CLUB SUPPORT GUIDES

BRITISH ROWING

RowSafe

Safety advice for rowers, clubs, and competitions

2026 Changes

Introduction

The Update Process

British Rowing is a learning organisation, and our knowledge continues to evolve. RowSafe will be updated periodically to accommodate this learning.

Updates will be made on an annual basis around spring of each year. Each version is dated to help users to ensure that they are using the most recent version. A summary of the changes at each update will also be provided.

Users are invited to ask questions, make comments and suggest improvements; to do so please write to safety@britishrowing.org.

Version	Update date
2016	November 2016
2017	April 2017
2018	April 2018
2019	April 2019
2020	October 2020
2021	April 2021
2021	April 2021
2022	April 2022
2023	April 2023
2024	April 2024
2025	April 2025
2026	February 2026

Contents

1. Culture and Expectations

1.1. Roles and Expectations

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Assist, and if necessary, rescue anyone they find to be in distress, even when racing.
- Intervene if they see anyone who may be considering self-harm, or taking their own life (see Safety-Alert-Small-Talk-Saves-Lives.pdf)

Further Information

- Safety Alert – Small Talk Saves Lives - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Safety-Alert-Small-Talk-Saves-Lives.pdf

1.3 Club Safety Policy

A club may decide to extend the scope of its Policy to include the Environment. A specimen Safety and Environmental Policy is provided below should your club choose to do so.

Further Information

- RowSafe 1.2 - Positive Safety Culture
- RowSafe 1.3.1 - Specimen Club Safety, and Safety and Environmental Policies - see examples below

1.3.1 Specimen Safety Policy and Safety and Environmental Policy

Club Safety and Environmental Policy	(++ insert Club Badge or Logo ++)

+++ insert name of club +++ has a zero tolerance for anyone or the environment being harmed as a result of our members' participation in the sport.

We believe that harm is not an inevitable consequence of our activities and that incidents that cause harm can be avoided. We will strive to provide an environment in which the sport can be practised safely and enjoyably by our members whilst causing no harm to the environment. We will guide and lead our members in a way that fulfils these aims.

We recognise that our members have primary responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others, together with a responsibility to protect the environment.

The Club, through its Officers and Committee, will encourage safe practice having due regard for the guidance provided by British Rowing in RowSafe and in the Sustainability Guidance

The Club has safety rules that it expects its members to respect; these can be found (insert location). Complying with these rules will help to prevent harm.

The Club is also committed to learn from the incidents it becomes aware of and will share this information to help others in the sport to learn too. We are committed to make appropriate use of British Rowing's Incident Reporting System to report both Safety and Environmental Incidents.

Members are invited to refer any questions and concerns, relating to safety, to the Club's Rowing Safety Adviser (insert name) or his (or her) deputy (or deputies) (insert name(s)).

Signed by Chair: ..... Date: .....

3 Club Safety

3.1 Club Risk Assessment

Barriers come into effect before the hazardous event and tend to make it less likely to happen. Barriers identify things that should, or should not, happen and therefore can translate into rules. This all follows from the definitions.

Further Information

- Lessons Learned from the Dove Pier Incident - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Dove_pier_LESSONS_FOR_ROW_PDF-MI.pdf

3.2 Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

Safety Rules specify the behaviours that the club requires of its members and any behaviours that it would find unacceptable. Rules should be simple, specific and concise.

This all follows from the definitions. Barriers come into effect before the hazardous event and tend to make it less likely to happen. Barriers identify things that should, or should not, happen and therefore can translate into rules.

Safety plans could also include the routine maintenance of barriers, such as:-

- information when there are algal blooms or contaminated water

Expectations

Club

Safety Rules could include:

- Rules for club members covering their responsibilities in relation to safe practice.
- Not roll leggings down to the rowers ankles in boats that could capsize (doing so makes swimming difficult).
- Older steers may gain assistance from head mounted mirrors, or similar devices, if their neck flexibility is reduced.
- Rules relating to the use of launches, including that drivers should be at least 18 years old unless accompanied by a responsible adult. See Safety Alert - Children Driving Launches.
- Rules relating to Overtaking, including rules requiring crews being overtaken to move towards the edge of the navigation channel (usually towards the bank) and those overtaking to move towards the centre of the waterway but only when it is safe to do so. Overtaking crews do not have right of way.
- Not wearing earphones, etc. when afloat as this can make shouted warnings and alarm sounds difficult to hear.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Avoid instructing crews to turn upstream or upwind of obstructions.
- Instruct crews to take care to avoid straying into the centre of the waterway.
- Teach rowers to keep a good lookout and not rely on shouted warnings.
- If they use bikes, then ensure that they do so with due regard to the safety of themselves and others.

Further Information

- Joint guidance for Rowers and Paddlers on shared water - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Guidance-for-Rowers-and-Paddlers.pdf
- COLREGs - MSN 1781 (M+F)

3.3 Club Emergency Response Plan

The Club Safety Plan and Rules (see RowSafe 3.2) describe what members and others should do to make an incident less likely to happen. Plans should be simple, specific and concise.

Club Emergency Response Plans stem from the Risk Assessments. In most cases the Emergency Response Plans are derived from the Controls. In some cases these could be written as Safety Rules (e.g. always have a launch alongside inexperienced scullers). This is just expressing a control as a "shall do action".

3.5 Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

Training camps and rowing on unfamiliar waters introduce additional hazards that should be identified and risks that should be assessed. A Training Camp Safety Plan should be developed that will reduce risks to acceptable levels. Plans should be simple, specific and concise.

Expectations

Training Camp Organising Committee

Training Camp Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure biosecurity by Checking, Cleaning and Drying their equipment before using it at a rowing cam or on unfamiliar waters and doing so again before using it on home waters. See Rowers » NNSS

Further Information

- Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS) advice to rowers - Rowers » NNSS

3.7 Capsize and Recovery

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Not swim with the boat unless the rower is close to the bank and in easy conditions.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Avoid whole crew catch drills with less experienced rowers (e.g. use “front end slaps” with feathered blades).

3.9 Adaptive Rowers at Clubs

Useful Websites

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: https://adhduk.co.uk/

4 Competition Safety

4.2 Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules

This all follows from the definitions. Barriers come into effect before the hazardous event and tend to make it less likely to happen. Barriers identify things that should, or should not, happen and therefore can translate into rules.

Emergency Response Plans are based on Controls that come into effect after the hazardous event has occurred and tend to limit its consequences. In some cases, these could be written as Safety Rules (e.g. coxes shall wear lifejackets). This is just expressing a control as a "shall do action".

Competitions are advised to restrict themselves to only having the rules that they really need and ensuring compliance with those few rules. The consequences of failure to comply with a Safety Rule (a Local Rule) should be clearly specified. If they have a proliferation of rules, then people will not remember them all and one day a rule that is important will be forgotten. Rules should be simple specific and concise.

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Assist clubs to adhere to the advice provided by the Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS), and Check, Clean and Dry their equipment prior to use. See - Rowers » NNSS

Participating Clubs

Officers of participating clubs are expected to:

- Tell competitors that they should not lie back in the boat at the end of a race, as if they had collapsed (unless they have).
- Adhere to the advice provided by the Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS), and Check, Clean and Dry their equipment prior to use. See - Rowers » NNSS

Further Information

- Non-native Species Secretariat (NNSS) advice to rowers - Rowers » NNSS

4.3 Competition Emergency Response Plan

It is important that this plan is implemented in a timely manner. Plans should be simple, specific and concise.

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Provide adequate First Aid cover including provision for people suffering from mild hypothermia (people with severe hypothermia should be taken to hospital). It is recommended that: -
  - Any competition medical service should be competent enough to deal with any medical emergency until the ambulance arrives. This may be up to 30 minutes. Some large competitions seriously consider whether to have a paramedic ambulance on site (with paramedic attendance, plus equipment and drugs) but remember that the risk level changes if this ambulance leaves site with a life-threatening emergency and may require stopping the competition until it returns.

