



















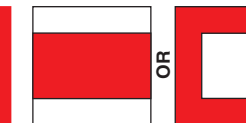
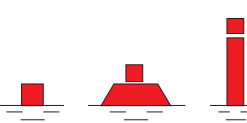
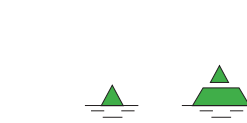
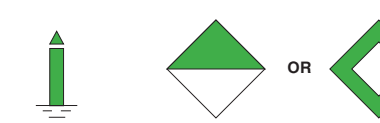
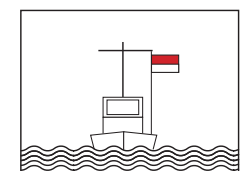
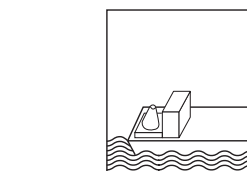
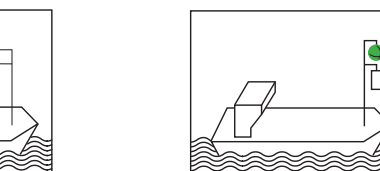


SKI BOAT DRIVER AWARD

CANDIDATES MANUAL

**PUBLISHED BY:
BRITISH WATERSKI & WAKEBOARD
THE FORUM
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EUROPEAN REGULATIONS ONLY

						
A4 NO OVERTAKING	A9 NO WASH	A12 NO MOTOR CRAFT	A13 NO SPORT CRAFT	A14 NO WATER SKIING	A15 NO SAILING	A16 NO HAND PROPELLED CRAFT
						
A17 NO SAILBOARDS	A18 END OF ZONE FOR HIGH SPEED	A19 NO LAUNCHING	A20 NO WATER BIKES	B7 MAKE A SOUND SIGNAL	B8 KEEP A SHARP LOOKOUT	C4 NAVIGATION RESTRICTIONS
						
A1 NO ENTRY	A10 PASS BETWEEN THE SIGNS	B5 STOP BEFORE BRIDGE OR LOCK	B6 SPEED LIMIT IN KM / HR	5 NAVIGATION CHANNEL NEAR RIGHT BANK (FACING DOWNSTREAM)		
						
1 BUOYS INDICATING RIGHT SIDE OF CHANNEL (FACING DOWNSTREAM)	2 BUOYS INDICATING LEFT SIDE OF CHANNEL (FACING DOWNSTREAM)	6 NAVIGATION CHANNEL NEAR LEFT BANK (FACING DOWNSTREAM)				
						
76a REDUCE YOUR WASH NEAR THIS VESSEL	82A DIVER WORKING UNDERWATER NEAR THIS VESSEL	41A FERRY-BOAT MOVING INDEPENDENTLY AND HAVING PRIORITY				

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SKI BOAT DRIVER AWARD MANUAL

8th Edition - April 2011 (minor revisions)

THE SCHEME

The Ski Boat Drivers Award (S.B.D.A.) is a voluntary scheme that allows British Water Ski & Wakeboard members to be instructed and tested at approved centres in basic boat handling and the driving of boats for water skiing. All candidates must pass the written and practical tests, however experienced drivers may, at the discretion of the examiner, take the tests without undergoing a course of instruction.

The test is comparable to the ordinary car driving test and represents the basic level of competency to drive safely. It is NOT a professional qualification and instruction on how to ski is NOT covered.

Approved S.B.D.A. centres are situated around the country either at established water ski clubs or at commercial ski schools. In most cases the clubs rely on volunteer centre principles who will arrange courses and examinations according to demand from club members and their own availability. Commercial S.B.D.A. centres arrange courses and tests for members of the public who may join British Water Ski & Wakeboard at the centre immediately prior to the test.

The S.B.D.A. scheme is approved by the Marine Safety Agency and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency who are responsible to the Department of Environment, Transport and Regions. The scheme complies with the requirements of United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution No. 40 for the issue by British Water Ski & Wakeboard of International Certificate of Competence. All members who pass the S.B.D.A. and additionally are UK citizens or normally resident in the UK, may apply for an International Certificate of Competence (I.C.C.). Valid for coastal waters in Europe. If an additional written examination is passed an I.C.C. valid for European inland as well as coastal waters, may be applied for.

The administration of the scheme and issue of S.B.D.A and I.C.C. certificates are solely the responsibility of British Water Ski & Wakeboard.

ARE YOU FIT AND CAPABLE?

When you fill in the declaration form before or after you take the tests you must sign to confirm that you are physically fit and over the age of 16. If you are fit enough to hold a car driving licence you would normally be judged fit enough to drive a ski boat, provided you prove your competence. Your ability will be judged during the written and practical tests but if you have the slightest doubt about your skill in driving boats for water skiing then you must arrange suitable training prior to taking the test.

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO KNOW?

The syllabus for basic boat handling is given in this manual and a full explanation is given in the book "POWERBOATING" by Peter White. Additional information about European rules is given in the booklet "EURO REGS FOR INLAND WATERWAYS" written by Marian Martin and published by Adlard Coles Nautical. The test does involve a basic knowledge of coastal boating and regulations. The written test takes the form of 22 multiple choice questions and 30 minutes are allowed for answering them. The questions are based on information given in this manual and the book Powerboating. Your practical boat handling skills will be judged during your S.B.D.A. test. The practical test involves a brief ski tow of less than 10 minutes using standard British Water Ski & Wakeboard procedures as detailed in this manual. An S.B.D.A. course at an approved centre will cover all these aspects.

WHAT DO YOU GET?

Both the S.B.D.A. and I.C.C. certificates are laminated in ski pass size plastic folders with the holders photograph for positive identification. The S.B.D.A. is valid indefinitely whilst a British Water Ski & Wakeboard member. The I.C.C., which requires more recent and detailed information about the holder, is valid for 5 years from the date of issue. The description of the qualification is translated on the back of the I.C.C. into French, German, Italian, Spanish and Greek languages.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

If the test is not done in your own boat then the cost of using the centre boat will be by mutual arrangement. The cost of commercial courses is a matter for centres to decide.

- **The current cost of S.B.D.A and I.C.C. certificates is indicated on the candidates application form / the British Water Ski & Wakeboard price list.**

All certificates are supplied by British Water Ski & Wakeboard and application forms must each have personal photographs attached. The cost of certificates includes V.A.T. All cheques to be made payable to the "British Water Ski & Wakeboard". Visa and MasterCard credit cards may be used if the appropriate information is given on the application form.

WHAT ABOUT EXISTING S.B.D.A.'s?

All existing older style S.B.D.A. certificates remain valid indefinitely whilst a British Water Ski & Wakeboard member. The holders may, if they wish, at any time complete the application forms giving the centre and date at which they passed their tests and apply for either or both the new S.B.D.A. and I.C.C. certificates laminated in plastic. A replacement fee is payable in order to issue a new style S.B.D.A.

HOW DO I BOOK A TEST?

You must make your own bookings directly with your chosen centre. The British Water Ski & Wakeboard office holds a list of club and commercial S.B.D.A. centres. Commercial centres run courses throughout the year but not all centres run courses at all times. The weather, priority for water skiing, and the demand for tests all pose limitations to available dates so you need to book well in advance.

Club S.B.D.A. centres normally only examine club members but in some cases by prior arrangement they may be able to test experienced drivers from other clubs who do not have their own approved principle. Club centres do not have facilities for training non member novice drivers. Centre principles are expressly forbidden from testing away from their own approved centres.

WHAT DO I NEED FOR THE TEST?

Besides suitable clothing you will need a form of payment, your British Water Ski & Wakeboard membership card if you have one, and a passport photograph with a second passport photograph if you are also applying for an I.C.C. Make sure you print your name on the back of each photograph.

WHEN DO I GET MY CERTIFICATE?

The centre principal will send your combined application form and written test paper together with your payment and photograph(s) to British Water Ski & Wakeboard who will issue the certificates within 4 days of receipt of a correctly completed form in legible writing. If you were not a British Water Ski & Wakeboard member prior to the test but your application form is accompanied by a membership application together with payment, then there will be no delay in issuing the certificates.

