



TGFA RADIO PROCEDURE & RISK ANALYSIS FOR SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS AS AMENDED December 2018

PURPOSE

To provide safety guidelines for clubs and anglers fishing in offshore events in Tasmania's coastal waters and to provide follow up incident reporting.

OVERVIEW

The Tasmanian Game Fishing Association (TGFA) is the Tasmanian branch of the Game Fishing Association of Australia (GFAA).

TGFA comprises five-member clubs, namely

- The Tuna Club of Tasmania
- St Helens Gamefishing Club
- The Game Fishing Club of Northern Tasmania
- The Southern Game Fish Club
- Sports Fishing Club of Tasmania

Membership of these clubs combined is generally around 700 members. Most clubs run game fishing events each year between the months of November and July. These events usually involve fishing in offshore waters on the east coast and south coasts of Tasmania and generally involve travelling to the continental shelf.

SCOPE

These guidelines are designated to make all concerned with the organisation and running of game fishing events aware of safety issues concerned with offshore fishing and onshore facilities such as weigh stations etc. And to disseminate information to individual fishing teams as required. These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with TGFA Sanctioned Tournament Rules and Guidelines as amended from time to time.

The following items have been identified by TGFA as issues that require some consequence minimisation strategies.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT

All clubs must ensure that all competing vessels are equipped with safety equipment as required by the state authority MAST and as updated from time to time. To achieve this end TGFA requires that all entry forms for events contain a checklist of MAST required safety items that must be checked off by the vessels skipper prior to the entry being accepted by the organising club.

TGFA also recommends that each vessel is equipped with a waterproof "Safety Grab Bag" that contains an EPIRB, a set of flares to the MAST standard and a hand held VHF radio.

These grab bags should be in a prominent position on the boat that is easily accessible. All boat crew should be made aware of the position of the grab bag and its purpose and content prior to commencement of each trip.

It is recommended therefore that: each club have a "Safety Grab Bag" on hand for display at every briefing prior to tournament or contest start.

SURVIVAL TECHNIQUES

Should an incident result in people ending up on the water they are exposed to the possibilities of hypothermia and drowning. Depending on water temperature and weather conditions these have the ability to occur in a very short time frame. People wearing PFDs are still at risk.

All anglers should be made aware of the following marginal hypothermia times for coastal waters.

MONTH MEAN SURFACE - TEMP TIME TO MARGINAL

February	16 2.25hrs
May	13 1.50hrs
August	11.5 1.25hrs
November	13 1.50hrs

There are techniques which people can adopt to increase their chance of survival. These include treading water and adoption of the Heat Escape Lessening Posture (HELP) or group huddle to preserve body heat.

It is recommended therefore that: The techniques for increasing survival time for people in the water are included in all briefing note packs boating prior to tournament or contest start.

RADIO PROCEDURES

TGFA has recognised that safety at sea during our tournaments relies heavily on maintaining good radio communications between vessels at sea, boat to boat and boat to shore bases where applicable. In order to facilitate effective radio communications TGFA has established the following procedure:

TGFA RADIO PROCEDURE

Scope

To ensure that radio procedures during tournaments are adequate and follow best practice.

Procedure

a. Radio Frequencies

It is recommended that all tournaments days operate scheds on the VHF and 27 MHz frequencies. All vessels competing must be equipped with fully functioning radios that has, as a very minimum the following channels installed

1. VHF – channels 16-67-71-73-79-80-82
2. 27 MHz – channels 27.88 and 27.94

b. Radio Relay Vessels

Each Sanctioned Tournament to provide a designated Radio Relay Vessel and designated Radio Operator to communicate between the radio base on land and vessels unable to contact the Base Station.

c. Sched Times

Radio skeds will be conducted on channels as advised at the contest briefing. Phone numbers for contacts on the Radio Relay Vessel and shore base should also be provided in the event of radio failure but should only be used if radio contact can't be made. Tas Marine Radio conduct regular skeds during normal hours and also provide a 24/7 listening watch.

