



Standard Operating Guideline No. 2.

The Boat Ramp and Winch

Launching and retrieving the Club's power boats on the boat ramp is a potentially hazardous activity. It should be undertaken only under the close supervision of responsible and properly trained persons.

List of Amendments from Previous Version

Additional information on launching the new Polycraft Start Boat. Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 have changed significantly and Section 2.9 has been added.

2.1. Who is Authorised to Supervise Operations?

Any adult member of the CRSC may supervise the launching and retrieval of power boats on the ramp, provided he/she has been properly trained (see Section 2.6) and is fully conversant with this Operating Guideline. The supervisor (who will usually operate the winch) is fully responsible for the safety of the members and should not be distracted.

Children under the age of sixteen should not be permitted to supervise launching and retrieval. They may assist in these operations only under the close supervision of properly trained adult members.

2.2. Correct Operation of the Winch

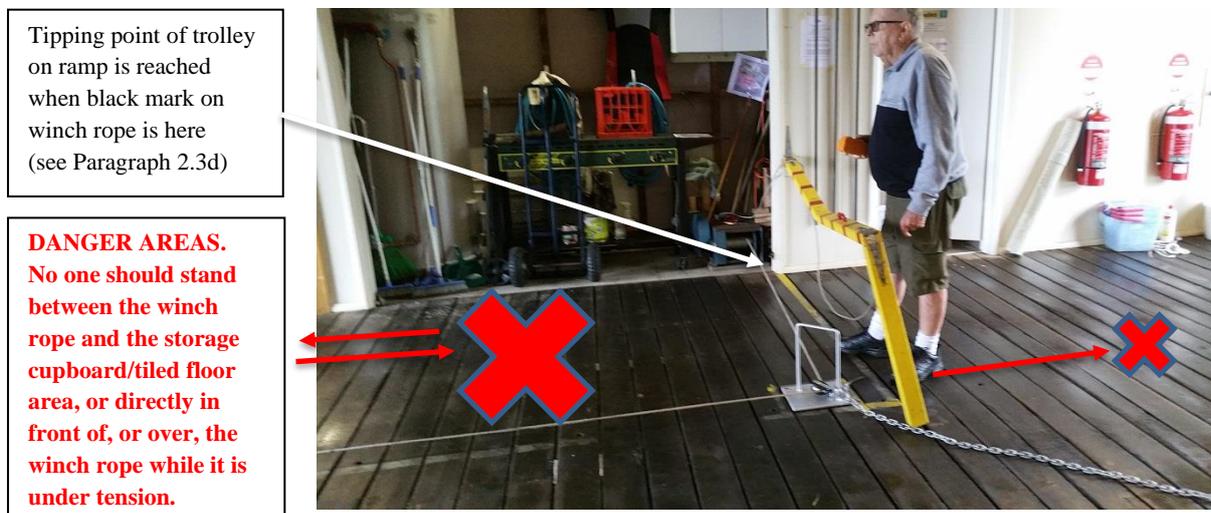
- (a) Insert the pulley tackle into the holes pre-drilled in the timber decking adjacent to the winch.
- (b) Lock the pulley tackle in place by turning the lever to the "Lock" position. The handle should now be pointing towards the door.



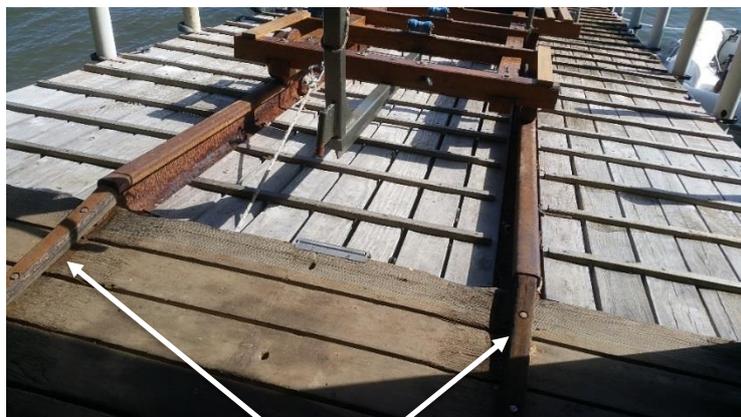
- (c) Check that the pulley tackle is locked in position by pulling it vigorously upwards.
- (d) Shackle the pulley safety chain to the pulley tackle. This chain is permanently bolted down close to the flammable liquids cupboard and is designed to restrain the pulley tackle in the event of a failure.
- (e) Erect the yellow safety barrier



- (f) Turn on the electricity supply to the winch. The switch is located on the wall above the winch.
- (g) Take out the winch controller. This controller has two buttons “Up”, to retract the winch rope, and “Down”, to extend the winch rope.
- (h) Stand **BEHIND** the yellow safety barrier and **NOT** directly in line with, or over, the winch rope. Do not allow anyone else to stand in the danger areas between the winch rope and the storage cupboard, or on the deck between the winch rope and the tiled floor area of the Clubhouse. If the winch rope or fittings were to fail, the energy stored in the rope could cause it to catapult back with considerable force.
- (i) Organise one or two assistants to help. If they have not previously been trained, it is the supervisor’s responsibility to explain each step in the process and ensure that they complete their tasks safely and correctly, thereby learning “on the job”.
- (j) The arrangement should now look like this:



- (k) Clear any debris from the ramp. Use the Gurney water jet blaster if necessary.
- (l) Insert the two wooden feeder chocks in front of the steel rails on the boat ramp. These wooden chocks are stored one on either side of the roller door leading to the ramp.