Both certificates are valid whilst a member of British Water Ski & Wakeboard.

WHAT IF I LOSE MY CERTIFICATE?

Contact British Water Ski & Wakeboard - there is no need to retake your test however there is a small charge for a replacement.

CAN THE S.B.D.A. BE WITHDRAWN?

If it comes to the attention of British Water Ski & Wakeboard that your driving has been dangerous or has brought British Water Ski & Wakeboard into disrepute, then British Water Ski & Wakeboard reserves the right to withdraw the S.B.D.A. and I.C.C. certificates. Appeal against the decision may be made to the management committee of British Water Ski & Wakeboard.

WHAT IF I FAIL THE TEST?

If you fail the practical test then the center will allow you up to one month to obtain further practice before taking the test again. If you fail the written test then the center will allow you a few days to revise the knowledge of the manuals before taking the test again. You can take the test again after one month to allow you time to practise. You may take the test at the same or another centre. The centre principle will return the application form showing a failure to British Water Ski & Wakeboard Certificate fees are only payable when one is issued but expenses to the examiner and to the club for the application form, may still be payable.

WHAT TUITION CANDIDATES CAN EXPECT

COMMERCIAL CENTRES are expected to provide driving courses throughout the year to any member of the public as long as British Water Ski & Wakeboard membership is current or applied for at the time of the test and the candidates are fit and over the age of 16. Candidates without previous experience must be given a minimum of two days instruction. Such tuition will be a mixture of shore based tuition and practical boat work. Typically at least one day will be required to cover basic boat handling and another day to learn and practice driving for skiers. Longer courses are encouraged and may be essential for some candidates. British Water Ski & Wakeboard will not tolerate commercial centres charging for alleged driving courses and then failing to provide good value in the tuition. For example it is not acceptable for candidates to simply be given the manual for self study and then examined. Commercial centres are expected to explain the syllabus in detail and to cover all the points on which there are questions. For water tuition in ski boats the pupil to instructor ratio of 4 to 1 must not be exceeded so that pupils are not left unoccupied for too long. For shore tuition classes may be of any size. Commercial centres will make their own decision on what fees to charge for tuition and use of boats and equipment.

Candidates with previous boat driving experience must be judiciously assessed by the commercial centre principal and the length of course may be suitably adjusted. Customers must be told if they are being offered an abbreviated course and allowed the option of paying for a full course if they should want one.

CLUB CENTRES examine BWSW members who in many cases already have their own boats and variable amounts of experience. Clubs are not expected to provide courses at short notice to complete novices who are not members of their clubs. However Club Centre Principals may, if convenient to themselves, examine BWSW

members from other BWSW clubs but only on their own water that they have approval to examine on. Principals must adjust the length of the courses they provide prior to the test according to the candidates experience. Clubs may have local rules or conditions that require training and this may be combined with the basic S.B.D.A syllabus. If there are additional examinations required by club rules, these must be completed separately to the S.B.D.A. although they may be done at the same time.

BASIC BOAT HANDLING SYLLABUS

All boats used must have insurance that covers skiers and water skiing

1. ONSHORE TEACHING

The following syllabus is given in outline form so that an instructor can expand on the topics covered. The primary reference source is the book "POWERBOATING".

TYPES OF PLANING POWERBOATS

The advantages and disadvantages of inboard, sterndrive, outboard powerboats, deep V hulls, flat bottoms, dories and semi-rigid inflatables.



ENGINES

How to check the oil for inboard engines. Oil mix for outboard engines or oil reservoirs as appropriate. Checking and changing propellers. Use of different propeller pitches. Use of outboard power tilt for different conditions. Tilting outboard engines for launching. Opening air vents for outboard fuel tanks. Priming fuel lines. Use of blower on inboard engines before starting and after refuelling. What to look for on inboard boat gauges. Purpose and use of kill switch on engine controls. Types and use of various engine control boxes, including use of idle throttles and neutral locks.

FIRE EXTINGUISHERS

Most boat insurance policies require that ski boats with inboard engines be fitted with an automatic extinguisher within the engine compartment. Inboard boats are advised to carry a second hand held extinguisher. Outboard boats need an extinguisher in an accessible place away from possible fires.

BOAT EQUIPMENT

If there is the slightest chance of losing sight of the land due to reduced visibility or a long trip, then a compass suitable for fast small boats must be fitted and you must understand how to use it. A bilge pump must be fitted and an alternative mechanical pump or buckets are recommended. Paddles, flares, (with valid expiry date) and anchor must be carried unless only operating on a small lake. Always carry spare buoyancy aids or life jackets in numbers and sizes sufficient for all persons on board.

N.B. The Coast Guard and British Water Ski & Wakeboard recommend that you carry a marine band V.H.F. or mobile telephone when using coastal waters. Marine V.H.F. sets are now available in hand held versions and are relatively cheap but they could make the difference between summoning help from a friend in good time or a major tragedy developing.

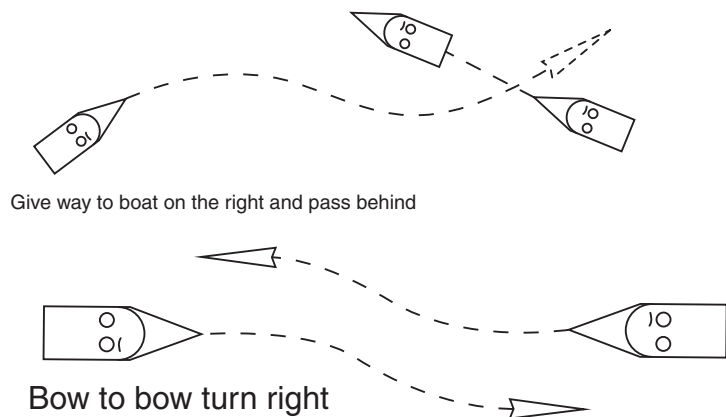
Mobile phones are commonly carried but in an emergency they do not communicate directly with the coastguard and identifying your position could be a problem. Marine band V.H.F. sets enable you to talk directly to lifeboats and helicopters and you might be able to render assistance to others. An operators licence is required.

BOAT TRAILERS

Wheel bearing maintenance, Operation of winches, Breakback trailers, Trailer brakes, Lighting boards, Hitch locks and safety chains.

RULES OF THE ROAD

Summary of International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. Importance of finding out local rules and bylaws from the Harbour Master or local authority. Keep right, turn right.



TIDES AND CHANNELS

A very basic knowledge of how often tides go up and down is required. The purpose of buoys marking restricted channels must be known. Further information is given in "Powerboating" by Peter White.

PREPARATION FOR LAUNCHING

Allow the trailer bearings to cool before launching. Check the state of the tide and the condition of the slipway at your proposed time of return.

Removing lighting board, checking bung, removing tie down straps, tilting engine, checking propeller, skeg, and controls, checking equipment including sufficient fuel, paddles, and for coastal use, flares, anchor and rope.

ON THE SLIPWAY

Use of ropes and winch. Effect of tides and currents. Courtesy to other users of the slipway. Move car and trailer away from slipway after use.

LAUNCHING CHECK LIST

Bilge empty, bung in	Compass
Sufficient fuel, tank secure	Anchor chain/rope
Tank breather open	Flares
Battery secure	Paddles
Throttle, gear shift & steering cables free movement, no excessive wear.	Marine band VHF radio, or mobile telephone

LAUNCHING CHECK LIST continued

Outboard engine tilted	Fire extinguisher
Propeller and locknut secure	Skis, vests, lines, wet suits,
Skeg for damage	Engine oil sufficient
Speedometer pitot tube clear	Screen and mirror clean
Relevant spares	

TRAILER TOWING CHECK LIST

Hitch and safety chain	Outboard tilted and secured
Lighting board	Tyre pressure & condition
Wheel nuts	Propeller protected
Wheel bearings for slackness	Boat tied down

2. PRACTICAL HANDLING

STARTING

Propeller clear of shallow water or people. Blower on inboard boats. Use of starting controls. Initial engine readings on inboard boats.

