

# Introduction

## Safety on and off the water

Safety has become an increasing issue in sport and in our daily lives. For some people this is a question of having more rules, and for others it is a matter of having more common sense.

Both viewpoints have some merit and in developing Row Safe the ARA has defined responsibilities and standards of practice for all those involved in the sport so that each of us can manage safety issues within our rowing environment.

All decisions about safety at rowing clubs and competitions should be based on 'risk management' as no 'book of rules' can possibly cover all situations. By continually assessing likely risks and taking action to manage them, some generalised 'standards' can be developed, enabling us to provide guidance on how to avoid and take action on unforeseen hazardous situations.

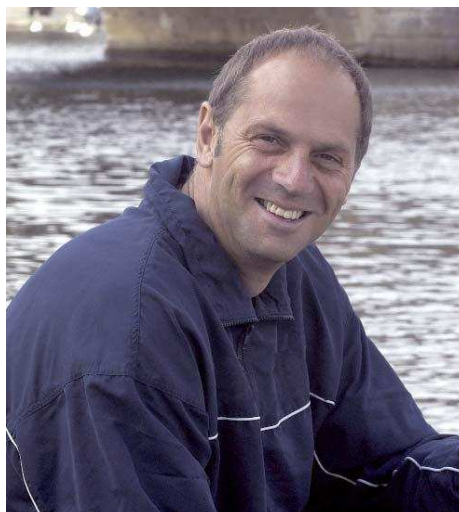
The key element in this process is a balanced assessment of risks in advance, the communication to club or competition members on how to take action to limit those risks and how to cope with hazards when they occur. A policy of risk management also requires a review of system failures and any necessary re-shaping of guidance and rules in the light of the experience gained.

A strong theme for this framework is 'think safe' and the ARA's aim is to provide clubs with educational and training resources that will encourage all members to have safety in mind from the moment they approach their club premises or a competition area to the time of leaving.

The main message in the new Row Safe guidance is that clubs have a responsibility to provide information, education and training about safety, and individuals have a responsibility to find out, learn, question and put this into practice. A club should be confident that none of its members can find themselves in a situation where they can justifiably say 'I was never told about that' or 'I didn't know who to ask or what to do when it happened'. Having safety in mind at all times is an important part of what it means to be a club member.

'Row Safe' outlines the roles responsibilities and minimum standards of safe practice. It also gives guidance on further good practice. Row Safe will continue to be developed in response to new standards and safety issues and, just as importantly, feedback from members.

*"I'm pleased to endorse this Row Safe Guide. In my view safety is not something that should curtail what we can do. Safety training can be fun and rewarding and good practice allows us all to enjoy rowing in an environment which is as safe as necessary."*



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Steve Redgrave". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

**Sir Steve Redgrave, CBE**

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### Acknowledgement

The ARA is grateful to the Water Safety Working Group for their work in compiling this document, and to the many other individuals and organisations who have contributed advice, guidance and comment. We would particularly like to acknowledge the considerable and valued input from the late Tim Hooper.



We would like to thank the following for permission to reproduce photos: Marie-Christine Coassin; Tim Cullen, Image Conscious; Steve Linderidge, Ideal Images; Chris Morris; Thomas Smith Photography; Stephen Tancock



The additional safety guidance referred to throughout Row Safe is available from the ARA website. Look for the ARA Row Safe symbol at [www.ara-rowing.org](http://www.ara-rowing.org)

# Water Safety Roles & Responsibilities

## Developing a Culture of Safety throughout Rowing

### ARA Responsibilities

The Amateur Rowing Association has the responsibility to develop and maintain a culture of safe practice in rowing and to support everyone involved in the sport in their efforts to achieve this.

### Regional Responsibilities

Regional Rowing Councils (RRCs) have a responsibility to develop a culture of safety in their Region. The role of the RRC is to support clubs in organising their activities to meet the Minimum Standards, whilst allowing for an interpretation based on the types of clubs, waters used and activities in the Region.

The nature of Regions varies enormously and this will influence how each one approaches its responsibilities. The role of the Regional Water Safety Adviser, working with others, will therefore be influenced by how the Region wishes to develop a positive safety culture.

### Club Responsibilities

Clubs have a responsibility for the safety of their members and for the development of a culture of safety in all activities associated with rowing. The primary responsibility for ensuring safe practice within a club lies with the Club Officers and the Club Committee. The Club Committee should appoint a specific individual as a Club Safety Adviser to take the lead in promoting safe practice, but such an appointment does not remove the accountability for safety from the Officers and Committee members. In this respect, every member of a club has an important part to play. A Club Water Safety Adviser must not be seen as the only person responsible for safety but rather the person who can advise the Committee and work with the Captain, Officers, coaches and others to identify and respond to safety issues by adopting Minimum Standards and good practice. If, for any reason, a Club Safety Adviser is not appointed or does not adequately perform this advisory function the accountability for the provision of adequate safety advice remains with the Officers and Committee.

The nature of clubs varies enormously and this will influence how a club manages safety and addresses the various issues. The approach taken by the club is therefore dictated by the way the Officers and Committee decide to manage safety and adopt the Minimum Standards.

### Personal Responsibilities

Everyone involved in rowing has a Duty of Care to ensure their actions both on and off the water are conducted in a manner which does not compromise the safety of others. Adults also have a personal responsibility for their own safety.

### Duty of Care

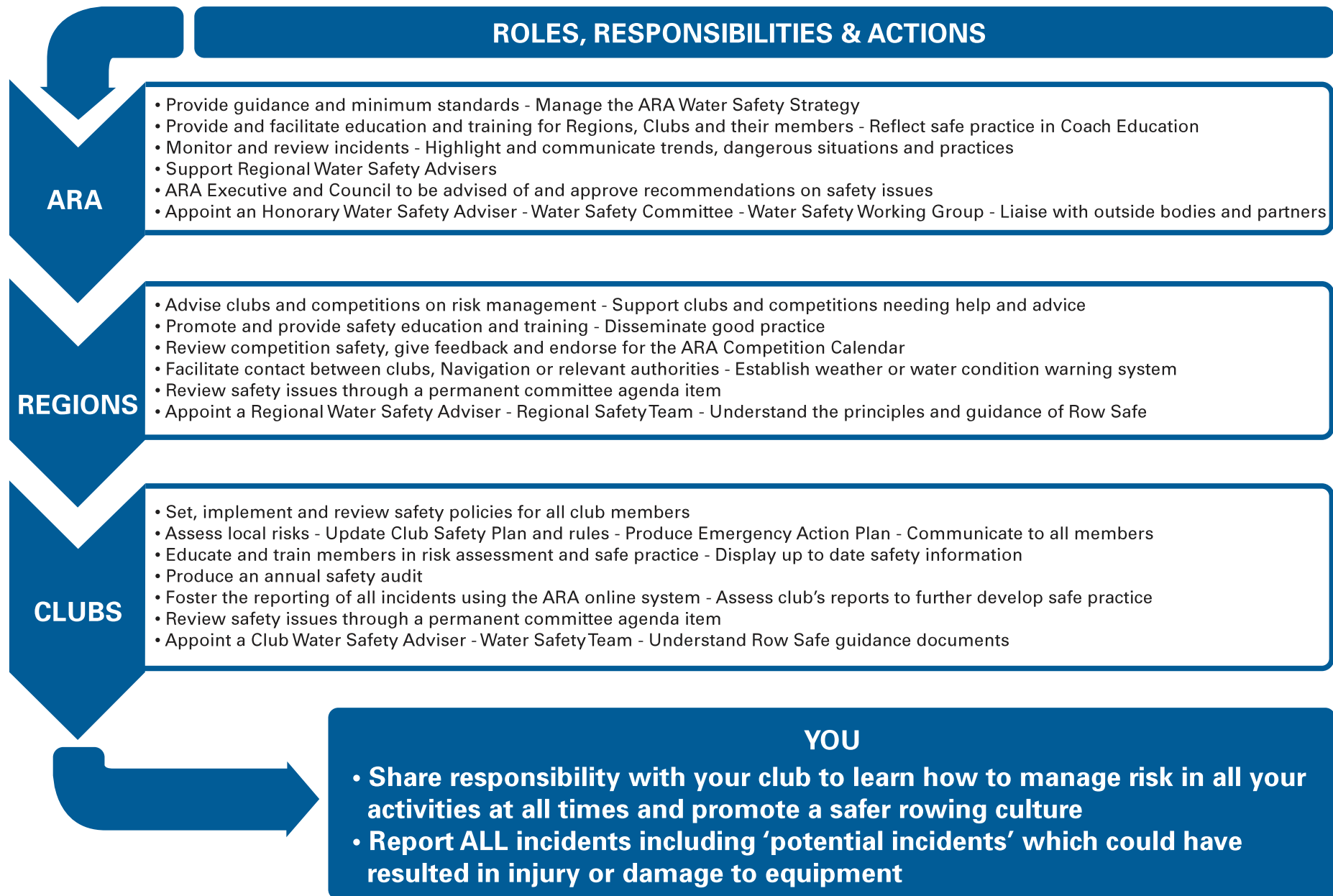
What is it? Duty of Care was described by Lord Atkin in 1932 – “You must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbour. Who then is my neighbour? Someone who is so closely and directly affected by my acts or omissions that I ought to have them in mind when directing my mind to the acts or omissions which are called into question”

### Who has a Duty of Care in Rowing? – Put in simple terms, everyone connected with the sport

### Further good practice

Set aside time in the Club's calendar to provide education and training on safety related issues such as navigation, boat checking, first aid etc.

# Water Safety Roles & Responsibilities



# 1. Risk Management

- 1.1 Safety Notice Boards
- 1.2 Risk Assessment
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# 1.1 Safety Notice Boards

## Responsibilities

### Personal

- Be aware of the contents of the Safety Notice Board and check for updates before each outing
- Suggest topics to be included on the Safety Notice Board

### Club

- Provide and ensure that a designated Safety Notice Board displays current information
- Issue the Club Water Safety Adviser with current information supplied by the ARA or other relevant organisations

### Coach

- Be aware of the contents of the Safety Notice Board
- Check regularly for updates before each outing
- Use safety information on display to support training sessions
- Suggest topics to be included on the Safety Notice Board

### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Maintain a prominent display of safety information at the club

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Every club must have a designated Safety Notice Board situated in a prominent position that is regularly visited by club members, eg clubhouse, boathouse, changing room. It may be appropriate to have more than one location. A list of vital telephone numbers relating to safety in general and appropriate to the locale shall be prominently displayed in every club. Clear directions to nearest alternative telephone points shall also be displayed.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES - 999

Note: Fire, Police, Ambulance, together with a schedule of information needed by the emergency service, viz

- Service required
- Precise location
- Access details
- Contact name

### Telephone numbers for

- Doctors, local hospital casualty department
- Offshore or river rescue services

- Local river or harbour police
- Relevant Navigation Authority
- RNLI and Coastguard (for coastal and tidal waters)
- Lifeguards
- Club officials
- First aiders
- Incident reporting book
- Club Welfare Officer

ARA 'Row Safe' posters and related information should be used as a resource of safety information for display.

Visual Aids on safe practice, life saving and resuscitation techniques as may be provided by the ARA, or by other organisations with the approval of the ARA, should be prominently displayed. Every club providing rowing or sculling facilities shall draw up and display a plan of the local waterway, drawing attention to the applicable navigation rules and any local interpretation required to accommodate particular hazards.

Instructions shall be displayed to cover any variation in normal procedures necessary to combat tidal currents, stream, wind or other climatic conditions particular to the area

## Further good practice

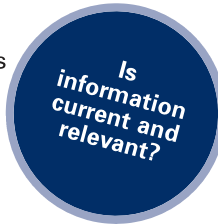
(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- The Safety Notice Board should be kept up to date and should not be used for other than safety information
- A notice giving explicit directions to the club or incident site should be displayed
- The club should include details of access points for emergency vehicles on its map of the area
- Establish a method for updating members of changes to Safety Notice Board information
- Safety information for the control of weightlifting and use of ergometers should be displayed
- A 'Day Board' (eg dry wipe) or other method should be used and situated in a prominent position to indicate restrictions, new hazards or cancellation of activities
- Display insurance and other licences in appropriate locations

## Further information

### ARA website

- Safety resources and posters





# 1.2 Risk Assessment

## Don't take risks that have not been assessed

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Comply with any rules, advice and guidance given by the club, ARA, Club Water Safety Adviser, Regional Water Safety Adviser, competition organisers and coaches to ensure that the risks to yourselves and others are adequately managed
- Assess the risk of your own activities and manage them to a tolerable level
- Only take risks you are comfortable with

#### Club

- Ensure that all activities undertaken by the club (both on and off the water) have undergone a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk and activities are as safe as necessary
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken for all junior activities

#### Coach

- Instruct participants in the process of personal risk management to enable them to adopt suitable control measures
- Assess the risks involved and run the activity safely

#### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Provide advice and guidance to the clubs, coaches, competition organisers and individuals on risk assessment and the management of all activities undertaken to an acceptable level

#### Competition Organisers

- Ensure that all the activities associated with the competition have undergone a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk and that risks are adequately managed through the Competition Safety Plan

#### Training Camp Organisers

- Ensure that all the activities associated with the camp have undergone a suitable and sufficient assessment of risk and that risks are adequately managed through a Safety Plan

#### Launch Drivers

- Ensure your activities are risk assessed and adequately controlled

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Clubs are to have risk assessments completed for all of their activities that have a potential risk – both on and off the water. A suitable Safety Plan including an Emergency Action Plan can then be published
- All significant new activities undertaken by a club must have the risks assessed before the activity is allowed to be undertaken and the situation managed to control risks to an acceptable level
- Competition organisers to have risk assessments completed for all of their activities to enable a Competition Safety Plan to be drawn up
- Clubs, competition organisers and organisers of camps are to review risk assessments on an annual basis or following a significant incident, change in any relevant legislation or guidance

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Risk assessments should be reviewed after:
  - an incident
  - analysing summary of recordable and reportable incidents
  - a competition review
- Risk assessments should be published on club Safety Notice Boards and included in club induction packs or induction process
- Water Safety Advisers and coaches should attend a suitable risk assessment training course

All significant club activities must have the risks assessed, documented and communicated to all members.

In addition to any other activities deemed necessary risk assessments should be conducted for:

- training activities
- land and water-based activities
- competitions
- transportation to competitions/camps
- training on non-home waters and training camps
- learn to row sessions
- summer school camps, etc.

*Risk  
assess  
before and  
during every  
outing*

*Think  
about what  
could go  
wrong*

# 1.2 Risk Assessment

## What is meant by risk assessment?

*"Hazards are assessed to ensure the combination of the likelihood of harm occurring and the consequences from that harm, have adequate precautions in place – which when taken make the risk acceptable to all."*

As clubs have developed, so they have either formally or informally assessed the local hazards involved in their activities and have evolved rules and precautions in an attempt to reduce or eliminate the risks.

Risk assessment is the process of identifying potential hazards and managing effectively the risks posed by them. This involves checking whether existing safeguards and emergency action plans are adequate to reduce risks to an acceptable level or whether further action is needed.

The purpose of this is to highlight unacceptable risks to determine steps to control them to acceptable levels or eliminate them all together.

Risk is reduced by employing a combination of controls and not relying on just one control measure.

Risk assessments are only worthwhile if action is taken on the findings. Assessments need to be carried out by competent persons with knowledge of the activities, locations, environment and people involved.

As an assessor ask yourself the following:

- What hazards exist?
- In the course of the activity being assessed, who is at risk from the hazard?
- How often does exposure to the hazard occur?
- How likely is it that the incident will occur?
- How serious would the consequences be?
- What steps exist to prevent incidents?
- Could more be done to reduce the level of risk?



Because there are many different aspects of our sport, it is important to consider as many as possible. You may need to draw in other parties with relevant knowledge to help assess risks within their particular areas of expertise.

## A simple risk level estimator

BS8800:2004 provides a simple risk level estimator together with a risk based control plan which can be modified to relate more directly to the rowing environment. Extracts from this standard are included below along with some additional matrix guidance.