d. Grid Maps

All clubs are to use TGFA approved grid maps for their local areas for all sanctioned tournaments. Fishing boundaries will be confined to those areas covered by the Grid map. Grip maps will provide the phonetic alphabet.

e. Reporting Procedures

All vessels will Log on prior to leaving the Launching Point/Marina berth/Mooring with the following details

- i. Vessel Name
- ii. Number of people on board
- iii. Departure point

On the FIRST sked of EACH DAY and on EACH subsequent of sanctioned tournament vessels will report the following

- i. Vessel Name/Boat Number
- ii. Position as a grid reference preferably using the phonetic alphabet ie Whisky 16
- iii. Number of fish captured and type (optional but may be required by some clubs)
- iv. Number of fish tagged and type (optional but may be required by some clubs)

On the FINAL sked

- i. Vessel Name/Boat Number
- ii. Position as a grid reference preferably using the phonetic alphabet ie Whisky 16
- iii. Number of fish captured and type (optional but may be required by some clubs)
- iv. Number of fish tagged and type (optional but may be required by some clubs)
- v. Estimated time of arrival in port

Upon ARRIVAL in port

- i. Vessel Name/Boat Number and officially sign off
- ii. The Skipper MUST receive acknowledgement that they have made contact with the Radio Operator. If radio contact is not made, the Skipper is to report in person to the Radio Room and sign off.

IF A VESSEL FAILS TO LOG OFF ON RETURN TO PORT, BY RADIO OR IN PERSON, THE VESSEL, ITS SKIPPER AND CREW WILL BE DISQUALIFIED FROM THE TOURNAMENT IMMEDIATELY.

f. Failure to Report on Skeds

It is mandatory for ALL vessels to report on each sked. Failure to report on two consecutive skeds WILL result in an Emergency Procedure being instigated. If a vessel is found to not have a legitimate reason for not answering on two skeds, the vessel, its skipper and crew WILL be disqualified from the Tournament immediately.

g. Vessel Responsibility

- a. Vessels MUST answer EACH sched with the required details

- b. IF a vessel has radio failure and cannot contact the radio operator, or through a radio relay attempts should be made by Mobile phone (if coverage available). If this is not possible, the vessel must return to port
- c. No vessels entry will be accepted by a host club, if that vessel is not fitted with the required radio frequencies
- d. Any vessel found to give false or misleading grid positions will be disqualified from the Tournament immediately

h. Radio Operator Responsibility

- a. It is essential that the Radio Operator (be it on land or sea) has a copy of the details of each and every vessel at sea on each day of Tournament fishing. Vessel details are not available on some Club Rally Days until after initial log on to radio base station, as no official entry is required.
- b. At St Helens, St Helens Marine Rescue are given a detailed description of each vessel and what it carries on board (updated each year) when the member pays his/her membership.
- c. It is the Clubs responsibility to have the appropriate radio licenses.
- d. The Radio Base MUST remain operational or conduct a listening watch until ALL vessels have returned to Port AND signed off.
- e. If a vessel is granted permission to continue to fight a fish hooked up before the time of fishing ceasing, a Radio Operator MUST maintain contact with the vessel until its return to Port and signing off. If the relay vessel needs to cross the St Helens barway before dark and the vessel fighting the fish is not in St Helens Marine Rescue range a boat (on trailer) will park out at the headland and relay instead of the radio relay vessel.
- f. The association urges all clubs to commit to organising training for all club members in the proficient use of the VHF radios with goal of all VHF radio users obtaining a VHF radio Licence.

WEATHER

All Tournaments should have duly constituted weather committee, to determine, on the best and latest information whether to call of a day's fishing.

It is ultimately the responsibility of each vessel's crew to decide to or not to go to sea. HOWEVER, if the incentive to fish for prizes is taken out of the equation, wise heads prevail! The above should also apply to normal Club Rally Days.

SAFE AREA AROUND WEIGHING FACILITIES

Club officials should provide safe areas at all weigh-in stations.