SLOW SPEED HANDLING

Use of controls. Movement of the stern of the boat when selecting forward or reverse. Momentum of the boat. Effect of wind, current or tide. Simple figure of eight manoeuvres, coming alongside a buoy and finally docking to a fixed jetty with consideration for winds, current or tide. How to moor a powerboat and the use of fenders should be practised.

HANDLING AT PLANING SPEEDS

Positioning crew and effect of weight distribution on planing. Angle of boat and visibility when coming onto plane. Use of engine power trim. Turns of the type used when towing water skiers should be practised. The only type of emergency stop that need be practised is to reduce power rapidly and select neutral gear while steering a straight line.

ANCHORING

Should be practised and the effect of tides and rope lengths or chains, explained.

PICKING UP A FREE FLOATING BUOY

The manoeuvre is equivalent to picking up a skier or a man overboard. The novice driver must be proficient before proceeding to learn how to drive for water skiers.

EUROPEAN REGULATIONS FOR COASTAL WATERS (APPLICABLE TO S.B.D.A)

In 1988 the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe issued the "CEVNI" REGULATIONS" defining codes and regulations for using pleasure craft in Europe. Two questions in the S.B.D.A. syllabus relate to European regulations. Possession of the S.B.D.A. gives the holder the right to apply for an International Certificate of Competence (I.C.C.) valid for use in European coastal waters only. For the I.C.C. to be valid on European inland waters, an additional 14 question examination must be taken.

Major European rules, which are entirely in line with the British Water Ski & Wakeboard codes for ski boats, are that water ski tow boats are only driven by persons over the age of 16, an observer is always carried, water skiing takes place only in daylight and good visibility, keep clear of all other vessels, and unless skiing in a designated area, retrieve ski ropes from fallen skiers immediately. Ski boats must carry a fire extinguisher, bailer and anchor with at least 10 metres of line. The engine must have a kill switch.

"Normal", i.e. large vessels always have right of way and indeed water ski boats give way to everything else and most importantly leave ample room for large vessels to manoeuvre. When meeting other small powered vessels the usual International rules of keep right, turn right, apply.

All vessels, including ski boats, must be identifiable. The identification marking shall be fixed in clearly legible Latin letters and Arabic numerals in a dark colour on a light background or by light colour on a dark background. The identification shall be displayed on both side of the boat in the middle of the hull or on the bows. The characters shall not be less than 100mm high and easily legible.

EUROPEAN REGULATIONS FOR INLAND WATERS (I.C.C.)

To qualify for an I.C.C. valid on inland waters now requires knowledge of the rules governing European marine navigation and known as the Code Européen des Voies de la Navigation Intérieure, or more commonly the CEVNI rules.

Their primary purpose is to control the very intensive use of inland waterways by large vessels and indeed 'normal vessels' in CEVNI rules refer to vessels over 20 metres in length. These normal vessels have many specific identifications and rules for narrow channels as well as special procedures when going upstream and downstream. Nevertheless the CEVNI rules also contain regulations for operating small powered boats and water ski tow boats. All vessels may additionally be subject to local and national rules.

The following extracts contain all the information required to answer the 14 questions on the additional multi choice examination paper that will enable an I.C.C. to be issued with an endorsement making it valid for driving boats towing water skiers on EUROPEAN INLAND WATERS.

WARNING

This manual contains a summary of the European Regulations that are relevant to drivers of water ski boats only.

Anyone wishing to navigate other recreational craft such as cruisers or sailing vessels, are advised to take the appropriate RYA examinations and must refer either to the full United Nations regulations or the Royal Yachting Association's booklet 'EuroRegs for Inland Waterways' by Marian Martin and published by Adlard Coles Nautical for £5.

In particular this manual has no information about night signals or marking because water skiing at night is prohibited.

BOATMASTER

All vessels must be under the control of a boatmaster. This person must be qualified, over the age of 16, and not intoxicated by drink or drugs.

SKI BOATS

On your ski boat you must carry a certificate of registration or national navigation permit. The boat must be identified by its name in the following manner: -The name shall be inscribed on the outside of the craft, on both sides, in Latin characters not less than 10 cm. high, easily legible and indelible, their inscription in oil paint being considered indelible. Alternatively if the craft has no name it must bear the name (or its usual abbreviation) of the organisation to which it belongs, followed where applicable, by a number.

There must be clear vision in all directions from the steering position and the ability to hear sound signals.

You must not pollute the water in any way such as by the discharge of sewage or dumping of fuel or oil.

The boatmaster shall endeavour to clear a navigation channel of any floating material (i.e. ropes, skis, and skiers) as soon as possible.

The following article 6.35 of the regulations applies specifically to water skiing: -

- 1 Water skiing and similar activities are permitted only by day and in good visibility. The local competent authorities shall designate areas where these activities are permitted or prohibited.
- 2 The boatmaster of the towing vessel shall be accompanied by a person responsible for the tow and for the supervision of the skier and competent for those purposes. (In other words a competent observer is compulsory.)
Local competent authorities may specify the minimum age of the observer.
- 3 Except when navigating in a channel, which is reserved for their exclusive use, towing vessels (water ski boats) and water skiers shall keep at sufficient distance from all other vessels, from the bank, and from bathers. The distance to be determined by the competent authorities, who may extend this provision to other categories of equipment.
- 4 The tow rope shall not be trailed unheld. (In other words you must retrieve the ski rope when the skier falls)

Further regulations concerning water ski boats are contained in United Nations Resolution No. 41 which in summary say that the boat must carry a paddle, buoyancy aids for all the people on board, a mooring rope at least as long as the craft, effective steering, a fire extinguisher, a bailer, an anchor with at least 10 metres of line, and "a device to automatically stop the engine if the helmsman leaves the steering position" - in other words a kill switch tied to the driver.

The water skier must not create a nuisance or danger for other users of the waterway.

RULES OF THE ROAD

Rivers are classified as Class I and canals, lakes and broad waterways are classified as Class II. The direction of the current on Class I rivers is important because "normal" vessels over 20 metres in length have certain priorities when proceeding upstream or downstream. Also so far as small craft such as ski boats are concerned, you must give way to everything and most importantly not obstruct the navigation of "normal" vessels in any way. Large "normal" vessels do not necessarily keep to the right on waterways. When for instance the deeper channel is on the outside of bends, then that is where the normal vessels will navigate.

- In general the international collision rules apply with modifications for the large vessels operating in narrow or shallow channels and ski boats must always keep out of the way of normal vessels and give them plenty of room to manoeuvre.
- A ski boat navigating a narrow marked channel will keep to the right and maintain its course when meeting another small powered vessel. If a vessel sees there is a risk of collision it will sound a series of very short blasts on its horn.
- As a general rule, an overtaking vessel shall pass to the port (left) of the vessel being overtaken. Where the channel is unquestionably wide enough, the overtaking vessel may also overtake to starboard (right) of the vessel being overtaken.
- Signs are displayed where overtaking is prohibited.
- Vessels may turn only after making certain that the movement of other vessels will allow them to do so safely, and without obliging such vessels to change their course or speed abruptly.
- No vessels are allowed to drift in navigation channels.

REDUCE WASH

- Vessels shall regulate their speed to avoid creating excessive wash likely to cause damage to stationary or moving vessels or structures. In particular reduce speed in good time near harbour entrances, moored vessels, ferry-boats, or where there is a sign.
- Reduce speed and do not create wash if you see the sign.
- Vessels moored or moving, and floating equipment that needs special protection from wash will fly a flag with red upper half and white lower half, or a board with the same colours, or a red flag above a white flag.
- All vessels, including water ski boats, must reduce speed and keep clear of anything showing such signals.

- Vessels, which are unable to manoeuvre, will display two black balls suspended from a mast. Towed vessels display a yellow ball suspended from a mast. Vessels fishing display two black cones point to point, and one above the other.
- Vessels used for underwater diving display the international 'A' flag which is blue and white.

GENERAL NAVIGATION SIGNS

Navigation on any waterway may be prohibited by the display of the general "NO ENTRY" sign.

