

# VESSEL TRANSFER OPERATIONS

## BASIC RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDE FOR ALL PERSONNEL

This guide covers the main hazards you will face during vessel transfers. **Read it. Know it. Follow it.**

If you are unsure about anything, **ask your Team Leader before you transfer.**

#	HAZARD	WHAT CAN HAPPEN	WHAT YOU DO
1	<b>Fall between vessels</b>	You fall into the sea. Drowning, hypothermia, serious injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wait for the Master to confirm safe conditions</li> <li>✓ Use the pilot ladder – check it before you climb</li> <li>✓ Three points of contact at all times</li> <li>✓ Wear your lifejacket with light and whistle</li> </ul>
2	<b>Vessel movement / wake</b>	You lose your footing and fall overboard or get thrown against the vessel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Hold on and brace when told to</li> <li>✓ Only transfer when both vessels are stable</li> <li>✓ Transfer stops if conditions get worse</li> </ul>
3	<b>Crushing between vessels</b>	You get crushed between the boat and the vessel. Fatal or life-changing injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Never stand between the two vessels</li> <li>✓ Wait for the coxswain to say it is safe</li> <li>✓ Stay clear until the transfer point is confirmed</li> </ul>
4	<b>Pilot ladder failure</b>	The ladder breaks or comes loose. You fall into the sea or onto the deck.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check the ladder is properly rigged before climbing</li> <li>✓ Report any damage – frayed rope, broken rungs</li> <li>✓ Do not use a ladder you are not happy with</li> </ul>
5	<b>Bad weather</b>	Wind, rain, and swell make the transfer dangerous. Higher chance of falls and injuries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Transfer only goes ahead if Master and Coxswain agree</li> <li>✓ If conditions change, tell your Team Leader</li> <li>✓ Transfer will be stopped if thresholds are exceeded</li> </ul>
6	<b>Wet or slippery surfaces</b>	You slip on a wet deck or ladder. Broken bones, head injury, fall overboard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wear non-slip footwear – always</li> <li>✓ Wear grip gloves for ladder climbing</li> <li>✓ Check the deck and ladder for water before you step</li> </ul>
7	<b>Falling equipment</b>	A bag, case, or weapon falls and hits someone below. Serious head or body injury.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All kit in bags or secured with lanyards</li> <li>✓ Pass equipment hand to hand or by tag line</li> <li>✓ Never throw anything during a transfer</li> <li>✓ Clear the area below the ladder during equipment moves</li> </ul>
8	<b>Wrong or missing PPE</b>	No lifejacket, no helmet, wrong gloves. You are not protected if something goes wrong.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Check your PPE before every transfer: lifejacket, helmet, gloves, footwear</li> <li>✓ Do not transfer without full PPE</li> <li>✓ Report any damaged or missing PPE</li> </ul>

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9	<b>No safety briefing</b>	You do not know the plan, the risks, or what to do in an emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Attend the pre-transfer briefing – every time</li> <li>✓ If no briefing happens, ask your Team Leader</li> <li>✓ Know the abort signal before you start</li> </ul>
10	<b>Fatigue</b>	You are tired, slow, and make mistakes. Higher risk of falls and poor decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Tell your Team Leader if you are too tired to transfer</li> <li>✓ Get rest before transfer operations</li> <li>✓ No one should transfer if they are not fit</li> </ul>
11	<b>Poor communication</b>	Wrong timing, wrong position, nobody knows what is happening. Accidents happen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Radio check before every transfer</li> <li>✓ Know the hand signals</li> <li>✓ Listen for the abort call</li> </ul>
12	<b>Poor lighting (night)</b>	You cannot see the ladder, the deck, or the hazards. Missteps and falls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Carry a head torch on night transfers</li> <li>✓ Transfer area must be lit before you start</li> <li>✓ Report if lighting is not good enough</li> </ul>
13	<b>RHIB overloading</b>	Too many people or too much kit. The boat sits low, takes on water, capsizes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Coxswain decides the load – do not argue</li> <li>✓ Multiple trips are safer than one overloaded trip</li> </ul>
14	<b>Man overboard</b>	You or someone else falls in the water with no immediate rescue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Know the MOB alarm and recovery procedure</li> <li>✓ Rescue equipment must be at the transfer point</li> <li>✓ If someone goes in, raise the alarm immediately</li> </ul>

**🛑 STOP WORK – YOU HAVE THE RIGHT**

If you believe the transfer is not safe, you must stop and speak up.

**No one will be punished for refusing an unsafe transfer.** Tell your Team Leader. If they do not listen, contact the Group Compliance Director directly.

**Full risk assessment:** SM/HSE/RA/002 – Vessel Transfer Operations v1.0

**Related SOPs:** Vessel Transfer SOP (region-specific) | SM/HSE/PRO/001 – Hazard ID & Risk Assessment

**Questions?** Contact the Group Compliance Director or QHSE Manager

**YOUR WATCH. OUR STANDARD.**

Assess. Report. Deliver.