

MERRICKS YACHT CLUB

INC. Reg. No. A 14049



TRACTOR OPERATIONS MANUAL

for

LIMITED TRACTOR USE

This manual has three sections:

- Section 0** - Merricks Yacht Club general comments and considerations
- Section 1** - General Guidelines for the Safe Operation of Tractors.
- Section 2** - Procedures for Tractor Operations at MYC
- Section 3** - Responsibilities of Registered Tractor Drivers - Key Holders

Revised October 2000
Revised November 2008
Revised March 2010

Section 0

Merricks Yacht Club general comments and considerations

From experience at MYC we know that it takes at least three (3) experienced adult club members to safely and reliably recover large boats (eg. The club safety/rescue boat ML11 etc.) Additional people (not necessarily members) are often required to maneuver and stabilise a boat or to operate the yard winch.

The only times the Committee can guarantee that members and experienced Registered Tractor Driver personnel will be present is during club events; refer to MYC Annual Program of events for details. Registered MYC Tractor Drivers are only available to support movement of craft to and from the water at these times. Whilst a race is being run a person who is in Race Control is unavailable to act as a driver.

We know that a trailer begins to sink as soon as it enters the water, hence time is critical, and particularly with a large boat (ML11 is usually recovered in 45 to 60 seconds). Once a trailer starts to bog it leads to other hazardous & hasty actions such as use of yard winch, 'snatchem' straps, digging etc leading to the potential for increased opportunities for accidents to happen.

To affect a swift recovery, a coordinated team of at least 3 members is necessary. It is not feasible for one person or even two to do all the tasks safely, including driving the tractor harnessing the craft, blocking wheels etc, in a timely and effective manner.

The granting of use of the tractor by the committee is done so, with the view that the requesting member will take due care of the club facilities and equipment including the tractor itself and undertake the use of the tractor with full knowledge that tractors can be a very dangerous and it is well known that many experienced drivers have been maimed and killed due to failings in the use of the equipment in their care.

Further, Tractor Drivers have a legal and moral obligation to take the utmost care when using such equipment for the safety of other members of the club and public that is at large, while in use in the club grounds and while on the beach.

Any breach in the agreed use of the tractor during training, probation and full use of the tractor will be brought to the attention of the committee where a formal investigation will be undertaken and breaches found to be against training and club policy, for the safe use of the tractor, will render automatic suspension of Tractor Driver privileges.

Requests of Members to become MYC Registered Tractor Driver

In considering requests for (additional) tractor keys and approval to drive the tractor, the committee will maintain the following policy:

1. Requesting members will have been members of the club for at least 12 months before the request will be considered.
2. Requesting members will have had regular contact with the club during this time and will have had personal experience assisting with the launch and retrieval of his/her own and other members craft over this time – advice as to this level of contact will come from MYC Registered Tractor Drivers
3. Requesting member will have had formal lessons from at least two (2) of the MYC Registered Tractor Drivers – these lessons will be managed under the arrangements as agreed by the committee from time to time – but at minimum the new ‘Learner’ Tractor Driver have had at least 6 fully supervised lessons in use of the tractor:
 - 2 lessons without any towing
 - 2 lessons with towing/launching a small craft (tinny) and
 - 2 lessons with supervised launching and retrieval of ML11
4. Once these lessons have been undertaken the Registered Tractor Drivers who have undertaken the lessons with the ‘Learner’ will advise the committee as to the acceptability of the proposed requesting ‘Learner’ Tractor Driver member, seeking formal acceptance by the committee as to ‘Probationary’ availability for use of the tractor to the requesting member.
5. Once this approval has been provided, the requesting member will be confirmed as a ‘Probationary’ Registered Tractor Driver for a further 12 month period after which time the other Registered Tractor Drivers will again formally confirm to the committee their views on the ‘Probationary’ Tractor Driver, seeking formal acceptance by the committee as to full availability for use of the tractor to the requesting member as a Registered Tractor Driver.
6. At this time the MYC ‘Register’ of Registered Tractor Drivers will be updated to add the new Registered Tractor Driver/members name to the posted register

When considering requests for use of the tractor the committee will also consider the following:

1. What is the usage pattern of the requesting member – use outside club hours is not a proposition that the club will entertain?
2. For what use will the member be using the tractor – Primarily sailing or fishing
3. Does the applicant intend to make their services available to the club to support other users of the tractor?
4. Whether the member will carry a level of responsibility where the club can be assured that the tractor will be adequately cared for and not left to be bogged and drowned by a rising tide?