Ferry-boats crossing waterways carry a green ball suspended from a mast at the stern if they are pulled by cables, or a green ball suspended from a mast at the bow if they can navigate independently. They all have priority over water ski boats but if they also have priority over other vessels then they show a white cylinder suspended below the green ball.

If passage under bridges, through weirs, or through locks is restricted, then all vessels, including water ski boats, must pass between the signs.

One or more red lights before a moveable bridge, weir or lock, means that passage is prohibited. Small craft including water ski boats must always keep away from other vessels in or near locks. One or two green lights mean that entry is permitted into a lock.

On lakes and broad waterways, weather warnings may be given by a yellow strobe light flashing at 40 times per minute indicating caution and at 90 flashes per minute meaning immanent danger of bad weather.

CHANNEL MARKINGS

The convention for right and left sides of a channel is taken from the position of an observer facing downstream in a river. On canals lakes and broad waters the appropriate authorities will designate which sides are right and left.

- Right hand side channel markers are red cylinders or red buoys with red cylindrical topmarks.
- Left hand side channel markers are cone shaped or buoys with a cone top mark and coloured green.
- When the channel divides buoys or marks are coloured in green and red bands.
- When the navigable channel for normal vessels lies close to the right bank then red and white markers are placed on the bank.
- (Do not confuse with no entry sign).
- Like wise navigable channels close to the left bank are green and white.
- Black and yellow rectangles or a yellow cross indicate point where the navigable channel crosses from one side to the other.
- Isolated danger marks may be shown.
- When a stop is required before moveable bridge or lock it will be indicated by a black horizontal bar in a red square.
- Speed limits in km/hour are shown as black numbers in a red square.
- The requirement to give a sound signal is shown as a black dot in a red square.
- A requirement to keep a particularly sharp lookout is shown by a vertical black bar in a red square.
- When there are restrictions on navigation about which you must make enquiries, a simple red square is shown.

WATER SKI CHANNELS

Special areas which for example may be designated to protect swimmers canoeists, rowers or water skiers may be defined by a series of yellow buoys which may also carry a red flag. An example of how a channel specifically for water skiing might be marked to cross a swimming area where all types of craft are prohibited, is given in Figure WSC. An example of an area where motorised craft are prohibited is given in Figure MCP and of an area where there is a 12 km/h speed limit in Figure GL12.

DISTRESS SIGNALS

Any vessel in distress and needing assistance may make repeated long blasts on a horn or ring a bell. Additionally all of the following visual signals may be used: -

- Waving a flag or any other suitable object in a circle.
- A flag having above or below it a ball or anything resembling a ball.
- A light waved in a circle.
- Rockets or shells throwing red stars.
- A light signal showing SOS in Morse Code (... --- ...)
- Flames by burning oil etc.
- Red parachute or hand held flares.
- Slow movement of the arms extended on each side, up and down.
- All these signals are illustrated in figure 74a

SOUND SIGNALS

There are numerous signals used by normal vessels between each other to indicate what they are going to do but for water ski boats the important general signal is a series of short blasts indicating "imminent danger of collision" when they must promptly get out of the way. Also repeated long blasts indicate a distress signal.

Summarised by Robin Nichols from information contained in United Nations Document TRANS/SC.3/115/Rev.1 No liability accepted for any mistakes or omissions. For all questions requiring a full definition, the original document should be referred to. European regulations are not copyright and may be copied if acknowledgement is made to the United Nations and British Water Ski & Wakeboard, The Tower, Thorpe Road, Chertsey, Surrey, KT16 8PH.

WATER SKIING SYLLABUS

ONSHORE TEACHING

The following syllabus is given in outline form so that an instructor can expand on the topics covered.

BOAT CREW

The importance of always having a rear facing ski observer so that the driver can always concentrate on where he is going. The need for at least two people in a boat to assist an injured skier. Give examples of cases where drivers without observers have lost skiers or have driven over swimmers.

SKI ROPES

Explain the advantages of braided plastic rope that floats, is easily visible, easily spliced, and resistant to rotting. No metal attachments at the skier's end which might catch a skier's hand. Different lengths for recreation, slalom, tricking, jumping, knee boarding, racing, barefooting, and inflatable toys. Advantages of ski pylons (poles) or of a transom bridle and pulley for a small boat. Hazard to fingers of ropes. Hazard of driving over floating ropes. Importance for a skier in the water to let the rope pass through his hands and not behind his head.

SKIERS EQUIPMENT

The difference between a lifejacket which supports an unconscious person face up, and a buoyancy aid giving freedom of arm movement and which skiers use. Need for close fitting ski vest (Buoyancy aid) which does not slip up around a skier's ears. Protection to a skier's internal organs that is given by a ski vest. Protection against enemas by wearing a wet suit. Types of wet and dry suits. Dangers of rings catching in ski ropes. Danger of losing contact lenses or false teeth during falls.

STANDARD SKI SIGNALS

Drivers, skiers and observers must all know and understand the visual signals given in this booklet together with the standard aural signals of "in gear" and "hit it".



Importance of not annoying other water users who have equal rights to use public water such as yachtsmen, wind surfers, canoeists, swimmers, divers, and anglers. Stay well clear of boats flying the blue and white flag indicating a diver below. The future of water skiing on public waters is increasingly in jeopardy if the environmental and safety codes given in this booklet are not followed.

LOCAL RULES

The increasing presence of local rules that make it essential to find the harbour master or other controlling authority before skiing in an area you do not know. Use of buoys to protect swimmers and ski lanes at coastal resorts.

BOARDING AN INJURED SKIER

Discuss types of injury such as those which require urgent action when there is a severe loss of blood or breathing has stopped. Accidents where care is necessary such as spinal injuries, bone breakage and limb dislocation. How to board an injured skier on boats without a ski platform. Use of the observer to support an injured skier. Communications, nearest telephone, mobile phones, marine band radio.

INSURANCE

All boats must be insured for third party liability to and of water skiers. When candidates use their own boats for the test, proof of valid insurance must be shown to the examiner.

The currently approved British Water Ski & Wakeboard insurance broker offers a discount when ski boats are driven only by holders of the S.B.D.A.

EQUIPPING A BOAT FOR WATER SKIING

Many boat manufacturers say their boats are suitable for water skiing but some need a little adaptation. A bridle with a pulley mounted on the transom is the best solution for small boats but for larger boats a ski pylon or pole will give the best pull for a skier.

A mirror should always be fitted. The rearward facing observer needs to be comfortable while watching the skier. Except for purpose built ski boats, this will probably mean turning the passenger seat around. Boarding a skier, especially one who is tired or injured, needs either a boarding platform or boarding ladder. Sharp deck fittings that pose a hazard to skiers going over the side, may need removing. A speedometer is useful for keeping a constant speed when towing a skier.

DRIVING TECHNIQUES FOR WATER SKIERS

First familiarise yourself with local surroundings and conditions. Check where you can and can not ski and take careful notice of any local Bylaws, details of which can be obtained from the local Harbour Master, library, coast guard, or council offices. It is advised that you drive a circuit of the water to be used in order to familiarise yourself before actually towing a water skier.

You must carry an observer and see that they can sit comfortably and do their job of watching the skier. Communication from the skier to the observer and from the observer to the driver is essential and should be clearly understood from the start. The recommended hand signals are shown in the diagram given earlier in this manual. It is also the observers job to look after the ski line including throwing the handle to the skier at the start, making sure the line is clear of knots and not entangled with the boat or engine, and retrieving the line and handle at the end of the ski.

The ski line is potentially the most dangerous bit of equipment on the boat so make sure your observer treats it with respect and never touches it once the boat is moving because serious injury can be sustained if a finger or limb becomes trapped.

As you would in a car, adjust the seat and mirror before you start. If there is no seat adjustment then you may need to use cushions or life jackets to achieve a position where you can reach the controls easily and see properly. Never sit on the back of the seat or side of the boat. If you do so you are not properly in control of the boat. You may be thrown out and the boat would probably continue in circles without control!! Kill switches with cords attached to the driver are fitted to prevent this occurrence in rough water.

