



ROWING
IRELAND

Row Safe

Introduction

Forward

Rowing Ireland would like to thank British Rowing for the permission to adopt their RowSafe safety book for the use of Rowing Ireland clubs. This very detailed, informative and well laid out booklet covers safety for all aspects of rowing. Rowing Ireland in particular would like to acknowledge the support and encouragement shown by Stephen Worley, British Rowing, Honorary Rowing Safety Advisor and the CEO of British Rowing Andy Parkinson

Welcome to RowSafe

RowSafe provides safety advice to rowers, clubs, competitions and everyone else associated with the sport of rowing. RowSafe is a simple and direct web-enabled directory. A one-stop shop for rowing safety information. The sections contain "Expectations" for various different groups, e.g. Everyone, Clubs, Competitions, Coaches, Rowing Ireland, the list varies a little according to topic. They also contain links to other relevant information.

The Approach

It is a myth that "health and safety" is all about stopping people from enjoying themselves. RowSafe has adopted the modern safety approach of trying to find the ways in which people can take part in an activity without putting themselves and others at unacceptable risk.

We recognise that, in the real world, there is some risk associated with every activity. A little thought can go a long way to ensuring that the level of risk is acceptable.

The need for risk assessment is a continuing theme in RowSafe. This consists of thinking about hazards and the hazardous events that they can cause. Risk can be reduced by installing 'barriers' that reduce the chances of a hazard producing a hazardous event and by having 'controls' that limit the harm should a hazardous event occur. This is explained in detail in the Safety Basics online learning resource.

Risk Assessments can be documented and detailed but these should be supplemented by considerations of whether it is safe to do what we were planning to do. We all do this every time we cross the road.

Rowing Ireland is a learning organization 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 section 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@Rowingireland.ie

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1. Culture and Expectations

The analysis of iROWsafe reported incidents has shown that most harmful incidents associated with rowing are the result of at-risk behaviour. (At risk behaviour can be defined as **a situation in which an individual or a group of individuals perform an action that can have detrimental results**)

A positive safety culture can do more to ensure everyone's safety than the technical issues that many tend to focus on.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

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I. Culture and Expectations

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

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1.1. Roles and Expectations

Everyone involved in rowing is expected to ensure they do not compromise the safety of themselves or others. Confusion in role definition can lead to necessary tasks being left to others or not being completed at all.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own safety both on and off the water.
- Ensure that their actions both on and off the water do not put others at risk.
- Examine their own actions if they are involved in an incident and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure that they have prepared for the activity that they are about to undertake, including having eaten appropriately and have sufficient drinking water.
- Ensure that they are dressed appropriately for the conditions and that their hair, if long, is restrained such that it does not interfere with their rowing.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the Club Safety Rules.
- Follow the guidance in the Club Safety Plans.
- [Report all incidents](#) both within the club and to Rowing Ireland.

Club

Club Officers are expected to ensure a positive safety culture (see [RowSafe 1.2](#)) and safe practice within the club; they are expected to:

- Establish and publish a Safety Policy in which they commit to safety.
- Provide a safe environment for their members and others to enjoy their sport.
- Appoint a Club Rowing Safety Adviser (CRSA) (see [RowSafe 3.4](#)), to lead and advice on promoting safe practice.
- Support the CRSA and take their advice into account.
- Establish and communicate Safety Rules that define what is, and what is not, appropriate behaviour (these may be integrated into the more general Rules of the club).
- Complete and maintain Safety Plans to guide members on safe practice in rowing.
- Provide members with education and training in risk assessment and safe practice.
- Produce and maintain a Club Risk Assessment that covers all the activities of the club.
- Complete the Rowing Ireland Annual Safety Audit and consider implementing any improvements that this suggests.
- Liaise with all water users and other stakeholders in the locality to ensure that neither will put the other at risk.
- Encourage club members to be accountable for safety and report all incidents.
- Take appropriate action if its members fail to abide by its Safety Rules.
- Account for zero safety incidents at the end of the year so that others can learn how to emulate

Competitions

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Complete and maintain a Competition Risk Assessment and use this to define Safety Plans for the competition.
- Promote and communicate safe practice in all activities associated with the competition.

