



More and more clubs are choosing to have their training camp overseas. The warm weather training camp is no longer the preserve of the very serious rower, even beginners and intermediate level rowers are now wanting to go abroad on camp as more training venues and low cost flights become available.

However some important factors face our rowing tourists:

- As an ARA affiliated club you operate under the ARA Water Safety Code whether you are in the UK or not.
- Local safety codes may also exist with specific requirements that you must observe.
- One of the big attractions of training camps is rowing in conditions we don't experience in the UK. This normally means big lakes. Hopefully you will get flat water and lots of it. However, big lakes can also blow up with big waves.
- Conditions experienced in these venues are often outside the experience of the average UK rower.
- Bear in mind the temperature differential between your home country and the camp. There can also be significant weather changes during the camp. "On the Tuesday it was all-in-ones and sun tan lotion, trying to stay hydrated. On the Wednesday we were scraping ice off the boats. We didn't have enough kit to stay warm".
- Some clubs have experienced a lack of safety equipment provided by the venue. A lot depends on the host's safety code and your relationship with the venue. Is your club hiring or borrowing the facilities? Have you arranged this before your visit?
- Check mobile phone coverage - is it everywhere except where you need it?
- The lack of discipline in applying what safety regulations exist by the host venue. Just as in this country it is sometimes those that should be setting the best example who break their own regulations.

- The lack of shared information either locally or in UK e.g. clubs not telling other clubs what they have learnt from a particular venue.
- Is sufficient safety information provided to the participants (before travel and on arrival)?
- If your coaches are driving launches then the only recognisable international qualification is the RYA level 2 power boat course, which may be mandatory in some countries. This is recommended by the ARA.

Organising a training camp brings with it a high level of responsibility particularly with safety issues. To assist training camp organisers therefore, the ARA have produced a checklist covering various safety aspects that need to be addressed in the planning stages. This list however should not be regarded as definitive, but as the basis for a safe and worthwhile training camp.

Also see the Training Camp checklist