

## **DEALING WITH A MAJOR INCIDENT ADVICE TO PRINCIPALS OF RYA TRAINING CENTRES**

These notes give guidelines in the aftermath of a major accident.

- Your first priority is, of course, the safety of participants and instructors, but once ashore you are going to have to deal with the authorities and the press.
- Get a statement from competent witnesses
- Remove the instructor and key witnesses from the school to a place you can talk to them away from the press.
- Produce a written statement that you can give to the press.  
E.g. "\*\*\*\* sea school regret to announce the death of a crew member who fell overboard at night from a training yacht.  
When  
Where  
Our deepest sympathy to the relatives etc. A full statement will be issued at 2pm tomorrow (give yourself time to collate the information).
- Don't hold a press conference
- Decide who will speak to the press
- Don't allow well meaning but ill informed staff to make public comments.
- Try to keep a record of whom you have spoken to, who has contacted you etc.
- Inform RYA Training (023 8060 4180) who can assist with compiling your statement to the press.
- If the rescue services have been involved the press will have probably obtained some information from them.
- If there has been a fatality the police will contact the Training Centre and inform the next of kin. Do not publicise the name of the casualty until you know this has been done, even if the press appear to know who it is.
- If your boat has a code of practice certificate you must inform the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) within 24 hours. You can do this by phone 023 8023 2527. They will inform you within 28 days whether they intend to investigate.
- Keep any relevant equipment e.g. Lifejackets, logbooks etc
- If required send a report to the MAIB (refer to booklet G27).
- Major accidents at RYA Training Centres are very rare but if you are ever unfortunate enough to be involved in one, it helps if:
  - your paperwork is up to date e.g. you have a contact number for the next of kin
  - your boats and instructors comply with your own safety policy and the RYA conditions of recognition.