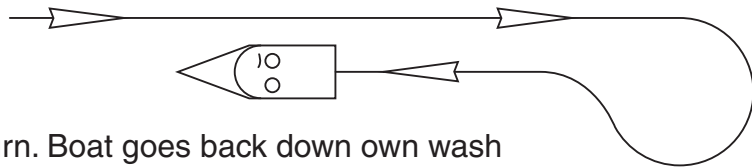
The ideal driving position is with one hand on the steering wheel and the other always on the throttle. Boat steering mechanisms are notoriously prone to corrosion and if you need two hands to turn the wheel, then the steering needs maintenance. Perhaps a new steering cable or maybe just some grease.

With an inboard boat that has not been running for a few minutes the most important thing you must always do before turning the ignition key is to turn on the blower. This will blow out any petrol or gas fumes that may have accumulated in the bilge and avoid the possibility of an explosion when you start.

Find out from your skier the speed, start method, and type of skiing that they want. Make sure your skier will use the standard aural signals of "in gear" and "hit it". Other words can be confusing. I.e. "go" can sound like "no". Also make sure your skier is familiar with the standard hand signals given in this manual.

When the skier is ready check the line is clear of snags with the ski tips above the water and rope between the skis. Before starting ensure that the engine (outboards) or rudder (inboards) is lined up straight ahead before applying power. **YOU MUST LOOK AHEAD BEFORE ACCELERATING.** When applying the throttle be smooth but firm. It requires a lot of power to pull the skier out of the water and get the boat onto the plane, but beware, as soon as the boat and skier are planing on top of the water that the boat wants to race away. Now is the time to gently ease back on the throttle and achieve the desired speed smoothly. Once under way ensure that the boat path is clear not only for the boat but also for the skier who may be viraging from side to side. For jetty or beach (scooter) starts, any loops of slack that the skier may have taken, must be thrown away before you open the throttle. A loop around a limb or finger is very dangerous.

Give smooth acceleration dependent on weight of skier and type of ski. Drive a constant speed dependent on the skier's weight and type of skiing. Give a smooth response to skier's signals. A "P" type turn to return down the boat's own wash, is the preferred pattern.



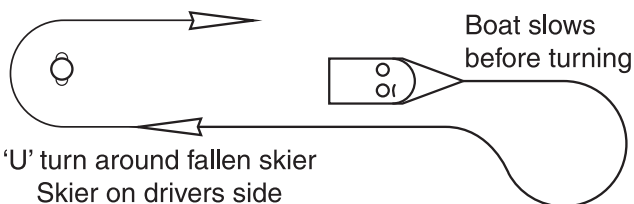
'P' turn. Boat goes back down own wash

Look for flat water and attempt to create as few wake problems of your own as possible. The water is being flattened behind you but being made wavy on either side which is why you should make a "P" type turn and return down the centre of your own wash. Before you start a turn be aware of which side your skier is on and signal your intention to them. Ensure you have plenty of room for the turn and if the skier is a beginner make allowances for a wider than usual turn. If the skier is out of control on the whip and on the outside of the turn, you can assist them by easing back on the throttle but don't forget to put the speed back up as you come out of the turn. The opposite action might be required for a beginner caught on the inside of a turn and needing a bit more throttle to keep his speed up. If you have allowed yourself enough room you can also widen the arc of your turn.

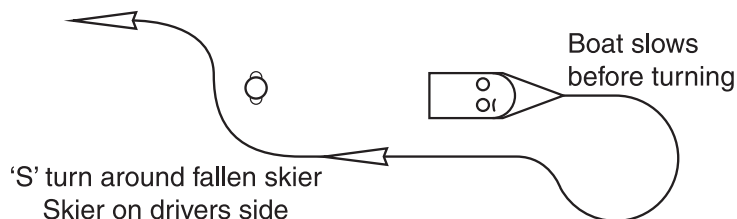
If you are driving on water that has other users or perhaps on a narrow strip of water, and your forward course becomes blocked, NEVER try to force your way through just because you have a skier on the back. You can and should always STOP. It will mean the skier has to make another start but towing a skier gives you no right of way over other users of the water.

When a skier falls without any apparent injury, the observer should immediately tell the driver. You should then slow the boat before turning and going back to the skier. The skier must be on the driver's side and always in view to the driver. If there are no other boats in the area it is accepted practice to return with the ski rope trailing and do a "U" turn or "S" turn around the skier so that they can regain the handle, and as illustrated in the diagram. The skier should let the rope pass through their hands in front of their face and never let the rope be pulled around their neck.

DRIVER MANOEUVRES FOR RECOVERING A FALLEN SKIER



'U' turn around fallen skier
Skier on drivers side



'S' turn around fallen skier
Skier on drivers side

On water crowded with other boats it is safer to first pull in the ski line before returning to the skier. The observer can then throw the handle to the skier for another start. At some clubs with many boats operating this is a compulsory rule.

If you need to board a fallen skier always switch off the engine first.

When returning to the dock or beach slow down slightly and drive parallel to the dock or beach. Never put the skier into the dock or beach too fast or out of control. Skiing up the beach or into the dock can be as much the drivers fault as the skier's. Clear the landing area and retrieve the ski line before trickling slowly back to the dock or beach. Look out for swimmers, boats, or skiers who might have come into the area while you were away skiing.

Remember that when you drive a boat with a skier you are controlling a boat that is effectively 25 metres long and travelling at between 30 and 60 k.p.h. Take it seriously, don't drink and drive and don't allow your boat to be used as a toy by unqualified drivers. The whole image of water skiing suffers when the public sees ski boats being driven recklessly or needlessly running round in circles without even a skier on the back.

The golden rule is the driver drives and the observer watches the skier. Take pride in giving the best ski tow by smooth control and constant speeds and you will be rewarded by as much satisfaction as the skier gets.

S.B.D.A. PRACTICAL TEST

PREPARATION

If the candidate provides their own boat for the test, they must also provide the examiner with written proof that the boat is currently insured for towing water skiers. The skier to be used during the test may be supplied either by the candidate or the testing centre. The skier must be competent on two skis, stay in the centre of the wake behind the boat for the whole test, and not do anything that might cause a fall and be over the age of 14. It is permissible to use a wakeboarder providing the rider stays in the center of the wake at all times.

The examiner may act as the observer and will relay the skiers signals as well as keeping the driver informed if the speed is not suitable for the skier or if the skier is having difficulty during turns. Alternatively an additional person may be carried to act solely as the observer.

The test will be proceeded by a briefing from the examiner to the skier and the candidate. This will describe the test and the area of water to be used.

Throughout the test the candidate must remain properly seated and not perched on the seat back or side of the boat.

The test should not be prolonged for any item and should be completed in less than ten minutes. The candidate must pass all sections. The examiner will tell the candidate the result of the test immediately on its completion.

DETAILED PROCEDURE

- 1 The test will start when the skier is in deep water and the observer passes or throws the handle to the skier. It is the candidate's duty to supervise this operation and ensure that the rope has no knots or is not caught up on any part of the boat. It is also the candidate's duty to ensure that the skier is wearing a ski vest.
- 2 The candidate will drive the boat slowly out to a position where the ski rope is just taught.
- 3 The candidate will look over their shoulder and check that the skier is ready with the rope between their skis.
- 4 When the skier shouts "hit it" THE CANDIDATE MUST FACE THE FRONT and check the water ahead is clear before accelerating.
- 5 The candidate will accelerate the boat in a straight line at a rate suitable for the weight of the skier.

6 The candidate will drive in a straight line until the examiner indicates that a turn is required. This will be after approximately 300 metres. The examiner will expect a reasonably straight course with a constant speed suitable for the weight of the skier. The examiner will not expect tournament type accuracy but will require a good recreational ski tow to be given. The candidate must watch where they are driving and rely on the observer (or examiner) to relay the skiers signals and speed requirements.

7 The candidate will execute a smooth and uniform turn through 180 degrees to return to the centre of the boats previous wake. The turn should be of a size and speed suitable to the weight of the skier who is being towed.

During the turn the candidate must primarily watch the area ahead but they are permitted an occasional glance over the shoulder to check the skier's path and speed although it is preferred that a mirror and the observer are used for this purpose.

