

RIB EX 10 – RIB SKIPPER- MANAGING VESSELS IN DIFFICULTY:

Purpose: Tips and observations for “assist” in a variety of situations.

Inexperienced vessel handlers:

It is preferable for those in difficulty to ask for assistance early rather than ending up in the white water and then drawing rescuers into their disaster. Due to the discomfort from sea sickness, the inexperienced often imagine they are in greater danger than they really are. Standing offshore and waiting for conditions to improve can be the safest option. “Rescuers” must be wary of allowing the “rescued” to set the agenda, particularly when rescuers are transferred onto distressed vessels as relief crew, and can become additional casualties.

Personnel transfers at sea:

Vessels below 300 Tonnes rarely provide any safety nets, man ropes or boarding apparatus, making this a high risk operation. Before transferring, fully reconnoitre the vessel taking note of outfalls, appendages and rolling /pitching effect on freeboard. Then negotiate with the vessel’s skipper a safe plan for boarding, asking for the required safety equipment to be provided. Life jackets for personnel are obligatory. In heavy rolling seas it can be safer to get the vessel to maintain slow headway and transfer while on the move.

Task:

Practice boarding CR1 with the Rib while underway.

Escort over the bar:

Outbound- PMSRG does not routinely escort vessels outbound. If a vessel’s skipper doubts his/her ability to safely go out you should question his/her ability to safely be out.

Inbound- The decision to enter a bar rests with a vessel’s skipper. The crew’s skill, vessel’s draught, freeboard and capabilities cannot be appreciated by those asked to give local knowledge advice. Unfortunately river bars look far more timid from the escort vessel’s perspective (looking shoreward) than looking to sea. Where possible avoid the pitfalls of formally advising an entry plan by doing a demonstration exit and re-enter in the RV (at his/her speed) while radioing the soundings and conditions experienced during the demo.



If the vessel is confident to enter with this knowledge, then you can guide him in (at his speed). But be ready to speed ahead if white water threatens to overtake the Rib.



Task:

When fully confident at bar crossing, practice to cross at an overall lower speed. (be ready if white water threatens from behind)

Vessels with limited steerage and tug shunts:

The manoeuvrability of the Rib makes it ideal for shunting larger vessels that may have limited turning ability. The Rib motor needs to be fully down and power built up slowly against the vessels side (clear of puncture threats to the rib). The greater the power applied, the more skilled the helm adjustment needed to maintain a steady directional thrust. Good communications with the vessel needing assistance are required, as the Rib (hard against the vessels side) has limited overall visibility. Also, other vessels underestimate the considerable shunt that the rib can push with. Towing along side is described in “Rib Ex 9.”



Task:

Practice shunting CR1, first on the starboard bow and then on the port quarter, in order to spin her in a complete circle. Heavy shunts can be practiced on the simulator.

Vessels aground and heavy tows:

Heavy towage is more appropriate for CR1. However, the Rib may be in a position to hold a vessel off a lee shore until further assistance arrives. Greatest success will be found by taking off the vessels anchor and placing it offshore for the vessel. This is not as easy as it may seem with anchor and heavy chain and may have to be accomplished by reversing away from the stricken vessel while dragging out the heavy chain from the Rib’s bow.

Further information on techniques for grounded vessels will be found in “CR1 Ex8 Heavy Tows & Grounded Vessels”

Task:

Practice taking an anchor and its chain off the PMSRG jetty and positioning it mid stream.

Vessels overturned and sinking:

The Rib’s prime function is to save life. If however a vessel can be saved from sinking the techniques in “CR1 Ex 9” can be used.

Task:

Practice the use of the fire pump for bilging operations.



Training resources:

Workbooks- “Respond to navigational emergencies”.

Presentation - CD Index>Rib Lessons> Comply emerg. procedures. > “Comply emerg. procs”

USCG Powerboat Instruction Videos and Programs.

Motorboat Simulator- Moor Rib > Select options>boats>runabout> options.