4.5 Competition Navigational Arrangements

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- In head races, prepare an order of racing that minimises the need for faster crews to overtake slower crews

4.6 Alternative Arrangements Plan

Sometimes the conditions at a competition are such that it cannot safely continue as planned. It may then be appropriate to abandon or suspend the competition or make other alternative arrangements. Alternative Arrangements plans and safety rules should be simple and concise. Plans should be simple, specific and concise.

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Define an Alternative Arrangements Plan that outlines:
  - The criteria that should be satisfied to enable a suspended competition to be restarted.

4.7 Competition Safety Boat Providers

Expectations

Competition

Competition organisers should use their Risk Assessment and take the following into account when deciding on the number and type of safety launches required: -

- the number of crews afloat at any one time
- the presence or absence of umpires in launches
- the hazards on and near the course
- the level of experience and expertise of the rowers involved
- the presence or absence of adaptive rowers or rowers with needs
- the types of boats used
- the presence or absence of juniors
- the conditions on the day of the event
- the number of places where rowers can get ashore and the number where they cannot
- the presence or absence of marshals with throw lines
- the presence or absence of other boats afloat

It may help to consider your safety provision in previous years and to judge whether that was adequate. If it was, and the hazards, etc. are unchanged then it may be that the same provision will be sufficient this year.

4.8 Adaptive Rowers at Competitions

On the Water

It is best practice to keep the number of adaptive rowers requiring additional recovery protocols, on the water relatively low. High numbers should be matched by an appropriate level of safety cover,

If "Race Guiding" has been agreed for safety or other reasons the Organiser should ensure this is in place on boating. Advice on Race Guiding is given in RowSafe 4.8.3 Race Guiding.

Useful Websites

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: https://adhduk.co.uk/

4.8.2 Boat Checking

- **Body/Leg Strapping** – All strapping used by rowers should have no mechanical buckles and be released on the same side and in the same manner and direction. All leg/trunk strapping should be single-point release.
- **Hand Strapping** - All hand strapping should be able to be released immediately in a quick and safe manner

4.9 Touring

Expectations

Tour Organiser

Tour Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:-

- Know how to transit through locks safely (see below), if appropriate, and be able to explain this to the members of the tour.

Passage through Locks

The advice for passing through locks is: -

STAY VIGILANT This is the most dangerous part of any extended tour, and all rowers and coxes should be vigilant when in a lock to minimise risks.

- Remain vigilant whilst in the locks. It is not the time to relax and let go of the blades to fiddle with cameras, suncream or foot plates – all of that can be done once you are out of the lock
- Everyone should remain alert to possible dangers when boats are in the lock and ready to react quickly to avoid dangers
- Coxes should remind crews of how to behave as they go into the lock
- Crew should take their feet out of the straps when going into the lock
- When going downstream, check that the stern of the boat is well clear of the sill of the gate behind so that the rudder does not get caught
- Check that the bows of the boat are well clear of the gates and any obstructions on the sides of the lock
- Ensure that the blades do not get caught in ladders or other indentations on the wall of the lock as the water level changes
- Keep the blades flat on the water and under control
- Bear in mind that the force of the water entering or leaving the lock will move the boats forwards and backwards in the lock, as well as the level of the water changing, so keep checking for hazards
- If crowded, rafting up with adjacent boats may be useful
- If ropes are used, ensure they run freely around bollards and are long enough for the fall of the lock
- If you notice a problem, shout to the lockkeeper or the bank party so they can take appropriate action

When you are in the lock EVERYBODY in the boat has a responsibility to continually check that the bow, riggers, blades and rudder are free of hazards as the water level changes. The cox cannot see everything. If you spot a problem, alert the cox and the bank crew quickly.

All crew members should follow instructions from the cox save that in an emergency the bank leader may take over from the cox in directing the boats as the bank crew will have a better view of what is happening.

5 Competence

5.1 Steering and Navigation

Expectations

Coxes and Steers

Coxes and steers (including scullers) are expected to:

- Always keep a good lookout when afloat. Coxes who cannot see directly ahead should enlist the help of members of their crew. Steers should keep a good lookout over both left and right shoulders, perhaps assisted by a head mounted mirror or similar device.
- Know how to stop the boat quickly and safely in an emergency as demonstrated here and practise this skill with their crews.
- Where there are motorised vessels, understand the sound signals, day shapes, navigation marks and, where appropriate, lights displayed by other vessels.

Launch Drivers

Launch drivers (and Coaches when driving launches) are expected to:

- Where there are motorised vessels, understand the sound signals, day shapes and navigation marks, and where appropriate, lights displayed by other vessels.

Further Information

- Joint guidance for Rowers and Paddlers on shared water - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Guidance-for-Rowers-and-Paddlers.pdf

Other

- Day Shapes - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_shapes

5.2 Launch Driving

Expectations

Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Check the launch prior to each use (see Safety Alert – Launch pre-use checks and RNLI Outboard Pre-Start Checks) and that the lights, if needed, are working correctly. Take care to check the steering and ensure that bungs etc. are correctly fitted.
- Be conscious of their wash and drive in a way that does not inconvenience other water users. See the Safety-Alert-Consider-your-wash.pdf

Further Information

- Safety Alert Consider your Wash - Safety-Alert-Consider-your-wash.pdf

6 People

6.1 People new to Rowing

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Teach people new to rowing not to let go of their handles when afloat.
- Take time to explain to people new to rowing what is going to happen and how they will be kept safe. Explain any terminology that may be used in the outing. Terms that others may feel are self-explanatory may be a complete mystery to a person new to rowing. Do not refer to "Bowside" and "Strokeside" in a sculling boat.
- Consider using the rowing technique information here Rowing Training and Technique | British Rowing Plus and here Essential Sculling Technique for rowers - YouTube
- Teach their rowers not to row away from the launch area until the coach is ready and instructs them to do so.
- Teach rowers to launch and land their boats with the bows pointed upstream.

Further Information

- British Rowing plus technique library - https://plus.britishrowing.org/category/training-and-technique/ .
- World Rowing animation - Essential Sculling Technique for rowers.

6.2 Adaptive rowers

Useful Websites

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: https://adhduk.co.uk/

6.2.1 Rescue Provision for Adaptive Rowers at Clubs and Competitions

The Basics - a little extra thought and preparation is needed

- All officials and safety personnel should be made aware when a person with a non-standard recovery protocol is on the water (and off). Keeping the number of adaptive rowers on the water at the same time low is advised.

7 Equipment

7.2 Transport and Trailers

Expectations

Trailer Towing Vehicle Drivers and Minibus Drivers

Drivers are expected to:

- Carry the equipment that would be needed to replace a wheel at the roadside, this should include: -

- Hi Vis vests for all occupants of the vehicle.
- A method of lifting the trailer to remove and replace wheels.
- The tools needed to remove and replace the wheel.
- A replacement wheel with a correctly inflated tyre in good condition.
- A torch in case of an incident happening in darkness.
- A robust warning triangle, which stays in place.

Further Information

- The Highway Code - https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code

7.3 Safety Aids

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Wear a lifejacket when coxing, in a launch or as required by the club or a coach. Coxes in bow-loader boats should wear a manual inflation lifejacket.

Coaches

- Ensure that buoyancy aids and auto inflation lifejackets are not used by coxes in bow loaded boats. Coxes in bow loaded boats should use manual inflation lifejackets.

7.4 Launches

Expectations

Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Before each use, check that:
  - The fuel tank cap is correctly fitted and the vent is open.

