

Boat Maintenance - checks to keep your boat operating smoothly

Much like a car engine your boat engine needs general maintenance to make sure that everything is in working order. Below you will find some checks that are recommended by River Canal Rescue engineers.

General checks

- Change or clean the air/oil/fuel filters regularly - some common causes of breakdowns that RCR engineers attend.
- Before setting off cruising check that all moving parts i.e. cables, are fully greased.
- Check that all bolts and connections are tight.
- Check that the batteries are charging correctly. Last year RCR attended 423 battery related breakdowns.
- Check that the morse control is working correctly and that the throttle and gears are working.
- Check that you have enough fuel to complete your journey.
- When the engine is warm check that the oil pressure and coolant temperature are as it should be.

Monthly checks

- Check the condition of stern gland and there is plenty of grease supplied to it.
- Make sure that the prop shaft is turning freely.
- Check that the charge rate from the alternator to the batteries is as it should be.
- Check the engine oil and gearbox oil levels and top up if need be.
- Check the condition of the fan belt. If it is worn get it replaced.
- Check all coolant hoses for leaks and wear and tear. Replace if required.
- For raw water-cooling engines, check the seacock and all pipe work for leaks.
- Check all fuel lines and shut off valves for leaks.
- When starting the engine make sure that the charge light is off and that the alternator is charging.

Annual checks

- Check the conditions of the engine mounts. After a years cruising they have had a lot to cope with. If they are worn replace them or if the bolts seem loose, tighten them before cruising again.
- When leaving the boat for the winter, make sure to use anti-freeze.
- Also to stop condensation within the engine, sure fuel treatment. The fuel treatment that RCR recommends is Marine 16 and it can be used in any engine. This can be purchased for £15 from the RCR webshop.