



BRITISH ROWING

# **Guidelines for Dealing With the Aftermath of a Serious Incident at a Club or Competition**

**March 2023**

Serious incidents resulting in life-changing injuries or fatalities are fortunately very rare in rowing. However it is prudent to be prepared to manage such a situation at your rowing club or competition.

These guidelines are intended as a checklist for various aspects of dealing with the aftermath of a serious incident at your rowing club or competition. Depending on the circumstances, other actions may also be appropriate.

## **Emergency services**

If the incident involves the emergency services, then they will take charge of the incident. Please co-operate and do whatever you are asked to do to help.

## **Media including social media**

A major incident may generate interest from the media. You should have an agreed process for dealing with enquiries.

Nominate a single point of contact to communicate with the media in relation to this incident. This will help to ensure a single consistent message. The contact may vary according to the nature of the incident and who is available at the time. It is often common sense that the person is located at or near to the incident. The person should have the authority to speak on behalf of the club.

Discourage other members of the club from talking to the media unless requested to by the designated communications lead.

Prepare a statement about the incident. This will help you to clarify your thoughts and provide the single consistent message. Stick to the known facts, avoid the temptation to speculate about the incident. You may need to put this statement into context by speaking to the media “off the record”. Again make sure that this is done consistently.

Decide how you will communicate with the media. Are you prepared to give interviews or do you simply want to provide a written statement?

Try to discourage club members from taking and sharing photos and from posting online information or comments about the incident. Discourage speculation about the incident.

Manage the club’s own social media and digital channels. Some clubs have scheduled posts about club activities or events; check whether any scheduled posts are going to be made and, if necessary, shut down the site until the incident has passed. For example, if a scheduled reminder about a club dinner appears shortly after a major incident has occurred this will appear thoughtless and disrespectful.

## **Welfare**

Think about what support your members may need to cope with the distress of a major incident. Provide contact details for organisations who can help. Some suggestions can be

found on the British Rowing website here <https://www.britishrowing.org/mental-health/> in the Signposting>Helplines, Charities and Organisations section.

## Who to notify

Notify the Chair of your [Regional Rowing Council](#).

Notify British Rowing comms team at [pressoffice@britishrowing.org](mailto:pressoffice@britishrowing.org).

Report the incident using the [British Rowing Incident Reporting System](#) so that others can learn from your experience.

If appropriate, notify the local water authority.