- Appoint a Competition Rowing Safety Adviser (CoRSA) (see [RowSafe 4.4](#)) to lead and advise on promoting safe practice, support their CoRSA and take their advice into account.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides leadership and promotes a positive safety culture (see [RowSafe 1.2](#)).
- Provides support through safety education and training for branches, clubs, competitions, and members.
- Appoints a Chair of the Rowing Safety Advisory Committee.
- Supports the Rowing Safety Advisory Committee.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#) reporting system for documenting safety incidents
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 1.2](#) - Positive safety culture
- [RowSafe 3.4](#) - CRSA Job Description
- [RowSafe 4.4](#) - CoRSA Job Description
- [Rules of Racing](#)
- Safety Alert Archive
- Rowing Ireland [iROWsaf](#)

1.2. Positive Safety Culture

A positive safety culture is a bit like a sense of humour, it is difficult to describe but you know it when you see it.

What is safety culture?

The safety culture of any organization is formed from a combination of individual and group:

- Beliefs
- Values
- Attitudes
- Perceptions
- Competencies;
- Patterns of behaviour

These determine the commitment to, and the style of a club's approach to safety.

Clubs with a positive safety culture have:

- Communications founded on mutual trust
- Shared perceptions of the importance of safety
- Confidence in the effectiveness of their safety precautions.

Building a positive safety culture

Safety culture does not just develop on its own and it does not happen quickly. The best way to start is to help people to understand how their behaviours can influence their safety; In time this will influence that behaviour, and help people to develop positive values and attitudes.

It may be necessary to impose behaviour using rules. Eventually, imposed behaviours become learned behaviours, and learned behaviours will become natural or instinctive behaviours. This all leads to improved competence and will, in due course, help to develop attitudes and beliefs.

This does not just happen on its own; it takes leadership and commitment. A desire from the leaders of the club to improve the way members act together to keep themselves and each other safe is needed. This all starts with influencing behaviour.

Leading people to change their behaviour

The leaders of clubs can motivate and encourage their members to develop 'safe' behaviour and avoid 'at-risk' behaviour. The first step is to understand the importance of behaviour in the causation of incidents. This was described in an article in [Rowing and Regatta](#).

'Leaders' in this context are not just those in positions of responsibility but also everyone whose decisions can impact on the safety and wellbeing of others. This will include club officials, coaches, coxes, steers, rowers, scullers, parents and helpers. Almost everyone involved has some sort of leadership role.

Leaders can encourage people to improve their behaviour by first defining the behaviour that is acceptable and that which is not acceptable. This should not be a long list but should contain the issues that matter most. More can be added later as behaviour improves. This information should then be published so that members can understand it. This will influence their behaviour.

There should be consequences of both acceptable and at-risk behaviours. There should be positive consequences for acceptable behaviour and negative consequences for at-risk behaviour. This could be as simple as a coach thanking a cox who took great care when steering to avoid hazards and keeping to the navigation plan, and taking a cox who did not to one side and providing stern words of advice.

1.2. Positive Safety Culture

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Knowledge of the consequences, at the time of the behaviour tends to feedback and influence the behaviour. To be effective, consequences should be soon, certain, and significant.

Why should a club want to build a positive safety culture?

Having a positive safety culture leads to a cohesive, considerate, friendly atmosphere. It will also enhance the reputation of the club particularly amongst the parents of juniors. It will reduce the number of injuries that stop rowers from performing and it will reduce the amount of equipment damage.

This cohesion will help when it comes to competition. The pride and sense of belonging that rowers have for their club will motivate them to succeed.