Wooden Chocks



(m) You are now ready to start the launching/retrieval operation.

2.3 Launching a Power Boat

- (a) The electric winch operator should extend sufficient winch rope to enable the shackle to be connected to the boat trolley.
- (b) The assistants should **check that the bungs are inserted in the boat**, the outboard leg is raised to clear any obstructions and the trolley's manual winch ratchet is engaged.
- (c) The assistants should manually push the boat and/or trolley up to the wooden chocks but must not yet push them up the chocks onto the ramp itself. The larger power boats have steel wheels which must be aligned with the rails on the ramp. Some of the smaller boats have a different wheel arrangement which must be aligned as appropriate around the steel rails.
- (d) The electric winch operator should now extend a little more rope, just sufficient for the boat and/or trolley to be manually pushed up the wooden chocks onto the ramp but not so much that they are able to run away down the ramp. This is indicated by two black marks on the winch rope. The first is for the Start Boat, the second is for the Rescue Boat. When they are level with the threshold of the storage cupboard (see photo on Page 2), the trolley is at this tipping point.
- (e) When the winch operator is satisfied, the assistants should push the boat and/or trolley onto the ramp. If the detachable jockey wheel is being used, it should be removed at this point. This is done by pushing the foot lever down and tilting the jockey wheel forward.



- (f) Once the boat and/or trolley are on the ramp, extend the winch rope to allow them to descend down the ramp as far as the ramp safety chain. Make sure the winch rope stays on the roller (see photo below).
- (g) Attach the ramp safety chain to the eye ring on the trolley. Then extend a little more winch rope so that the ramp safety chain takes the strain.



Here the Safety Chain takes the Strain

(h) If the boat is to be driven away once it is in the water, this is the time to load a fuel tank (with breather open) and for the driver to climb aboard. The required safety equipment varies from boat to boat. See SOG No. 3 for detailed lists. This gear may be loaded now, or once the boat is tied up alongside the ramp.

(i) When everything is ready, the boat and/or trolley can be lowered down the ramp into the water. For the Rescue RIB, it is usually sufficient to lower the trolley until the rear axle is just covered by water. For the Polycraft Start Boat, if the state of the tide allows the trolley should be immersed more deeply so that the boat more or less floats off the trolley.

(j) Once the trolley is in position, the boat driver is responsible for giving the all-clear for launching.

(k) The manual winch can now be released and the boat pushed slowly into the water. This should be done with care, to avoid creating a bow wave over the transom. **Note that the Polycraft Start Boat slides very easily on its skids and can easily drag the launching assistant with it!**

(l) Before launching, make sure someone on the ramp has a firm hold of the painter. Having an additional stern line led ashore is a good idea as this makes it easier to guide the boat into position alongside the ramp, if the motor is not being used.

(m) Once the boat has been launched, the trolley can be winched back up the ramp and either secured with the ramp safety chain, or moved away for the next boat to be launched.

(n) At no time should anyone stand behind, or alongside, the boat and/or trolley while they are in motion on the ramp. No one should stand behind the boat and/or trolley when it is stationary on the ramp unless the ramp safety chain has been attached. No one should stand directly in front of the winch rope, or over it, while the boat and/or trolley are in motion. Passers-by should be told not to step over the winch rope while it is in motion.

2.4 Retrieving a Power Boat

The process of retrieving a power boat is essentially the reverse of launching her. However, please note the following points:

(a) The trolley for the Polycraft Start Boat should be immersed deeply, if the tide allows, as the boat should more or less be driven onto it.



- (b) The boat driver will usually remain on board during the retrieval operation. He/she should stand forward in the boat, while it is being manually winched onto the trolley, to balance the load. Make sure the ratchet on the manual winch is engaged.
- (c) He/she should not climb off the boat until the boat and trolley have been winched up the ramp and secured with the ramp safety chain.
- (d) **Under no circumstances should anyone stand behind the boat and/or trolley, wash the boat down, or flush the engine, until the ramp safety chain has been attached.**
- (e) When the boat and/or trolley are finally winched to the top of the ramp, the trolley will roll forward, down the wooden chocks, and care must be taken not to get in the way.
- (f) The detachable jockey wheel, if needed, can be attached once the trolley reaches the yellow mark on the decking.

2.5 Emergency Rope

If it is necessary/preferred to launch or retrieve a boat without the electric winch, for example in the case of a power cut, or when handling a lightweight boat, an emergency rope is available for this purpose.