Likelihood of harm	Severity of harm		
	Slight harm	Moderate harm	Extreme harm
Very unlikely	Very low risk	Low risk	Low risk
Unlikely	Low risk	Medium risk	Medium risk
Likely	Medium risk	Medium risk	High risk
Very likely	Medium risk	High risk	Very high risk

Category of risk	Evaluation of acceptability
Very low risk	Acceptable
Low risk	Risks that should be reduced so that they are acceptable - if reasonably practicable to do so
Medium risk	
High risk	
Very high risk	Unacceptable

NB: Acceptable here means that risk has been reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable.

### Examples of categories for likelihood of harm and severity of harm

Categories for likelihood of harm	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely
Typical occurrence	There would be <b>frequent opportunities</b> that individuals will be exposed to the identified hazards	It is <b>probable</b> that individuals will be exposed to the identified hazards	It is <b>possible</b> that individuals could be exposed to the hazards	It would be a <b>remote chance</b> of individuals being exposed to the identified hazards

Slight harm	Moderate harm	Extreme harm
Cuts, abrasion – first aid treatment, superficial equipment damage	Medical treatment required, slight equipment damage	Fatality or major injury, major equipment damage



# 1.2 Risk Assessment

Example:

- **Slight harm** - event might be grounding craft on a shoal or obstacle
- **Moderate harm** - event would be collision with minor injury to person and slight damage
- **Extreme harm** - event could be a collision with a motorised craft or a bridge buttress involving major injury or fatality

Set a good safety example

## Hazards: rowing is a relatively safe sport, so what are the hazards?

What hazards have been encountered in the past in running the competition or in managing boating activities?

Consider water hazards: depth, turbulence, currents, obstacles and pollution. Look at access to the water: is the bank made up, shelving or vertical? Can casualties be recovered readily and does road access exist? What about visibility? Can all the activities be clearly monitored from the bank? Is there any history of accidents arising from any of the above?

**No history of accidents:** Look at the activities themselves, are they supervised or unsupervised? What is the degree of competence of the athletes involved? Time of day and month of the year have an effect on visibility and water temperature.

**The participants:** Are they a hazard to themselves? Can they swim and what tests are carried out to ensure they can? Are they properly equipped for the conditions they will encounter? Coxswains must wear lifejackets or buoyancy aids but are they adequate and in working order and is the coxswain adequately protected against the elements?

Anticipate how conditions could change

**Damaged equipment:** It is a hazard to everyone, to the user in the first instance, to those around who may be affected by it, or those who have been forced into a dangerous rescue operation.

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.4 Competitions & Safety Plans
- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training

### ARA website

- Fit to Compete poster
- Example Club Safety Plan
- Example Competition Safety Plan
- Example Risk Assessments

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual
- HSE 5 Steps to Risk Assessment

If in doubt, don't go out

# 1.3 Club Safety Plans

## Is your club as safely managed as it can be?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Read, understand and follow the Safety Plan

#### Club

- Produce and communicate a Safety Plan for all your members and coaches to follow
- Modify the Safety Plan in the light of incidents, risk assessments and current good practice
- Actively promote a culture of safe practice

#### Coach

- Educate and train your crews in understanding and following the club's Safety Plan and that of other clubs when training away

#### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Advise on the effectiveness of the Safety Plan

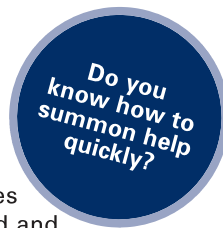
## Minimum standards to be adopted

#### Safety Plan

*It is the primary function of the Safety Plan to care for the safety of club members, other water users and the public at large.*

The club should prominently display:

- A plan of the local water highlighting hazards, navigation rules and circulation patterns and emergency access points (named and where necessary with postcodes)
- Instructions to cover any variation to normal procedures needed to manage risks resulting from tidal currents, stream, wind or other climatic conditions
- Visual Aids on safe practice, life saving and up to date resuscitation techniques
- Instructions for reporting incidents online
- Telephone numbers for Emergency Services including the exact location and directions to the club and any access points including postcode or identifiers used by the Emergency Services
- Vital telephone numbers relating to safety eg club officials, First Aiders, the local



accident and emergency hospital, navigation authority, river or harbour police, RLNI etc.

- Clear directions to the nearest and alternative telephone points
- The position of First Aid Boxes and equipment

A Safety Plan must be formulated and communicated by the club, by all appropriate means possible to educate and train its members including Induction Programmes for all new members.

All new members must receive a copy of the Safety Plan and participate in an Induction Programme.

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Emergency services local navigation authorities and other water users should be provided with a copy of the Safety Plan for any comment or suggestion to be made
- Safety Plans should be modified in the light of incidents or changes in good practice

Topics to be addressed by the Safety Plan should include:

- Rules for club members relating to their responsibilities in relation to safe practice
- When and where crews can train, warm up and cool down on the water
- The criteria for assessing the risks associated with any local on the water activity
- Rules relating to the training of junior members

**Emergency Action Plan** - members should be made aware of their roles and action to be taken in the event of an emergency

## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training

#### ARA website

- Example Club Safety Plan
- Example Risk Assessments



# 1.4 Competitions & Safety Plans

## Is your competition safely managed?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Read and understand the instructions to competitors
- Report any incidents at the competition

#### Club

- Distribute instructions to competitors
- Provide a representative to attend any safety briefings

#### Coach

- Read and understand the instructions to competitors
- Discuss these plans with your crews and check their understanding

#### Competition Safety Adviser

- Facilitate the production of the Competition Safety Plan for the competition

#### Competition Organisers

- Ensure that an effective Competition Safety Plan is produced
- Ensure that the Competition Safety Plan is distributed to all competing clubs and other relevant parties

#### Race Officials, Safety Boat and other personnel

- Read and understand the Competition Safety Plan
- Keep competition organisers informed with ongoing safety aspects of the competition

#### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Advise on the effectiveness of the Competition Safety Plan

#### Regional Rowing Council

- Approve the Competition Safety Plan

## Minimum standards to be adopted

**Safety Plan:** The primary purpose of the Competition Safety Plan is to ensure the safety of competitors, officials, other water users and the public at large.

- The Competition Safety Plan must be formulated, published and circulated by the Competition Organisers
- It is vital that those affected by the Competition Safety Plan know what actions are to be taken, by whom and when, and in what sequence, to maintain effective control and co-ordination
- Competition Safety Plans or relevant off-prints must be received by both competitors and officials at least three days prior to the competition
- Competition Safety Plans must be in place even for small private competitions





# 1.4 Competitions & Safety Plans

Topics to addressed by the Competition Safety Plan (complete Competition Safety Audit Sheet):

- Vehicle and trailer access routes
- Circulation patterns to be followed at all times during the period of racing and during practice sessions on, or in the neighbourhood of, the course
- Any special points of danger on or near the course
- Safety boat type, numbers and locations
- First Aid positions
- Safety equipment required for the competition
- Summoning help
- Cancelling or suspension of the competition
- Medical support arrangements
- Location of emergency telephones and suitable communications systems, (including back-up) covering on the water, internally and to outside agencies and emergency services
- Marshalling instructions and control
- When and where crews can practice, warm up and cool down on the water
- Access and transport arrangements (there needs to be a distinction between the levels of response needed for major and minor incidents)
- Racking and boat storage arrangements
- Launching and landing provision
- Emergency Action Plan with details of immediate actions to be taken

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Off-prints of, or information and instructions based on, the Competition Safety Plan should be produced to give separate succinct information to the competitors and to the various officials to highlight individual responsibilities
- Pre-competition meetings for coxswains, coaches, officials etc. to reinforce the requirements of the Competition Safety Plan
- Emergency services and local navigation authorities should be provided with a copy of the Competition Safety Plan in sufficient time for any comment or suggestion to be made
- Competition Safety Plans should be modified in the light of the competition review or any changes in the risk assessment
- Competition organisers should set the criteria to enable them to judge when a competition should be cancelled or suspended (eg strong winds, poor visibility, rough or fast flowing water etc.)

## Further information

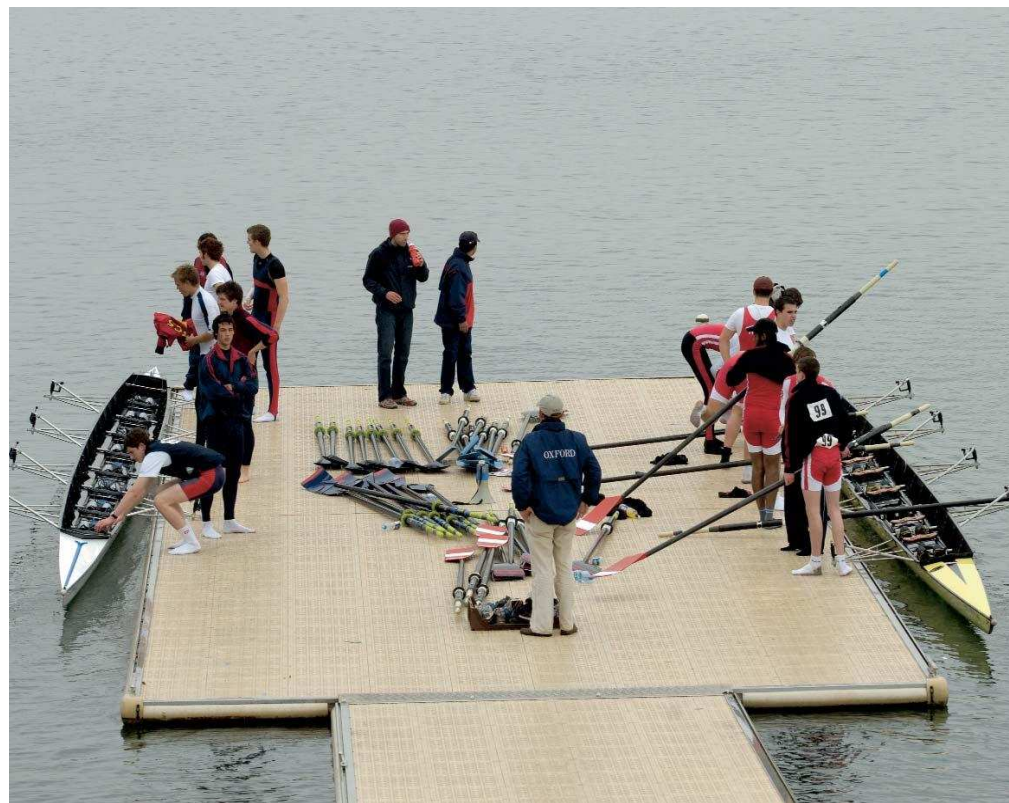
### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia

### ARA website

- Guidelines for Rowing Competitions – ARA Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy guidance (SPCG 11)
- ARA Rules of Racing

Read  
and  
understand  
the Safety  
Plan



# 1.5 Insurance

## Is your activity covered?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Ensure you are covered for your rowing activities. ARA members should check that the cover provided by the ARA's insurance scheme is appropriate for your activity. Details on the ARA website

#### Club

- Ensure that the insurance cover held covers all your activities; the committee, members, the general public and other water users

#### Coach

- Ensure you are covered for your role either as a volunteer or professionally. ARA members should check that the cover provided by the ARA's insurance scheme is appropriate for your activity

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Ensure you are covered for your role if not an ARA member

#### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Ensure you are covered for your role if not an ARA member

#### Competition Organisers

- Ensure you are covered for all non ARA competitions

### Definitions

**Third Party** – the injured person

**Second Party** – the insured

**First Party** – the insurer

**Public Liability Insurance** – sometimes referred to as Third Party Insurance, covers the insured for claims made against them.

**Civil Liability Insurance** – includes Public Liability but is wider in cover to include matters such as libel, slander, errors and omissions, bad advice.

**Indemnity Limit** – is the maximum that the policy will pay out to a third party. If the cost is greater than the indemnity limit, the policy will only pay up to the limit without deduction. A property policy will have a proportionate amount deducted if it is under insured.

**“Member to Member” Insurance** – is invariably an extension of Public Liability Insurance and not a standalone cover. “Member to Member” only relates to members of the same club and as such, a member of a visiting club would be deemed a third party. However, the reason for “Member to Member” is that a person cannot sue themselves as such and as a club, being the insured and the sum of its members, they cannot therefore sue themselves. “Member to Member” removes that defence of the insurers and gives the cover, treating each member of the same club as individually insured.



Ensure  
you are  
insured

**The ARA Civil Liability Competitions Scheme** – this cover extends to all Regattas and Processional Races affiliated to the ARA and to Coastal Rowing Associations that have applied individually to the ARA and have been accepted as participants in the scheme. The cover provided indemnifies the insured for Third Party claims for all activities connected with organising and running the competition. It is for liability only.

**The ARA Registered Members Civil Liability Insurance Scheme** – ARA individually registered members are covered, in whatever capacity, as athlete, coach, umpire, volunteer, in the event of a claim for damages against them being successful. This is provided the activities are carried out under the auspices or umbrella of the ARA, ie an ARA affiliated club, or competition, an ARA region or national committee, a school that is part of an ARA scheme like Project Oarsome. Please note that the legal costs of defending a member in the event of an accusation being made are not covered.

**Note** – For anyone working outside the ARA environment eg an unaffiliated rowing club, a school not connected to an ARA scheme, a commercial organisation or Trust, the responsibility lies with that operator. Individuals who gain their employment from rowing coaching are not covered.

**The ARA Registered Members Personal Accident Insurance** – All individual ARA members, except those over 75 years of age are covered for accidents whilst taking part in rowing associated activities as described above. This is limited to death, permanent and total disablement or permanent and total loss of use of eye(s), limb(s) speech or hearing (both ears).



# 1.5 Insurance

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- All clubs must ensure they have adequate Public Liability Insurance cover including “Member to Member” extension
- Clubs must read their policies carefully and ensure they go to a reliable and respected insurer in liability insurance
- When arranging insurance, clubs must ensure all their activities and business are declared on the policy schedule. This may include such things as corporate days, a canoe section or section racing under a different name, letting out the premises for functions, running an open day or competition, etc. The test on any point of cover is “Has a premium been paid on the activity or situation?” A situation may include parents who are non-members acting as helpers, but taking it upon themselves to act outside the direct control of a coach for example
- Clubs must ensure that if they are running non “ARA Calendar” competitions, they are covered through their club insurance
- Competitions not organised by a club must have individual insurance for that competition
- Where a claim is likely to be made against a club or individual, they must inform the insurers, or the ARA, if under one of its schemes, immediately and certainly within seven days of the incident
- A club employing a coach who has set him/herself up as a “commercial venture” must ensure that the coach has insurance for that purpose if he/she is not employed and covered by his/her employer’s insurance. The ARA member insurance will not provide this cover

- Non rowing club organisations that provide rowing tuition and courses must take out insurance for themselves and their staff

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Where an incident occurs initial preparation of the report should be completed as soon as possible with as much contemporaneous evidence and witness statements as possible. Please ensure these are clearly written or preferably typed, with the name of the person, and if relevant their role, and sent to the Regional Water Safety Adviser and to the ARA
- As with all insurance, you should not admit liability following an accident

## Further information

### ARA website

- Membership Benefits





# 1.6 Training Camps & Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

## It's all in the planning

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Read understand and implement the requirements of the Training Camp Safety Plan
- Make known to coaches, or others who need to know, any relevant medical condition or medication requirements you may have



#### Club

- Establish a training camp organising committee that includes the Water Safety Adviser to plan visits to unfamiliar venues and prepare a Training Camp Safety Plan

#### Coach

- Adopt the Training Camp Safety Plan and ensure it is implemented

#### Training Camp Organisers

- Conduct a risk assessment prior to the camp, including travel to and from the location
- Carry out a risk assessment on arrival, paying particular attention to sources of local information and amend the Training Camp Safety Plan as necessary
- Check that all aspects of insurance cover are in place

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor the preparation of a risk assessment and Training Camp Safety Plan
- Participate in post visit review
- Follow up any incidents

## Minimum standards to be adopted

The minimum standards for water safety at the training camp must follow those of the Row Safe guidance unless there are local requirements that require additional precautions to mitigate risks.

