manoeuvre. You may have to lower your sails and start your engine – Beware of loose sheets fouling the propeller.
- If possible note your position – most nav aids have a MOB function – it may prove vital if contact is lost with the person in the water. **Remember** the MOB function records where the person fell overboard – he/she will drift away with the tide.
- If you are the only person remaining on board, do not leave the deck as you may become disorientated and lose sight of the person in the water.
- During the hours of darkness, a white parachute flare, which will pick up the retro reflective tape on clothing/lifejacket, can be used to illuminate the area.
- If you cannot see the person in the water, or you have any doubt about your ability to recover him/her, send a Mayday call on your VHF radio.

ACTION - SAILING BOATS

WITHOUT AN ENGINE

A simple way to make the recovery is to:

1. Put boat onto an "apparent" beam reach (breeze across the boat). Allow yourself some sea room to manoeuvre and get yourself organised to recover the person from the water.
2. Tack and sail on the opposite beam reach (person in water now on weather bow).
3. Approach on a close reach easing the sheets in the final stages. Leeway will increase as you slow down – allow for this.
4. In a larger boat it is easier to come alongside to windward of the person in the water and make the recovery over the leeward side.
5. In a dinghy, come alongside to leeward of the person in the water and make the recovery by the weather shroud.



ACTION - SAILING BOATS

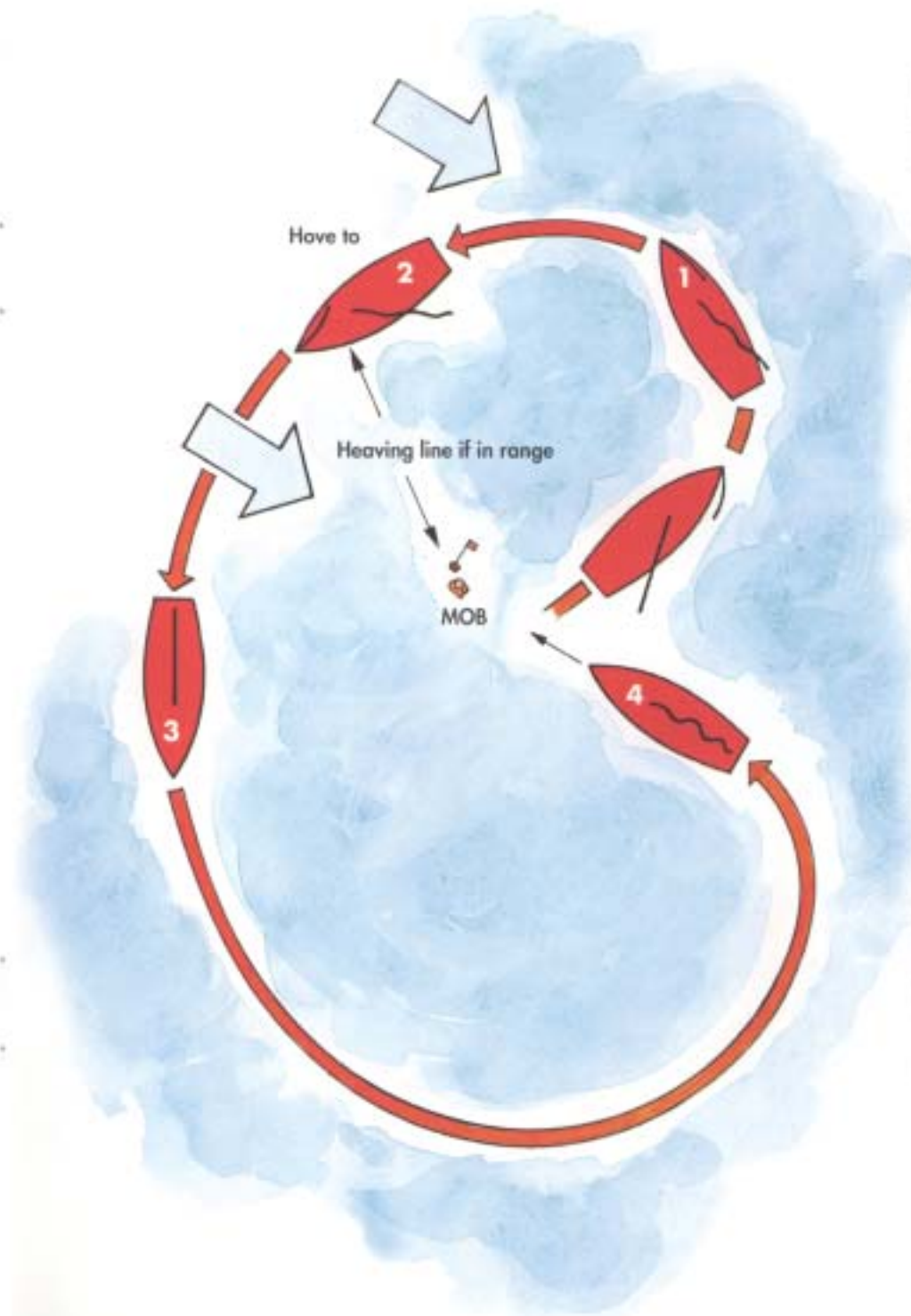
WITH AN ENGINE

To stay as close to the person in the water as possible:

1. Come up to wind and tack, leaving headsail cleated so that boat stops hove to.
2. Throw a heaving line to the person in the water, if in range and haul alongside.
3. If not within heaving line range:
 - start the engine
 - lower or furl the headsail
