



# 5-2 Safety Short

19 June 2007

## Water Safety - Fishing

### Weather

- Weather reports are essential to all fishermen. Make sure you have the most up to date local information available and be prepared for sudden changes.
- For coastal locations take particular note of expected tidal and swell conditions. For details contact local weather service organization.
- The forecast will assist in determining the following:
  - the type of clothing to wear and take along
  - who can participate
  - the most appropriate fishing location.

### Communication

- It is imperative that someone knows where you are going and what time you are returning.
- Take a mobile phone and keep it turned on. Have family or friends check on you or report in occasionally throughout your trip.

### First Aid

First aid kits are essential for any fishing trip and are readily available from many stores. Choose one which suits your needs.

### Alcohol

- Alcohol seriously hampers your chances of survival if you fall in the water.
- Revival procedures and techniques are dramatically less effective after alcohol has been consumed.

### Hypothermia

- It is recommended that if anyone in your party is uncomfortably cold then they should retire to a warmer spot.
- Avoid getting to the involuntary shivering stage, this indicates hypothermia is progressing and immediate action is required.

## What to do if you lose your footing?

- Try not to panic, roll on to your back and bring your knees up towards your chest using trapped air for buoyancy.
- Do not fight the current, point your feet in the direction of travel to protect yourself, steering as well as you can with your hands.
- Do not feel for the bottom with your feet, underwater rocks, tree trunks and debris are less likely to snare your trailing hands, try to steer towards a clear bank feeling for the bottom with your hands.
- Do not attempt to stand until you are confident of firm footing.
- If you are caught in a rip current, point your feet in the direction of travel hold one arm in the air to indicate you are in trouble. When you feel you have stopped moving out to sea, wait for help to arrive. If you were unlikely to have been seen, carefully remove the waders.
- These are extremely dangerous situations, be over cautious how far you venture into fast flowing water, particular wearing waders.

## Clothing

- Appropriate footwear is essential for all fishing environments.
- Wear an appropriate hat to avoid suffering from the heat or cold.
- Outerwear should be comfortable and warm. Lightweight garments worn in layers are highly recommended. Bulky woolen pullover's become extremely heavy and difficult to remove if you fall in the water.

## Life Vest's

- When on a boat, ensure that there is one approved lifejacket (Life Vest) for each person on board, even take to wearing them all the time while out on the water.
- Life Vest's are recommended when rock, ledge and even riverbank fishing to make certain of safety.

## Waders

- Do not wear waders on any vessel, even for a short trip.
- Avoid conditions that endanger firm footing such as strong river flow or surf conditions.
- Do not wear waders when rock or ledge fishing.
- Wear a supplementary wide belt to seal your waders at the waist, velcro style is recommended.

## Hooks and rods

- Hooks and rods by design can be dangerous if not handled with care. When fishing in close proximity to others extra care should be exercised.
- Exposed hooks on rods should be corked or placed in a hook safety cover when transporting.
- Instruct novices and children on safe rod and hook procedures.

## Choosing a Fishing Location

- When choosing a site to go fishing, gather information beforehand.
- Local stores generally have coastal maps and pamphlets to guide you on safe locations.
- Talk to local people, they will know of the best places to fish as well as dangerous and hazardous areas.
- When choosing locations for rock, ledge or tidal estuary fishing, take extra care and time judging tidal, sea, access and escape conditions.