

A night-time photograph of a blue and white police boat with yellow and blue stripes. The boat has 'POLICE' written on its side and 'AXE MARINE' on its equipment. It is illuminated by its own lights and a bright light source from the right. In the background, a building with 'OCTOPUS' written on it is visible. The water is dark and reflects the lights.

AXIELPD

Marine Policing



Introduction



Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the MPU

What are the responsibilities of the MPU

The responsibilities of the MPU are as follows

- To provide a counter terrorism resource to enforce no-go zones around Parliament and the Port of London
- Provide an enhanced underwater search and recovery capability to the MET.
- Provide Working at Height Resources.
- Provide crime prevention patrols on the clipper network and around houseboat marinas.
- Assist the Port of London Authority (PLA) with the enforcement of byelaws.
- Assist with the preservation of life on the river.



Specific Roles within MPU

Teams

The MPU has a broad spectrum of operational commitments, as such, each team rotates between water based duties, and land-based response. For the purpose of this training, we will only cover general waterborne operations.

- Marine protect- A team of MPU officers trained in the carriage of sidearms, they are used to assist the interception of higher risk suspects, assist in the enforcement of no-go zones. Partake in higher risk operations.
- Waterborne operations - general duties officers on the water, generally respond via boat to incidents on, or near the river.
- Working at Height - Provide the MET's high-angle ropes team, trained to deploy anywhere and at any height.
- Underwater Search - Assist with location and recovery of evidence and human remains from deep water.



MPU Legislation/common offences



MPU legislation/offences

Merchant Shipping Act 1995

Concerns COMMERCIAL vessels, referring to vessels used for commercial purposes, or which require commercial qualification to crew. Also contains offences concerning passengers on passenger craft.

Offences by seamen employed on a commercial vessel:

- Conduct endangering ships, structures or individuals - Section 58.
- Concerted disobedience and neglect of duty - Section 59.

Offences by passengers:

- Section 101 - drunk and disorderly on a ship (and failing to leave), obstructing or impeding the crew in operation/navigation of the vessel, causing damage with intent to endanger a vessel.
- Section 103 - A person commits an offence if they go, or attempt to go to sea (stow away) without the permission of the master
- Section 104 - Unauthorised presence on a commercial vessel (boarding and/or refusing to leave on the request of the master or persons employed on the ship/boat)

Powers:

- Section 105 - Gives the master of any UK flagged vessel (or a person authorised by him) the power to arrest any person for so long as it is deemed necessary for the safety and preservation of good order on board.
- Section 95 - power to detain a dangerously unsafe ship



MPU legislation/offences

Thames Byelaws 2012

Written and reviewed by the PLA, designate practices of safety, control and regulation over the River Thames. It is important to remember that there is **NO LEGAL REQUIREMENT** to hold any form of boat license, this is purely a recommendation, not a legal requirement. However, using a VHF radio without a license other than in an emergency situation, is an offence punishable by a fine of up to 10,000 pounds.

- Section 5 - A person who is in breach of any byelaw is guilty of a summary offence.
- Section 14.1 - All personal water craft (PWC) are subject to the IRPCS (covered in more detail later).
- Section 14.2 - A person may not launch a PWC without permission of the harbourmaster (except in an emergency situation as per section 14.3)
- Section 14.5 - A PWC may not be used within 200 metres of a jetty, pier, berth, terminal, public beach or residential premises except in an area authorised by the PLA.
- Section 16.1 A PWC may not exceed 8 knots.

Specific offence - It is an offence to use a PWC on the river thames without written permission from the harbourmaster. It is an offence to operate a PWC within the port of London.



MPU legislation/offences

Common offences/incidents (generic)

Based on previous incidents:

- Importing a controlled substance
- Navigating a vessel whilst under the influence of alcohol (legal limit for commercial vessels is 0)
- Importing firearms
- Possessing firearms
- Illegal immigration
- Customs offences
- Smuggling
- Border bypass (landing at an unregulated location to effect uncontrolled entry to the UK)
- Human trafficking
- Importation of explosives



General Patrol



General Patrol

Areas of focus

There are numerous locations of interest both on land and at sea. MPU officers can be employed on land and on the water to conduct their duties.

On land:

- Port of London
- Beaches
- Piers
- Any piece of PLA property on, or away from water.

At Sea:

- Inland waterways (imagination court area)
- Port of London
- Beaches and recreational spaces (offshore)



General Patrol

Types of craft

Taga: The Taga is a general purpose MPU patrol boat, it is used for 90% of jobs, from pursuits, to bridge jumpers. It's main role is to act as an all-round craft to assist officers in their duties. However, it is limited to certain areas as under passes, for example into the Imagination Court area are too small to allow passage. Designated as pursuit capable

RHIB: The RHIB is used for a mixture of general duties and operational support. It's main role is to patrol areas of the themes which are inaccessible to the Taga or the deployment boat. It also provides a support to the dive team as it can be deflated and placed in the back of either the land rover, or in the back of a carrier for search deployments. Not pursuit capable due to lack of ELS and lack of protective rails.

Deployment RHIB - Contains 12 seats and allows for carrying MARV officers, marine protect teams, maritime dogs, and can be used for general patrol. Not suitable for Pursuits due to lack of MOB preventative measures, except in authorised circumstances.



Pursuits and response on the water



Pursuits - coxswains

Responsibilities

Police Coxswains, due to the nature of the role and type of vessels used, require MCA endorsement, this means they must hold valid MCA approved SCTW table qualifications which must be updated every 4 years. In addition, they must hold an ENG1 seafarers medical certificate of fitness.