 - sheet the main sail amidships.

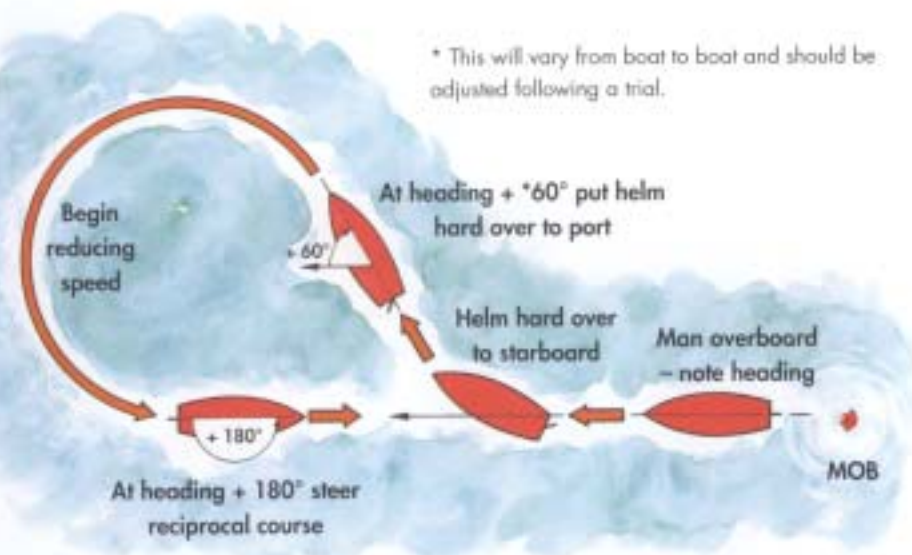
Ensure there are no lines or sheets lying loose on deck or overside that could foul the propeller.

4. Motor to leeward of the person in the water and approach him/her head to wind.



ACTION - POWER BOATS

- If you can see the person in the water clearly, a simple 180° turn is quickest.
- If you lose sight of the casualty, due to poor visibility, or heavy weather and sea state, the 'Williamson Turn' is a good way to get on to a reciprocal course which will take you back down your track:



Put the helm hard over to starboard and add *60° to your course. When the compass is on the new heading, put the helm hard over to port. When the compass is reading the course + 180°, steer a reciprocal course and the casualty should be ahead of you.

- In heavy weather the reciprocal course may bring the sea astern, in which case a short approach head to sea may be more appropriate once the turn has been completed.

- Do not waste time while the boat is turning to approach the person in the water - prepare for the recovery as it is too late when they are alongside.
 - Which side will you approach?
 - Have a heaving line ready
 - Wear a life jacket and lifeline; if you don't, you may get pulled on top of the person in the water
- The initial approach to the person in the water will vary depending on weather/sea conditions and the type of boat. Let the weather help rather than hinder - stop upwind and drift down.
- If you are concerned about drifting onto the person in the water, bring your stern into the wind. If you're not confident with your boat handling skills, or if it looks likely that the boat could come down on top of the person in the water, throw them the heaving line and pull them alongside to a safe place for recovery.
- **Ensure the propeller is not turning when you are alongside the person in the water.**