8. Health

8.3 First Aid

Expectations

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Use the Club Risk Assessment to define the requirements for First Aid provision. Factors to be considered include:
  - Potential hazards such as obstructions, weirs, sluices and limited access points.

Further Information

These do not constitute formal training, but they may be of use either as a reminder, or in preparation for more formal training. The videos include: -

also

- Panic disorder - NHS

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8.5 Concussion

Expectations

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of concussion and know how to help someone who is concussed.

8.6 Coping with Illness and Diseases

8.6.4 Anaphylaxis

Treatment

The general advice is: -

ALWAYS DIAL 999 AND REQUEST AN AMBULANCE IF AN AAI IS USED."

If an AAI has been used afloat, then the crew should immediately return to the club or the nearest landing stage and call the emergency services. They should NOT continue the outing.

8.6.5 Stroke and Transient Ischaemic Attack (TIA)

A Stroke is a medical emergency that requires immediate attention as every minute is vital. If you see or experience or spot any of the signs below, don't wait. Call 999 straight away. A Stroke can be identified as follows: -

The FAST acronym (Face, Arms, Speech, Time) is a test to quickly identify the three most common signs of stroke.

- **Face weakness:** Can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?
- **Arm weakness:** Can the person raise both arms fully and keep them there?
- **Speech problems:** Can the person speak clearly and understand what you say? Is their speech slurred?
- **Time to call 999:** if you see **any one** of these signs.

Remember: Face **or A**rm **or S**peech, at the first sign, it's **T**ime to call **999**. There is more information here Stroke signs and symptoms | Stroke Association and here Stroke Symptoms & First Aid | St John Ambulance.

A mini-stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA) is not a trivial event. In the early stages of a TIA, it's not possible to tell whether a person having a TIA or a full stroke. It's important to call 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance if you or someone else has symptoms of a TIA or stroke.

A TIA is a warning sign that a person may be at risk of having a full stroke soon, and an assessment can help doctors determine the best way to reduce the chances of that happening. There is more information here Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) - NHS.

If you suspect that a person has suffered a TIA, then please do your best to ensure that they receive immediate medical care. This could save further consequences and even their lives.

Further Information

- Stroke Association Guidance - Stroke signs and symptoms | Stroke Association
- St John Ambulance Association Guidance - Stroke Symptoms & First Aid | St John Ambulance
- NHS Guidance on TIAs - Transient ischaemic attack (TIA) - NHS

8.7 What To Do If Someone Collapses

There is British Rowing guidance, produced by the Medical Panel, available here. This includes the following:-

"The three key factors in the pre-hospital phase are:

- Early CPR (chest compressions) within 20 seconds of the casualty being discovered – to buy time

Advice from the Resuscitation Council UK, here, states that

- "Bystander CPR and early defibrillation remain critical, doubling to quadrupling survival chances, and rescuers are reassured that the risk of harm is very low." and
- "For every minute that someone's in cardiac arrest without receiving CPR and having a defibrillator used on them, their chance of survival decreases by 10%. That's why it's so important to act immediately".

The current advice is that on finding someone who is unresponsive,

- Immediately call for help - call out loud and call 999 on speakerphone.
- Whilst waiting for the 999 operator to connect, check for breathing (10 seconds) and
- If not breathing start chest compressions.

It can take 20-30 seconds, or longer, for the rescuer to be put through to the 999 ambulance call taker and it is essential to start chest compressions as soon as possible. The 999 ambulance call taker will also guide the rescuer as to how to perform chest compressions etc.

It is also important to understand that heart rhythms associated with cardiac arrest are divided into two groups: shockable rhythms (ventricular fibrillation / pulseless ventricular tachycardia (VF/VT)) and non-shockable rhythms (asystole and pulseless electrical activity (PEA)). The first monitored rhythm is VF/VT in approximately 25% of cardiac arrests, both in- or out-of-hospital. VF/VT will also occur at some stage during resuscitation in about 25% of cardiac arrests with an initial documented rhythm of asystole or PEA. There is more information here.

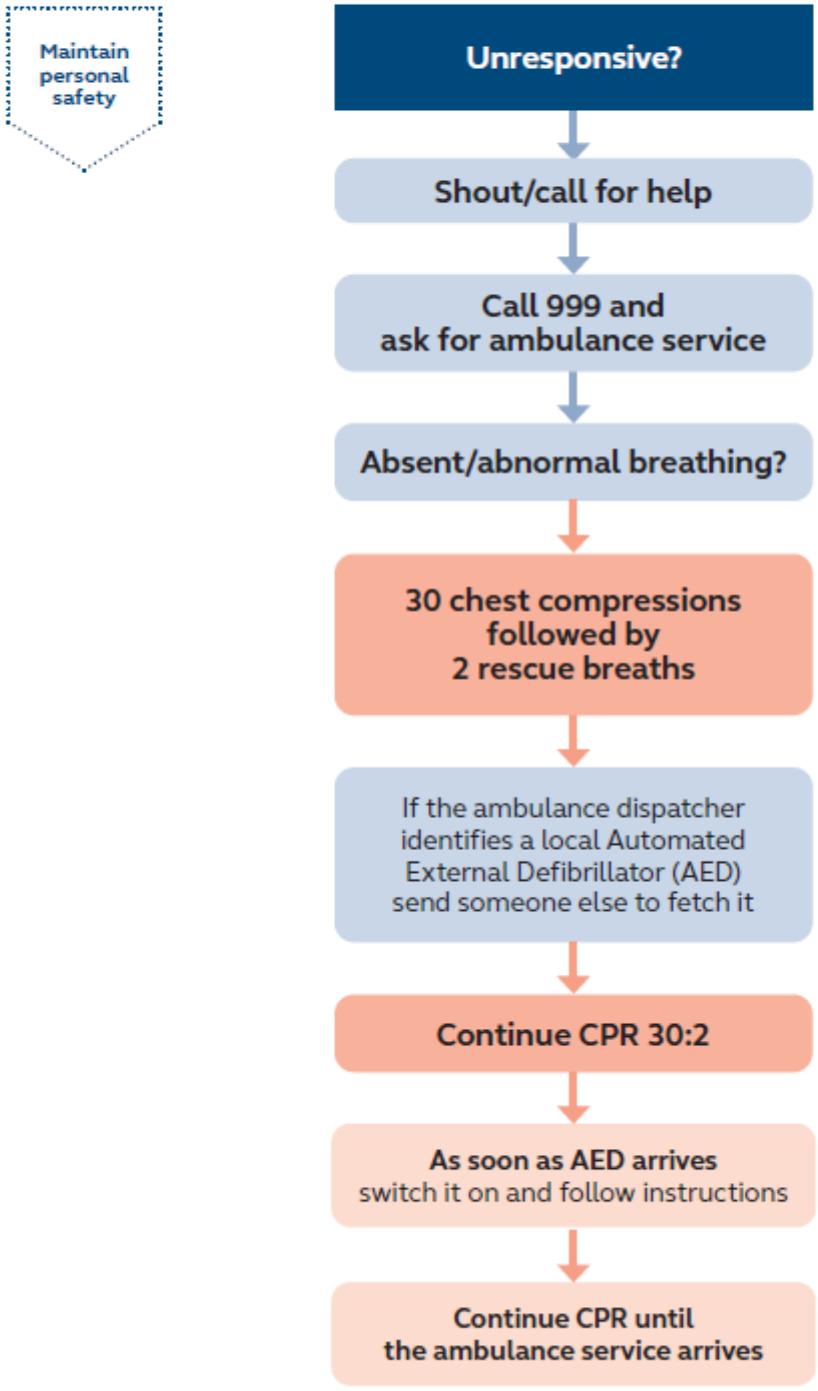
This is why an AED may instruct users to "continue CPR" and at some point, later will re-analyse the heart rhythm and may then determine that the rhythm is shockable and a shock is needed.