A positive safety culture in a rowing club would result in everyone taking care to keep themselves and others safe. For example, members would always:

- Consider safety when deciding whether to start, or continue, an activity.
- Check their boats before going afloat.
- Take care when handling boats.
- Follow the instructions of their cox and coach.
- Take care when launching.
- Ask the opinion of more experienced club members
- Dress appropriately for the conditions.
- Always abide by the circulation plan or rules of the river.
- Keep a good lookout.
- Report all the incidents that they see and consider how they could have been avoided.
- Take care when coming ashore.
- Clean their boats before putting them away to inspect for and reduce gradual decline resulting in less safe equipment

Further Information

A positive safety culture may be difficult to define but it is an invaluable asset for any club.

For further information and training opportunities contact the Rowing Safety Advisory Committee at safety@rowingireland.ie

1.2. Positive Safety Culture

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaim

1.3. Club Safety Policy

A safety policy provides the opportunity for a club to make a clear statement of its intention to keep its members safe. It can also form the basis for the development of a positive safety culture (see [RowSafe 1.2](#)).

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Read the Club Safety Policy and show their commitment to it by signing a copy.
- Implement the policy to the best of their abilities.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Define the safety policy for their club, there is a specimen policy in [RowSafe 1.3.1](#).
- Communicate it widely.
- Invite members to commit to it by signing it.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Support the implementation of the safety policy.
- Lead by example.
- Commit to the safety policy.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides support through safety education and training for regions, clubs, competitions and members.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 1.2](#) - Positive Safety Culture
- [RowSafe 1.3.1](#) - Specimen Club Safety Policy - see example below

1.3.1. Specimen Safety Policy

Club Safety Policy	(++ insert Club Badge or Logo ++)
---------------------------	--

+++ insert name of club +++ has zero tolerance for anyone 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. 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. The Club, through its Officers and Committee, will encourage safe practice having due regard for the guidance provided by Rowing Ireland in RowSafe.

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 Rowing Ireland's iROWsafe incident reporting software

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 Chairperson/President: _____

Date: _____

NB: You can copy and paste this Safety Policy into an editable document.

2. Communication

Good communication works in many directions. In rowing it is important that clubs communicate with their members and competitions communicate with participants (including umpires and officials). Effective communication often uses a variety of media, these include personal and electronic communication.

Everyone should ensure that they are aware of the information and guidance that has been made available to them and that they should report any issues or concerns that they are aware of. It is also important to feel free to ask questions and to be able to receive appropriate answers.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

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2. Communication

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

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2.1 Communication of Safety Information

Everyone should ensure that they are aware of the information and guidance that has been made available to them and that they should report any issues or concerns that they are aware of. It is also important to feel free to ask questions and to be able to receive appropriate answers.

Communication methods include:

- In person, face-to-face
- Safety notice boards (club and competition)
- Digital communications (websites, emails and social media)
- Training and induction materials

Expectations

Everyone

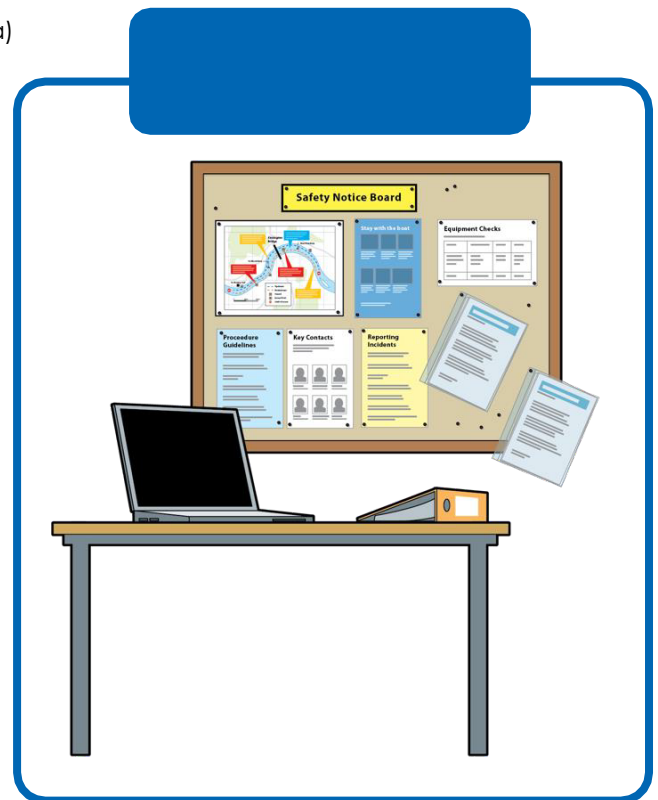
Everyone is expected to:

- Frequently check the various communication methods such as notice boards, emails and website.
- Review the information available and take appropriate action such as understanding the displayed circulation plan and abiding by it.
- Report all incidents using the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).
- Ask a responsible person whenever they have questions or feel that they need more information.
- Be aware of, and understand, the instructions and any safety requirements when at competitions.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Promptly review all advice issued by Rowing Ireland and take action when required.
- Make members aware of changes whenever the Club Risk Assessment, rules, procedures and advice are updated.
- Maintain regular communication with all local water users and other stakeholders and circulate any information to members. This could include information about sailing regattas and fishing competitions arranged by other organisations.
- Ensure that all members are aware of and able to access the communication methods used by the club.
- Review the effectiveness of the club's communication processes.
- Report all incidents using the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).



Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Communicate rules and safety recommendations to rowers under their supervision.
- Report all perceived safety issues to the Club Rowing Safety Adviser and Club Committee.
- Report all incidents using the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).

Ensure that their crews, when at competitions, are aware of and understand the instructions to competitors and any safety requirements. Read, understand and implement the guidance on Coaching Safe Behaviour

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Promptly review all advice issued by Rowing Ireland and the Competition Rowing Safety Adviser and take action when required.
- Make competing clubs aware of the Competition Risk Assessment, local rules, procedures, advice and safety arrangements.
- Publicise rules, procedures, and other requirements.
- Encourage competitors to check the communication methods used by the competition.
- Review the effectiveness of the competition's communication processes.
- Report all incidents using the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#)

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting system
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).
- Safety Alert Archive.

2.2 Make up of Club Induction Pack

The Club Induction Pack should contain information that new members would need to familiarize themselves with the operation of the club. It should provide new members with simple guidance that will keep themselves and others safe and ease their transition into full participation in the club.

The Club Induction Pack should also contain links to other information that may be needed later. If it is available on the club's website then the links should be hyperlinks.

Suggested Contents

Introduction to the Club

Provide information on topics such as:

- A summary of the history of the club.
- A list of club officials (preferably including photographs)
- A list of club First Aiders (preferably including photographs).
- Club Rowing Safety Adviser (name, photo and contact details).
- Club Safeguarding Officer (name, photo and contact details).
- Parking.
- Times when the club is open.
- Transport to and from the club.

Club Procedures

Include a list of procedures and links to each. Procedures could include, for example, the process for quarantining damaged equipment.

Safety Information

Provide information on topics such as:

- The location of club procedures; for example, are they located on the notice board or on the website?
- Responsibilities and expectations for everyone.
- Risk Assessments / Safety Plan; what they are and where they can be found.
- Safety Aids such as throw lines, lifejackets, launch, lifeguard tube.
- Declarations of Medical Conditions (for example telling a coach about medical and fitness issues).
- First Aiders and First Aid provision.
- Emergency Action Plans: what they are and where they can be found.
- Clubhouse Fire Evacuation Plan.
- Emergency Contacts.
- Incident Reporting.
- Capsize / Man Overboard and Recovery Training / Swimming ability.
- Waterborne diseases.
- Where to find further safety information on the Rowing Ireland website including RowSafe and the Rules of Racing.