8 The candidate will continue in a straight line back down the boats original wash. At a suitable point the examiner will signal to the skier that they must let go of the handle.

9 The observer (or examiner) will tell the candidate that the skier has let go of the handle. The candidate must immediately slow the boat without turning.. The candidate will RETURN AT IDLE SPEED WITH THE SKIER ON THE DRIVERS SIDE. The candidate must keep the skier in sight throughout the return. The handle may be returned to the skier either by an "S" or "U" turn with the rope trailing through the skiers hand, or by the observer retrieving the rope and throwing the handle to the skier when close enough.

10 When the skier is ready and shouts hit it, the candidate will again face the front and do another start followed by a straight line tow and a turn in the opposite direction to the first turn if local skiing rules will permit this.

11 The candidate will return the skier to the drop off area previously designated by the examiner and the observer will signal the skier to let go.

12 The candidate will return the boat to the jetty and demonstrate a safe docking. If the test is carried out where there is no jetty, this manoeuvre will be demonstrated alongside a moored boat or raft. The boat must be driven in a slow and controlled manner. The examiner will make due allowance if the candidate is not familiar with the type of boat that the test is taken in.

13 At all times while the skier is being towed, the candidate will not drive closer than a ski ropes distance (23 metres) from any other boat, obstruction, shallow water or shore.

HIGHER QUALIFICATIONS

In the world of competitive water skiing the S.B.D.A. is an elementary qualification from which to progress to higher licences. Details of more advanced licences for tournament driving, club driving, ski racing and barefoot driving are available from British Water Ski & Wakeboard

FIRST AID

It is strongly recommended that all participants in water skiing are fully conversant with methods of resuscitation and first aid. It is recommended that first aid training is refreshed every three years.

British Water Ski & Wakeboard SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

(AMENDED 2010)

Safety is the single most important factor when participating in any sport. Safety not only means the safety of those participating in the sport, but also the safety of other water users, general public, spectators, etc.

British Water Ski & Wakeboard has drawn up this Code of Safety Recommendations for the guidance of those who participate in the sport of water skiing, and for the authorities who manage and control water ski areas. British Water Ski & Wakeboard is confident that if these recommendations are accepted and scrupulously followed, water skiing may be enjoyed by all without danger to participants or to other water users.

DEFINITIONS

"Skier" means any person being towed as part of the water skiing activities listed below.

NOTE - Wakeboarders like to be known as riders but for the purpose of these Recommendations ALL water skiers are referred to as "Skiers" to avoid confusion with riders of Inflatable Equipment.

"Boat" means any vehicle used to tow a skier.

"Inflatable equipment" means any other towed water sport as shown below.

THE TOWING VEHICLE

Water skiing can take many forms and not all water skiers are towed by boats!

Water skiers would normally be towed by a boat; personal watercraft (PWC) or by a cable tow. British Water Ski & Wakeboard does not differentiate between boats and PWC's as towing "vehicles". The same rules apply for the driver and observer.

Similarly, no matter what the towing "vehicle" the skier should follow these Safety Recommendations at all times.

WATER SKIING ACTIVITIES

The following activities are all considered to be part of the sport of water skiing:-

The term "water skiing" includes any activity associated with the sport and includes, but is not limited to:

- Water skiing on 2 skis or 1 ski
- Slalom skiing
- Trick skiing
- Jumping
- Wakeboarding
- Wakeskating
- Kneeboarding
- Barefooting
- Water ski racing

British Water Ski & Wakeboard has also taken responsibility for producing safety recommendations for activities that are not "technically" water skiing, such as

- Ringos
- Tubes
- Biscuits
- Sausages
- Bananas

All of which are covered by the recommendations for towing Inflatable Equipment.

We do not recommend Wake Surfing in these Safety Recommendations or in the Code of Practice.

CABLE TOW WATER SKIING

British Water Ski & Wakeboard has published a separate Code of Practice for Cable Tow Water Skiing. Also available is the Operator's Manual for Cable Tow Water Skiing. Copies available from the British Water Ski & Wakeboard website.

SKI BOAT DRIVER AWARD - DRIVER QUALIFICATIONS

1. British Water Ski & Wakeboard strongly recommends that all water ski boat drivers acquire the British Water Ski & Wakeboard Ski Boat Driver Award (SBDA). This voluntary certificate of competence can be gained via courses and tests at Centres throughout the UK. Details of your nearest Centre can be obtained from the British Water Ski & Wakeboard website.

2. British Water Ski & Wakeboard recommends that all water ski boat drivers, aboard and in charge* of a water ski boat should be in possession of the SBDA. *Novice drivers and drivers in training for the SBDA should be permitted to drive a water ski boat if an experienced driver, holding a SBDA, is aboard and supervising the activity.

3. In the interests of safety, improved awareness, and the reduction of the conflict with other activities, British Water Ski & Wakeboard recommends, wherever possible, that an SBDA is held by all water ski boat drivers. Water Ski Clubs and Associations, Local and Harbour Authorities are asked to make this a requirement for all Ski boat drivers, operating in areas of water under their authority or supervision.

The Ski Boat Driver Candidates Manual contains a whole host of valuable information on safe boat driving for all forms of water skiing. Copies of the SBDA Manual are available for download from the British Water Ski & Wakeboard website www.bws.org.uk

BWSW SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All Water Ski boats; PWCs and power boats towing water skiers, on public waters and on enclosed sites where more than one water ski boat operates, shall, at all times whilst towing be occupied by two competent persons, thus enabling the driver to concentrate on navigation and the water ahead, whilst the second person is responsible for watching the skier and relaying his signals to the driver.
2. At water ski schools and water ski clubs on enclosed waters, where only one water ski boat operates at any time and help can be summoned at any time, it is reasonable and safe for a qualified driver / coach to drive for water skiing without a second person aboard. However, an observer is always required when towing an inflatable, when towing two or more skiers and when towing a skier for jump. Water ski schools and Clubs are strongly advised to carry out a risk assessment, as to the need for a second person in the boat where there is any possibility of another boat or activity using the water area at the same time.
3. All boats towing skiers shall be operated in a careful and prudent manner, and at a reasonable distance from persons and property so as not to endanger the life or limb or the property of any person.
4. No boat shall tow a skier from the period of one hour after sunset to one hour prior to sunrise, provided that the rule shall not apply to boats used in duly authorised training and coaching sessions, ski tournaments, competitions, expositions or trials.
5. No person shall manipulate any vessel or tow rope by which the course of water skis or water skiers may be influenced in such a way as to cause a collision or accident.
6. No person shall operate a boat or water ski in a reckless or negligent manner.
7. No person operating a boat towing a skier shall allow any person to ride or sit on the gunwales or decking of the vessel while underway.
8. When operating on the sea or other large expanse of water, the skier shall wear a buoyancy aid, and the towing boat must carry a life buoy or other approved life preserver sufficient for the number of people in the craft. It is also recommended that all boats carry fire extinguishers and that the engine cover be lifted or blower operated (if fitted) for a short period after refuelling.
9. When skiing takes place from a public beach or other area where swimmers and other water users are present, one experienced person shall be in charge of skiing operations and assume responsibility to ensure that all necessary safety precautions are rigidly observed. Take off and landing points shall be clearly marked and buoys, ropes or guard boats used to indicate these approach areas to other water users, and careful watch kept to ensure that swimmers in particular do not enter the danger area. Apart from take off and landing operations, all normal skiing shall be carried out away from the shore at a safe distance beyond areas used by swimmers, pedalos and similar craft.
10. No person shall operate a boat towing a skier within a water area which has been clearly marked by buoys or some other distinguishing device, as a bathing or otherwise restricted area provided that this rule shall not apply in case of emergency.
11. Where water skiing takes place on areas of water where rowing or canoeing also take place, wash from ski boats can seriously disturb their activity. In the worst cases wash can swamp or even sink canoes and rowing boats. Water ski boat drivers shall stop their boat and allow the rowers and canoeists to pass by with no wash. All water skiers are asked to "Give one minute of their time to make friends and allow other water users to enjoy their activity".
12. Wherever practicable water ski boats, operating within a speed limit area or in any area close to other craft, are recommended to proceed at a NO WAKE speed.
13. REMEMBER Water Ski Zones and the removal of speed limits are created to enable ALL water skiers to enjoy the sport. Water skiers should use all water ski zones with respect for both the environment and other users of the area. Water skiers should conduct themselves, at all times, in such a way that that all water skiers will be welcomed back for years to come.