#### The Club

- Establish contact details for all participants in case of emergency
- Check insurance is in place for:
  - club and relevant non-club equipment
  - member-to-member cover
  - personal travel insurance

#### The Training Camp organising committee should:

- Use the ARA checklist in its planning
- Ensure welfare provision where required
- Check and approve the participants planning to attend the training camp or visit
- Understand and implement the ARA Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy where juniors (under 18 years old) are involved
- Ensure an appropriate coach/helper/participant ratio

Seek advice  
from those who  
know

Plan,  
prepare,  
research

# 1.6 Training Camps & Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

- Produce a risk assessment and safety plan for the training camp or visit
- Contact previous users of the location to identify any potential hazards
- Show the Training Camp Safety Plan to the host club or other local experts for appraisal and advice
- Ensure that all coaches and participants fully understand the safety plan before participating in the camp
- Check driving licences and ensure at least two drivers with appropriate driving licences and insurance cover
- Check safety launch cover and any driver qualifications required
- Check appropriateness of the safety plan on arrival at training camp location for:
  - circulation pattern
  - first aid provision
  - rescue launches
  - communications
- check local weather forecast and other up to date safety information with host club or local experts at time of visit
- establish system for reporting incidents
- identify first aid provision and communicate to the participants
- carry out equipment audit before travelling to training camp
- conduct post visit review

Follow  
local rules and  
controls

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.5 Insurance
- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 2.5 Transport & Trailers
- 3.2 Juniors
- 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

### ARA website

- Training Camps Overseas
- Training Camp Checklist

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

### The training camp organising committee should provide:

- Tool kit
- Spare bow balls, slides, heel-release mechanisms, fins, rudders and rudder lines
- Checked PFDs including spares plus spare CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders and, if fitted, automatic inflation cartridges
- Sufficient safety kit for rescue launches; method of attracting attention, throw lines, thermal blankets, first aid equipment, bailer, paddle, cut-out lanyard, kill cord (2 per launch), anchor and line where appropriate
- Launch drivers with RYA certificates





# 1.7 Weather & the Environment

## Shall I go out today?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Assess the weather and water conditions for the duration and type of outing you are undertaking in accordance with the rules and guidelines available
- Be aware of your personal limitations and the local weather conditions, rules and guidelines
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of other crew members if boating in adverse conditions

#### Club

- Set out rules and guidelines for outings covering local weather and water conditions
- Inform members of the rules and guidelines
- Set up a communication network with the local navigation authority and other water users and communicate relevant information to crews
- Take due regard of any advice or direction provided by local navigation or other relevant water authority relating to local water or weather conditions and amend risk assessments and safety plans accordingly
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe
- Establish procedures for rowing or sculling in the dark, or in poor visibility

Assess conditions and amend as necessary

#### Coach

- Assess the weather and water conditions for the duration and type of outing you will be controlling in accordance with the rules and guidelines available
- Consider all the participants personal limitations, limitations of their equipment and safety facilities available
- Respect the individual's concerns and capabilities if boating in adverse conditions
- Take particular care to learn of local hazards, weather peculiarities, and local rules of navigation particularly when visiting unfamiliar water
- Ensure that every rower in your charge is aware of, and understands, the rules and guidelines for the activity being undertaken
- Ensure that the whole crew, including the coxswain, is suitably dressed and adequately protected for the weather conditions (wet, hot or cold) that they are likely to encounter

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor compliance with the club's rules and guidelines
- Alert the club of any issues that may impact on these rules and guidelines
- Review incidents and advise on preventative measures
- Advise the suspension of activities should you believe the conditions be unsafe for whatever reason

#### Competition Organisers

- The Safety Adviser and the Chairman of the Race Committee shall monitor water and weather conditions leading up to and throughout the period of the competition
- If safety is compromised any of the key race officials associated with a particular race must halt racing, and should involve the Safety Adviser and the Chairman of the Race Committee as soon as possible
- Establish an effective procedure to stop or suspend racing in total or by class of event until such time as safe conditions are restored and to adhere to any advice given by the Competition Water Safety Adviser
- Ensure there are facilities for competitors, support staff and officials to cope with weather conditions
- Incorporate the risk from lightning in the Competition Safety Plan

Know your limitations

#### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Review incidents in the Region and advise on preventative measures
- Facilitate contact between local clubs and navigation authorities in relation to local water or weather conditions



# 1.7 Weather & the Environment

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Rules and guidelines for the following conditions:

- wind
- rain / snow / hail
- lightning (see further information)
- current / stream
- tide
- heat / cold
- poor visibility
- low light - rowing or sculling in the dark or in poor visibility is dangerous and is not to be encouraged. At all times in poor visibility, (eg after sunset and early morning) craft shall be fitted with white lights showing fore and aft and visible through 360 degrees, as required by COLREG (Rule 25). Where a local Navigation Authority specifies differently, then such requirements must be met

Learn  
the local  
hazards



## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Clubs should establish and display a document identifying the criteria for assessing unsafe local rowing conditions as they apply to various boat types and individual abilities. This should include a list of those persons or roles authorised to undertake this assessment to allow or restrict boating activities
- A system of informing crews about how currently applied restrictions should be put in place. This could be in the form of coloured boards / flags or information boards. Whichever system is used it should be prominently displayed
- Restrictions on boating activities should be agreed between local clubs

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

### ARA website

- Lightning Guidance

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual

# 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia

## Cold water can kill

No matter how good a swimmer you are, sudden unexpected immersion in cold water causes an initial cold shock that affects your muscular co-ordination and impairs your ability to swim. Heat loss from immersion can quickly cause hypothermia. Any of these factors can lead to drowning. Everyone has a responsibility to assess and manage the risk of immersion in cold water and to know what to do if it occurs.

## Responsibilities

### Personal

- Follow the Row Safe minimum standards and those set by clubs and competitions

### Club

- Assess and control the risk of cold water immersion to your members
- Educate and train members in emergency procedures in the event of cold water immersion and hypothermia

### Coach

- Follow the Row Safe minimum standards and those set by the clubs and competitions
- Manage and educate your coxswains and crews to ensure they are not at risk from hypothermia
- Manage the risk of cold water immersion

### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor the compliance of clubs and competitions with Row Safe minimum standards

### Competition Organisers

- Ensure your competition is managed with regard to cold water immersion and hypothermia risks to competitors and officials

### Coxswains and Crews

- Monitor each other for signs of hypothermia and take appropriate action

Stay with the boat – it will keep you afloat

Wear your PFD in high risk conditions

Plan your rescue before you need it

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Managing the risks before the outing if cold water immersion and hypothermia are assessed as potential issues. Remember that there is less rescue time in cold conditions.

## Risk Management

- Check local weather forecasts and conditions (could conditions deteriorate during the outing?). Ask others with local knowledge to assist with your risk assessment
- Check all buoyancy compartments are sealed and equipment to be used is in good condition before going afloat
- Know and follow the local navigation rules
- Know and understand the local hazards in the area
- Don't go out in the dark alone or in cold or poor conditions
- Plan your rescue before you go afloat – will it work? Check it out
- Check safety boat cover is suitable for emergencies (if cover breaks down, abort the outing)
- Plan the outing so that the rescue time will be as short as possible
- Adopt the 'One minute - One degree' rule to help you plan

## Clothing

- Should be bright and visible, with several layers to reduce heat loss
- Should be close-fitting, to avoid getting caught up in equipment
- Waterproof fabric is advisable for the outer layer
- Hats should be worn and not easily lost in a capsize situation
- Gloves or pogies will keep hands warm

## Communication

- Set up a means of communication which is simple, easy-to-use and reliable. Check that it works
- Are there any communication dead spots and do you have a system to cover these areas?
- Use your boat outing board to record outing times and duration
- Set up a method of contacting emergency services

## Equipment

- Throw lines must be available, in use and functional
- Thermal blankets need to be available – there must be enough for all crew members



# 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia

## Competences

You should know what to do in the event of immersion:

- **Stay with the boat** and use it to keep you afloat
- Get on top of the boat and attract attention immediately
- If you have to stay in the water, retain warmth by keeping arms and knees tucked into the body
- Stay calm and breathe deeply
- Do not waste energy by trying to right the boat
- Do not swim away from the boat because your swimming ability in cold conditions is dramatically reduced
- Know the emergency procedures to be able to help effectively if you see a capsize

You should be aware of the effects of cold water immersion:

- Cold shock – what this is and how to deal with it
- Dry drowning – what this is and how it is avoided
- Swim failure – the situations in which this can happen
- The possibility of post rescue collapse and how to deal with it
- Hypothermia – recognise the signs, treatment and risk increase due to age, body type and size

## Measuring and reviewing

- Record and review **all** capsizes and any cold/hypothermia incidents using the ARA online system
- Review all capsizes and any cold/hypothermia incidents and reassess safety procedures regularly

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Adopt a 'buddy' system on the water. **Look out for each other**
- Prepare an effective system for contacting emergency services comprising one point of contact and local reference points known to all
- Organise capsize drills and swim tests frequently for all members
- Practise the use of throw lines
- Investigate capsize incidents and spread learning from investigations to others in the sport
- A whistle or other simple means of summoning assistance should be available
- Personal flotation devices are advisable in high risk situations in low temperature conditions eg beginners - they could minimise the effects of swim failure
- Run local CPR and rescue training

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training

### ARA website

- Basic Life Support poster

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual





# 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training

## Are you able to rescue yourself or others?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Know what to do in the event of capsize or swamping
- Attend any swimming tests and capsize training as required by the club
- Inform the club of your current swimming ability



#### Club

- Ascertain that all members participating in rowing are competent and confident in and under the water and able to swim to at least the minimum standard
- Ensure all members know what to do in the event of capsize or swamping of all boat types
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with juniors, beginners or adaptive athletes

#### Coach

- Instruct your athletes in safe capsize and rescue techniques following a capsize or swamping
- Be aware of your participants' swimming ability and capsize training

#### Competition Organisers

- Provide adequate safety cover for capsized or swamped crews

## Minimum standards to be adopted

All participants must be instructed on safe capsize techniques (for all boat types) including:

- The need to **stay with the boat** and use it as a life raft
- Precautions to be adopted before going afloat to reduce the risk
- The need to get out of the water quickly and on top of the boat to reduce heat loss
- The effects of water temperature, water conditions and clothing
- Why boats turn over or get swamped – how to avoid this and what to do if it happens
- The means of summoning assistance and how to plan for this



All participants in rowing must be able to demonstrate both competence and confidence in and under the water by:

- Swimming at least 50 metres in light clothing (rowing kit)
- Treading water for at least two minutes
- Swimming under water for at least 5 metres

Participants unable to demonstrate the minimum standard must wear a personal flotation device (PFD).

Clubs must ensure swimming ability and capsize training is recorded for each member of the club.

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

Clubs should organise capsize training in a local swimming pool or equivalent safe setting to practise:

- Getting on top of the boat
- Lying on top of and paddling a boat
- Summoning help
- Buddy rescue
- Recovery using a throw line
- Getting back into the boat
- Developing confidence in the boat (balance drills)
- Attendance at drills should be documented
- The swimming ability of all members should be assessed at appropriate intervals and documented to allow easy access by coaches



## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 2.1 Safety Aids
- 3.1 Beginners
- 3.2 Juniors
- 3.3 Adaptive

#### ARA website

- Stay with the Boat poster

#### Other

- Royal Life Saving Society - [www.rlss.org.uk](http://www.rlss.org.uk)



# 2. Equipment

- 2.1 Safety Aids
- 2.2 Steering & Navigation
- 2.3 Boats & Blades
- 2.4 Launch Driving
- 2.5 Transport & Trailers



# 2.1 Safety Aids

## These could save a life – learn how to use them

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Know how to use the club's safety aids and follow the club's rules on their use
- Wear a personal flotation device (PFD) when required by your club or coach or when you consider it to be necessary

What safety aids are available? Where are they?

#### Club

- Provide and adequately maintain sufficient lifejackets, buoyancy aids, throw lines and space blankets to cover the size and needs of the club as detailed by the club's risk assessments and Safety Plan
- Provide training to all members in the location and effective use of safety aids
- Have procedures in place for the purchase, maintenance and use of safety aids
- Ensure that all safety aids comply with specified standards, see Further Information

#### Coach

- Include the use of safety aids as part of the training and risk management strategies, and follow the club's procedures on their use, maintenance and storage
- Report any safety equipment that is damaged or missing
- Lead by example in the use of safety aids

Check and store them correctly

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Advise on the club procedure on the use of safety aids
- Monitor the procedure in operation and advise on any necessary changes to improve their use

#### Competition Organisers

- Ensure that all people involved in running the competition have an appropriate PFD and/or throw line (if identified in the Competition Safety Plan) and are aware of how to wear and use them correctly

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- All lifejackets and buoyancy aids (PFDs) must conform to the relevant national EN standards and carry the CE mark of approval
- All clubs must have written procedures in place for the use of safety aids and ensure that all members understand and follow them
- All coxswains must wear an approved lifejacket or buoyancy aid on top of all other garments when in a boat. In 'front-loader' boats, only a manually operated lifejacket can be worn to allow easy and unrestricted escape from the boat
- All launch drivers and passengers must wear an approved lifejacket or buoyancy aid on top of all other garments when in a launch
- Where a participant cannot meet the swimming competency standard set by the ARA or the club, a lifejacket or buoyancy aid must be worn when in a boat
- Where, because of a medical problem, there is a risk to a participant of becoming unconscious or immobile, an automatic lifejacket must be worn
- All lifejackets and buoyancy aids should be checked for wear and tear before each use
- Lifejackets and buoyancy aids should be stored properly in a designated place where they can dry out naturally away from a heat source
- All safety aids should be made readily accessible, particularly throw lines, and stored ready for use where they may be needed in an emergency
- All those involved in rowing should be trained and have had practice in the use of a throw line
- Throw lines and space blankets must be carried by coaches and those monitoring activities
- Lifejackets must be checked for damage, leaks and gas cylinder integrity frequently and the check recorded in a maintenance log in accordance with the Section on Using and Looking After PFDs. See additional information on PFDs
- Junior beginners must wear a PFD until they have completed a swim test, received training in capsize procedure and reached a satisfactory level of competence in, for example, a single sculling boat

Are throw lines accessible and usable?

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Adult beginners should be offered the use of a PFD
- Those training on their own away from immediate help should wear a PFD, especially in cold conditions

# 2.1 Safety Aids

## Additional information on PFDs

### Selecting a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or lifejacket for Sculling or Rowing

All lifejackets and buoyancy aids sold must have an 'EN' (European Standard) number. This standard, which has replaced British Standard, ensures that all lifejackets and buoyancy aids sold in this country meet very stringent requirements regarding the design, performance, materials and components used. It is important therefore to purchase from a recognised and reputable manufacturer.

#### Lifejackets

Lifejackets rely on inflation to provide buoyancy. They have no permanent inbuilt buoyancy making them generally compact and easy to wear. There are three methods of inflation:

#### The automatic gas inflation lifejacket

Inflation is automatically triggered via a CO<sub>2</sub> gas cylinder on entering the water without the wearer having to take any action. This is recommended for those with disabilities and those with a medical condition that may render them unconscious before entering the water.

#### The manual gas inflation lifejacket

Inflation occurs when the user pulls a short cord which fires CO<sub>2</sub> gas from a cylinder in the personal flotation device. This is recommended for normal use and particularly coxswains. It is the only type that should be used in front-loaders and, indeed, the only type allowed in these boats in competition.

#### The oral inflation lifejacket

The wearer has to inflate the jacket by blowing into a tube. This may prove difficult, particularly if the wearer is unfit or unable to breathe correctly in cold or rough water. These are not recommended for rowing.