2.2. Make Up of Club Induction Pack

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Navigation

Provide information on topics such as:

- Club rules.
- Circulation plan and navigation rules.
- Outing rules.
- Hazards whilst afloat and hazards on land.
- Responsibilities and expectations of cox and steersperson.
- Responsibilities and expectations of launch drivers.
- Launch driving rules.
- Launch drivers list.

Equipment

Provide information on topics such as:

- Care of equipment; for example, pre and post use equipment checks.
- Types of boats and parts of boats and blades.
- Any limitations on the equipment to be used by members.
- Responsibilities and expectations when using launches.
- Responsibilities and expectations when using the rowing tank.
- Responsibilities and expectations when land training; for example, using the gym, rowing machines, bikes and weights.
- Responsibilities and expectations when using trailers.

Expectations

Specify expectations for:

- Crew (novice and more experienced rowers).
- Cox and steersperson.
- Coaches.
- Launch drivers.
- Helpers and other volunteers

2.3 Radio Procedure (where a club is obliged to use radio equipment)

Effective use of the radios relies on keeping transmissions short and to the point, speaking clearly and following basic internationally recognised procedures.

The following guidelines are based on standard VHF radio procedure. They are internationally recognised and are consistent with the procedure regarded as standard by other radio users. The use of Procedure Words (pro-words) and the International Phonetic Alphabet makes transmissions easier to understand, especially when reception is poor. A list of pro-words and the phonetic alphabet are shown below. The pro-words are shown in red in the following examples.

Competition Organizers are advised to consider having a dedicated channel for safety and rescue communications.

Radio Channels

Marine Mobile Band VHF channels

Marine Mobile Band radios typically have 57 channels with each channel having a designated function. The following channel designations should be noted:

- Channel 16 is used for initial calling, distress and safety only
- Channel 67 is the small craft safety channel in the UK
- Channels 6, 8, 72, and 77 are the primary inter-ship channels for "ship to ship" working
- Channel 70 is reserved for Digital Selective Calling (DSC) only

Other channels are reserved for Port Operations. If you operate near a port then you should know the primary channel used by that port. Monitoring the local Port Control or Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) channel can give you advance notice of large ship movements.

A list of the channels used by Port Radio (VTS) stations, locks and bridges can be found at [British and Irish VHF Channels](#)

Some channels use different frequencies for "ship to shore" and "shore to ship" transmissions (these are known as duplex channels).

They cannot be used for ship-to-ship communications.

Avoid channels commonly used by other local water users e.g., fishing boats, other local clubs.

Other radios

Other radios may have several channels but without a designated function for each channel. It is important that your club agrees which channels are to be used or that all radio users agree this at the start of the outing.

Making a Call

Listen

Only one radio can transmit successfully at a time so if you talk at the same time as someone else one of you will not be heard.

Make Your Call

To make your initial call, say their name and yours. e.g. **"Control. This is Rescue 1. Over."**

If you do not get an immediate reply, wait a short time and then call again saying the station names twice, for example, at a competition you may say **"Control, Control, this is Rescue 1, Rescue 1. Over"**.

At sea or where communications are difficult it is quite normal to say the station names three times **, this is Gig Swift, Swift, Swift, Over."**

When the other station has replied to your initial call, pass your messages. When you have finished saying something and want to hear the other station, say **"Over"**. At the end of the conversation, one station will say **"Out"**.

For example, at a competition you may hear:

**"Control, this is Rescue 1
Over."** "Rescue 1, this is
Control. Over."

"Control, this is Rescue 1. I am in position just downstream of the bridge Over."
"Rescue 1, this is Control. Received. Out."

Always use the phonetic alphabet.

Examples of some standard calls

Radio Checks

At the start of a competition, Control may carry out radio checks to ensure that everyone can hear and be heard. The procedure for this is:

"Rescue 1, this is Control. Radio Check, please. Over."