RULES FOR SAFE WATER SKIING

WATER SKIERS

ALWAYS be confident in the water and always wear a buoyancy aid / ski vest. If you cannot swim make sure the boat driver and / or your instructor know this.

- A buoyancy aid need not be worn by competent trick skiers who can swim.

ALWAYS use approved signals between skier and observer and driver.

ALWAYS let the observer / driver know you are OK immediately after a fall.

ALWAYS watch the water ahead of you at all times.

ALWAYS check your equipment is safe, wing nuts, loose binding, splinters and sharp metal.

ALWAYS ski clear of solid obstacles - jetties, boats, mooring buoys, rocks, banks etc.

ALWAYS let go of the handle on falling.

ALWAYS use an approved buoyancy aid and helmet when jumping.

ALWAYS wear neoprene shorts if not wearing a suitable wetsuit when jumping - learners advised to wear two pairs.

TAKE CARE to remove jewellery that the rope might catch on.

TRY TO avoid falling forwards - sit down, or if falling sideways, curl yourself into a ball.

TRY TO recover skis quickly.

ALWAYS use the phrase 'hit it' when you are ready to ski, shout 'hit it' to the driver when the rope is taut and your ski tips are up.

NEVER wrap rope around any part of your body (fingers, hand or foot).

NEVER place any part of the body through the handle (neck, arm or leg).

NEVER ski in shallow water.

NEVER ski at night.

DO NOT ski directly ahead of, or to the side of another boat.

DO NOT attempt fast landing directly towards the shore - sit down if coming in too fast.

DO NOT ski in unknown waters.

DO NOT jump from a boat whilst it is moving.

LADIES should always wear neoprene shorts as protection if not wearing a suitable wetsuit.

SKI BOAT DRIVER

ALWAYS have a competent observer in the boat when towing a skier. With the exception of recommendation rule 2 above.

ALWAYS wait for the skier's signal and his ski tips above the water before starting.

ALWAYS steer clear of other boats and floating obstacles.

ALWAYS when skiing in restricted waters stop and allow canoeists and rowers (who are easily swamped) to pass. You can make friends doing this!

ALWAYS BE AWARE you have a long rope behind you that should be recovered as soon as possible and before you pick up your fallen skier - if the skier is not injured and not in danger.

ALWAYS make sure observer understands water ski signals.

ALWAYS give the skier a smooth and steady pull on take off.

ALWAYS shut off your motor before taking aboard a skier.

ALWAYS return immediately to pick up the skier **ALWAYS** carry an extra life jacket in the boat.

DO NOT turn sharply and put the skier in the water or on the whip - gradual wide turns are the rule.

DO NOT take the skier aboard without shutting off the engine first.

DO NOT drive the boat through swimming or restricted areas.

DO NOT operate the boat sitting on the side, **ALWAYS** sit in the seat.

NEVER put the boat into reverse when a skier is in the water behind the boat.

NEVER drag an injured skier over the gunwales or decking until you are satisfied that they are fit to do so and that no further injury could occur.

INTERNATIONAL - REGULATIONS

BRITISH WATER SKI & WAKEBOARD'S ABRIDGED INTERNATIONAL MARITIME REGULATIONS FOR USE IN CROWDED WATERS

Speed limits and their boundaries must be adhered to at ALL TIMES. Within speed limit zones, where ever possible, operate your water ski boat at a NO WAKE speed. Typically an 18 -20ft.water ski boat creates the maximum wash at about 10 - 12mph.

It should be noted that the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea apply to all vessels upon the high seas and in all waters connected therewith navigable by sea going vessels.

Based Upon: The Merchant Shipping (Distress Signals and Prevention of Collisions) Regulations 1989 (Statutory Instrument 1989 No.1798) as amended by S.I. 1991 No.638. These Regulations apply the International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea 1972 (as amended) to UK shipping.

1. Two speed boats meeting head on shall alter course to "starboard".
2. Two speed boats crossing: the vessel which has the other on her starboard side gives way.
3. Speed and sailing vessels: the speed boat shall give way.
4. Vessels to keep course and speed: the vessel with the right of way shall keep her course and speed.
5. Vessels overtaking shall keep well clear of an overtaken vessel.
6. Vessels in narrow channels: every speed boat shall. When it is safe and practicable, keep to that side of the fairway (e.g. entrance to harbour) which lies on her starboard side.
7. Speed boats when launched from slipways must proceed directly to sea at low speed - no warming up or exercising in harbours will be permitted.
8. Towing vehicles and carriages must be removed from slipways and approaches immediately after launching.
9. Every vessel which is directed to keep out of the way of another vessel shall, so far possible, take early and substantial action to keep well clear.
10. Any action taken to avoid collision shall, if the circumstances permit, be positive, made in ample time, and with the observance of good seamanship. If necessary to avoid collision or allow more time to assess the situation, a vessel shall slacken her speed or take all way off by stopping or reversing her means of propulsion. (re: rules 9,10 and 11, these have been included at the express wish of the Ministry of Transport in the full knowledge that they will seldom apply in waters used by water ski clubs. However, we can see that there could be special circumstances which might arise and made the observance of these particular rules essential).
11. Power driven vessels shall in general keep out of the way of vessels engaged in fishing. However a vessel engaged in fishing shall not impede the passage of any vessel navigating within a narrow channel or fairway. A vessel of less than 20 metres length shall not impede the passage of a vessel which can navigate safely only within a narrow channel or fairway.
12. Special circumstances; in construing and complying with these rules due regard shall be had to all dangers of navigation and collision and to any special circumstances, including the limitations of the vessels involved, which may make a departure from these rules necessary to avoid immediate danger.
13. Nothing in these rules shall interfere with the operation of special rules made by an appropriate authority for estuaries, harbours, rivers, lakes or inland waterways connected with the high seas and navigable by sea going vessels.

SOUND SIGNALS

- 1 Short Blast Altering Course to Starboard (Right)
- 2 Short Blasts Altering Course to Port (Left)
- 3 Short Blasts Going Astern

CODE OF PRACTICE WATER SKIING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Water skiing is an exciting and exhilarating family recreational activity. It is also one of Britain's most successful sports. Water skiing is an activity which most people would like to try, and as such has great potential for growth.

The popularity and success of water skiing are placing increasing pressures on water ski areas. At the same time the conservation value of water ski areas is becoming more important in relation to their surroundings. This has resulted in the need to work towards maximising the use of the areas for water skiing whilst enhancing or maintaining their conservation value. Many water ski clubs already manage their areas on this basis and co-exist harmoniously alongside or even within important conservation areas, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Nature Reserves.

The provision of new water sites is largely dependent upon decisions made by local planning authorities. Water skiing must present a good case to the local authorities by demonstrating that water ski sites are always well managed and responsibly run, with minimal disturbance to local residents or wildlife.

The Codes of Practice for Clubs, and for Skiers and Boat Drivers, are a guide to the good management of water skiing areas, and to responsible behaviour, which in turn will lead to an overall better image for the sport of water skiing.