This rope is kept in the storage cupboard, coiled up on the floor adjacent to the electric winch. It has a shackle on one end, for attachment to the trolley, and a steel hook on the other end. There are a number of holes drilled into the boathouse deck, at intervals, in line with the path of the winch rope. These holes are for the steel hook to fit into and thereby enable the emergency rope to be secured at various points along its travel. The hook alone must not be relied on to hold the boat/trolley securely – the ramp safety chain must be attached if the boat/trolley is to remain on the ramp for any length of time.

Use of the emergency rope requires a great deal of care and attention as it is entirely under the manual control (and strength) of those holding it. It is vital to ensure that sufficient adults are holding the rope before it takes the strain of the boat/trolley. Usually, this requires a minimum of six adults. As always, no one should ever stand behind a boat/trolley while it is being held by the emergency rope alone.

2.6 Safety Checklist

A copy of the Safety Checklist (see Appendix) and a printed copy of these Operating Guidelines should be displayed prominently in an area close to the electric winch.

2.7 Training Provisions

Many long-standing, sailing members of the CRSC have broadly followed these procedures and operated the boat ramp equipment safely for many years. It is not necessary to retrain these people, though they should be encouraged to read the Operating Guidelines as a refresher. This group includes most sailing members of the CRSC Management Committee. These people have an obligation, when supervising operation of the boat ramp equipment, to train their less-experienced assistants by example and by instruction.

In particular, Class Captains have an obligation to ensure that all of their group on Duty Class, who are involved in launching or retrieving power boats, understand the correct procedures and are competent in their execution. By “learning on the job” in this way, it is expected that the number of members who are competent to operate the ramp equipment will grow steadily over the season.



2.8 Maintenance Schedule

The following maintenance tasks should be undertaken:

Each Saturday during the Season

- The winch rope and fittings should be checked for fraying or damage.
- The winch and ramp safety chains and fittings should be checked.

At least once a month during the Season

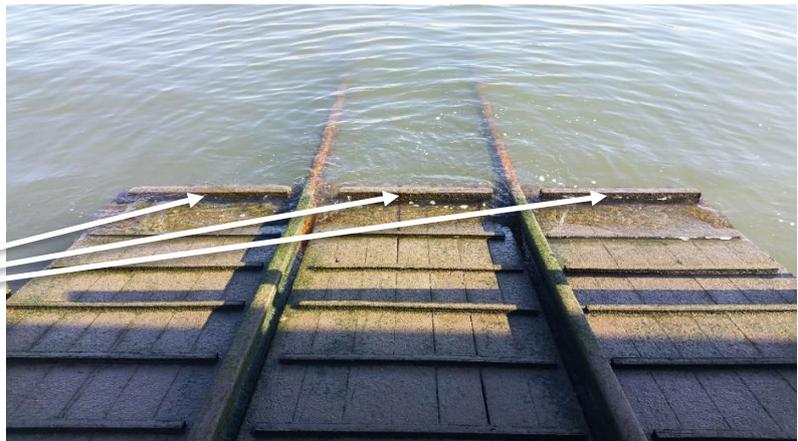
- The ramp should be cleaned with the water jet blaster, at low tide.
- The ramp planking and timber beams should be inspected.
- The steel rails on the ramp should be inspected.

2.9 Ramp Dimensions

The timber ramp is approximately 3.5m wide and extends for a distance of approximately 10m from the top to the bottom. At the end of the timber ramp, there is a drop-off of approximately 0.9m to the river bed. Three wooden battens (see photo) are bolted to the decking. These are intended to prevent people stepping off the end of the ramp. They do not stop the trolleys.

The rails themselves extend for a further 5m, approx., at which point they meet the river bed. There is no drop-off at the end of the rails.

Safety
Battens



At the lowest low tide, the depth of water at the point where the rails meet the water is approximately 0.6m.





Boat Ramp & Winch Operation Safety Checklist

At the Winch

- Is the pulley tackle properly locked in place on the decking and tested by vigorously pulling it upwards?
- Is the pulley safety chain securely shackled to the pulley tackle?
- Is the yellow barrier erected and the winch operator standing behind it?
- No one should be standing between the winch rope and the storage cupboard, or on the deck between the winch rope and tiled floor area of the Clubhouse.
- No one should be standing directly in line with the winch rope, or over it, in case it fails.

On the Ramp

- The boat ramp is always slippery so be very careful.
- Has the safety chain, winch rope and trolley fittings been inspected and found to be serviceable?
- Is the ratchet on the trolley winch engaged?
- If the boat/trolley is stationary on the ramp, has the ramp safety chain been attached?
- If the boat/trolley is in motion, no one should be standing behind it, alongside it, directly in front of, or over, the winch rope.
- No one should cross the winch rope while it is in motion.
- No one should ever stand behind a stationary boat/trolley on the ramp until the ramp safety chain has been attached.

The supervisor/winch operator is responsible for safety