Please remember that, in all circumstances, it is always correct to attempt resuscitation. The chance of survival if resuscitation is not attempted is zero.

Resuscitation Council UK

GUIDELINES 2025

Adult basic life support in community settings



Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Use the BHF RevivR app to learn and practise CPR.
- Be aware that the casualty will need further assessment and advanced medical care and should be taken to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Attempting resuscitation can be distressing so offer support and counselling to anyone who has was present when someone collapsed. Further information is available from the NHS and help may be available from a General Practitioner, the NHS, Samaritans and ChildLine.
- Ensure that any AED that they are responsible for is kept in good condition and that the pads are in date and the battery is replaced when the battery condition indicator shows that this is needed or when it goes out of date. See Safety-Alert-Automated-External-Defibrillators-1.pdf

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Practise retrieval of simulated collapsed rowers from boats.

Further Information

- BHF RevivR CPR App - https://www.bhf.org.uk/revivr
- Safety-Alert-Automated-External-Defibrillators-1.pdf
- Advanced Life Support Algorithm - here
- Resuscitation Council UK - Adult basic life support Guidelines | Resuscitation Council UK

8.8 The Health Benefits of Intensive exercise for older adults.

Intensive exercise, such as indoor rowing provides several health benefits but also introduces some risks. On balance, we believe that the benefits far outweigh the risks and that, with care, these risks can be managed.

Intense exercise offers significant protective effects for older adults, including: -

- a reduced risk of chronic diseases (heart disease, stroke, diabetes, cancer),
- improved cognitive function (slowing dementia and cognitive decline),
- enhanced physical function (balance, strength, mobility), and
- better mental health.

These benefits are achieved through various physiological mechanisms that help counteract age-related decline at a cellular and systemic level. There is more detail in below.

Key Protective Effects

- **Cardiovascular Health:** Intense (vigorous) exercise can reverse a significant portion of age-related decline in aerobic power, lowering blood pressure and heart rate, and improving the heart's maximum pumping capacity. It enhances vascular function by improving blood flow and reducing arterial stiffness.
- **Musculoskeletal Strength and Function:** High-intensity and resistance training are particularly effective at building and maintaining muscle mass and strength, which helps prevent sarcopenia (age-related muscle loss) and osteoporosis (bone loss). This, in turn, vastly improves physical function and balance, significantly reducing the risk of falls and related injuries, a leading cause of injury in older adults.
- **Brain Health and Cognition:** Regular, intense physical activity is associated with a lower risk of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and can slow age-related cognitive decline. Exercise promotes brain health by increasing blood flow to the brain, enhancing neural cell growth (neurogenesis), and upregulating neuroprotective factors like Brain-Derived Neurotrophic Factor (BDNF).
- **Metabolic Health:** Intense exercise improves the body's sensitivity to insulin and helps manage blood sugar levels, which lowers the risk of type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome.
- **Immune System Modulation:** Exercise helps regulate the immune system by reducing chronic inflammation, which is often a factor in age-related diseases. It can also boost immune responses, for instance, by increasing the effectiveness of vaccinations.
- **Mental Well-being:** Intense physical activity can significantly improve mood, sleep quality, and self-confidence, while also reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression.

Safety and Recommendations

While the benefits are significant, older adults should approach intense exercise with appropriate precautions:

- **Medical Consultation:** It is important to consult a healthcare provider before starting any new, intense exercise program, especially if you have pre-existing medical conditions.
- **Gradual Progression:** Start with light or moderate activities and gradually increase intensity and duration as fitness improves.
- **Balanced Routine:** A comprehensive program should include a mix of aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and balance/flexibility exercises.
- **Supervision:** Initial supervision by a qualified professional can help ensure correct form and safety, particularly for resistance and high-intensity interval training (HIIT).

If using an indoor rowing machine, then consider: -

- Wearing a heart rate sensor that links to the monitor on the rowing machine so that there is a continuous display of your heart rate.
- Controlling the intensity of the exercise so that your heart rate does not exceed 220 minus your age or whatever algorithm you feel is appropriate
- Only exercising when there is someone else in the house
- Trying to keep the "split" times even through the piece
- Not putting pressure on yourself to improve your personal best
- Completing longer exercises (5k and 10k) and keep the exercise relatively aerobic
- Stopping immediately if the exercise becomes painful

9 Topics Covered in Risk Assessments

9.1 Weather

Expectations

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

Adopt the 30:30 rule on lightning. This states that if the flash to bang is 30 seconds or less you should seek shelter. Stay inside this shelter until 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder.9.2 The Local Environment

Rowers can also be inconvenienced, and sometimes put at risk, by the anti-social behaviour of others. If this is likely to occur, then it should be included in the Risk Assessment. See Safety-Alert-Coping-with-the-behaviour-of-others-June-2023.pdf.

Further Information

- Safety Alert – Coping with the behaviour of others, https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Safety-Alert-Coping-with-the-behaviour-of-others-June-2023.pdf
- Lessons Learned from the Dove Pier Incident - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Dove_pier_LESSONS_FOR_ROW_PDF-MI.pdf

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with the local environment

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
Bends in river or lake	• Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout over both left and right shoulders • Coach good steering • Coxed rather than coxless	Collision with bank	• Train rowers to check the equipment then (if OK) to walk the boat back into deeper water and row away • Train rowers what to do if the equipment is damaged

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
	• Circulation plan (identify areas where it is not safe to row at speed or to overtake) • Lookout on bank or launch • Local knowledge		• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat • Use throw lines from the bank to pull the boat into the bank (or shallow water) • Carry first aid kit and radio or mobile phone to contact emergency services • Have trained first aiders available
Presence of people on the water intending to inconvenience or harm rowers	• Operate a Buddy system with other rowers • Share information about anti-social events and their location • Avoid areas where anti-social behaviour is likely to happen • Have coaches in launches rather than on the bank.	Distress or harm to rowers and coaches (caused by appropriate or suggestive speech, excessive wash, obstruction, etc.,)	• Don't REACT • REMOVE yourself from the situation • REPORT to the Navigation Authority, Police, British Rowing, etc. • Offer counselling or support to the people affected (see notes on Mental Health above). • Provide First Aid, etc, to anyone injured.
Presence of people on land intending to inconvenience or harm rowers	• Operate a Buddy system with other rowers • Share information about anti-social events and their location • Avoid areas where anti-social behaviour is likely to happen • Avoid rowing under bridges where people congregate. • Try to move out of the range of people throwing objects • Have coaches in launches rather than on the bank.	Distress or harm to rowers and coaches (caused by appropriate or suggestive speech, thrown or dropped objects, indecent exposure, etc.,)	• Don't REACT • REMOVE yourself from the situation • REPORT to the Navigation Authority, Police, British Rowing, etc. • Offer counselling or support to the people affected (see notes on Mental Health above). • Provide First Aid, etc, to anyone injured.

9.3 The Water

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with the water

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
Tides	• Check the direction of flow past fixed structures (buoys, bridges etc.) • Observe how other crews are navigating and communicate with them about the state of the tide. • Only make changes to your navigation pattern once you are completely sure the tide has turned • Avoid racing or doing pieces when you are unsure of the tide direction • Keep a particularly good lookout	Confusion about changes in navigation rules at the turn of the tide	• Stop clear of other vessels and wait until the situation becomes clear.

9.4 Other Water Users

There may once have been a time when rowing boats were the only boats on the water and rowers could do whatever they wished. If that ever was the case, then it is no more. We now share our waterways with others such as anglers, canoeists, paddle boarders, swimmers, dinghy sailors, motorboat users, etc. We have no more right to use the waterway than they have. We will all have to learn to respect, and cooperate with, each other.

