

Surf Life Saving Australia - Circular



Title:	SAFETY ALERT: IRB Throttle Recoil
Document ID:	Circular 49/21-22
Audience:	States/Territory Centres, Branches & Clubs Club Lifesaving Officers IRB Personnel
From:	Coastal Safety
Date:	25 February 2022
Summary:	There have been reports of incidents involving operators becoming dislodged from IRBs and the throttle handle not recoiling, causing the IRB to operate without a driver onboard.

BACKGROUND

There are reports of incidents where Inflatable Rescue Boats (IRBs) have been operating 'out of control' after the driver and crew have fallen out of the craft. The reports indicate the IRBs have continued to operate unmanned, and at times at speed, until able to be safely retrieved.

Initial investigations indicate that one possible cause is the IRB motor throttle is not recoiling once the operator is not holding the tiller handle.

CURRENT ACTIONS

Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) is currently liaising with manufacturers, along with states to determine the possible cause/s of these incidents.

While the tiller handle recoil is checked as part of the gear and equipment assessments, it is recognised that both salt and sand may seize the handle over the course of the season which could lead to the tiller handle seizing in position and not recoiling.

As a precautionary measure it is important that all personnel continue to check the tiller handle recoils before any operations take place and lifesaving services continue to regularly maintain and service motors. This should be carried out as part of both the pre and post operational checks along with maintaining a regular service schedule for IRB motors.

The operations app has been updated to include a line item of 'throttle handle recoil' along with all future logs being created to include this check. For any old logs this should be checked as part of the 'MOTOR RUNS & IDLES SATISFACTORILY". See the current log below for further details.

PRE OPERATION CHECKLIST

- MOTOR RUNS & IDLES SATISFACTORY
- TELLTALE OUT-FLOW OPERATING
- STOP SWITCH WORKING
- PROPELLOR & GUARD FULLY SECURED
- COWLING SECURLY FITTED
- MOTOR CORRECTLY SECURED TO TRANSOM
- MOTOR SAFETY CABLE ATTACHED

POST OPERATION CHECKLIST

- MOTOR RUN & FLUSHED (3-5 MINUTES)
- MOTOR HOSED DOWN
- SPRAY MOTOR WITH WATER DISPERSANT
- TILT BAR CHECKED & TIGHTED IF REQUIRED
- CHECK PROPELLOR, GUARD & SPLIT PIN
- FLOORBOARD REMOVED (IF APPLICABLE)
- HULL WASHED & SAND REMOVED

In neutral, rotate the throttle (to replicate accelerating) and release to test capability of the throttle to recoil back to idle position (not stay/seize at high/maximum throttle).

For further information or to provide feedback (reports) regarding any related incidents please contact, Lifesaving Operations Manager, Jamie Findlay, on jfindlay@slsa.asn.au.