ULTIMATE RESPONSIBILITY/DUTY OF CARE

The club can only provide recommendations and ensure all regulations are acknowledged. The final decision on the safety and operation must always remain with the Skipper, provided all mandatory safety regulations and Tournament Rules have been acknowledged.

The Club cannot investigate and will not take responsibility for person who choose to operate outside the regulations and recommended guidelines.

INCIDENT REPORTING

TGFA will investigate all incidents in regard to safety and other issues involved with the operation and running of fishing events by affiliated clubs.

Reports should be forwarded to the Secretary TGFA as soon as possible after the incident occurred.

The Secretary in consultation with the Executive will determine what actions are necessary to rectify the situation. These actions should include but are not limited to the following:

- Call a TGFA meeting amend the above plan.
- Advise all other Club delegates of the incident, dangers and pitfalls involved with the incident.

The TGFA Secretary will maintain a register of these reports. All non-closed out reports will be listed as an agenda item at each meeting.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If a vessel fails to report for two (2) consecutive radio scheds, the contest committee through the radio base or relay vessel will instigate the following emergency procedures.

1. Issue a detailed description of the vessel to all other competitors with a reason for the action
2. Request all vessels especially those near the last known grid position to commence a search of the area. In the event of inclement weather only vessels capable of handling the conditions safely would be expected to undertake a search. This decision must at the discretion of the skipper as the person with the sole responsibility for the safety of his vessel and crew.
3. Instruct all other competitors not involved in the search and not within reasonable range through Base Radio or relay vessel, to cease competition fishing until the situation is resolved.
4. After 1 hour of searching without locating the vessel, the contest committee, relay boat or Base Radio operator will notify the Marine Police of the situation and all action from that point on will be at the discretion of the Marine Police or in their absence the contest committee.
5. All boats engaged in the search for the missing vessel will be asked to continue looking until the situation is resolved.
6. Competition fishing will not recommence until the situation is resolved and the contest committee, through the Base Radio or relay boat, announce the restarting of fishing in the Tournament.

If during a Club organised fishing tournament or Rally Day an emergency call is initiated such as a “May Day”, direct call or Flare, all fishing will cease immediately at the discretion of the committee and not recommence until announced by the Committee.

All available vessels should assist where possible in the event of any emergency.

HYPOTHERMIA PREVENTION: METHODS & EQUIPMENT

What is hypothermia?

Hypothermia is a physical condition that occurs when the body’s core temperature falls below a normal 98.6° F (37° C) to 95° F (35° C) or cooler. Think of hypothermia as the opposite of heat stroke. Cold water dangerously accelerates the onset and progression of hypothermia since body heat can be lost 25 times faster in cold water than in cold air. Hypothermia affects the body's core – the brain, heart, lungs, and other vital organs. Even a mild case of hypothermia diminishes a victim’s physical and mental abilities, thus increasing the risk of accidents. Severe hypothermia may result in unconsciousness and possibly death.

Who is at risk for developing hypothermia?

Elderly people, homeless people, and those under the influence of alcohol or drugs are particularly vulnerable to hypothermia. Children and people with certain health disorders are also susceptible. So are outdoor enthusiasts who spend time boating, fishing swimming, hiking, or skiing. How quickly a person becomes hypothermic depends on a variety of factors, including personality, behavior, physical condition, clothing, and environmental factors. Everyone reacts differently to the cold, even under the same conditions. Generally, children lose body heat more quickly than adults and thin people lose body heat faster than overweight people.

How long can a person survive in cold water? Water Temperature (°F)	Expected Time Before Exhaustion or Unconsciousness (°C)	Expected Time of Survival
32.5°	0.3°	< 15 minutes
		45 minutes

32.5–40°	0.3–4.4°	15 – 30 minutes	30 – 90 minutes
40–50°	3.3–10°	30 – 60 minutes	1 – 3 hours
50–60°	10–15.6°	1 – 2 hours	1 – 6 hours
60–70°	15.6–21.1°	2 – 7 hours	2 – 40 hours
70–80°	21.1–26.7°	3 – 12 hours	3 hours – indefinite
> 80°	> 26.7°	Indefinite	Indefinite