"Control, this is Rescue 1. I have you loud and clear. Over."

"Rescue 1, this is Control, I have you loud and clear also. Out."

It is important that Rescue 1 knows that Control is receiving his transmissions.

Routine call to coastguards

A routine call may be made to the area Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre by a Gig, or any other vessel, leaving harbour and proceeding to sea if the club's risk assessment, or the local conditions at the time, determine that this is appropriate.

In this example the Rowing Ireland Rescue craft is about to leave Cork harbour and proceed to sea and wishes to call Valentia Coast Guard. . Initial call on Channel 16,

"Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue. Routine safety traffic, over."

"Rowing Ireland Rescue, this is Valentia Coast Guard, stand by on channel 67 and await my call over."

Valentia Coast Guard this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, I will stand by on channel 67 out."

Then switch to channel 67 and listen, this is what you may hear.

"Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue this is Valentia Coast Guard pass your message over."

Valentia Coast Guard this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, I am just leaving Cork Harbour and expect to return within one hour. I have three persons on board. Over."

Rowing Ireland Rescue this is Valentia Coast Guard. Received. Please call again on your safe return to Cork. Out."

If the coastguard station is not particularly busy then it may transfer communication to Channel 67 immediately, as described below. Initial call on Channel 16,

"Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue. Routine safety traffic, over."

"Rowing Ireland Rescue, this is Valentia Coast Guard, channel 67 Over."

Valentia Coast Guard this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, channel 67 out."

Then switch to channel 67 and listen, if the channel is clear then transmit your message.

"Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, Valentia Coast Guard, this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue, Rowing Ireland Rescue, over."

"Rowing Ireland Rescue, this is Valentia Coast Guard, Pass your message, over."

Valentia Coast Guard this is Rowing Ireland Rescue, I am just leaving Cork Harbour and expect to return within one hour. I have three persons on board. Over."

Rowing Ireland Rescue this is Valentia Coast Guard. Received. Please call again on your safe return to Cork. Out."

Do not forget to switch back to channel 16.

Broadcasting to All Stations

Sometimes it is important to tell everyone something e.g. that the lunch break has just started. To pass a message to everyone, call "All Stations".

"All Stations, this is Control. Be aware that the lunch break has started and the next race is due to start at 13:00. Out."

This should be used when you need to communicate information to everyone. End the message with "Out" if you do not expect anyone to reply.

Distress calling - Mayday

The word Mayday is derived from the French *m'aidez* (help me). It is only to be used when there is grave and imminent danger of loss of life or a vessel and immediate assistance is required. "Mayday" calls take precedence over all other transmissions.

For example, on Marine Mobile Band, channel 16:

"Mayday Mayday Mayday Rogue All Stations, this is Ilfracombe Gig Rogue Rogue Rogue My position is In The Range, half a mile north of Ilfracombe Harbour. We have capsized and the boat is awash. We require rescue. There are seven persons in the water with the boat. All the people in the water are wearing lifejackets. There are no other boats in the vicinity. All Stations, this is Rogue Over."

At this point the Coastguard would respond to Rogue to confirm the information whilst another Coastguard officer would alert the appropriate Lifeboat station or Air Sea Rescue helicopter base.

If there are other vessels in the area then the Coastguard would retransmit the message using the pre-fix **Mayday Relay**. This prefix is used by a station that is not in distress to alert other stations that a vessel is in distress. For example, it would be used by a station upon sighting a red flare or other distress signal.

All further radio transmissions not directly associated with the rescue shall cease immediately and shall not resume until permission ("**Distress Fini**" (pronounced Distress Feenee)) is transmitted. All radio transmissions associated with the rescue should commence "**Mayday** Rogue".

