

Lifeboat rescue of diver – risk assessment

This document should be read by all divers of Totnes Sub-aqua Club, and will be made available to all club members via an annual distribution and on the club website.

This Risk Assessment is intended to cover rescue of a diver by a lifeboat and covers areas specific to the rescue. The standard open water Risk Assessment also applies.

Divers may be unfamiliar with rescue procedures by a large lifeboat. In particular divers should be aware that:

- it can be difficult for a hooded diver to understand shouted instructions
- divers may be lifted out of the sea by a hoist
- lifeboat crew may want dive equipment to be removed from the diver before the diver is lifted
- a lifeboat deck is not the ideal place to stow dive equipment

Hazard	Risk of	Evaluation	Controls	Immediate measures to deal with situation
Currents, Mist	Divers carried away from drop off point or losing contact with boat cover	Low	Divers to agree plan with boat handler or skipper. All divers to carry surface detection aids such as DSMB, torch, strobe, EPIRB, flag, flares, whistle, etc, particularly DSMBs.	Divers to use SMB or DSMB. Divers to use surface detection aids to attract assistance.
Lifting of Divers	Diver injured whilst being lifted	Low	Divers briefed on the procedure followed by the Lifeboat hoisting process.	Follow lifeboat procedures
Loss of dive equipment	Dive equipment rolling overboard. Possible injury to divers in water	Low	Ensure dive equipment is safely stowed. Ensure dive jacket is inflated before removal. Consider attaching a retaining strap?	Retrieve equipment if inflated. Recover casualty and administer appropriate first aid
Separation from diving equipment	Inhalation of water. Discomfort in rough conditions	Low	Advise divers to have access to snorkel. Ensure dry suit is inflated before equipment is removed.	Retrieve diver from water as soon as possible

Accident as result of mis understanding	Misunderstood instructions	Low	It can be difficult for hooded divers to understand shouted instructions for what may be unfamiliar rescue procedures.	
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