The buoyancy rating of PFDs is in Newtons. 10 Newtons are approximately equivalent to 1kg of buoyancy.



- **Lifejacket 100** Standard Application Sheltered Waters, children under 40kg, Relevant European Standard EN395:1993



- **Lifejacket 150** Suitable for swimmers and non-swimmers
- Will give reasonable assurance of safety from drowning to a person not fully capable of helping themselves
- Although intended to self-right, an unconscious user may not immediately do so
- Suitable for anyone wearing heavy, waterproof clothing



- **Lifejacket 275** Standard Application Offshore, extreme conditions Heavy protective clothing Relevant European Standard EN399:1993

#### ARA Lifejacket

The ARA, in conjunction with GeTeK Ltd., have produced a 150 Newton lifejacket manufactured to EN396, suitable for rowers 32kg and over and designed specifically to minimise interference with the normal rowing action and overheating during strenuous activity. It is available as a manual gas or automatic gas inflation.

#### Buoyancy aids

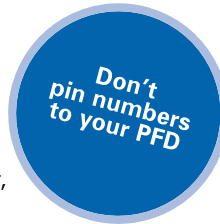


- **Buoyancy aid 50** Relevant European Standard EN393:1993
- Air-foam filled buoyancy aids have inherent buoyancy and thus do not require inflation. They are particularly suitable for younger juniors or those that prefer this type in preference to a lifejacket
- Only suitable for competent swimmers
- For use in sheltered water where help is close at hand
- For providing support to a conscious person who can help themselves
- **Warning: This is not a lifejacket**

# 2.1 Safety Aids

## Using and looking after PFDs

- It is essential that a lifejacket or buoyancy aid be worn correctly if it is to be effective in the event of an emergency. When fastened, it should be a tight but comfortable fit. If straps are slack there is the risk of it slipping over the head
- Pinning race numbers or other items through the inflation bladder is dangerous
- After use, PFDs should be stored so that they can dry out naturally, never on a radiator or dried with a hairdryer or similar, as this will have an adverse effect on the buoyancy material
- Never put a PFD away for someone else to use if it is defective or has been activated – it must be quarantined until it has been serviced
- Remember that before using your lifejacket it only takes a minute to make a visual check to ensure that the CO<sup>2</sup> cylinder is satisfactory and tight, the automatic inflation cartridge has not been fired or the manual firing mechanism used. Always check the manual activation cord is visible and can be easily used in an emergency
- PFDs must be checked **every three months** and a record kept of the following:
  - all webbing, stitching, buckles and zips are in good order
  - the CO<sup>2</sup> cylinder has not been fired, is free from corrosion and is screwed up tightly
  - where there is an automatic inflation cartridge this should be checked to confirm it has not fired
  - the inflation bladder should be checked for leaks by inflating orally, or by hand pump to avoid moisture build-up inside, and left inflated for 24 hours to ensure there are no leaks and pressure is maintained
- Over time the foam material in buoyancy aids can degenerate
- With all PFDs there should be maintenance instructions. These can also be accessed on the various manufacturers' websites



## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 3.1 Beginners
- 3.2 Juniors

### ARA website

- Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs)

### Other

- Royal National Lifeboat Institution – [www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk)
- GeTek Ltd – [www.getek.co.uk](http://www.getek.co.uk)





# 2.2 Steering & Navigation

## Be safe, be seen Responsibilities

### Personal

- Check the steering equipment before the outing as part of the boat checking procedure
- Follow correct steering procedures and navigation rules when on 'home' water, or away at a training camp or competition venue
- Report to the club any transgression of navigation rules you have observed
- Inform the club of any change in the location or type of hazard encountered
- Report any defects in steering equipment to the club responsible

### Club

- Provide advice and training for those who steer boats
- Ensure steering equipment is suitably maintained
- Display a plan of the local water including circulation patterns, the location of hazards and access points
- Ensure that those who steer boats are familiar with the information on the local plan
- Provide information on relevant local byelaws (eg those issued by the Port of London Authority) and ensure that these are observed



### Coach

- Provide information and training to crews on navigation, hazards and steering rules at all venues visited
- Check that crews (and particularly those steering) know the location of all hazards and how to avoid them
- Set a good example to crews when coaching
- Inform the club of any change in the location or type of hazard encountered
- Report to the club any transgression of navigation rules that they have observed

### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Ensure the club has produced a map of the 'home' water showing:
  - the navigation pattern
  - permanent hazards
  - access and exit points to and from the water in case of emergency
- Review the Club Safety Plan and inform members of any required changes in the navigation rules
- Liaise with other water users on the safe use of the 'home' water and agree a common policy

### Competition Organisers

- Provide clear instructions on the steering and navigation rules for the competition
- Provide information about warm up and cool down areas

### Launch Drivers

- Observe good steering practice during an outing and advise crews on any steering issues or problems

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Any person steering a boat takes on a highly responsible role and must:

- Communicate effectively with their crew
- Be aware of their position at all times relative to circulation patterns, hazards and other water users
- Maintain a high level of attention both visually and aurally in order to be able to assess situations and take appropriate action to avoid accidents
- Learn and use concise commands for boat control both off and on the water – and to be able to use these correctly, clearly and instructively
- Understand and observe the local navigation rules and the audible and visual signals given by others with whom the water is shared
- Know how to stop the boat safely in an emergency
- When visiting unfamiliar water, take particular care to learn of local hazards, weather conditions and rules of navigation





# 2.2 Steering & Navigation

- Be conversant with safety and rescue procedures in the case of accident
- Recognise and respect the rights and needs of other water users, especially anglers
- Watch out for swimmers at all times and be alert to unexpected floating objects
- Know what to do in the case of an accident or capsize – and to have practised dealing with such situations

Can I be seen?

- Coxswains must wear an approved lifejacket or buoyancy aid when on the water, both in training and in competition
- Inflatable lifejackets must not be worn under other garments
- In 'front-loader' boats only manual inflating lifejackets must be worn and must allow easy and unrestricted escape from the boat
- Coxswains must fully understand and be practised in the operation of their lifejacket/buoyancy aid
- Those responsible for steering boats must be able to satisfy their club and coach that they are in good health with adequate vision and hearing. Where prior evidence of epileptic fits or blackouts exists, coaches and crews must seek medical advice and be made fully aware of actions to be taken should an incident arise
- Coxswains should wear clothing suitable for the weather conditions. Particular care should be taken to ensure warmth around the head, neck and lower back, wrists and ankles. Water resistant outer gloves are recommended but bulky or heavy clothing and 'wellington' type boots which hinder movement, are to be avoided (where practicable) and should only be worn if easily removable by kicking off without the use of hands
- Rowing or sculling in the dark or in poor visibility is dangerous and is not to be encouraged. At all times in poor visibility, (eg after sunset and early morning) craft shall be fitted with white lights showing fore and aft and visible through 360 degrees, as required by COLREG (Rule 25). Where a local Navigation Authority specifies differently, then such requirements must be met
- Coxswains must be aware of the symptoms and dangers of hypothermia
- Voice projection and radio communication equipment when carried in the boat, must be securely fixed to the boat, not the coxswain. Similarly in competition, deadweight must not be attached to or carried in the clothing of the coxswain

Is the cox wearing the right PFD?

What's he sounding his horn about?

- A map of the 'home' water must be exhibited in a prominent position(s) showing:
  - the navigation pattern
  - all permanent hazards
  - sites of any potential temporary hazards – if appropriate
  - locations of emergency life belt sites, safety aids, etc.
  - sites of public telephones
  - easy access for emergency vehicles, ideally using GPS sites where it is easy to get out of the water
  - sites where it is difficult, or impossible, to get out of the water
- Any changes in the type or location of hazards must be brought to the attention of participants
- All members must be educated on the navigation rules
- A system must be in place to re-educate transgressors or discipline anyone blatantly disregarding the navigation rules
- Liaise with other water users to establish a safe and workable navigation plan

## Navigation rules

The International Regulations for Preventing Accidents at Sea lay down a series of sound signals to be used by the Masters of craft when about to change direction, there are also light and other signs used to indicate temporary or other hazards in the navigation channels.

Set out below, with their meanings, is a selection of those signs and signals most likely to be encountered by rowers and scullers.

## Sound signals



I am altering my course to starboard



I am altering my course to port



My engines are going astern



I am doubtful if you are taking sufficient avoiding action

There are other signals and for more information reference should be made to more extensive literature on the subject.

# 2.2 Steering & Navigation

## Bridge signals

When an arch or span of a bridge is closed to navigation the following signals will be suspended from the centre of the arch:

by night: 3 red lights in an equilateral triangular configuration

by day: 3 red discs in place of the lights, each 0.6 metres in diameter

When the headroom of an arch or span is reduced, but still open to traffic, the following signals shall be suspended from the centre of that arch:

by night: 1 white light

by day: a bundle of straw large enough to be easily visible



## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Level 1 Steering Award
- Level 2 Steering Award

## Further information

### ARA website

- Level 1 Coxing/Steering award
- Watch Where You're Going poster

### Other

- COLREGS: Collision Regulations – Port of London Authority
- Rowing on the Tideway – Thames Regional Rowing Council and Port of London Authority
- Keep a Good Lookout poster



# 2.3 Boats & Blades

## Don't let your equipment let you down

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Check the boat and equipment is in a safe condition and in working order before each outing and is suitable for the conditions in which it is being used
- Report and record any damage to appropriate person and ensure the boat or other equipment is quarantined if necessary

#### Club

- Ensure that all equipment used for rowing, sculling and coaching is properly and regularly maintained
- Ensure that all equipment used for rowing and sculling is safe and adequate for its intended purpose and that it does not expose its users to danger
- Instruct participants in the process of equipment checking and why it needs to be done at each outing

#### Coach

- Train participants in the process of equipment checking
- Ensure crews check equipment prior to each outing

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Check that all club equipment used for rowing, sculling and coaching is being properly and regularly maintained to ensure that it is safe and adequate for its intended purpose and that it does not expose its users to danger in accordance with the minimum standards to be adopted

#### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Advise clubs on the regular checking and maintenance of their boats/equipment, the minimum standards to be adopted and further good practice
- Suspend water activity, through the Regional Rowing Council, where there is evidence of disregard for minimum standards and advice

#### Competition Organisers

- Check, in accordance with the Rules of Racing, that competitors' equipment used for rowing and sculling at competitions complies with the Row Safe Guidance

#### Coxswain

- Check, with the crew before each outing, that the boat and equipment is in a safe condition, in working order and suitable for the conditions in which it is being used

#### Equipment Manufacturers and Suppliers

- Ensure that all equipment supplied, manufactured or repaired for rowing, sculling and coaching complies with the minimum standards to be adopted
- Provide clubs and individuals information regarding the inherent buoyancy of the boat in relation to the ARA's or FISA's requirements
- Ensure that all boats are plated with the date of manufacture, the design weight, and if it conforms to the ARA's or FISA's requirements on buoyancy
- Label boats in accordance with the 1998 EU Directive 94/25/EC Recreational Craft Directive

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- In the event of being swamped - all newly constructed boats must have sufficient inherent buoyancy, together with their oars and sculls, to support a seated crew of the stated design weight such that the rowers' torsos remain out of the water and the boat can be manoeuvred
- All Clubs and individuals purchasing new boats must confirm with the manufacturer or supplier that the boat being supplied complies with the ARA's or FISA's requirements on buoyancy and insist on the boat being plated accordingly
- If, after risk assessment for a planned activity, it is judged that a boat, new or old, does not have sufficient inherent buoyancy, additional buoyancy must be added
- Where the construction shape of a boat or its composition is such that the bow presents a hazard in collision, a solid ball of not less than 4cm diameter made of rubber or material of similar resilience must be firmly attached to the bow
- All boats where 'fitted shoes' are employed must have effective heel restraints. These must be properly adjusted (the heel must be prevented from rising higher than the lowest fixed point of the shoe) and in working order. Likewise, the foot release from any other type of fitment that may be used must be self-acting and not require the intervention of the athlete or a rescuer
- Buoyancy compartments must be watertight to ensure effective operation
- Rudder lines, steering mechanisms, rudder and fin, must be secure and in good working order
- The 'buttons' on oars and sculls must be secure and properly set
- Before each outing the following checks must be made:
  - check that buoyancy compartments, seals, hatch covers, boat hull and ventilation bungs are secure and watertight

Is  
your boat  
fit for  
purpose?

Remember  
to log all  
damage and  
repair



## 2.3 Boats & Blades

- check that the bow ball is securely fixed and fully covers the bow of the boat in order that adequate protection is given to any person or object struck by the moving boat. This check should also examine any fixing screws or bolts to ensure that they do not represent a further hazard in the event of accident
- check that outriggers, swivels, gates, seats and stretchers are secure and operating freely. In difficult water conditions are 'splash boards' available and fitted?
- check that heel restraints are secure and that restraints are adequate and effective – heels should be positively restrained not to rise higher than the lowest fixed point of the shoe
- check that rudder lines, steering mechanisms, rudder and fin, are secure and in good working order
- check oars and sculls for damage and ensure that 'buttons' are secure and properly set
- check that the boat is suitable for the situation in which it is to be used, for example maximum crew weight
- check that if lighting is required it is suitable for the outing (see navigation/steering)

### Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Boats with insufficient inherent buoyancy for a swamping situation should be identified and marked accordingly by the club and unless extra buoyancy is added, its use restricted to situations where risk of swamping is low
- Boats and equipment should be stored in an orderly fashion, in well-lit premises where possible, in such a way as to minimise damage to persons or equipment
- Damaged equipment should be 'quarantined', with the nature of the damage clearly marked, to ensure that it is not used by others unaware of its condition
- Procedures should be in place where damage to equipment is notified to responsible officials without delay and the damage repaired before the equipment is used again
- All damage to boats and equipment and the repair should be logged

### Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.3 Club Safety Plans
- 3.1 Beginners
- 3.2 Juniors

#### ARA website

- Fit to Compete poster
- ARA Rules of Racing



# 2.4 Launch Driving

## Make sure you are using a launch correctly

### Responsibilities

#### Club

- Ensure, if identified as a necessary control measure, that the correct type of launch is used for different club activities
- Ensure only suitably trained and competent launch drivers use club launches
- Ensure that all launch occupants wear lifejackets and clothing appropriate to the prevailing conditions
- Maintain launches and associated safety equipment in good condition
- Ensure that launches are fitted with outboard engine 'kill cords' and that they are used properly
- Ensure that policies are in place so that no launch user goes afloat in unfavourable conditions

#### Coach (if a launch driver)

- Ensure you are competent to drive and handle the launch in the conditions you are likely to encounter
- Ensure that, if the launch is suitable for rescue, the driver is competent in rescue techniques
- Ensure all the necessary safety equipment provided for the launch is available and carried at all times
- Report any incidents or defects associated with use, storage, coaching from, and handling of, the launch

#### Competition Organisers

- Ensure that safety launch cover provided at the competition is suitable and adequate as detailed in the Competition Safety Plan
- Hold records of the qualifications, training and experience of safety launch drivers when using their own safety cover

#### Launch Drivers

- Ensure you are competent to drive and handle the launch in the typical water conditions you will encounter
- Ensure that, if the launch is suitable for rescue, drivers are competent in safety rescue techniques
- Ensure all the necessary safety equipment provided for the launch is available all the time
- Report any incidents or defects associated with use, storage, and handling of the launch

Any launch used for coaching purposes may be called upon for a number of potential situations, including rescuing rowers and boats should they come into difficulty. It must be recognised by clubs that not all launches in use today have the inherent stability to be used to rescue rowers from the water. It is important that the limitations of a particular launch in use are understood by both the club and driver, including the load or number of persons it can support.

It is **not** a reasonable assumption that 'any launch is better than none'. Situations have arisen where a launch driver has attempted to rescue a capsized boat, and the unsuitability of the launch has caused the driver and his passenger to subsequently require rescuing. Clubs and launch drivers should not assume that coaching launches are always rescue launches, and that launch drivers must be capable and confident in rescue techniques.