There is a standard order in which information should be passed in a distress or urgency situation. This can be remembered using the mnemonic "MIPDANIO", as follows:

- M** = **M**ayday
- I** = **I**dentification (the name of your vessel)
- P** = **P**osition (your location, preferably as a bearing and distance from a well-known point)
- D** = nature of your **D**istress (what is your problem)
- A** = the **A**ssistance required (what help do you need)
- N** = the **N**umber of people involved
- I** = any other relevant **I**nformation
- O** = **O**ver

The efficient transfer of information may help to save a life.

Urgency message - prefix Pan-pan

The message prefix "**Pan-pan**" is used when there is a matter of urgency but where there is no imminent danger of loss of life or a vessel. "**Pan-pan**" messages take precedence over all except "Mayday" messages and, although they do not impose radio silence automatically, further transmissions not associated with the incident should cease until the urgency has ended. There is an example below:

"Pan-pan, Pan-pan, Pan-pan, All Stations this is Umpire 1, Umpire 1. I am 50 metres upstream of the weir I have suffered engine failure but am using my anchor to maintain this position. I will require a tow. I have 2 persons on board. All Stations this is Umpire 1 Over."

"Pan-pan Umpire 1 Umpire 1 this is Rescue 1. I will be with you in 30 seconds Over"

"Pan-pan Umpire 1 Rescue 1 this is Umpire 1. Received Out"

Safety message - prefix "Securite"

A Safety message is often used to broadcast safety information. For example, a Coastguard radio station will broadcast gale warnings, upon receipt. There is another example below:

"Sécurité Sécurité Sécurité All stations this is Start Marshal, Start Marshal. A large motor vessel is about to enter the course and navigate up the centre of the river at speed. Suspend racing and clear the course. All Stations, this is Start Marshal. Out."

"Sécurité" messages take precedence over all except "Mayday" and "Pan-pan" messages.

Pro-words

This is	Indicates the Station making the call
Over	Invitation to reply
Out	Indicates the end of working (Never say "Over and Out".)
Radio Check	Tell me the strength and clarity of my transmission
Wait	If a station is unable to receive traffic, it will reply "Wait ... minutes"
Station Calling	Used when a station receives a call but is unsure who is calling
I say again / Say again	I am repeating what I have just said / Please repeat what you have just said
All after / All before	Used after "say again" to request the repetition of a part of the previous message
Repeat	Used if a part of the message is important and needs emphasising
I Spell	I shall spell the next word or group. Use the phonetic alphabet
Received	Your message has been received and understood (Do not use Roger)
Break	I am going to continue to transmit but I am going to speak to another station
Mayday	This is a distress call
Silence Mayday	Announcement to impose radio silence during a distress situation
Distress fini	Announcement made to indicate the distress situation is now resolved
Pan-pan	This is an urgency call. Urgent help is needed but there is no imminent danger of loss of life or a vessel.
Sécurité	This message contains safety information.

Phonetic Alphabet

A	Alpha
B	Bravo
C	Charlie
D	Delta
E	Echo
F	Foxtrot
G	Golf
H	Hotel
I	India

J	Juliet
K	Kilo
L	Lima
M	Mike
N	November
O	Oscar
P	Papa
Q	Quebec
R	Romeo

S	Sierra
T	Tango
U	Uniform
V	Victor
W	Whiskey
X	X-ray
Y	Yankee
Z	Zulu

0	Zero
1	Wun
2	Too
3	Tree
4	Fower
5	Fife
6	Six
7	Seven
8	Ait
9	Niner

3. Club Safety

Rowers, and other club members, are expected to take responsibility for their own safety and clubs are expected to provide education and training to help them to be safe. Clubs are also expected to provide a safe environment in which their members can enjoy their sport.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

3.1	Club Risk Assessment	26
3.2	Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules	27
3.3	Club Emergency Action Plan	30
3.4	Club Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description	32
3.5	Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters	34
3.6	Swimming Competence	36
3.7	Capsize and Recovery	38
3.8	Man Overboard	41

3.1 Club Risk Assessment

Hazard identification and risk assessment are the basis for planning to maintain and improve safety. These provide clubs with the ability to understand the ways in which harm can be caused, and to minimise both the probability of that harm occurring and the severity of harm should it occur. It puts clubs in control of their risks.