5. When recovering large boats who will be assisting with the following, given that the tasks need to be done simultaneously to effect a safe recovery:
 - A. driving the boat
 - B. driving the tractor
 - C. operating the winch
6. Owners of large boats should not be misled into thinking that recovering their boat at Merricks is straightforward, let alone a given. It requires a coordinated team of experienced personnel, favorable sea and sand conditions, a suitable & reliable trailer, mats etc.
7. The maximum size power boat that the club will launch at MYC is to be no more than 6 meters in length, with a gross weight of not more than 2400 kg with tandem axle. The exception is trailable yachts and self launching rigid inflatable craft with a maximum length 7 meters, with weight of not more than 2000kg.
8. Exceeding the max weight will be considered by the committee on an individual as needed basis by request to the Committee.
9. There is no evidence that the required personnel considered necessary for safe craft recovery will be present (other than at club events). Should the committee approve the member to become a Registered Tractor Driver (through the above) it would do so in the knowledge that it will probably be used in an safe & reliable situation. Use in an unsafe, unreliable or impossible situation is not a tenable situation that the club will allow.
10. Only Merricks Yacht Club members are permitted to launch power boats at the yacht club via yacht club facilities.

SECTION 1

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SAFE OPERATION OF TRACTORS

Information for this section has been derived from the following sources:

- Guide to the Safe Use of Tractors. Victorian Workcover Authority
- Tractor Operation Handbook. Longerenong College University of Melbourne
- Safe Tractor Operations. David E. Baker
- Power and Sail. Western Australia TAFE

INTRODUCTION

Here are a few facts about driving a tractor which you should bear in mind. Although we are not a farm, our operations still involve real hazards:

- ◆ In recent years, more people have been killed by tractors than any other piece of rural equipment.
- ◆ Nearly nine out of every ten people killed on farms die as the result of tractor accidents
- ◆ One in every four people killed in tractor accidents is a child under the age of 16.
- ◆ The use of the tractor at Merricks is seen as a serious and likely risk to members and the public. The yard and beach are often crowded with adults and young children. Moving a boat is difficult and usually has blind areas. Boat owners are often anxious, if not impatient to get their boat in & out of the water.

PASSENGERS

- ◆ Many of the persons killed by tractors were trying to ride as passengers.
- ◆ The Roll Over Protection Frame does NOT protect passengers.
- ◆ Passengers obstruct the drivers view and distract his attention
- ◆ PASSENGERS MUST NOT BE CARRIED

DIFFERENTIAL BRAKING

Tractors are fitted with two brake pedals which independently operate on each rear wheel. Applying the brake, on one side only, enables a very tight and possibly unexpected turn.

THREE POINT LINKAGE (3PL)

- ◆ Never trust the three point linkage to hold a load.
- ◆ Do not place feet or hands under any load, inc. parts of trailer supported only by the 3PL.
- ◆ The three point linkage will not support an UPWARDS load. This means that if a trailer is "back heavy", the 3PL will not stop the trailer drawbar from flipping upwards. This could happen when the bow of a boat is on the rear of the trailer.
- ◆ Always lower the 3PL after parking the tractor. If left up, the linkage will lower slowly, and when the tractor is started again, it will rise quickly, possibly causing injury or damage.

HITCHING HAZARDS

- ◆ Drivers should be aware of the dangers of attempting to recover a trailer, boat or other vehicle using a cable or "Snatchem Strap" etc .
- ◆ Towing a load forwards, can cause the tractor to flip backwards, particularly if using a "Snatchem Strap" which stores large amounts of energy. If the tractor tends to lift, depress the clutch immediately
- ◆ Towing is safer if attempted in REVERSE, with the towing cable connected to the attachment point under the front of the tractor.

