



## Boats & Safety Committee

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### Safety Boat Considerations

#### Guiding Principles:

Sailing in cold weather or with precipitation is not inherently dangerous. The danger arises from capsizes that lead to sailors being in the water and subsequently exposed to cold-related injuries.

To minimize the risk of cold-related injuries, sailors should not be competing if there are more simultaneously capsized boats than the available safety boats can respond to.

**If there are more than three simultaneously capsized racing boats per safety boat, racing should be abandoned or postponed until weather conditions improve.** The host shall have discretion to determine what is an appreciable improvement in weather conditions.

#### Definition of Safety Boats:

**A safety boat is any motor boat that can be used to assist competitors in need on the race course.**

Any motor boat near the racing area for any purpose relating to the racing (i.e. spectating, mark boat, etc.) may be considered a safety boat. **A motor boat that is part of the race course after the start or required to record finishes, such as a race committee boat or finish boat, does not constitute a safety boat.** If a host elects to use separate boats for race committee and finish boat, the race committee may be considered a safety boat.

If safety boats are owned or operated by persons or organizations not affiliated with the regatta host, there shall be a prior acknowledgment that the motor boat is available for use as a safety boat and will respond as needed.

If the racing area is reasonably close (as determined by the regatta host) to onshore facilities, **additional safety boats need not be on the water at all times provided that the regatta host previously established who will operate them if needed.** The intended operator should be prepared and able to assist when necessary. The regatta host shall have discretion to determine if a potential safety boat has a qualified operator and sufficient personnel to assist competitors in need.

**Whether a judge or umpire boats constitutes a safety boat depends on whether they are mandated to follow the racing in the event of capsizes. If a judge or umpire boat can stop following the racing to assist competitors in need, it may be considered a safety boat.** Otherwise, it does not constitute a safety boat.



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Impact of Adverse Weather:

Many events in college sailing have only one safety boat – generally a mark boat in addition to an anchored committee boat. In good weather conditions, this is not an issue regardless of the number of competitors on the water.

As breeze strength increases, the risk of competitors capsizing increases. In colder weather, the dangers associated with a capsize are greater than in moderate or warm weather. Accordingly, cold and high wind conditions necessitate an increased presence of safety boats.

As water temperature decreases, the dangers associated with prolonged time in the water increase. For both sets of weather-based guidelines below, it is assumed that the water is always cold enough to make prolonged exposure hazardous.

**Workable and easily understood definitions for “warm weather” and “cold weather” must be developed based on a combination of air temperature and wind speed.**

Minimum Number of Safety Boats:

Hosts should be able to determine the appropriate number of safety boats that should be available for rescues based on the fleet size, weather conditions, and wind speed. We recommend the following:

	Fleet Size: 1 – 11 Boats		Fleet Size: 12 – 18 Boats	
	Cold Weather	Warm Weather	Cold Weather	Warm Weather
0-15 Knots	1 Safety Boat	1 Safety Boat	1 Safety Boat	1 Safety Boat
15-20 Knots	2 Safety Boats	1 Safety Boat	2 Safety Boats	1 Safety Boat
20-25 Knots	2 Safety Boats	2 Safety Boats	3 Safety Boats	2 Safety Boats
25+ Knots	2 Safety Boats	2 Safety Boats	3 Safety Boats	3 Safety Boats