There are times and places when we can no longer use our waterways as racetracks and our coaches can no longer produce wash with impunity, not that they ever could.

Further Information

- Joint guidance for Rowers and Paddlers on shared water - https://www.britishrowing.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Guidance-for-Rowers-and-Paddlers.pdf
- Safety Alert – Look out for Swimmers - Microsoft Word - Safety Alert - look out for swimmers (KB)

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with other water users

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
Swimmers in the water	• Keep a good lookout for swimmers • Warn the swimmers of the presence of the rowers.	Collision with a swimmer	• Rescue the swimmer using a launch or provide whatever assistance is appropriate.

	• Warn the rowers of the presence of the swimmers • Operate a buddy system so that one crew can more easily see swimmers ahead of another crew and warn the other crew (and the swimmer if possible) • Carry a communication device (radio or mobile phone in a waterproof case) to warn other crews and coaches of the presence of swimmers.		• Administer First Aid • Use the communication device to call for help. • Call 999 for external help if needed • Use the boat to support a conscious swimmer in the water • Call for help from other boats, coaches and other swimmers • If the swimmer cannot help themselves and no other help is available, then consider entering the water and supporting them using the boat to provide buoyancy

9.5 Going Afloat and Landing

Expectations

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Supervise rowers using winches and other similar mechanical equipment.

9.6 Around the Boathouse

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards Around the boathouse (including handling boats on land)

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
Solid fixed objects (riggers, boats, racking, etc.)	• Clear indication of what should go where (housekeeping) • Coaching people to take care in the boathouse • Good control and instruction (coxing) • "Cushioning" the ends of riggers	Collision of person with fixed object (e.g. walking into rigger)	• Have first aid kit available • Have trained first aiders available
Lifting and carrying boats, oars, etc.	• Coach good lifting technique • Assistance from additional people • Good control and instruction (coxing) • Ensure that one person controls all the movements of each boat.	Strains and Musculo-Skeletal Disorders	• First aid • Rest • Gentle exercise • Physiotherapy

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
	• Good control and instruction (coxing) • Ensure that one person controls all the movements of each boat. • Keep a good lookout (coach/cox) • Good technique (oars)	Person struck by object being carried	• First aid treatment

9.10 Rowing in floods

Example Risk Management Plan

Stationary objects, such as buoys, in fast moving water are hazardous

Hazard	Barriers (to reduce the probability)	Hazardous Events	Controls (to reduce the severity of harm)
The flow of water past anchored stationary objects such as:- • Moored boats • Buoys (both for navigation and mooring) • Bridges • Pontoons • Weirs and sluices • Floating docks or • Any other obstruction that the water flows past quickly	• Finding a land based alternative activity • Finding an alternative stretch of water (e.g. a canal) where the water is moving less quickly • Revision of the circulation plan to take the obstructions into account • Taking care to avoid the obstructions • Not stopping or turning upstream of an obstruction • Using coxed rather than coxless boats • Having a coach in a launch supervise the outing and provide an extra lookout	Boats can be swept into a stationary object and perhaps pinned against it or pulled under it	• Using a launch to rescue the crew and then returning for the boat • Provision of helpers with throw lines on the bank • Provision of support by a properly trained and equipped First Aider

10 Rowing on the Sea

10.1 Coastal and Inshore Rowing

Expectations

Coxes

Coxes are expected to:

- Complete the appropriate online coxing workshop.

10.2 Fixed Seat Sea Rowing

Expectations

Coxes

Coxes are expected to:

- Complete the appropriate online coxing workshop.

Further Information

- Online Coxing Workshops - online coxing workshop

10.4 Beach Sprint Risk Management

Aim

The aim of this section is to assist coaches, clubs, organising committees and others with the Risk Management process for beach sprint rowing activities in order to deliver training and events with high standards of safety.

Introduction

The information in this section of RowSafe is presented as four separate elements:

- Safe People,
- Safe Equipment,
- Safe Practice and
- Safe Place.

These are supplemented by sections on: -

- Daily Risk Assessment and
- Risk Rating Calculator

Each element will outline advice and guidance to enable beach sprint rowing activities to be conducted with the lowest reasonably practicable level of risk. It is not the intent of this section to detail the safety procedures to be followed in every possible situation: the range of possible activities, training methods, and variability in training locations is far too wide to keep up to date with change and development in techniques and practices.

Other than stating clearly the specific best practice, it aims to identify the internet links to appropriate national and international safety regulations, codes or advice, that supervising coaches and organisers are advised to use as an aid to conduct safe activities.

In all cases of referenced documents and instructions, the latest published edition at the time of reading is the authoritative source, regardless of whether it is directly referenced in this document. In all cases the latest policies and guidance here and elsewhere in RowSafe take precedence and should be consulted as the primary resource.

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10.4.1 Safe People

Categorisation of Rowing Ability

Individual rowing ability is split into three levels which are characterised by the performance statements in the table below: -

Ability Level	Performance
Beginner	Needs tuition in all elements including launching and landing, basic rowing technique, basic sea skills, recognising and managing coastal conditions. Needs support with self-rescue.
Intermediate	Can launch and land with minimal support. Has basic rowing technique in line with the British Rowing technical model. Has basic up wave, down wave, slalom and turning skills. Can recognise a range of coastal conditions and can adapt technique and skill accordingly. Can self-rescue. Competent to compete in local and regional and national competitions.
Advanced	Can launch and land independently. Has advanced rowing technique in line with the British Rowing technical model. Has advanced up wave, down wave, slalom and turning skills and can use those skills to their advantage in race conditions. Can recognise a range of coastal conditions and take tactical advantage of them. Can self-rescue. Competent to compete nationally and internationally.

Training

All organised training is to be directly supervised by a nominated and appropriately qualified or experienced lead coach. The lead coach is responsible for ensuring that all necessary safety requirements are observed in accordance with the Safe Practice section.

The recommended maximum staff to student ratios are outlined below. Qualified coaches may be supported by designated non-qualified assistants, provided their responsibilities are clearly outlined prior to the training session. These are recommended maximum ratios, and may be increased or decreased depending on staff experience and prevailing weather conditions.

Beginner: 1 staff to 6 students

Intermediate: 1 staff to 8 students

Advanced: 1 staff to 12 students

Competitions

A Competition Rowing Safety Advisor (CoRSA) should be nominated for competitions. Due to the nature of coastal rowing, the CoRSA should perform the additional responsibilities outlined below.

The additional responsibilities of a CoRSA include:

- To be briefed on the form and scope of the proposed competition.
- Carry out a reconnaissance and a complete full site-Specific Risk Assessment of the competition area to establish the extent of any hazards and the measures necessary to reduce any risks. In addition to the Met Office for weather and the Hydrographical Office (Easy Tide) for tidal information, local authorities should be consulted for tidal, depth, current, hazards to navigation and weather condition information.
- To advise the Race Director and Organising Committee on:
    - The Risk Assessment and the reduction measures.
    - The safety organisation required.
    - The equipment required.
    - The requirement for, and the contents of, safety rules
    - The need for briefing participants and staff and for practising safety drills.
- To establish the availability of resources that may be required, e.g. lifeboats, and how to obtain assistance.
- To act as the single point of contact for the safety support team
- To be responsible to the Race Director and Organising Committee for the safety of personnel and equipment by ensuring that risk reduction measures outlined in the risk assessments are implemented.

Safety Boat Helmsman

It is recommended that safety boat helmsmen hold a minimum qualification of RYA Power Boat Level 2 with experience of operating a power boat on the sea or a recognised equivalent qualification. Safety boat helmsmen should be familiar with the boat used, be aware of the equipment on board, and capable and confident in rescue techniques. The manning of the Safety Boat is to be determined by the lead coach or safety advisor but is never to be fewer than two people.