SECTION 2

PROCEDURES FOR TRACTOR OPERATIONS AT MERRICKS YACHT CLUB

1 RESTRICTIONS & SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- ◆ The tractor shall only be operated within the confines of the yard and the beach area in front of the Clubhouse
- ◆ Tractor is NOT to be driven into water under any circumstances.
- ◆ Drivers shall not attempt to launch boats heavier than those which they normally launch.
- ◆ Drivers shall wear the 'High Visibility' waste coat while operating the tractor
- ◆ At least two adults are required to safely launch boats. More are often required.
- ◆ Passengers are NOT allowed on the tractor or on the trailer being towed. (The boat crew may remain in the boat, but must keep inside the gunwales)
- ◆ When the tractor is towing a trailer, another adult must be nominated as an Observer who shall watch out for potential dangers and be able to warn the driver or bystanders.
- ◆ When the tractor is moving, do not allow anyone to walk between the tractor and the trailer.
- ◆ Bystanders, particularly children, shall be warned, to keep clear
- ◆ All tractor operations on the beach shall be in line with the mats on the East ramp
- ◆ 'Tractor in Operation' signage to be placed in an obvious position on the beach while operating the tractor on the beach
- ◆ If you have only driven on hard surfaces, driving at Merricks will be very different. Sand conditions vary from day to day and between tides. Here are some of the hazards:
 - ◆ The tractor will often have difficulty climbing even a gentle slope in soft sand. Steering will be difficult. Hence the use of mats.
 - ◆ Trailer wheels begin to sink immediately they enter the water. Prepare boat & trailer before going near water.
 - ◆ The tractor wheels also begin to sink when close to the water. If the tractor starts to dig in, disconnect trailer, move tractor up beach & recover boat by other means.
 - ◆ The sand above the waters edge is usually hard but can be dangerously soft. Check with other members if you are unsure. Spend minimum time near the water

2. STARTING

- ◆ Disconnect the on-board battery charger
- ◆ Check fuel, oil and water
- ◆ Check the 3PL and the draw bar for damage, missing components etc.
- ◆ Unlock the security bar
- ◆ Put on the High Visibility vest
- ◆ Check the position of the differential brake pedal lock, and drive accordingly

- ◆ Hand brake ON. Hazard light ON
- ◆ Gear levers in Neutral
- ◆ Turn START key
- ◆ Check foot brakes by briefly applying when moving at slow speed.
- ◆ Drive at minimum speed. Maneuvering & clutch operation is easiest at idle

3. STOPPING & PARKING (Under Clubhouse)

- ◆ Handbrake ON, .Hazard light 'OFF', Pull STOP handle to stop engine
- ◆ Three point linkage lowered
- ◆ Put tractor into gear. Release handbrake.
- ◆ Lock security bar
- ◆ Reconnect the on-board battery charger
- ◆ At the end of a day wash tractor with fresh water, particularly inside the sliding drawbar.
- ◆ Put High Visibility vest back to its location on the seat

4. BOAT LAUNCHING & RECOVERY

- ◆ Ramp mats in place
- ◆ Decide on direction and position of launch/recovery before leaving the yard
- ◆ Back the tractor/trailer down the ramp. Only if there is ample beach space and the sand is hard, should drivers consider driving down forwards and turning on the beach
- ◆ Line up the tractor/trailer in line with the mats, but at this stage, well clear of the water.
- ◆ Chock trailer wheels or otherwise restrain trailer
- ◆ Remove the extension drawbar pin.
- ◆ Make all boat preparations **before** entering the water.
- ◆ Slowly drive forwards, extending the tractor drawbar to its full length. Keep hands clear of drawbars. During extension it may be necessary to adjust the 3PL position to let the extension slide freely and to compensate for unevenness of the sand.

CAUTION

Once the drawbar is extended NO turning is permitted
otherwise serious damage will occur to the drawbar

- ◆ Replace the drawbar pin and check that it is fully inserted.
- ◆ Back the trailer into the launch/recovery position

CAUTION

Do not change direction when moving with drawbar extended.
Do not allow the tractor tires to enter the water above half the tread.
Keep time spent near water to absolute minimum.

- ◆ When recovery/launch is complete, drive forward until the trailer is clear of the water and retract the drawbar.

SECTION 3

RESPONSIBILITIES OF REGISTERED TRACTOR DRIVERS - KEY HOLDERS

CONTROL OF KEYS

- ◆ Keys will only be issued to Tractor Drivers who meet the requirements noted above – Section 0.
- ◆ The key must be kept in a secure place at all times.
- ◆ Keys must not be lent.
- ◆ Keys can only be reproduced using the signatories of the Club Committee.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR TRACTOR DRIVERS

- ◆ Financial Club Member and licensed motor car driver – see above Section 0
- ◆ Know and understand the Tractor Operations Manual.
- ◆ Demonstrate to the Club Committee their ability to operate the tractor in all situations associated with launching and recovering a trail-able boats

RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRACTOR DRIVERS

- ◆ Once a Driver unlocks the tractor, they are then responsible for the use of the Tractor until they (the Driver) either:-
 - ◆ lock the tractor or
 - ◆ hand over to another Driver, making it clear that the other Driver is now responsible for the tractor. (Including hand over of the High Visibility vest)