Clubs should carefully consider the suitability of their launches for the purposes for which they are to be used, particularly when purchasing replacements.





# 2.4 Launch Driving

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- All launches should carry a plate stating the maximum weight it can safely support, together with this translated into the number of adults. This must be considered when planning safety cover
- All launch drivers should hold as a minimum the RYA Level 2 powerboat certificate (appropriate to water conditions; tidal v non-tidal) or equivalent
- All launch drivers and passengers must wear appropriate lifejackets at all times
- All launch drivers must carry an appropriate form of communication device to summon help where necessary (eg, mobile telephone or marine VHF). Launch drivers must know emergency frequencies or numbers in case of an emergency (these can be laminated and stuck inside the launch). If carrying a marine VHF radio, the operator must hold a Short Range Certificate (SRC) and follow correct radio procedure at all times
- All launch drivers must be aware of the rules of the water upon which they are operating and at all times, except in an emergency situation, adhere to the speed limits in place on that stretch of water
- In dark or low visibility situations, launches must follow anti-collision regulations by following the necessary navigation rules, and displaying the correct navigation lights on all waters as specified by "Safety of Life at Sea" (SOLAS)
- All launches must carry as a minimum:
  - First Aid kit in a waterproof bag, checked monthly
  - a throw line or equivalent grab line
  - minimum toolkit and spares for the engine (if necessary)
  - safety knife with rope cutter
  - foil blankets or "Bivvi bags" enough for the passenger load capacity of the launch
  - spare PFDs
  - length of spare rope
  - anchor and line appropriate for the conditions (if necessary)
  - boathook
  - spare kill-cord for use in the event of the driver over board
  - audio signalling device: air horn, loudhailer, megaphone etc
  - bailer
  - paddle
  - for Inflatables or Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs), a pump for the sponsons plus a spare valve, valve cap, and a repair kit (if necessary)
  - spare fuel (if necessary)
  - simple handholds fixed to the side of the launch to provide assistance to a person being rescued and to provide self help should the driver fall overboard

- Before going afloat launch drivers must check that the launch is carrying the appropriate emergency equipment listed above
- Launches used for safety cover should:
  - be fitted with a propeller guard
  - have sufficient stability to allow safe recovery of victims from the water
  - be quick and manoeuvrable.
  - be designed not to create an excessive wash
  - have adequate capacity to be capable of carrying injured persons back to the boathouse quickly and safely
  - have a freeboard low enough, and sufficient buoyancy, to ease extraction of the victim from the water
  - Carry a 'rescue tube' (a 930mm length high-buoyancy foam tube developed especially for water rescue) or other flotation device suitable for supporting a casualty in the water
  - have space to lie a victim down in the boat to allow resuscitation or cater for injury
  - be properly equipped for rescue
  - be well maintained, with documented maintenance and servicing



**Note:** Aluminium 'Tin Fish', coaching catamarans and traditional long and narrow-beam 'low-wash' coaching launches are not suitable for rescue. Clubs should consider small cathedral-hulled dories or whalers, 5m+ RIBs or inflatable boats, with a propeller-guarded outboard motor suitable for the conditions (recommended minimum of 15hp).

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Clubs should ensure that rescue techniques are practised and recorded at least once every year by all launch drivers
- Additional spares to be carried - Spare PFDs (accounting for largest single boat liable for rescue less capacity of launch), spare fuel tank (open water use), spare engine (open water use), engine spares
- Alternative means of contacting shore, in-date flares, maps, navigation aids or GPS system
- When choosing a new safety and/or coaching launch, clubs should consider 4-stroke engines where possible to reduce noise, emissions and pollution
- Use of 'Tin Fish' as a suitable coaching and safety launch should be phased out by clubs and not used to provide safety cover for a session or competition
- Launch drivers must never take to the water on their own without means of contact



# 2.4 Launch Driving

to shore and communication of their journey

- Clubs should recognise that ongoing training in launch driving is of great importance
- Rescue techniques should be practised annually and records kept
- It is necessary to keep boat and engine regularly cleaned and serviced, with this being documented by the club
- Where a club wishes to provide its own safety cover for a competition further training should be sought
- Launch drivers providing safety cover should hold a minimum of RYA safety boat qualification
- Advice should be sought from experts in rescue cover (e.g. Royal Life Saving Society UK) whenever a competition safety plan that includes use of safety boats is being designed
- Whenever possible clubs should consider the provision of external, professional bodies and clubs for the provision of safety cover at competitions

## Safety launch drivers guidelines

These guidelines are intended as an aide-memoire for those launch drivers that have passed their RYA Level 2 Powerboat Handling Course and, for those who have yet to take it, as an introduction to some of the principles of safety provision using powered launches. By accepting the role of safety launch driver you are taking on responsibilities towards others so, for your own benefit, you must ensure that you are well trained, well practised and up to date with the current rescue techniques.

It is important to recognise that the primary duty of a safety launch driver is the control of the launch. A crewman must be qualified and trained to carry out rescue, recoveries and first aid without the support of the driver, or the rescue of a casualty may become inefficient and/or pose a danger to the launch, crew, driver, casualty and other river users.

The primary aim of all safety launch drivers is the safety of those taking part in the organised activity, within their area of responsibility, for the duration of the Regatta, Processional Race or other club activity. If the launch is being used in secondary duties, such as any umpiring, marshalling or coaching tasks these must give way to the primary aim of safety should the need arise. Launch drivers must not forget the responsibility for their own safety, and the safety of other river users, whilst performing these duties.

It is not recommended that a safety launch be used for any other secondary duties if possible.

The objectives of all safety launch drivers are to:

- avoid becoming a victim him/herself
- stay at the helm of the boat unless the crew requires assistance with recovering a casualty
- stay in the launch and never enter the water for a rescue
- direct his/her crew to the maximum effect for an efficient rescue
- provide rescue facilities to Regattas, Processional Races, events and other club activities
- recover capsized athletes without worsening their condition
- quickly and safely transport any injured rowers to medical attention (or vice versa)

Safety Launches should always carry a minimum of one crewman for a variety of reasons including to:

- assist the driver by 'spotting' in front of the launch, for debris, river traffic etc
- take over ancillary functions from a coach, for example, using a megaphone, video camera, rate watch etc
- assist with proper trim and balance of the launch, most powerboats require at least 2 persons on board before they will perform and handle optimally, creating the least wash and wake possible
- assist if the driver experiences any difficulties
- assist with rescue, first aid and resuscitation should a rescue be necessary

Launch drivers should be:

- relevantly trained and practised in boat handling and rescue techniques
- trained in resuscitation and first aid. The safety launch may well be the first craft on the scene of an accident so the driver or crewman should hold a valid and recognised First Aid Certificate
- up to date in knowledge and skill

### General Points

The maximum load of the launch must be considered when planning safety cover and should not be exceeded under any conditions.

Due to wind and engine noises, trying to shout from a moving powerboat is not very effective. Get in close, stop and speak clearly.

Choose the right clothing for the prevailing weather conditions and bear in mind the potential length of time to be afloat, the possible need for one crew member to enter the water, inactivity for long periods in cold weather and the need for agility when moving about the boat.

Hot drinks on cold days, and vice versa, will maintain the efficiency of the crew.

Boat handling skills should become second nature so that you can concentrate on the task of



# 2.4 Launch Driving

rescue without having to think about how you are going to get the boat into the right position.

When manoeuvring outboard powered boats in close quarters make sure that the correct helm is applied before engaging forward and reverse gear. Look in the direction of travel and check the way is clear.

## Recovering from the water

When a rower needs to be recovered from the water, the following precautions must be observed:

- The only time high-speed manoeuvres should be used is when making the approach to the scene of an incident or when taking injured rowers back to the landing stage
- Any high-speed approach to the scene must make allowance for the safety of other river users. Use the klaxon or audible warning device to alert other craft. Give way if need be
- The final approach to the rower in the water must be made carefully and at low speed, in order to weigh up the situation and to avoid alarming the person in the water
- On approach provide buoyancy aid (rescue-tube, float or similar) to person in the water
- Talk to the person in the water. Make sure they understand what you intend to do and what you want them to do
- Approach from downstream/downwind, as appropriate, in order to maintain control over your speed and steering
- When bringing the rower aboard, the engine must be turned off so that no injury can be inflicted by the propeller blades. Leaving the gear lever in neutral is not enough as it is easy to knock it whilst attempting to get the rower on board. If the speed of the current or other hazards make this precaution dangerous, then use the anchor to hold the launch in position
- Appropriate training in the provision of first aid to injured rowers will help the safety launch driver to determine the best stage of the rescue to apply first aid

Watch out for other river users

Always be in control of the launch

Resuscitation of a non-breathing casualty, treatment of life-threatening bleeds and the maintenance of a clear airway are the main priorities to be considered

Consideration to the continued safety cover of a competition must be observed whilst a safety launch is engaged in the process of a rescue or recovery

Where there are several rowers in the water priority should be given to any injured or younger rowers, or those that are displaying difficulty in remaining above water. Coxswains wearing lifejackets should be told to inflate them and should be the last priority of rescue under normal conditions.

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 2.1 Safety Aids
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia

### ARA website

- Prepare for Launch poster

### Other

- Royal National Lifeboat Institution – [www.rnli.org.uk](http://www.rnli.org.uk)
- Royal Yachting Association – [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk)
- Spot the Driver poster



# 2.5 Transport & Trailers

**Will you and your boats arrive safely or will you be let down before the competition even starts?**

## Responsibilities

### Personal

- Follow the club's guidance on loading the trailer

### Club

- Ensure that any vehicle or trailer used by the club is maintained in a roadworthy condition
- Insure the trailer
- Confirm that all drivers have the appropriate vehicle licence and insurance for the trailer type, length and load
- Confirm that all drivers are competent in towing and/or minibus driving
- Provide all drivers with information on towing and loading the trailer



### Coach

- Educate members in the loading and checking of the trailer

### Trailer and Minibus Drivers

- Have the appropriate licence and insurance for the vehicle, trailer and load
- Develop experience in towing and driving unfamiliar vehicles before committing to transporting boats and people
- Understand the regulations and responsibilities of trailer towing and minibus driving

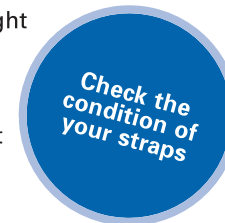
### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Advise the club on its responsibilities
- Ensure that the trailing of the club boats is reviewed as part of the annual club safety audit

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Information and diagrams showing the recommended arrangement for loading, including the allowable load projection, must be displayed in the club/boathouse and towing vehicle
- A copy of the trailer insurance and any club vehicle insurance must be displayed in the club/boathouse and towing vehicle

- A method must be available and used to check the nose weight of the trailer
- Adequate projection markers and lights must be available
- Adequate ties in good condition must be available
- Information regarding the Maximum Allowed Mass (MAM) must be fixed to the trailer
- Before each trip the driver must check the tyres (including spare), lights, projection markers and the security of the load, jockey wheel and brakes
- The vehicle used for towing must be appropriate for the length, load and type of trailer
- All trailers must carry a spare wheel and suitable tools and jack for changing a wheel
- Drivers must always carry a passenger to help with navigation, manoeuvring, and any emergency, which may arise
- Always be aware of the dangers of high winds and icy road conditions and consult the weather forecast before setting off



## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Have a loading plan prior to loading the trailer
- Copies of the 'ARA Trailer Drivers Handbook' should be made available as a reference document
- All drivers should make reference to the interactive tutorial for trailer drivers on the ARA website or CD
- Information regarding the weight of the empty trailer, the recommended tyre pressures and jacking points should be fixed to the trailer
- Always carry a spare set of bulbs and a copy of the electrics coupling plug wiring diagram
- Always check the regulations of the countries when travelling abroad

## Further information

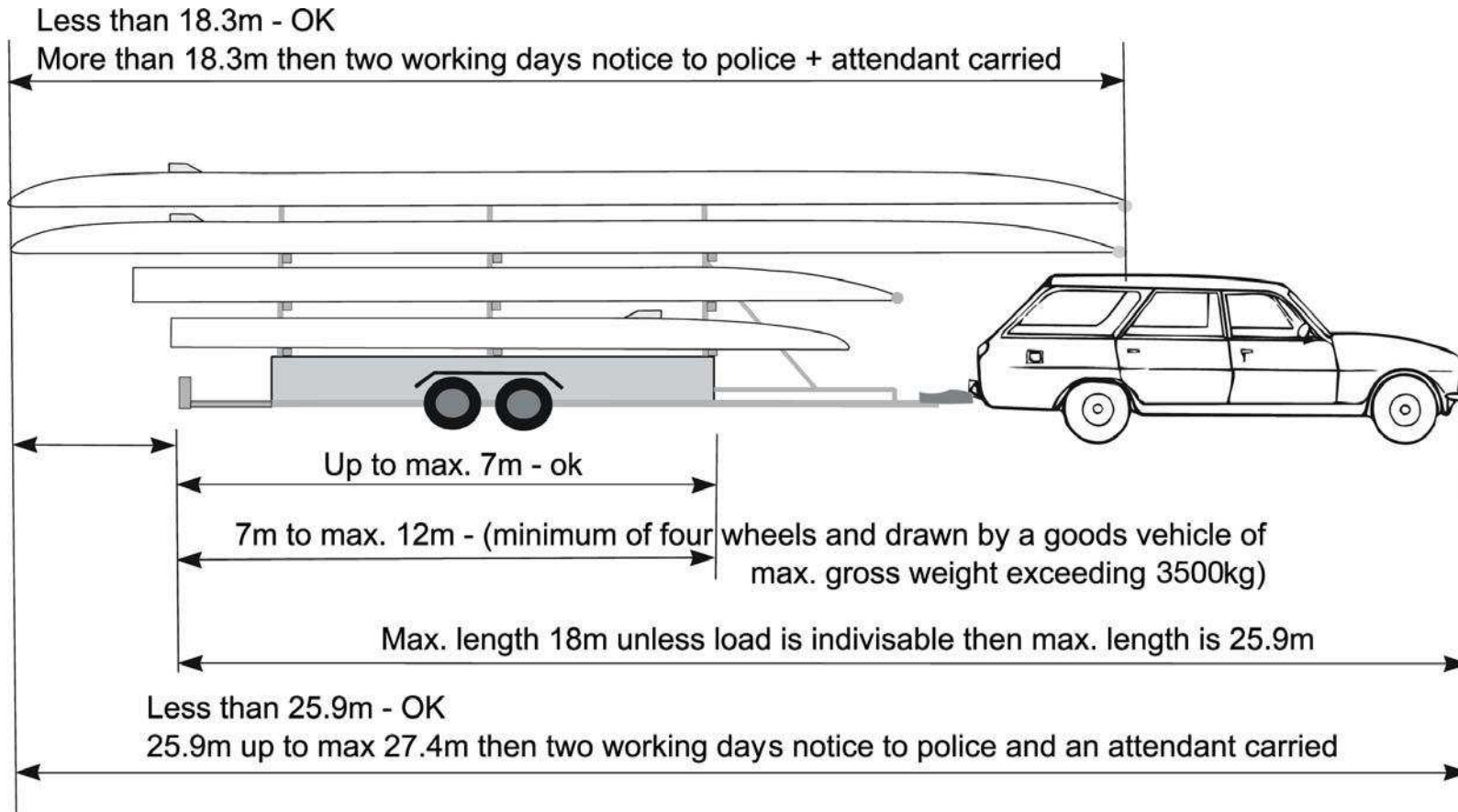
### ARA website

- ARA Drivers Handbook
- ARA Boat Trailers & Towing

### Other

- ARA Boat Trailers & Towing CD
- DVLA Driving Licence Requirements for Towing Trailers in GB
- Caravan Club – [www.caravanclub.co.uk](http://www.caravanclub.co.uk)

# 2.5 Transport & Trailers



Projections over 1m must be marked so that they are clearly visible from the rear and side including night time. Brightly coloured rag or tape, warning triangles and illuminated marker boards for night driving are essential.

