

# **SALVAGE ! GROUNDING ! PIRACY !**

Presented by Norwegian Hull Club

&

Hosted by the Yacht Club de Monaco and the Professional Yachtsmen's Association

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The essential points of this very interesting and interactive seminar are recounted in brief below for those of you who could not attend and missed this very lively hands on discussion.

## **SALVAGE**

If you are in trouble:

1. Assess the situation => decide if you are in danger

Decide if you are in danger, by obtaining all the relevant information from the engine room to information on your course, drift...

2. Decide on a timeline for events.

Once you obtain the information, analyse it and work out a time line on when you have to act, which will help you decide if you are in danger and on how imminent the danger is. This will make 'decision making' much easier further down the line.

3. Act

Get help, i.e. put out a mayday call & tell the crew and guests what is happening.

Once you ask for help over the radio, the system will be set in motion => local shipping, coast guard,... will be alerted – you will be contacted and asked your situation and what you need – in certain cases you could be asked to sign a Lloyds Open (No cure, no gain).

Lloyds Open: “no cure = no gain”, i.e. if the vessel is not rescued then the salvo will not get paid.

The amounts are discussed later between your insurer, their lawyer and the salvage company. The amount paid depends on the degree of danger, time to rescue, efficiency & readiness of salvo, type of rescue, value of vessel, skill & equipment of salvo, measure of success, expenses & losses, nationality of company conducting the rescue.

4. Alert the manager/agent if time allows.

After having asked several questions to assess the situation, he will put your contingency plan into action:

- call the insurer
- call local agents
- call the local authorities
- call the salvage company...

Subsequently, if time allows, you will now have professional help to negotiate a salvage operation and not necessarily sign a Lloyds Open.

5. Depending on the situation, whilst you're waiting.
  - Prepare the vessel for towing.
  - Try to help the situation i.e. in the case of imminent grounding use your anchors to try to stop the vessel.
  - Prepare the guests/crew for evacuation.
  - Log the events.

## **GROUNDING**

When you run aground:

1. Immediately put out a call over the radio, the same system as above will be put in motion.
2. Sound the general alarm on board: muster the crew & talk to the passengers and prepare them for eventual evacuation.
3. Assess the damage, if possible.
4. Call the agent, if time allows.
5. If the media call you for information, the advice to the master is :
  - Be short but polite.
  - Do not give out any information, refer them to the agent
  - Protect your guests
  - Keep your priority on your vessel and the people aboard.

The advice to the agent dealing with the media is:

- Protect the owner.
- Prepare for difficult questions.
- Be polite but firm.

NHC receives 1400 claims per year and in 10% of these cases, the captain does not sound the general alarm to alert crew and guests.

## **PIRACY**

There were a further 2 attacks on the 05/05/2010. Some official numbers for thought:

- 324 attacks in 2009, and rising.
- 11% are efficient.
- 1% max are successful.
- 99% of the success of the transit corridor is mainly due to Naval helicopters arriving in time to display "force", subsequently the attack is broken off..

Success is about countering piracy in the correct way by looking at how they operate and what equipment they use and then turning this against them.

### **How they operate:**

Skiffs operate mainly from mother vessels and attack targets of opportunity within their operating area. There is no strong Intel that suggests that the pirates intercept VHF calls or radar transmissions and that they use these transmissions for cross-fixes or bearings on GoA.

**Equipment used:**

- Skiff – ideal, fast enough for the purpose, keeps its position alongside the yacht when underway.
- AK47 – light and efficient under most conditions.
- RPG – limited range (stay outside 900m, as most models will not be efficient outside this range). This RPG is designed to pierce the outer hull of an object, in this case the outer hull of a Yacht. The detonation will then start a small fire and destroy the inside furnishings with shrapnel. This will divert the crew's attention from preventing the pirates boarding as 2 or more will have to fight the fire and prevent it from spreading within the superstructure / lower hull of the Yacht.

**The solution is to buy yourself time, by this:**

- Post lookouts who have good eye sight; are correctly trained and know what to look for. Not all skiffs are pirates, yachts generally attract attention as they are a "piece of Hollywood" and the general public just want to have a look.
- Have an experienced radar operator on duty at all times in pirate infested waters. He must know his radar system extremely well so as to optimise all the functions.
- Do not turn off radar or AIS. This equipment is paramount for naval forces to track you and for naval attack helicopters to home in on your position directly in case of an emergency. AIS information can be minimised.
- Do not turn off navigational lights when other vessels are within optical range.

If private guards are embarked for piracy protection and modifications etcetera are made, please bear in mind the Master is in command and that ISM, SOLAS, STCW and Class requirements must be adhered to for valid insurance cover.

NHC is a very hands on insurance underwriter, that stays up to date on the latest techniques, trains officers and crew on what to look for at sea and how to identify potential threats, instructs radar operators on how to fine tune a radar and read it for this kind of danger and prepares and helps the agent to talk and negotiate with pirates. (<http://www.norclub.no/yacht/>)

The PYA would like to thank the Norwegian Hull Club for making the trip from Norway to Monaco to provide this very useful and lively seminar to over a 100 crew and shore going personnel alike and also the Yacht Club de Monaco for the use of their premises and hospitality.

