

**ACBO Policy and guidance for
RECOMMENDED SAFE WORKING PRACTICE
FOR BOAT LAUNCH AND RECOVERY WITH TRACTOR**

1. Policy

General.

Boat launch and recovery is carried out entirely at the boat owner's risk and they should ensure they have insurance that covers the operation. It is the boat owner's responsibility to ensure that trailer is safe and adequate and prepared for the job. It is the boat owner's responsibility to ensure that there is enough help for all aspects of the launch / recovery.

The tractor may only be driven by Paul Killick, Bill McKee or Brian Sinclair (drivers named on the tractor insurance policy.).

Safety.

You are entirely responsible for your own safety and should ensure to the best of your ability that others are not put at risk.

Boats that have to be moved up and down the lane will be briefly on a public highway. It is the boat owner's responsibility to ensure this is clear and that no other vehicles or pedestrians are put at risk. You are advised that someone should walk 5 metres in front of the tractor and one person 5 metres behind the boat wearing a high visibility jacket to warn pedestrians of vehicles of the boat movement.

Tractor driver cannot see road behind at this stage so if someone is walking or driving behind it must be done at a safe working distance.

Remember the Tractor driver cannot hear you so ensure he has visual contact.

Mast raising

Ensure you put a warning barrier around you boat when lowering or lifting your mast to ensure that members of the public keep well clear.

2. Guidance

Preparation for launch/recovery

- Do check all your trailer and securing gear including guides, tyres, wheels and stops eg tyres inflated, wheels not seized, guides in place and securing ropes are ready to be picked up.
- Make sure you have some chocks for the trailer for when it is stopped on the slope.
- Take a ladder down for accessing the deck to secure boat or lower mast etc.
- Arrive in good time for the operation so that you are completely ready once boat movement commences.
- The time slot is small and should be done over the flood tide.
- If you borrow anyone's A Frame ensure you have permission and it is returned in the same condition as at the start
- Launching and recovery is always done across tide and the current is often strong. Calm or light wind conditions are safest.

Haul Out.

- The approach to the trailer which is underwater can often be tricky, even for the most experienced and every time is different. "Slow is Professional".
- It is essential that the trailer has correctly placed upstream guides and stops as no one can see if boat is correctly placed until haul out commences.

- As the boat is hauled out have someone to observe the boat position quickly in case it needs to be dropped back for re positioning.
- Research and use 'Crane Speak' hand signals and especially be sure of knowing how to tell him to start or stop pulling.
- Follow the driver's instructions and ensure you understand each other's signals. Apart from maybe a loud shout of stop backed up by hand signals, too many shouts just cause confusion and potential risk.
- Mast raising and lowering can be tricky and potentially dangerous. If you haven't done it before, ask for help. Make sure you have a plan for safe raising or lowering –be clear with helpers what their role is.

Tractor and gear.

- Care is needed when hitching up to trailer, either with pin or tow hitch. Ensure tow hitch is free to operate and that it locks safely.
- Watch out for any side or vertical tension at this point, especially during releasing because nasty hand injuries can happen with a sudden lurch or snap of the mechanism.
- Make sure you fully wash off the tractor wheels and the hawser before you start on your boat so that tractor can be put away. Treat it as your own!

Do and Don't reminders.

- Do not go beneath the boat until you are sure it is secure and can't slip or topple.
- Do be fully prepared so that all is ready for driver and helpers.
- Do not follow closely behind the trailer whilst moving. Driver cannot see you and things may fall off.
- Cancel if the weather is too dangerous for smooth operation.

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