Any projection over 3.05m requires two working days notice to police.



# 3. Participants

- 3.1 Beginners
- 3.2 Juniors
- 3.3 Adaptive Rowing
- 3.4 Touring Rowing
- 3.5 Coastal & Open Water Rowing
- 3.6 Indoor Rowing



# 3.1 Beginners

## Learn to be safe

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Attend the club's induction programme and follow advice and guidance provided
- Ask a coach or club official about any aspects of safety you are concerned or unsure about
- Take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of others affected by your activities
- Be aware of key club and sport policies and where to find them

Engage  
in safety  
from day one

#### Club

- Ensure that all beginners take part in an effective club induction programme that has an emphasis on safe practice
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and vulnerable adults
- Support the principle that safety is everyone's responsibility
- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of the individual is the overriding principle
- Ensure that all members set an example for beginners to follow

Get  
key safety  
messages  
across

#### Coach

- Ensure all rowers have an adequate club induction programme – and check their understanding of what is expected of them
- Set standards that athletes will follow – lead by example
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and vulnerable adults

Keep  
it simple  
keep it fun

#### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor compliance with Minimum Standards set in this guidance for clubs and competitions, through inspections and the Club Water Safety Audit system

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Before any activity takes place with beginners the following information must be recorded by the club:

- Swimming ability – advise them of the test they will need to pass

- Advice given on the need to discuss medical conditions that could affect safe practice
- Personal contact details for emergency contacts
- Parental or guardian consent given for juniors to participate

Local induction programmes must be set up by clubs to ensure beginners are successfully and safely introduced into the sport and club operations. By the end of the club induction programme participants must have been given basic information or training on the following topics:

- Risk assessments – what are they and why they need to be done?
- Local hazards – what are they? Where are they? How are they controlled?
- Navigation rules – communicate these, where and where not to go and give reasons for rules
- Emergencies – what to do, how to summon help – nearest telephone (mobile phone dead zones)
- Equipment – function and safety checks to perform before each outing, including boat buoyancy checks and the need to check when returning to the club
- Manual handling – how to lift, carry and handle boats and equipment
- First Aid – who is the First Aider? where is the First Aid Box?
- Incident reporting – what needs reporting, to whom and why?
- Safety equipment – what types, storage, rules on using and how to use, maintenance and location
- Club Officers – Water Safety Adviser, Captain, Welfare Officer, etc.
- Capsize/swampings - what to do if it happens to you or someone else
- PFDs – what types, rules on wearing, storage, how to use, maintenance and location
- Clothing – what to wear and what not to wear and why
- Cold water immersion and hypothermia – issues, controls, reporting
- Supervision – when they can and cannot go afloat, session times, duration
- Boat booking board – how and why to use this, need in emergencies
- Weather – be aware of local forecasts and conditions
- Boat outing restrictions – temperature, water conditions, tidal, times of the day/year
- Water-borne diseases – symptoms, hygiene, etc.
- Night and poor visibility rowing – rules, lights, etc.
- Safety Notice Boards – location
- Boat types – suitability
- Personal responsibility for safety

Clubs should ensure that beginners know where and how they can obtain further information on the above topics.

# 3.1 Beginners

Clubs should have the following controls in place to cover beginners' activities:

- Risk assessments – should cover age, swim ability, capsize, water/air temperature, weather conditions, stream, current, hazards, other water users, skill level/experience, boat type, clothing
- Trained coaches – Level 2 or IA for water activities
- Safety launches – drivers RYA 2 or equivalent trained
- Boat outing board – outing times duration
- Safety Notice Board – latest guidance, emergency numbers, Water Safety Adviser, incident reporting, detailed plan of water, hazards, navigation rules, flow patterns etc.
- Capsize drill – system for ensuring beginners know what to do, via practices, demonstrations, video, etc.
- Communication system for summoning emergency assistance
- System for restricting access to damaged equipment
- If a member is unable to swim – a suitable PFD must be worn whilst on the water

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Document induction – capture details of when conducted and what was covered
- Guidance on outings in respect of particular disabilities or illnesses (eg epilepsy)
- Swimming and capsize drills performed regularly – use local swimming pool
- Policy on wearing of PFDs for beginners and juniors – set one and communicate and enforce
- Logbooks – need to record progress of beginners, to improve development, monitor safety and enable communication between coaches and athletes
- Throw lines – need to practise use of them for all members
- First Aid room or recovery room
- System for reporting damaged equipment to all members
- Navigation – use of charts/drawings/diagrams
- Juniors – parents to be encouraged to attend first session
- Vulnerable Adults – clubs and coaches to be aware of the individual's background and needs and follow the ARA's 'Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy'

**ARA Epilepsy Policy:** 'Those who suffer from epilepsy should not be allowed on the water when there is a significant risk of further seizures. In line with the recommendations of the Driving Vehicle Licence Agency (DVLA), this period of significant risk is defined as within one year following a fit and whilst reducing medication and for six months after stopping it, except where there is a special individualized risk assessment of the rower and the event. Equally launch drivers should follow this advice.'

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 13 Club Safety Plans
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training
- 2.1 Safety Aids

### ARA website

- Row Safe: Key Points for Your Safe Rowing

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual



# 3.2 Juniors

## Stay safe and have fun in rowing

### Responsibilities

#### Juniors

- Attend the induction programme and follow the advice and guidance provided
- Take responsibility for your own safety and the safety of others affected by your activities
- Ask a coach or club official about any aspects of safety you are concerned or unsure about

Engage  
in safety  
from day one

#### Parents and Carers

- Ensure that your child is able to attend the induction programme
- Keep coaches informed about any special needs, medical conditions or allergies that your child may have
- Ensure your child is appropriately dressed for the weather and activity, eg warm clothes, sun hat, sun protection, cream, drinks etc as appropriate
- Ensure that you keep the club up to date with any changes in contact details, especially emergency numbers

#### Club

- Ensure all juniors are effectively inducted into the club and safe rowing practice through a planned induction programme
- Ensure a higher level of Duty of Care is promoted for all juniors
- Support the principle that safety is everyone's responsibility
- Ensure the health, safety and welfare of the individual is the overriding principle
- Ensure that all members set a good example for juniors to follow

Get  
key safety  
message  
across

#### Coach

- Ensure all juniors have completed an appropriate induction programme – and check the learning outcomes
- Be an excellent role model by maintaining appropriate standards of behaviour – lead by example
- Listen and respond to concerns raised by juniors regarding safety or other matters
- Ensure a higher level of Duty of Care is promoted for juniors
- Understand and adopt the Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and procedures set out by the ARA and relevant guidance documents relating to water safety and safeguarding children
- Ensure that you do not work in isolation

#### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Monitor compliance with the minimum standards set in the guidance for juniors when on the water and within the environs of the club

#### Competition Water Safety Adviser

- Ensure that the welfare and safety of juniors is taken into account when planning competitions

#### Club Welfare Officer

- Promote a child-centred approach within the club
- Promote the ARA Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy
- Monitor compliance with good safe practices for juniors at clubs and competitions

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Before any activity takes place the following information should be recorded by the club:

- Swimming ability – provide advice on the level required
- Parent, carer or guardian's consent in writing to act 'in loco parentis' for the administration of emergency first aid or other medical attention if the need arises
- Personal contact details for emergency contacts
- Written consent given by a parent or carer before any activity takes place
- Written consent given by a parent or carer before taking photographs or videos

Local induction systems should to be set up by clubs to ensure that juniors successfully complete an appropriate induction programme that places an emphasis on safe practice on the water and within the environs of the club. On completing the induction programme, juniors should have been given basic information or training on the following topics:

- Risk assessments – what they are and why they need to be done
- Local hazards – what are they? Where are they? How are they controlled?
- Navigation rules – communicate these, where and where not to go and reasons for rules
- Emergencies – what to do, how to summon help – nearest telephone (mobile phone dead zones)
- Equipment – function and safety checks to perform before each outing including boat buoyancy checks and need to check when returning to the club
- Manual handling – how to lift, carry and handle boats and equipment
- First Aid – who is the First Aider? Where is the First Aid Box?
- Incident reporting – what needs reporting, to whom and why?
- Safety equipment – what types, storage, rules on using and how to use, maintenance and location
- Club Officers – Water Safety Adviser, Captain, Club Welfare Officer, etc. who they are, what they do and where their contact details can be found
- Capsize/swampings - what to do if it happens to you or someone else



## 3.2 Juniors

- PFDs – what types, rules on wearing, storage, how to use, maintenance and location
- Clothing – what to wear and what not to wear and why?
- Cold water immersion and hypothermia – issues/controls, reporting
- Supervision – when they can and cannot go afloat, session times, duration
- Boat booking board – how and why to use this, need in emergencies
- Weather – be aware of local forecasts and conditions
- Boat outing restrictions – temperature, water conditions, tidal, times of the day/year
- Water-borne diseases – symptoms, hygiene, etc.
- Night and poor visibility rowing – rules, lights, etc.
- Safety Notice Boards - location
- Boat types - suitability
- Personal responsibility for safety

The club should ensure that juniors know where to obtain further information on the above topics.



Clubs should have the following controls in place to cover junior activities:

- Risk assessments – these should cover age, swim ability, capsize, water/air temperature, weather conditions, stream, current, hazards – other water users, skill level/experience, boat type, clothing, any known medical conditions or allergies
- Trained coaches – Level 2 for water activities
- Safety launches – drivers RYA 2 or equivalent trained
- Boat outing board – outing times - duration
- Safety Notice Board – latest guidance, emergency numbers, Water Safety Adviser, incident reporting, detailed plan of water – hazards, navigation rules, flow patterns etc.
- Safeguarding poster with contact details for Club Welfare Officer
- Capsize drill – system for ensuring juniors know what to do, via practices, demonstrations, video, etc.
- Communication system for summoning emergency assistance
- System for restricting access to damaged equipment
- If a junior is unable to swim a suitable PFD **must be worn** whilst on the water
- Codes of Conduct for juniors, parents and coaches displayed in the club

Avoid jargon

### Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Document induction – capture details of when conducted and what was covered
- Guidance on outings in respect of particular disabilities or illnesses (eg epilepsy)
- Swimming and capsize drills performed regularly – use local swimming pool
- Policy on wearing of PFDs for juniors – set one, communicate and enforce
- Log books – need to record progress of juniors, to improve development, monitor safety and enable communication between coaches and athletes
- Throw lines – need for all members to practise their use
- First aid room or recovery room
- System for reporting damaged equipment to all members
- Navigation – use of charts, drawings, diagrams
- Juniors – parents to be encouraged to attend first session
- Juniors should be encouraged to draw up, adapt or adopt their own code of conduct to promote ownership and adherence

Why do we do things this way?

# 3.2 Juniors

**ARA Epilepsy Policy:** 'Those who suffer from epilepsy should not be allowed on the water when there is a significant risk of further seizures. In line with the recommendations of the Driving Vehicle Licence Agency (DVLA), this period of significant risk is defined as within one year following a fit and whilst reducing medication and for six months after stopping it, except where there is a special individualized risk assessment of the rower and the event. Equally launch drivers should follow this advice.'

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.3 Club Safety Plans
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training
- 2.1 Safety Aids

### ARA website

- Row Safe: Key Points for your Safe Rowing
- ARA Safeguarding & Protecting Children Policy and guidance

### Other

- Level 2 Coaching Manual



# 3.3 Adaptive Rowing

## Providing opportunities, managing needs

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Inform the club and coach about any relevant disability or illness and any known 'warning signs'
- Check equipment is safe to use and report any defects to club and/or coach
- Seek additional medical advice where appropriate

#### Carers

- Attend the initial discussions with the club and its induction programme
- Ensure that the club, coaches and competition organisers are fully informed about the disability, warning signs and requirements
- Ensure the club is kept up-to-date with any changes in the disability, requirements and emergency contact details

#### Club (in addition to standard club water safety and welfare practice)

- Discuss with individuals their needs and aspirations
- Establish and practise procedures for managing incidents, including capsize, involving adaptive rowers
- Check equipment is suitable when adaptations are made
- Seek advice on equipment that is suitable for adaptive rowing

#### Coach

- Identify ability and develop a needs analysis for each individual
- Have an understanding of disability/illness and any necessary emergency action
- Seek practical advice to address medical needs within your Duty of Care
- Communicate information where appropriate with other athletes and coaches
- Check equipment is suitable when adaptations are made
- Seek advice on equipment that is suitable for adaptive rowing

#### Competition Organisers

- Undertake a specific risk assessment for all adaptive activities and racing
- Cater for the needs of adaptive rowing participants, including access, medical support, equipment and buddy support
- Be aware and communicate any rescue issues for individual adaptive rowers
- Ensure all umpires are aware of any specific issues eg. deafness, communication difficulties, which need to be taken into consideration
- Ensure other competitors are aware when adaptive athletes are on the water

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Conduct a risk assessment and produce an action plan for each individual adaptive athlete
- High visibility markings for all pathways (including stairs) throughout boat/clubhouse/venue
- Provide a suitable rescue launch
- The boathouse and club to be kept orderly and tidy

Look  
for the  
opportunities  
not the  
barriers

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Provide a 'buddy system' for athletes with a disability to assist with boating and guiding round boathouse and club
- Build links with other adaptive clubs, groups and competitions

## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.9 Swimming & Capsize/Swamping Training

#### ARA website

- Adaptive
- Welfare
- ARA Safeguarding & Protecting Vulnerable Adults Policy
- Club Management – EFDS: Inclusive Club Health Check
- ARA First Step Audit

#### Other

- Disability Discrimination Act
- English Federation of Disability Sport [www.efds.co.uk](http://www.efds.co.uk)
- Inclusive Fitness Initiative [www.inclusivefitness.org](http://www.inclusivefitness.org)



# 3.4 Touring Rowing

## Keeping a recreational activity safe and fun

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Be competent and physically able to meet the stamina and fitness demands of touring
- Be able to steer a boat and be conversant with the navigation rules applicable to the waterways being covered
- Wear and carry clothes suitable for the weather conditions likely to be encountered during the tour
- Follow the Captain of the Boat's instructions
- Provide your own Personal Flotation Device (PFD) where required

#### Captain of the Boat

- Ensure the boat and equipment is maintained in good working order
- Be responsible for the safety of the crew
- Understand and be familiar with the route, the daily plan, the navigation rules and any hazards

#### Tour Organiser

- Undertake a risk assessment prior to the tour and implement necessary controls
- Have an Emergency Action Plan
- Ensure all participants are fully briefed on the route, likely conditions to be encountered, the clothing and equipment to carry and the Emergency Action Plan
- Ensure the boats and equipment provided are safe and suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered

## Minimum standards to be adopted

(In addition to ARA Row Safe Guidance)

- Tour organisers must survey the route and produce a plan identifying hazards and accessible landing points for rest stops, emergencies and overnight stowage
- Tour organisers must carry out a risk assessment and produce a safety plan incorporating an Emergency Action Plan
- All tour members must be provided with a copy of the tour's safety plan and Emergency Action Plan
- Tour members must carry their ARA membership cards as evidence of their competence and third-party cover to show to lock-keepers
- Tour organisers must ensure that the event has appropriate insurance cover
- Crew members must declare any medical condition or disability which may affect them during the tour and where needed carry appropriate medication
- Before using a waterway with locks, tourers should consult the relevant administering body to determine the rules for passing through locks

- Lock keepers instructions must be followed at all times
- At least one boat in the touring group must carry:
  - tools for carrying out basic adjustments and minor repairs
  - a First Aid kit
- Each boat must carry:
  - a bailer
  - a boat hook
  - mooring ropes (bow and stern)
  - a means of communication
  - sufficient PFDs for each member of the crew (not necessarily worn whilst rowing) as and when required by the Risk Assessment
  - sufficient water and food to supply the crew between stages

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

A daily schedule should take account of the following factors:

- time to boat
- boat speed
- water conditions (including traffic and locks etc)
- rest and crew position changes
- meals
- transport to and from accommodation
- land-based activities
- age and experience of the crews



Daily briefing should include an outline of the route and any hazards or safety issues. Checklists should be produced to help both the organisers and the crews.

## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 2.5 Transport & Trailers
- 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

#### ARA website

- Touring Rowing Guidance, Planning and Checklist
- Lightning Guidance

#### Other

- FISA – The Rower's Guide to Safe Pleasurable Touring



# 3.5 Coastal & Open Water Rowing

## How do we manage the risk for those who like their rowing rough? Responsibilities

### Personal

- Follow the guidance for the type of coastal and open water rowing you are participating in

### Club

- Ensure all boats and equipment purchased and/or provided are in safe working order
- Manage the water based activities in accordance to local rules, conditions and implement appropriate water safety procedures

### Coach

- Undertake a risk assessment prior to outing and implement necessary controls
- Perform duties as detailed in coaches roles and responsibilities in Row Safe guidance

### Club Water Safety Adviser/Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Perform duties as detailed in Water Safety Adviser roles and responsibilities in Row Safe guidance

### Competition Organisers

- Ensure competitions are managed safely in accordance with the Row Safe guidance where relevant to the discipline of coastal and open water rowing

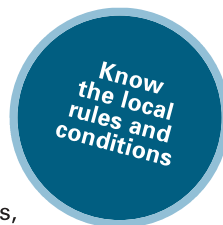
### Launch Drivers

- Perform duties according to the guidance and recommendations of the relevant local coastal association

## Minimum standards to be adopted

In addition to ARA Row Safe guidance the following minimum standards will be adopted (safety plans, risk assessment, boats/blades, etc.):

- Boat buoyancy – to be established and maintained for all boats

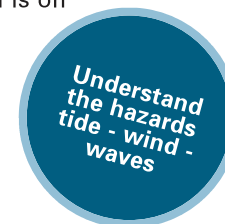


- Launch drivers to have RYA Level 2 tidal water version, to wear lifejackets and to use kill cords at all times on the water
- Conduct a coastal water safety audit annually and submit this to Regional Water Safety Adviser and ARA
- Establish effective communications with the shore and emergency services for any emergency situation that is foreseeable
- Provide teaching sessions for all coxswains and rowers to ensure they understand the hazards and controls to be used in coxing/rowing on open water (understanding tide, wind strength and direction, waves)
- All crews instructed in correct techniques for beach launching, and recovery
- All coxswains to wear suitable PFDs for any outing

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Safety launch is available for all outings
- When no launch or driver is available, no crew goes out without an experienced coastal rower in the boat (either coxing or rowing)
- If a safety launch is not available ensure that a safety person is on the beach with radio contact to the crew(s) on the water
- If more than one crew is on the water they are all rowing in the same direction
- There is always a qualified First Aider available whenever an outing is taking place



## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment
- 1.7 Weather & the Environment
- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 2.1 Safety Aids
- 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

### ARA website

- Coastal section with related links

# 3.6 Indoor Rowing

## Injuries can happen on an indoor rowing machine – so assess and manage the risks

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Follow rules on use of machines – including the wearing of appropriate clothing and the cleaning of the machine after use
- Inform the club of any reason that you may be at risk due to current or previous illness or injury – and seek medical advice before continuing
- Warm up appropriately for the activity
- Check the machine prior to use
- Report any incidents or defects to the machine



#### Club

- Advise all participants of the potential health risks associated with strenuous exercise
- Advise participants who might be at risk due to a current or previous illness or injury, to arrange a health check with a medical practitioner prior to any activity
- Provide safe, regularly serviced, machines
- Maintain machines in safe working order as recommended by the manufacturer
- Provide appropriate induction sessions for beginners
- Provide appropriate notices and instruction on safe use (clothing, storage, monitor set up, etc) and potential health issues
- Record all incidents relating to indoor rowing machines on the ARA incident reporting system
- Keep records of performance, either club based or individual
- Assess and manage the risks prior to, and during, the running of an activity or event

#### Coach

- Adequately manage activities of all users and exercise a higher level of care for those persons who present a higher risk – beginners, elderly, juniors, those with special needs or health problems
- Check regularly on participants who have been identified as being at risk
- Know how to deal with specific health-related issues that have been identified
- Emphasise safe use of the facility and equipment
- Check the facility and the equipment is safe to use
- Run sessions in accordance with club/activity risk assessment requirements
- Ensure users can identify and name the key parts of the machine
- Ensure users can set the machine up and adjust damper/feet correctly

- Ensure users sit correctly on machine, demonstrate good technique, recovery, drive, body position

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Promote a safe indoor rowing culture
- Review events/incidents relating to indoor rowing to promote good practice

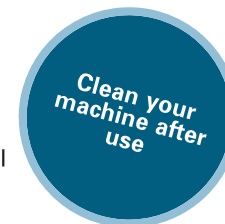
## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Maintain high standards of equipment hygiene
- Ensure users clean the handle and machine after use
- Ensure users sit correctly on machine, demonstrate good technique, recovery, drive, body position

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Keep records of performance, either club based or individual
- Ensure users can identify and name the key parts of the machine, can set it up and adjust damper/feet correctly



## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment

#### ARA website

- Indoor Rowing



# 4. Monitoring

- 4.1 Incident Reporting
- 4.2 Safety Auditing





# 4.1 Incident Reporting

## Help us to help you improve your safety - even near misses provide important learning points

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Know the reasons for and importance of reporting and how to report online ALL incidents in which you are involved or witness (during training or recreation, at a camp or competition)

#### Club

- Foster within the club the reporting of all incidents and 'near incidents' using the ARA online system and, where required, to any other relevant authority within specified time periods
- Ensure all club members are aware of what constitutes an incident and 'near incident' that needs reporting and are aware of how to report them online
- Set up a system within the club to enable the use of the ARA online reporting system ensuring that all incidents are reported as required by the ARA
- Regularly monitor the ARA online reporting system to gather information on club incidents and use the statistics to develop safer practices
- Keep the members informed of incidents and 'near incidents' at the club and ways in which action must be taken to avoid repetition



#### Coach

- Know the reasons for and importance of reporting and how to report online ALL incidents in which you or your crews are involved or witness (during training or recreation, at a camp or competition)

#### Competition Organisers and Competition Water Safety Adviser

- Know the reasons for and importance of reporting and how to report online ALL incidents involving spectators, competitors, or their boats or equipment during the competition. Note: This includes any incident where there is a 'near incident' which could have resulted in personal injury and/or damage to equipment, as well as one where there is only superficial injury (minor cut, bruise, abrasion or strain) and/or minor damage to equipment

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Know what constitutes an incident or 'near incident' and why and how to report them
- Monitor regularly the Club incident log on the ARA online system and communicate to the club and committee the results and actions taken
- Inform the club members of the ARA online incident reporting system and encourage its use
- Advise the club committee on the results of the data review at suitable regular intervals and ways in which action can be taken to avoid repetition of the incidents and 'near incidents'

#### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- View online incidents as soon as practicable after notice has been sent by email
- Analyse all reports promptly and respond or where necessary require or take further action
- Liaise with the Regional Rowing Council in taking action on serious incidents
- Liaise with the Honorary National Water Safety Adviser in taking action on serious incidents

#### Local Authority

Comply with any additional requirements enforced by your Local Authority such as:

- The Port of London Authority, Marine Accident Investigation Branch or other authority
- Any other system for general incident reporting such as bad behaviour or bad navigation (eg that for the Thames Region)

#### Examples of incident types you need to report

**Capsize or falling out of boat through:** inexperience, contact with another rowing boat, contact with other object, equipment or boat failure

**Collision through:** contact with static object, moving object, navigation issue, poor visibility or lighting

**Swamping through:** rough water, collision with other rowing boat, collision with other object, wash

**Health related:** manual handling, respiratory, hypothermia, heat stress, water-borne disease

**Equipment failure:** boat buoyancy, riggers, gates, seats/feet, steering equipment, bow ball, blades/sculls, safety/coaching/rescue launch, PFD's, throw lines, racking

**Land training due to:** weight training, circuit training, running, cycling, indoor rowing, slips/trips

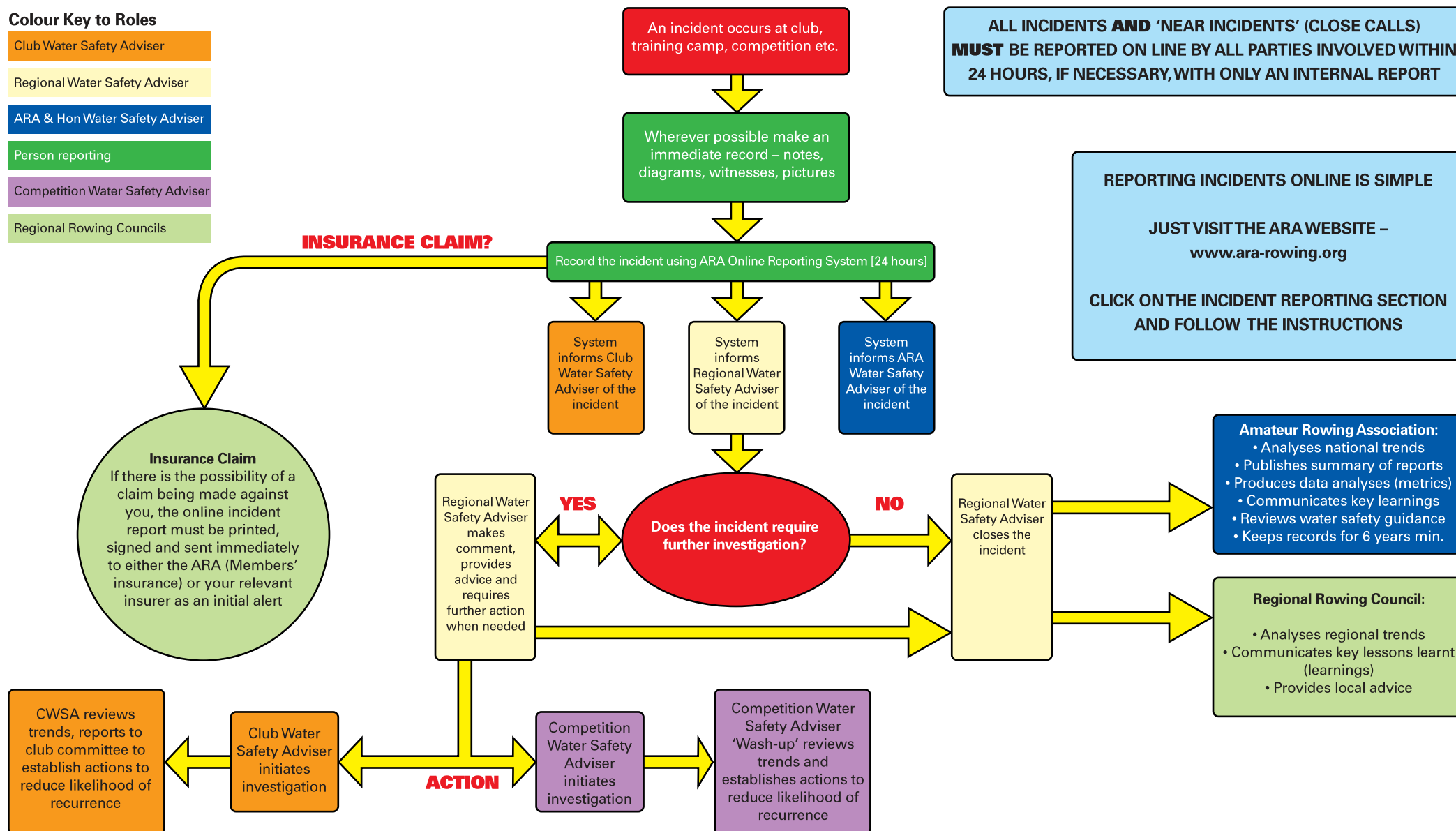
**Behaviour:** vandalism/violence

# 4.1 Incident Reporting

## ARA Incident Reporting Flow Chart

### Colour Key to Roles

Club Water Safety Adviser
Regional Water Safety Adviser
ARA & Hon Water Safety Adviser
Person reporting
Competition Water Safety Adviser
Regional Rowing Councils



# 4.1 Incident Reporting

**Trailer towing:** failure of equipment, driving issue, incorrect or improper stowage, falling from a height

**Examples of “near incidents” you need to report:**

Where sudden evasive action had to be taken to avoid a collision

Where a boat is flouting navigation rules

Where a boat is not displaying the required lights at night

Where a crew has boated in high risk conditions

Where a dangerous situation existed

## Minimum standards to be adopted

**Personal**

- Whether part of the activity or not you must report all incidents of which you have knowledge or feel a dangerous situation existed
- You must know how to report incidents and have knowledge of any follow-up, see flow chart above

**Club** (Captain and Committee)

- The Club must ensure that all members have access to and are educated and trained in their individual responsibilities to report incidents as a means of helping to developing safe practice
- The Club must ensure that a current list of incidents (no names), together with action points, is prominently displayed to promote awareness amongst its members

**Coach**

- The Coach, with the CWSA must enable all crew members have access to and help educate and train them in their individual responsibilities of reporting and learning from incidents

**Club Water Safety Adviser**

- The CWSA must be proactive in promoting the reporting of incidents and developing safe practice from any learning points

**Competition Organiser**

- The competition organiser must specify that all persons report any incident to a competition official
- The competition organisers must take account of all incidents occurring at the competition, review these as part of the wash-up and formulate actions to avoid repetition in future competitions

**Regional Water Safety Adviser**

- The RWSA should promote the culture of incident reporting

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

Consider, both at club and regional level, promoting online reporting by awards/prizes for the individual member or club making the most reports

## Further Information

**ARA website**

- Online Incident Reporting



# 4.2 Safety Auditing

## Checking it actually happens

Auditing the level of safe practice and acting on the findings is essential if clubs are to fulfil their duty of care. The ARA Safety Audits are designed to cover the basic aspects of club, competition and training camp safety.

If the ARA Annual Club Safety Audit is to be of benefit to your club and members it must be an accurate statement of your present position and practices. It is intended to highlight points of good practice and progress. It should also include areas that are under consideration to improve safe practice at your club. It is not a test to pass or fail. The information provided will enable your Regional Water Safety Adviser to discuss safety plans with your Club Water Safety Adviser and through the Regional network will facilitate the sharing of ideas and good practice.