First Aid Qualifications

Due to the often isolated and remote locations used for training, coaches should hold an in-date First Aid qualification covering Basic Life Support or ensure such a trained and current individual is in the group. First Aid qualifications should include an assessment of the skills required to deal with the hazards associated with coastal rowing and those identified in the Risk Assessment.

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10.4.4 Safe Equipment

Safety Boat

A Safety Boat should be reliable, properly maintained, powerful enough to deal with local water and weather conditions, and large enough to accommodate both its crew and personnel rescued from the largest craft under supervision. As a guide, a scale of one safety boat for every six craft on the water is recommended. Outboard Motors should be properly fitted with propeller guards designed for that propeller. The mechanical failure of one safety boat should not compromise the safety of the overall operation.

It is advised that the suitability and limitations of any launch for affecting a rescue of rowers or boats are assessed, and it should not be assumed that rowing coaching launches are suitable coastal rescue boats. It is not a reasonable assumption that 'any launch is better than none' particularly given the challenging conditions posed by operating in the shore break.

Each safety boat operating in coastal waters should be equipped with the appropriate Safety Equipment that should include, but not necessarily be limited to: -

- An anchor and cable made fast to the boat. The cable is to be at least 3 times for chain and 5 to 6 times for rope of the maximum depth of High Water for the area of operation.
- A boat hook.
- A bailer (in addition to any self-bailers).
- Powered boats are to carry a pair of oars or paddles.
- A life ring, Perry buoy or similar type of system to assist in Man Overboard recovery.
- A First Aid kit (held on shore if the size of boat precludes otherwise) and Emergency thermal poncho or blanket.
- A clearly visible marker buoy, line and sinker to mark obstacles or lost equipment.
- A radio with spare batteries (or spare radio). A VHF equipped with DSC is recommended. Mobile telephones in waterproof pouches, are only to be used as a last resort.
- A sharp safety knife for clearing rigging etc.
- A suitable tool kit and basic spares for the outboard motor.
- An air horn or loud hailer with siren function for signalling.
- In addition to the above, all boats used in Category C, D, 6, Inshore waters, and Deep Sea (see MGN 280) are also to carry: at least 2 rocket parachute red flares, 2 orange smoke signals and 3 handheld red flares.

See also Launch Safety Kits.

In the event of a boat capsizing in deep water, the crew should stay with the boat rather than attempt to swim ashore.

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Further information

Marine Guidance Note 280 - RIB Design Properties MGN 280

Merchant Shipping Notice 1827 - Categorisation of Waters M Notice Template - MSF 5011

RYA Guidance on Propeller Guards Prop-Guards-Info-Sheet.pdf

RYA Distress Alerting Info Sheet - Distress-Alerting-Info-Sheet.pdf

Pike, D. (2013). The Complete RIB Manual: The Definitive Guide to Design, Handling and Maintenance . A&C Black. The Complete RIB Manual: The Definitive Guide to Design, Handling and Maintenance: Dag Pike: Adlard Coles - Bloomsbury

RYA Powerboat Handbook RYA Powerboat Handbook (eBook) | Products

Rowing Boat

Recommended minimum boat standards and safety equipment to be carried for beach sprint and offshore rowing are outlined in the World Rowing Coastal rules. (see World Rowing Rulebook Rule RC9)

Helmets

Helmets may be worn at any time as a matter of athlete preference, unless otherwise directed by a coach, Rowing Safety Officer, Race Director or event Organising Committee taking account of local conditions. See Safe Place and Safe Practice sections for further guidance.

Coastal rowing helmets lack a dedicated safety standard. Helmets are used as secondary functions to their primary purpose, and therefore it is necessary to identify characteristics that reduce secondary risks to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

It is recommended that helmets used for coastal rowing: -

- Be EN1385 approved.
- Be made of strong, lightweight material, e.g. plastic or carbon fibre.
- Cover head, providing ample protection to the forehead, temple and back of the skull.
- Float
- Should not feature a peak, visor or brim.
- Contain prominent and functional drainage holes.
- Must not cover the ears without functional canals to aid hearing.
- Must not be a “one size fits all” design across the model range.

Further information

RYA Helmet Information Sailing Helmets | Safety Equipment

SLSA Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Project – Surf Sports slsa-personal-protective-equipment-ppe-project-surfsports-may2015.pdf

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10.4.3 Safe Practice

Coastal rowing takes place in a flexible and rapidly changing environment; the following advice may be used to supplement that contained elsewhere in RowSafe.

There are three types of risk assessment recommended for use in coastal environments: -

- Specific Risk Assessments,
- Daily Risk Assessments and
- Dynamic Risk Assessments.

Specific Risk Assessments

Specific Risk Assessments used to assess and mitigate site-specific, club, location, or competition risks. They should be completed by a suitably qualified or experienced person in accordance with the guidance provided in Competition Risk Assessment. Importantly, coastal sites can change rapidly as a result of prevailing weather, therefore Specific Risk Assessments should be reviewed regularly and as close to the planned event as possible.

Daily Risk Assessments

Daily Risk Assessments should be used by coaches or activity leaders for typical training activities and are a tool to assist with objectively assessing daily risk. A Daily Risk Assessment should be produced that considers: -

- Coach or leader Ability (IA)
- Coach Familiarity (IF)
- Rowers Ability (SA)
- Environmental Conditions (EC)
- Local Weather (LW)
- Activity Choice (AC)

Records of Daily Risk Assessments should be kept for 3 years. A suggested Daily Risk Assessment form is included in section 10.4.5.

Dynamic Risk Assessment

Dynamic Risk Assessment is the practice of mentally observing, assessing and analysing an activity to identify and remove risk. The process allows individuals to identify a hazard on the spot and make quick decisions regarding safety. Dynamic Risk Assessments should be used in the 'live' environment to support the formal risk assessment process.

A dynamic risk assessment should be carried out if an unexpected hazard arises whilst the activity is underway; this could be as a result of an emergency or change to the activity or surrounding circumstances (for example, a sudden change in the weather conditions), which could increase the risk of injury or illness.

A dynamic risk assessment should be completed when:

- An unexpected hazard arises.
- An emergency situation develops.
- There is a significant change in the activity or surrounding environment or risk reduction measures.
- The activity deviates from the planned parameters (difficulty, duration, procedure).
- Sudden environmental changes occur (e.g. weather).
- A participant's condition changes (e.g. injury, fatigue, medical issue).

The decision-making process should involve rapidly analysing and reviewing the risks and benefits presented by the activity, making a judgement on whether the risks are proportional to any benefits, and selecting an appropriate response. An appropriate response may involve activity modification, the introduction of further risk reduction measures, introduction of personal protective equipment (i.e. helmets), or stopping the activity.

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10.4.4 Safe Place

Identifying a safe place or beach to conduct rowing depends on the interaction of several different elements affecting the shore area. The seven most frequently observable characteristics or features include

- wave height,
- wave period,
- wave type,
- surf zone width,
- surface turbulence,
- drift or crosswind, and
- offshore currents (rips).

At any particular time and position along a beach, these characteristics may result in different energy transferred into the rowing area and their effect on participant safety.

These observable characteristics may be assigned a score to produce a Risk Rating, which can be used to assist safety-related decisions such as participants wearing helmets, increasing the number of boat handlers, widening the course, reducing the timetable, or adapting the position and amount of safety boat cover. The primary purpose of calculating a Risk Rating is to provide objective information which can assist competition officials. A Risk Rating can be updated continuously throughout the event as conditions change. However, a Risk Rating may also assist coaches and activity leaders in assessing conditions during training sessions.