Clubs Should:

- 1 Identify the wildlife on their water skiing areas, particularly birds, other animals and plants.
- 2 Identify which parts of the area have the most wildlife value, and whether the area contains designated conservation sites e.g. nature reserves or Sites of Special Scientific Interest and International designations such as Special Protection Areas or RAMSAR Sites.
- 3 Work with local conservation groups to determine the best way of protecting important species or conservation Sites, throughout the year.
- 4 Seek ways of helping wildlife on the area, through such actions as making new islands or setting aside refuge areas. Consider during long periods of cold weather whether a voluntary cessation of water skiing would be beneficial. Seek the advice of RSPB or local English Nature officer.
- 5 Monitor changes in wildlife from year to year, particularly bird populations.
- 6 Appoint a 'Conservation and Access Officer' to liaise as necessary with the NRA, local authorities, conservation interests, local residents, etc. Also run at least annual working parties to improve the area.
- 7 Produce or input into a management plan for the area.
- 8 Discourage boats and skiers from using lake margins or shallow silty areas.
- 9 Ensure only recognised and accepted landing places and launch sites are used, which cause minimal disruption to wildlife or other users.
- 10 Reduce wash by correct grading or lining of banks and encouraging weed growth along lake margins.
- 11 Ensure refuelling and bilge pumping are carried out away from sensitive wildlife sites.
- 12 Encourage members to use propane gas or unleaded petrol, together with biodegradable oils.
- 13 Ensure all club members' boats conform to the Noise Code of Practice for water ski boats.
- 14 Ensure all club members' boats are clearly and individually identifiable to other water users or observers e.g., by registration numbers.
- 15 Ensure all new members and visitors are fully informed about the site, including any conservation interest, management measures or zones currently in practice.
- 16 Include the Codes of Practice in all levels of instruction and training of skiers, observers, drivers and officials.
- 17 Ensure the Codes of Practice are observed by members and visitors.

Skiers and Boat Drivers Should:

- 1 Be aware of and respect other water users, local residents and the wildlife which depends on water ski areas.
- 2 Give other water users a wide berth and manoeuvre carefully, well away from them.
- 3 Reduce wash as much as possible.
- 4 Stay out of shallow water and well away from lake margins.
- 5 Take care not to disturb birds, particularly during nesting or moulting, and during very cold weather.
- 6 When using a water ski site for the first time always consult the appropriate Authority before launching.
- 7 Always respect bye-laws, zoning or other management systems affecting the area.
- 8 Always launch and land at authorised locations.
- 9 Only refuel or use the bilge pump well away from any sensitive wildlife sites.
- 10 Prevent any spillage of oil or fuel.
- 11 Use propane gas or unleaded petrol.
- 12 Do not make unnecessary noise.
- 13 Take litter home.

TOWING INFLATABLE EQUIPMENT

British Water Ski & Wakeboard has no responsibility for anything to do with inflatable equipment. Nevertheless ski boats and PWC are usually used to tow such equipment and often the drivers involved are quite inexperienced so it is prudent in these Safety Recommendations for drivers to be made aware of the hazards involved.

Inflatable equipment includes a variety of designs including "Ringos", "tubes", "Biscuits", "Sausages", "Bananas", "Sledges", and many other trade names. They are all designed to carry at least one rider and usually more while being towed along the water.

The riders have no control of the path of the equipment and it must be clearly understood that the boat driver determines what happens to the equipment and its occupants. For example when the boat turns sharply the equipment will slide across the water in a manner described as "on the whip". If the boat is driven too fast or over water that is too rough, the equipment may porpoise dive into the water or capsize. Many serious accidents have occurred because riders of inflatable equipment have been sent into collision with other boats, jetties, or shore banks when drivers do not allow sufficient turning room. Other accidents have occurred from riders being thrown out at excessive speed.

All riders of inflatable devices are advised to wear protective helmets. Serious injuries have occurred when unprotected heads have banged together during falls.

SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFLATABLE EQUIPMENT

THE BOAT DRIVER

- 1 Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations.
- 2 Do not overload equipment with riders.
- 3 Check that your boat insurance covers inflatable equipment.
- 4 Always have an observer.
- 5 Tow in straight lines with wide slow turns.
- 6 Do not put inflatables on the "whip".

- 7 Do not increase speed on turns.
- 8 Do not try to throw the rider out.
- 9 The rider must wear a ski vest (buoyancy aid).
- 10 Do not tow an inflatable over a jump or through a slalom course.
- 11 Do not tow an inflatable within a tow ropes distance of any solid object.
- 12 Always use a tow line of the type recommended by the manufacturers.
- 13 Check the water is clear of floating debris.
- 14 Check that local rules allow towed inflatables on the water.
- 15 Do not tow an inflatable over the wash of other boats.
- 16 Do not tow an inflatable with an unaccompanied small child.
- 17 Check the inflatable is in good repair, including the ropes and towing "eye".
- 18 Check the inflatable is firmly connected to the towing craft.
- 19 Make sure the rider knows British Water Ski & Wakeboard aural and hand signals.
- 20 Do not continue a tow if a rider falls.
- 21 Use standard procedures for crowded waters.
- 22 Always approach a fallen rider on the driver's side.
- 23 Switch off the engine before boarding riders from the water.
- 24 Do not start a tow until the rider shouts "hit it".
- 25 Keep away from other boats and other water users.
- 26 Do not tow an inflatable at night.
- 27 Do not tow an inflatable in shallow water.
- 28 Pay close attention to position of fallen skiers especially for recovery.

RIDERS OF INFLATABLE EQUIPMENT

- 1 Wear a ski vest (buoyancy aid).
- 2 Wear head protection (soft and visible)
- 3 Do not stand up.
- 4 Do not try to throw other riders overboard.
- 5 Do not attempt to steer an inflatable.
- 6 Know British Water Ski & Wakeboard standard hand and aural signals.
- 7 Do not attempt to abandon an inflatable during a tow.
- 8 Do not hold the towing rope.
- 9 Do not fasten any part of your body to an inflatable.
- 10 If a fall takes place, put your hands in the air to indicate "OK".
- 11 Do not shout hit it until the rope is taught and all riders are prepared.
- 12 Do not ride an inflatable unless you can swim.



E15 MOTORISED VESSELS PERMITTED

E16 SPORT CRAFT PERMITTED

E17 WATER SKIING PERMITTED

E18 SAILING VESSELS PERMITTED

E19 NON MOTORISED NON SAIL CRAFT PERMITTED

E20 SAILBOARDS PERMITTED

E21 ZONE FOR HIGH SPEED SMALL SPORT OR LEISURE CRAFT



E22 LAUNCHING VESSELS PERMITTED

E23 INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON RADIO CHANNEL

E24 WET BIKES PERMITTED

E6 ANCHORING PERMITTED

23 ISOLATED DANGER MARKS WITH OPTIONAL BLACK SPHERICAL TOP MARKS

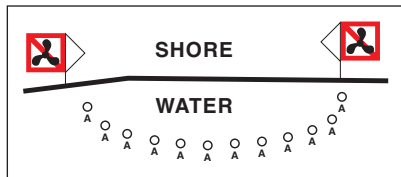
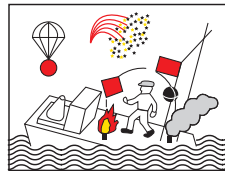


Fig. MCP

MOTORISED CRAFT PROBITTED INDICATED BY SIGNS AND BUOYS



74a

DIFFERENT METHODS OF INDICATING DISTRESS

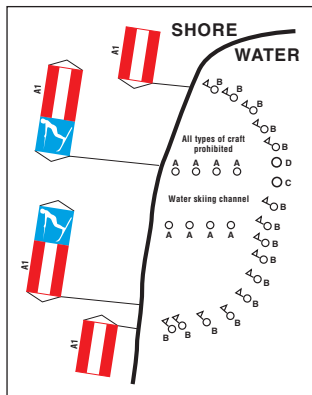


Fig. WSC

WATER SKIING CHANNEL MARKED BY SIGNS AND BUOYS THROUGH A SWIMMING AREA

BUOYS LABELLED:-

- A:** YELLOW COLOURED
- B:** YELLOW WITH OPTIONAL RED FLAG
- C:** YELLOW WITH RED TOP
- D:** YELLOW WITH GREEN TOP

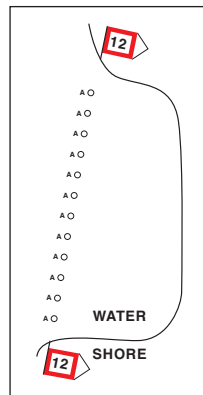


Fig. 74a

AREA MARKED BY SIGNS AND BUOYS WHERE A 12 KM / HR SPEED LIMIT IS ENFORCED



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