## Responsibilities

### Club

- Ensure that an accurate annual ARA Water Safety Audit is completed and delivered on time to the Regional Water Safety Adviser
- Review the findings of the Club's Water Safety Audit at committee level and implement its recommendations as appropriate

### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Conduct an annual ARA Water Safety Audit of the club's activities and ensure a report and recommendations are submitted to the Club committee
- Communicate via ARA communication channels (website, Regional Water Safety Adviser, Regional Rowing Council, Coaching & Development Officers etc), trends, issues, suspensions, etc

### Regional Water Safety Adviser

- Review the Club Annual Water Safety Audits submitted and provide feedback where requested or required
- Submit a summary Regional Water Safety Audit to ARA Honorary Water Safety Adviser in a timely manner
- Advise the Regional Rowing Council on a club's non-compliance with regard to its submission of a Water Safety Audit within the required time limit

### Regional Rowing Council

- Review its Clubs Annual Water Safety Audit submissions and make recommendations on non-compliance

- Provide feedback on its Clubs Water Safety Audit submissions – trends, issues, suspensions, etc

### ARA Water Safety Committee

- Review the Club Annual Water Safety Audit submissions and make recommendations on non-compliance
- Discuss issues arising from the Club Water Safety Audit submissions – trends, issues, suspensions, etc. and make recommendations
- Communicate metrics, trends and issues from the audit to RWSA and Regional Rowing Councils

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Clubs must conduct and submit annually the ARA Club Water Safety Audit within the required time period
- Clubs must ensure that their Water Safety Audit accurately reflects their present position
- Clubs must conduct a Safety Audit on competitions they organise using the ARA's Competition Safety Audit
- Clubs must act on any recommendations or non-compliance issues they or the Regional Water Safety Adviser identify in the Water Safety Audit

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Publish the Club's Water Safety Audit to engage its members in safety issues
- Conduct a Safety Audit on the Club's non-rowing activities to ensure these are adequately managed (bar, gym, etc)

## Further information

### ARA website

- Water Safety Audit checklist



# 5. Health

- 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion
- 5.2 First Aid
- 5.3 Water-borne Infectious Diseases



# 5.1 Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

## Hydrate, cover up, cool down

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Comply with the minimum standards detailed below and bring to the attention of club officials or competition officials any significant issues relating to sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion
- Take personal responsibility for precautions against sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion

#### Club

- Advise members about the risks of sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion, and of local guidance relating to this issue

#### Coach

- Include advice about the risks of sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion, and local guidance, as part of the regular training programme
- Consider the possibility of sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion as part of the overall risk assessment prior to a training session

#### Competition Organisers

- Advise competitors and officials about the risks of sunburn, heat stroke and heat exhaustion during competition, and of any local guidance
- Provide first aid support at the competition

Plan your  
outing to  
avoid heat  
stress

Hydrate  
before you go  
afloat

Cool  
down,  
cover up

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Provision of sufficient supplies of drinking water at facilities for athletes and officials
- Advise members, competitors and officials of the need to wear suitable clothing (hats, T-shirts, sunglasses etc) and use a high factor sun block
- Provision of first aid support (emergency phone numbers, first aiders) for members suffering from sunburn or heat exhaustion
- Advise members of the need to take on fluids before, during and after training, and of the need for good water bottle hygiene
- Consider changing training times and/or duration to avoid high risk periods
- Inform members and officials of symptoms of heat stroke, so that they can

identify early signs in fellow members or competitors before this becomes a serious issue

- Give greater consideration to the effects of sunburn and heat stroke and heat exhaustion when rowing in hot climates

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Set up heat stroke and heat exhaustion treatment controls (gradual cooling down, emergency first aid assistance, shaded area etc.)
- Provision of shelter from sun to enable competitors and officials to stay in shade at competitions
- Advise competitors and officials at competitions of the need to cover up, apply sun block and increase water intake
- Advise everyone concerned to avoid caffeine and alcohol if heat stroke and heat exhaustion is a significant risk
- Advise training camp members of need to acclimatise and to plan this into programme of activities
- Advise 'at risk' groups (those with heart conditions, the young and the elderly) of the extra care required

## Further information

#### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.2 Risk Assessment

#### Other

- HSE Guidance Note GS1



# 5.2 First Aid

## Are we prepared if there is an accident?

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Be aware of your club's emergency plans and procedures
- Report any accidents to First Aiders or club officers and provide details of any first aid sundries, such as plasters or disposable gloves etc. used
- Report to the club any deficiencies in first aid cover or summoning of emergency assistance

#### Club

- Have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) within the Club Safety Plan and ensure adequate First Aid is available during all club activities
- Communicate the EAP to all club members
- Encourage Club First Aiders to maintain their certification
- Keep a record of who they are
- Provide suitable quantities of First Aid materials within box(es) clearly identified as 'First Aid'
- Locate sufficient First Aid Boxes in easily accessible areas of the club and/or boathouse

**Club First Aiders** (if applicable) usually members who have undergone a training course in administering First Aid at work and hold a current First Aid at Work certificate

- Provide First Aid cover at club sessions as required by the club
- Conduct regular inspections of first aid sundries and equipment to ensure adequate supplies are available and in good condition
- Attend regular refresher training courses to ensure certification stays current

#### Competition Organisers

- Produce an EAP and ensure adequate First Aid cover is provided
- Ensure documentation and signage is such that competitors and spectators should be aware of the location of the First Aid Post(s)
- Ensure adequate communication to summon first aid is provided
- Inform all the emergency services of the competition, its Safety Plan and, specifically, make arrangements with the ambulance service for an emergency response
- Ensure that the ARA Regatta/Head Medical Return is completed (including a nil return)

## Minimum standards to be adopted

- Adequate First Aid facilities must be available at club sessions and competitions
- Clubs must ensure First Aid Boxes are available with the agreed minimum contents (see the recommended list)
- Clubs must ensure all First Aid boxes have sufficient regular checks against a list of contents detailed inside the lid and the inspections recorded and dated
- All launches must carry a First Aid Box (or bag) with minimum agreed contents along with sufficient thermal blankets for the crews concerned when on the water
- Adequate numbers of thermal blankets for club activities must be available for emergencies
- Communicate the Club EAP to all members and publish emergency phone numbers and location of the nearest telephone if available
- The location of the club, including postcode and directions for emergency services, must be displayed in a clear concise manner and in particular by the side of all club telephones
- All emergency access points on a Club's plan of their waterway must be named and where possible a postcode added to assist Emergency Services
- Identify club members who are recognised First Aiders
- Maintain an up-to-date list of club First Aiders and display for members information

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

- Promote First Aid sessions to all club members
- Promote lifesaving skills and resuscitation techniques to all club members
- Establish links with local First Aider providers
- Consider the suitability of the provision of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

## First Aid and Ambulance cover at competitions

### Points to be considered:

The Competition Organisers must decide whether the organisation of emergency and First Aid support justifies the appointment of a Medical Officer (who does not have to be medically qualified) or whether this role will be combined with another role eg the Safety Adviser or Chairman of the Organising Committee.

## 5.2 First Aid

The Competition Organisers must decide what is appropriate first aid and ambulance cover for the competition and share this information with all competitors and officials.

When considering the requirements, a number of points must be taken into account:

- Location of the competition - remote or in a built-up area, easy or difficult access
- Extent of boating areas and type of race - large Head race to short, contained Regatta
- Potential hazards - cold or hot weather, capsize, limited access points
- People - number of competitors (age and rowing experience), spectators and supporters
- Access to NHS Ambulance Service - the organisation and speed of response varies from region to region. Details of the service provided need to be known
- First Aid Point(s) - typically these will be at the clubhouse or at appropriate points on the course, eg near the finish line or marshalling area
- Transporting the injured to the First Aid Point or ambulance - safety launch or private car, etc
- Proximity of permanent medical facilities - the location of the nearest hospital providing appropriate A&E support must be agreed between the ambulance service and competition organisers. This may not necessarily be the nearest hospital

### On-site qualified first aid and medical personnel

- St John Ambulance the British Red Cross or private organisations are frequently employed at competitions to provide basic first aid cover. The scope of the cover provided needs to be understood by event organisers. These organisations will conduct their own assessment of the cover required
- Trained first aiders may be used at the event, providing cover in various capacities, eg club members, water sports centre staff. The presence of additional qualified first aiders in safety launches is desirable
- Qualified medical personnel, often Club members, are highly desirable. They are not covered by the ARA's insurance but by their own professional indemnity, which they should check. It should not be assumed that all medical personnel are qualified to deal with all types of incident that may occur
- Depending on the assessment of the requirements for the competition, paramedics, who are well qualified to deal with the majority of incidents encountered at rowing events, may be used

Make sure you know what to do in an emergency

### Incident Control and Communications

If there is a medical occurrence, it is vital that it is clear who is in charge of handling the incident. There are likely to be a number of radio or telephone communications systems and it is essential that race officials, rescue launches and first aid providers understand how these systems interrelate both before rowers take to the water and for the duration of the competition.

### Incident reporting and Medical Returns

All incidents must be recorded and reported online. Where first aid is required an ARA Regatta/Head Medical Return must be completed.

The various medical and rescue organizations may have their own recording systems, but cannot be relied upon to capture the information required by the sport.

### The First Aid Box

There is no standard list of items to put in a First Aid Box, it depends on what you assess are the needs of your club. However, as a guide and where there is no special risk at the club site, both on and off the water, a minimum stock of first aid items should be:

First Aid knowledge can save lives

Leaflet giving general guidance on first aid x 1  
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive waterproof dressings (assorted sizes) x 20  
Sterile eye pads x 2  
Individually wrapped triangular bandages (preferably sterile) x 1  
Safety pins x 6  
Medium-sized (approximately 12cm x 12cm) individually wrapped sterile unmedicated wound dressings x 6  
Medium (approximately 10cm x 10cm) sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings x 2  
'Micropore' tape 2.5cm x 1 roll  
Disposable gloves – non latex x 2 pairs  
Scissors x 1 pair  
Antiseptic cleaning wipes x 6  
Resuscitation face shield

Other items you may consider are:

Eye bath and sterile eye wash  
Eye pad  
Sterile individually wrapped unmedicated wound dressings large and small (15cm x 15cm and 5cm x 5cm)  
Spare supplies of frequently used items

*NB You should not keep tablets or medicines in the First Aid box.*

**The above is a suggested contents list only, equivalent but different items are considered acceptable.**



# 5.2 First Aid

## Rescuing and Resuscitation

On finding a person in the water who is in need of rescue:

**Approach** – establish there is no danger to yourself or the victim. If the person is in difficulties DO NOT go into the water to attempt a rescue – you may also become a victim

**Look** – is there something to help pull the victim out – a stick, some rope, clothing etc.

**Reach** – try to reach the person, but first lie down to prevent yourself being pulled in to the water

**Throw** – if the victim cannot be reached, throw any floating object, football, plastic bottle as a support

**Tow** – pull the victim steadily to the bank

If in a safety launch, carefully approach the victim if it is safe to do so, and bring to the shore. Remember to engage neutral or stop the engine to avoid serious injury from propeller

**Remember** - there may be neck or back injuries requiring extra care when moving the victim

Resuscitation, to be effective, must be started immediately, even if the patient is in a launch, otherwise irreversible damage or death may occur within a few minutes.

The saving of life during a medical emergency depends on the accurate assessment and proper management of the ABC of resuscitation;

- A – Airway
- B – Breathing
- C – Circulation (signs of life)

## Further information

### Row Safe – related sections

- 1.8 Cold Water Immersion & Hypothermia
- 5.1. Sunburn, Heat Stroke & Exhaustion

### ARA website

- Basic Life Support poster

### Other

- Royal Life Saving Society – [www.rlss.org.uk](http://www.rlss.org.uk)
- British Red Cross – [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)
- St John Ambulance – [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)



# 5.3 Water-borne Infectious Diseases

## Beware of bugs, blooms and bio-hazards

### Responsibilities

#### Personal

- Follow the advice and training given by the club and coaches on the prevention of contact with potentially harmful diseases
- Adopt these measures as part of your routine before, during and after rowing
- Be aware of the symptoms of water-borne diseases and to know what action to take

#### Club

- Provide information on diseases most likely to be encountered by club members, either on their home water or when they visit other venues
- Display posters in appropriate places (Safety Notice Board, changing rooms, toilets etc) informing members of the dangers, avoidance, symptoms and treatment of water-borne diseases

#### Coach

- Make yourself aware of the diseases likely to be encountered on your home water or at other venues that club members may visit
- Include knowledge about the prevention and the symptoms of water-borne diseases as part of your training programmes
- Be aware of the potential dangers of contact with water-borne diseases, the immediate treatment of someone suspected of coming into contact with a possible contaminant, and the need to seek medical attention
- Be aware of measures to reduce the possibility of contact with potentially harmful diseases and train your crews in the routine use of such measures

Water,  
water  
everywhere,  
but not a drop  
to drink

#### Club Water Safety Adviser

- Make yourself aware of the diseases likely to be encountered on your home water or at other venues that club members may visit
- Be able to recognise the causes of water-borne diseases (eg algal blooms) and their symptoms
- Be aware of the treatment for someone who may contract such diseases
- Have knowledge of the preventative measures that should be used to avoid contamination and so reduce the likelihood of infection
- Advise the club in all of the above

## Minimum standards to be adopted

Information about water-borne diseases, prevention and symptoms should be provided to all members. Club members should be advised:

- Never drink water from a river or lake
- If contaminated water has been swallowed, refer to your doctor with full details of the incident
- Only drink from your own water bottle
- Always shower after contact with the water
- Wash hands thoroughly and shower if necessary before eating or drinking
- Do not throw your coxswain into the water
- Cover cuts and abrasions (including blisters) with waterproof dressings
- Wear suitable footwear when launching or retrieving a boat, particularly if it is necessary to wade into the water to prevent direct contact with the water and protect the feet from cuts and abrasions
- Avoid immersion in, or contact with, water, particularly if there is an algal scum or bloom
- Do not splash river or lake water onto your face or body in order to cool down (take a bottle of tap water with you for this)
- Hose down all equipment after outings to remove any potential contamination
- Keep oar handles clean particularly if contaminated with blood
- Wash, and thoroughly dry, any contaminated clothing before re-use
- Maintain your immunisation regime against Tetanus, also Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Polio, Typhoid and Dysentery when training abroad

## Further good practice

(In addition to minimum standards to be adopted)

#### Personal

- Avoid jumping into, or swimming in, rivers and lakes
- Don't submerge hands or legs over the side of the boat in order to cool down (take a bottle of tap water with you for this)
- Don't splash river or lake water onto a sticking slide or oar (take a bottle of tap water with you for this)
- Do minimise contact with water by wearing close fitting clothing

#### Club

- Supply alcohol wash bottles in the boathouse

Now  
wash your  
hands

# 5.3 Water-borne Infectious Diseases

## Further information

The water we row upon is not always as clean as we would choose and certainly is not pure enough to be swallowed without giving more than a passing thought to the possible effects it will have upon our internal systems. The ARA Guide to Safe Practice in Rowing has, as its primary aim, the prevention of accidents involving physical injury, damage to equipment and, at worst, drowning. However, there are other risks to health associated with water-based activities which arise from the microbiological, or chemical, quality of the water itself and of its immediate environs. The use of inland waters can never be risk free and it is essential that, as users, we are aware of the risks present.

## Water-borne diseases most likely to be encountered

### Weil's Disease - Leptospirosis

The risk of contracting Leptospirosis from recreational water is very small, however the serious nature of the disease is such that we must be aware of the dangers and should take simple precautions to reduce the risk of infection. Leptospirosis is an infection caught through contact with infected animal urine (mainly from rodents, cattle or pigs). The causal organism can enter the body via cuts or abrasions of the skin or, the lining of the nose, mouth, throat or eyes. If flu-like symptoms develop shortly after contact with the water (1-3 weeks) then your doctor should be contacted and advised of the circumstances of exposure.

### Blue-Green Algae - Cyanobacteria

Cyanobacteria are commonly found in fresh and brackish water during mid to late summer. Algal blooms can form during extended periods of warm, settled weather. The blooms may be flocculent or have a jelly or paint-like appearance and are normally blue-green in colour though red, brown or black forms can occur. Algal scums accumulate downwind on the surface of lakes and slow moving water. The majority of blooms produce allergens and/or toxins and have caused the death of animals, including sheep and dogs. In humans they can cause eye irritation, dermatitis and joint/muscle pain or, more seriously, gastro-enteritis, pneumonia, liver damage and certain neurological conditions.

### Gastro-intestinal illness

The use of inland water will never be risk free and it is essential that users are aware of the risks involved in using a particular stretch of water. Assessing the risks posed by water quality is difficult as conditions can vary substantially in a very short space of time. In general, the health risk will depend on the number and proximity of sewage effluent discharges in any particular body of water. There are currently no microbiological standards for recreational water and, at present, only the powers

provided under the Public Health Act 1936 - Section 259, to deal with 'any pond, ditch, gutter or water course which is so foul or in such a state as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance', provide us with protection. Many organisms causing gastro-intestinal illnesses (eg Salmonella) can be found in water contaminated with sewage and extra precautions should be taken when rowing on flood-water and water known, or suspected, to contain sewage.

### Hepatitis A

Hepatitis is caused by a virus present in faeces and is, therefore another condition that may be contracted from water contaminated with sewage. The onset of Hepatitis can be abrupt and symptoms include fever, jaundice and abdominal discomfort.

Other potential infections include Polio, Tetanus and Typhoid, though they are less likely to be found in British waters.

### Other

- HSE Guidance on Leptosporosis