The aims of calculating a Risk Rating include:

- To enable activity leaders, coaches, safety advisors, officials and others to be advised of a Risk Rating in a timely and efficient manner.
- To have a consistent process for the evaluation of risk for rowing from a beach.
- To provide decision makers with information to enable them to make informed decisions.
- To provide key prompts associated with safety and risk management.
- To enable activity leaders, coaches, and officials to reduce the level of risk through mitigation.
- To act as a tool for the collection of data that may assist in determining future safety practices.

A Risk Rating Calculator has been included below.

Further information

Surf Hazard Rating: A Decision-making System for Application to Competition through the Surf Zone

MCA beach safety advice

Managing Beach Safety – GOV.UK

Waves and Beaches: The Powerful Dynamics of Sea and Coast | Patagonia UK

How To Read Water: Clues & Patterns from Puddles to the Sea: Amazon.co.uk: Gooley, Tristan: 9781473615229: Books

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10.4.5 Daily Risk Assessment

Coach or leader Ability (IA)		Coach Familiarity (IF)		Rowers Ability (SA)		Environmental Conditions (EC)		Local Weather (LW)		Activity Choice (AC)		RISK FACTOR	
												Total Score	Risk Grade
1	Expert	1	Current	1	V Competent	1	Comfortable	1	Good	2	Controlled	7 – 15	LOW
3	Very Experienced	3	Familiar	3	Competent	2	Uncomfortable	2	Changeable	5	Difficult	16 – 25	MED
6	Skilled	6	Unfamiliar	6	Inexperienced	4	Demanding	4	Adverse	10	Severe	25 – 45	HIGH
10	Newly Trained	10	Unknown	10	Novice	8	Hostile	8	Extreme	20	Hazardous	46 – 66	V.HIGH

These terms are defined below.

Date	Coach Mobile No	Course / Activity	Scoring Area / Route / Aims	Total Score	Signature
	Coach: Mob:		IA | IF | SA | EC | LW | AC		Sign in:
	Coach: Mob:		IA | IF | SA | EC | LW | AC		Sign in:

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	Coach: Mob:		IA | IF | SA | EC | LW | AC		Sign in:
	Coach: Mob:		IA | IF | SA | EC | LW | AC		Sign in:
	Coach: Mob		IA | IF | SA | EC | LW | AC		Sign in:

A list of participant names should also be kept.

DAILY RISK ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTOR

The following descriptions use a general assessment with the appropriate levels for the daily risk assessment. Instructors, leaders and risk assessors should understand the cumulative effect of risk areas before allocating a final activity choice grade. All coaches or leaders conducting Risk Assessment should be aware of 'downplaying' various subjective and objective difficulties in order to 'reduce' the activity risk. Coaches or leaders should always undertake a sensible and professional approach. Coaches or leaders are also required to carry out continuous risk assessments that may have an impact on the overall initial assessment.

COACH ABILITY (IA)

Points	Code	Description
1	Expert	An Expert instructor or leader is one who has extensive knowledge of the activity with long-term experience of associated risks. An instructor or leader can attain this level by gaining extensive knowledge of the activity and site, but also by recognised qualifications.
3	Very Experienced	A Very Experienced instructor or leader is one who has comprehensive knowledge of the activity with a wide range of experience of associated risks.
6	Skilled	Skilled instructor or leader is one who has broad knowledge of the activity with a varied range of experience of associated risks.
10	Newly Trained	A Newly Trained instructor or leader is one who has recently qualified at any level. Caution is required in adverse conditions or with inexperienced participants.

COACH FAMILIARITY (IF)

Points	Code	Description
1	Current	The coach or leader has current, detailed knowledge of the area. He or she is aware of the potential hazards involved for the particular activity undertaken.
3	Familiar	The coach or leader is familiar with the area, though not extensively. Knowledge of potential hazards, appropriate to the activity is well known.
6	Unfamiliar	The coach or leader has recent transitional knowledge of similar activity areas and potential hazards, but is unfamiliar with the particular chosen location.
10	Unknown	The coach or leader has neither knowledge nor recent transitional knowledge of the particular chosen activity area. Instructor or leaders who are unfamiliar with particular activity areas or have no 'up to date' available information may also fall into this category.

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PARTICIPANT ABILITY (SA)

Points	Code	Description
1	Very Competent	A Very Competent participant has the appropriate skills, experience and competency to carry out the particular activity. Must be mature and self-reliant to deal with all potential problems (even without the presence of the coach) and show a high-level 'duty of care'
3	Competent	A Competent participant has both the capability and proficiency to cope with activity diversities and take care of him or herself in almost any situation. The participant must be sensible with a 'duty of care'.
6	Inexperienced	An Inexperienced participant is one who has undertaken the activity before yet potentially lacks proficiency to cope alone. The coach or leader must have previous knowledge of the individual to award a higher level of competency.
10	Novice	A Novice participant is one who is completely new to the activity or unknown to the coach or leader.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS (EC)

Points	Code	Description
1	Comfortable	Comfortable environmental conditions do not hinder the activity. The environment must not produce either a physical or a mental concern for any participant.
2	Uncomfortable	Uncomfortable environmental conditions that may, in various ways, impede activity progress. Participants may feel some mental concerns when learning new skills.
4	Demanding	Demanding environmental conditions may inhibit performance of activity. Participants are likely to demonstrate unease, which could be detrimental to learning. Uncomfortable conditions hampered by poor weather conditions may lead to an increase in environmental dangers. Anxiety of participants may inhibit or reduce their performance.
8	Hostile	Hostile environmental conditions that is likely to inhibit performance of activity. Participants are highly likely to demonstrate increased anxiety, related stress, apprehension or even fear. There may be a risk of objective dangers being uncontrollable.

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LOCAL WEATHER (LW)

Points	Code	Description
1	Good	Good: calm weather conditions that do not impede the activity.
2	Changeable	Changeable: weather conditions, such as rain, increased winds or changes in ambient temperature, which may affect the activity.
4	Adverse	Adverse: weather conditions are likely to affect activity. Examples are constant rain, sleet or snow, high winds or large changes in ambient temperature.
8	Extreme	Extreme: weather conditions, will certainly affect the activity and therefore performance of participants. Weather conditions such as storm force winds, torrential rain and extreme changes in ambient temperature.

ACTIVITY CHOICE (AC)

Points	Code	Description
2	Controlled	The instructor or leader is always in control of activity. Occasionally, participants may need to perform tasks unaided. However, the instructor or leader must always be in a position to assist or stop activities.
5	Difficult	The activity has areas of safety that rely on the participant performing previously learnt safety skills, which, if performed incorrectly, may lead to an accident. Difficult activities without an instructor or leader present may rely on participants performing safety tasks.
10	Severe	The activity requires the participant to perform previously learnt safety skills in conditions, which are more hazardous. The perception of 'risk to life and limb' increases and, in some circumstances, may be real. Some potential problems are detrimental changes in weather, increased environmental objectivity and mental factors affecting the performance of participants.
20	Hazardous	The activity may potentially pose a real 'risk to life and limb', which the instructor or leader must carefully control. Participants will rely much more on the advice and support of a coach or leader. Heightened individual and group arousal and distress may dangerously affect the activity. Normally, this level of activity should not be undertaken.

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10.4.6 Risk Rating Calculator

The following factors should be taken into account when calculating the Risk Rating.

Wave Height

Wave height is the difference between the maximum and minimum water surface elevations in front of the breaking position during the passage of one complete wave. Wave height is one of the major generators of water movement at wave-dominated beaches. The wave height is proportional to the energy transferred into the surf zone and thus has a major effect on participant safety. Wave height can be assessed visually, by using weather forecast information from relevant apps or websites, or by accessing local tidal buoy data.

Wave Period

The period is the time between each successive breaking wave. It affects how quickly a competitor can recover stability from one wave to the next. A series of wave fronts with a short period is much more difficult to negotiate than a longer period series, independent of wave height. Wave period can be assessed by counting the number of seconds between each wave as it breaks on the shore.

