



# Sea Rescue

NATIONAL SEA RESCUE INSTITUTE  
AIR SEA RESCUE - Cape Town

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

### Pacing

DRAFT Approval Pending

**Note: Helicopter Pacing is restricted to NSRI Rescue Swimmers and NSRI rescue craft**

Revision date: January 2005

## 1. Description

The Pacing SOP is used to extract a trained NSRI ASR rescue swimmer from a rescue craft that is forming on a helicopter.

This SOP shall be used as follows:

- 1 Off a small rescue craft, thus avoiding blowing the craft around by the down draft
- 2 Off larger rescue craft during rough sea states where the long line is both time consuming and increased risk to boat crews

It should be noted that Rescue boat pacing (different to helicopter pacing) is a standard procedure for all NSRI Coxswains. This SOP is based on the principals used in boat pacing.

Pacing with a helicopter is used to extract a Rescue Swimmer off the bow of a rescue boat while the rescue boat is forming on the helicopter.

## 1 Definitions

Crew	NSRI sea going crew that are part of the National Sea Rescue Institute
ASR	Air Sea Rescue
RS	ASR Rescue Swimmer
Boat Crew	Trained NSRI boat crews

## 2 Equipment



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RS will be dressed in a wetsuit and booties.
Hood and gloves are optional.
Harness and life jackets
Attached to the harness is a short sling and snap hook, clipped back onto the harness.
Mask ; may be worn or attached to the RS harness
Fins attached to the RS harness

### 3 Training Requirements

Airborne	As opportunity presents

### 4 Safety Restrictions

Only trained ASR crew may initiate this SOP
Only qualified NSRI rescue boat coxswains may helm the partaking rescue boat
May not be used during Basic training exercises (refer to Basic training SOP)
Rescue strop may not be used for extrication of rescue swimmers

### 5 Procedure



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#### Setup

RS on board an NSRI rescue boat may initiate pacing
Helicopter may initiate pacing
The word <b>PACING</b> must be transmitted and confirmed by both helicopter and boat commanders.

#### Pre-Planning

Boat Commander to head rescue craft into wind and swell to provide most comfortable ride
Boat speed to be between 10kt and less than 20kt
RS to stand in bow of boat and raise hand when ready for extraction
RS will brief the coxn and crew on the procedure
RS will clearly brief coxn on abort procedures
Helicopter will format on rescue boat approaching from the Port stern
Boat commander Class-1 must have a crew member assisting and watching the RS for signals
Rescue strop to be attached to the hoist hook

#### Execution

The helicopter will move into a comfortable position pacing with the rescue boat
Keeping rescue boat on the right side of helicopter and in visual
Once aircraft commander happy the signal to the rescue boat will be given
The <b>signal</b> will be given by starting to lower the hoist hook attached to a strop
At this point the rescue boat will start pacing with the helicopter
Rescue boat moves in under the helicopter
Helicopter commander loses visual reference of the rescue boat at this time
This keeps the rescue boat in position with the <b>hoist head</b> directly above the coxn
The <b>hoist hook</b> will be lowered with a rescue strop to the RS without grounding the hook on the rescue boat
RS will keep focused on the procedure making sure that no problems develop



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RS will be in constant eye contact with hoist operator and the coxswain
RS may abort procedure at any stage
RS will hook onto the <b>hoist hook</b> and give the hand signal to hoist in
At no time will the rescue strop be used to lift a RS or NSRI crew member
Once RS has been lifted, the rescue boat must immediately slow down and break to starboard and pass ahead of the aircraft
This implements a fail safe process of avoiding a collision with the RS
Rescue boat will now once again be visual to the aircraft commander

### Abort Procedure

At any time the RS may initiate the abort procedure
It is unlikely that the helicopter will abort the procedure
Using the <b>abort</b> hand signal - flat hand drawn across the neck
The <b>abort</b> signal must be shown to the hoist operator and to the boat commander
Helicopter is to maintain current attitude and position until rescue craft is visible
The rescue boat must immediately slow down and break to starboard and pass ahead of the aircraft
Rescue boat will now once again be visual to the aircraft commander
Aircraft may now resume ops normal condition

### Safety Considerations

Rescue strop shall not be used to lift a RS or NSRI crew. The reason is that the strop may be partly in place and the RS snatched off the vessel. This could result in the RS falling out of the strop and also not being able to make use of the arms to fend off
The rescue craft breakaway procedure provides for a decisive movement veering away from the RS, thus avoiding any possibility of a collision between the RS and the rescue boat
The rescue craft breakaway procedure moves the rescue craft into visual reference as soon as possible

### Risks



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RS could be thrown overboard by sudden unexpected movements.
RS train to deal with sudden man overboard incidents
Helicopter could snatch the RS off the boat
The rescue harness provides a safe secure connection to the hoist hook.
RS are fit and are often exposed to snatching conditions
Static Shock
Hoist head could injure the RS being hoisted