Police Coxswains are authorised to exceed general maritime speed limits similar to a land based response team, and may engage in pursuit of a vessel, however, the procedure of this is different (see next slides).

When onboard, all personnel, whether a trained coxswain or not are to be employed as lookouts for other craft, buoyage etc. this is to ensure the safety of the craft, and those onboard.



Understanding the IRPCS

International Regulations for Preventing of Collisions at Sea

The UK is a member of the International Maritime organisation. For this reason, we are expected to comply with the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (IRPCS). Whilst some don't apply to the Thames, it is the legal obligation of every police coxswain to know, understand, and adhere to the following.

- Rule 5 - every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision.
- Rule 6 - Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that she can take proper and effective action to avoid collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions.



Maritime Pursuit



Maritime pursuit

Introduction

Whilst uncommon, it may occur that a vessel you are following fails to stop on request. In such an instance, the procedure differs from that of a traffic based pursuit. If the MPU duty officer is known, then they should be called up and a different form of IPP passed. If the MPU duty officer is not known, this should be called up to control, who will direct you to a sergeant/duty officer to manage the pursuit. They will then either approve authority to continue based off a dynamic risk assessment, and based on information passed from both the PLA control room, and local VTS services. MP should not be contacted for a maritime pursuit as they do not hold the training to authorise such a pursuit.

The IPP passed on the water is as follows:

Vessel description

Persons onboard (if known)

General Direction

Sea State (rough, moderate, slight, calm)

Are persons wearing flotation aids/lifejackets.



Maritime pursuit

Introduction

Lifejackets, unlike motorcycle helmets are NOT a barrier to pursuit or pursuit tactics. However, in the event of a person falling overboard, the pursuit should be stood down and the recovery, and, if necessary, life saving efforts of the man overboard must become operational priority to preserve life.

Tactics open to MPU officers in pursuit are as follows

Rapid boarding under way

Deployment of REGS device (in some instances)

IT IS NEVER LEGAL OR APPROPRIATE TO ENGAGE IN ANY DELIBERATE "TACTICAL" CONTACT WITH ANOTHER VESSEL REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

However, light contact when boarding may be unavoidable, this will be clear at the time by all involved.



Maritime pursuit tactics

REGS

The maritime version of a stinger - effectively consists of a large elasticated net with flotation devices installed. Fouls the props and causes the boat to stop. Deployed by getting ahead of the vessel and deploying one or more devices in an arc ahead of the vessel. It is vital that these be recovered post-incident to prevent innocent shipping being impacted.

Positives:

- Safer than boarding as officers are at less risk
- Tried and tested method for dealing with small boats
- Easy to deploy

Negatives:

- Does not work on jet skis or water-jet powered craft
- In some circumstances can result in damage to the prop shaft of the suspect, causing ingress of water which may result in sinking.



Maritime pursuit tactics

Rapid boarding

Rapid boarding is the single most dangerous operational tactic that can be conducted by officers within MPU. The coxswain will maneuver the police launch next to the suspect boat close enough (if not touching) for officers to step across to physically restrain the suspect(s). A man overboard situation could prove fatal if the person falls between the two craft.

Positives

- Rapid and contains element of surprise
- Officers are able to gain control of the craft quickly

Negatives

- Extremely risky to officers, generally only conducted by MARV officers in extreme situations where life is at risk.



Emergencies onboard



Emergencies onboard

The Fatal 3

When crewing any boat, crew must be mindful of the three fatal Fs. These are:

- Fire
- Flood
- Falling off (MOB)



Emergencies onboard

Fire

Most fires on boats start in one of two places, the galley (aka kitchen) and the engine room. Since our Tagas are not equipped with a galley, one main risk is ruled out. However, electrical circuit boards and even cooling pumps can be the causes of fire. The Taga carries both a foam and CO2 extinguisher for immediate fire fighting. In addition, the engine compartment is equipped with a high-fog fire suppression system which is initiated automatically once the heat of the fire causes a small charge to detonate (a small pop).



Emergencies onboard

Flood

It is natural for all boats to have a small amount of water ingress in the space between the hull and the internal structure, this space is known as the bilge. Flooding occurs when water, beyond normal water ingress begins to enter either the bilge, or other spaces of the boat. Flooding is different to sinking.

Sinking occurs when the amount of water entering the boat is greater than the amount of water being pumped out. In the event of sinking, the crew should consider abandonment.

The taga is fitted with a bilge pump which is capable of pumping a reasonable amount of water for long enough for the crew to get to the shore, however, manual bucket bailing may be needed to support this.



Emergencies onboard

Falling Off

A man overboard situation is by far the most terrifying, life threatening and more concerning, most common incident to happen onboard. All MPU officers when operating on, or around water must wear a life jacket.

MPU life jackets are provided by CrewSaver™ and come equipped with;

- A water activated light
- An AIS transponder unit (will show position of MOB on chart plotters)
- A whistle
- A spray hood to keep wind and water out of the face.

In the event of an MOB, do not attempt to swim, remain still, tuck your knees up to your chest to preserve body warmth and allow your life vest to keep you afloat.

Crew should begin to point at the MOB as soon as they are sighted, and should not stop doing so until the casualty is back onboard. Keep a straight course until ready to turn about and collect the casualty from the water. If done correctly, they should be directly behind you. Take caution not to strike the casualty with the craft. Once the casualty is onboard, they must be taken to hospital regardless of condition to clear for secondary drowning.



End of document.

Disclaimer: Any information on this document is created for the purposes of AxielPD only. Under no circumstances can this information be copied, edited or used elsewhere without direct permission prior. AxielPD is not in any way affiliated with any emergency service in real life. This document is solely fictional and created for roleplay purposes only.

© Axiel Gaming Community