Wave Type

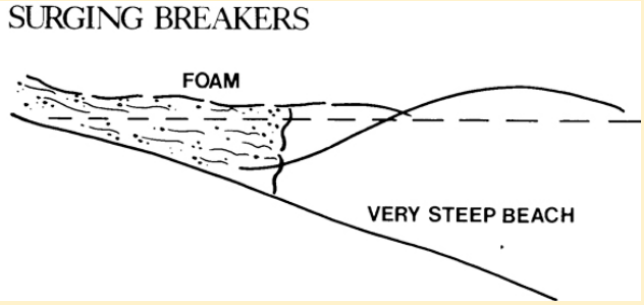
Common wave types include surging, spilling, plunging, and plunging with back-blasting.

Surging waves provide lower difficulty for rowers. There is more information here Surging waves are shown here Surging Breakers

Spilling waves dissipate their energy over a relatively large distance. They possess an increased degree of difficulty for rowers. Spilling waves are shown here #shorts Spilling Waves

Plunging waves dissipate their energy over a very short distance and often occur on steep beaches or near low tide. Consequently, the potential for injury to occur due to this wave type is much higher and is reflected in the higher scale value. Plunging waves are shown here plunging waves at Pontian

At the upper end are plunging waves that back-blast, which violently expend energy over a very limited space. They may project sand and particles backwards after the wave has broken. This type of wave has the greatest potential for injury.



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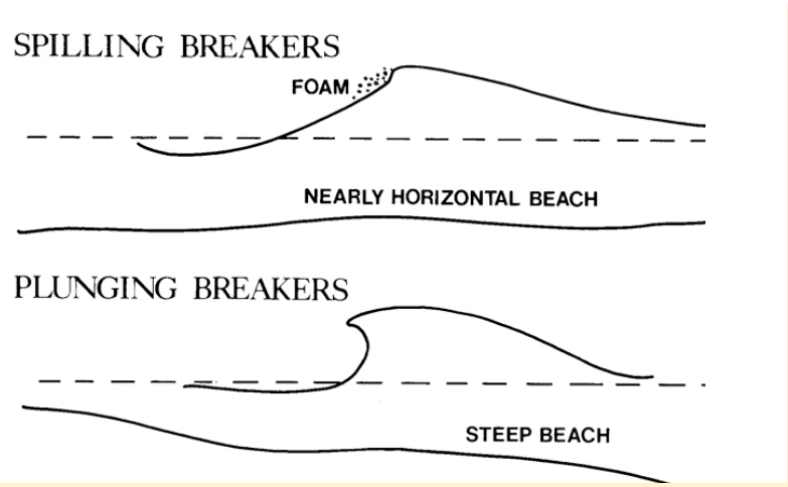

Surface Turbulence

Surface turbulence is a potential hazard because of its destabilising effect. Surface turbulence is the disturbance effect to the ocean surface caused by either

- cross-wave development due to primary and secondary wave swell interaction,
- wind chop alone, or
- the interaction of cross-waves and wind chop.

Cross-waves form at random angles to the primary swell direction and are due to local storms or reflection of the primary swell by obstructions near the shore.

Wind chop consists of small wavelets or localised roughing up of the water surface due to the combined effects of wind gusts of various speeds and directions.

Surf Zone Width

The surf zone is the distance from the shore over which the waves are breaking. The surf zone width has a major effect on the hazards faced by competitors as they row through it. The width of the surf zone is considered a hazard because of the potential for most other surf features to continually act upon the competitor while traversing it.

The difficulty in avoiding these other hazards increases as the zone width increases. In addition, when an incident requiring rescue operations occurs within this zone, the width is a determining factor in whether the competitor can be rapidly rescued successfully.

During activities taking place in a wide surf zone consideration should be given to the method of rescue between the limit of wadable depth and the inshore operating limit of the safety boat. In a wide breaking surf zone it may be necessary to provide surf-capable rescue methods, such as jet skis, swimmers with rescue boards, etc.

Drift or Crosswinds

Drift and crosswinds (or sideways movement across the beach) concerns the longshore speed of water movement (within the water) or the effect of a strong crosswind (on the water). This feature is hazardous to competitors due to the potential for the boat to drift across the course, either into the other lane or into an area of other water users.

It can also be hazardous while they try to negotiate the broken surf fronts because it causes craft instability and difficulties with participant rescue attempts. There is an increased risk of collision on a course affected by strong drift or crosswinds even when all other elements of risk, such as wave height, are low. Collision risk due to drift or crosswind may be especially high during a processional time trial.

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Rip Currents

Outward-flowing movement of water visible on the surface is a rip current. Rip currents increase risks involved in controlling incoming and outgoing craft as the rip nears the wave-breaking region, and may impact possible rescues of competitors.

Other Hazards

Other hazards not associated with wave-breaking, such as

- poor visibility,
- cold water,
- the presence of submerged rocks,
- water pollution,
- man-made obstacles,
- significant rock clusters,
- reefs,
- groynes,
- jetties,
- outflow pipes,
- wrecks,
- floating logs,
- thick seaweed,
- uncontrolled floating craft,
- stinging marine life and
- pot-holes near the edge

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Risk Rating Calculator Score

Wave Height					**Score**
<1 ft	1 – 2 ft	3 – 4 ft	5 – 6 ft	>6ft	
0 - 2	3 – 4	5 – 8	9 – 12	13 - 16	

Wave Type				**Score**
Surging	Spilling	Plunging	Back Blasting	
2	4	10	18	

Wave Period				**Score**
>14 s	9 – 14 s	6 – 8 s	<6s	
0	1	2	3	

Surf Zone Width (in metres)									**Score**
0	0-20	20-40	40-60	60-80	80-100	100-120	120-140	140-160	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	

This section was produced with the assistance of the British Rowing Beach Sprint Team **gbbeach@britishrowing.org**

Surface Turbulence				Score
No Chop (<5kts)	Light Chop (5-12kts)	Medium Chop (12-25kts)	Large Chop (>25kts)	
0	2	6	10	

Rip Currents				Score
None	Light	Mild	Strong	
0	1	2	3	

Total Risk Rating Score	

Safety Requirements

<10	11-18	19-25	26-30	>30
Low	Low-Moderate	Moderate	High	Extreme
Safety boat available with typical ratios No impact on timetable Two boat handlers Helmets optional Continually assess participant ability against conditions Consider collision alert method	Safety boat available on water No impact on timetable Three boat handlers optional Helmets optional Continually assess participant ability against conditions Consider collision alert method	Consider one safety boat on water per lane Three boat handlers required Helmets optional Continually assess participant ability against conditions Consider reduced timetable Consider collision alert method Consider widening course between lanes	Recommend one safety boat per lane with space for all rowers Three boat handlers minimum Helmets required Reduced timetable only for experienced athletes – consider cancellation Implement collision alert method Continually assess participant ability against conditions Consider widening course between lanes.	No water activity

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11 Land Training

11.1 Indoor Rowing

Indoor Rowing Technique

- Concept2 Stretching - https://www.concept2.nl/en/indoor-rowers/training/tips-and-general-info/stretching

12 Incident Reporting

The purpose of the Incident Reporting system is to learn from incidents and to share that learning to prevent a recurrence. It does not really matter who did what. What does matter is that we understand what happened and have some understanding of why it happened. Please try to avoid any thoughts about fault, blame and guilt; they have no place in Incident Reports. Paraphrasing "not our fault" is not learning.

Please take care to avoid profanities and swear words in Incident Reports. British Rowing has rules on abusive language incorporated into the Code of Conduct.

Further Information

- British Rowing Code of Conduct - Code of Conduct Safeguarding .docx