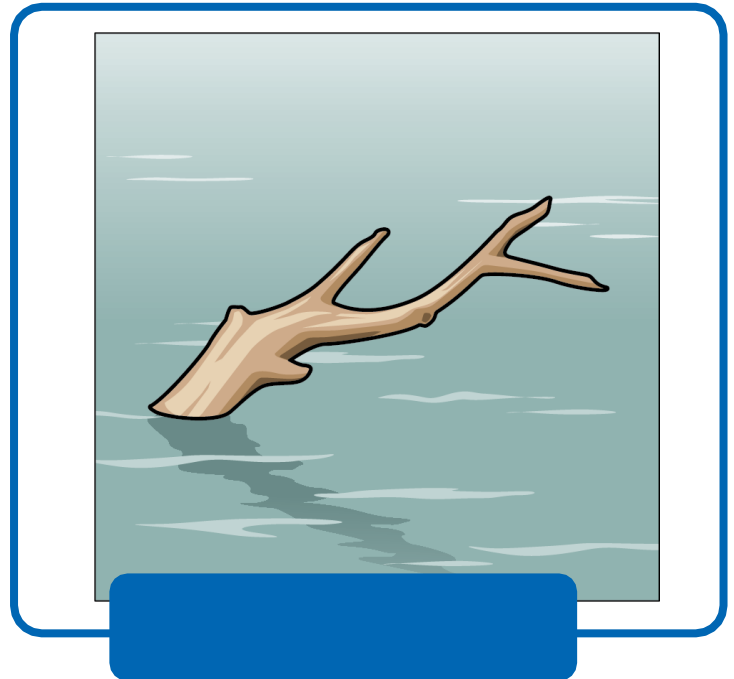
The Risk Assessment only adds value when the actions that it identifies as being needed are completed.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand, and abide by the rules that the club has defined as a result of its Risk Assessment.
- Be familiar with the club's Safety and Emergency Response Plans.
- Be aware of the hazards associated with each of the club's activities that they take part in.
- Be aware of the hazards in other club facilities such as gym, kitchen or workshop.
- Complete the Safety Basics online learning module.
- Report all incidents using the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).



Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that their club has completed a risk Assessment for each of its activities both on and off the water. Factors to be considered include:
 - Location of the club, for example remote or in a built-up area, easy or difficult access.
 - Type and extent of boating area (for example, narrow canal, wide river or lake, estuary or the sea) and the effect that this has on the type of rescue that may be needed.
 - Potential hazards such as obstructions, weirs and limited access points. There is more information on flow over weirs [here](#)
 - People, for example number of members, age and rowing experience.
 - Hazards in other club facilities such as gym, kitchen and workshop.
 - Travel time to the nearest hospitals with an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit and type of cover offered.
 - Details of the service provided by the local NHS ambulance service (this varies from region to region).
 - Availability of other rescue services such as air ambulance and lifeboat.
- Publish the club's Risk Assessments on their website or make them available to their members and the parents of junior members in other ways.
- Publish suitable Safety Plan(s) (see [RowSafe 3.2](#)) and Emergency Action Plan(s) (see [RowSafe 3.3](#)) based on the issues identified in the Risk Assessments.
- Take action, where necessary, to ensure that nobody is exposed to substantial or intolerable risk.
- Review, and if necessary, update, the Risk Assessments at least once a year.

- Review, and if necessary, update, the Risk Assessments following any significant incident at the club or elsewhere

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Be conversant with the Risk Assessment for the activity that they are leading.
- Ensure that participants are aware of, and abide by, the club's rules.
- Understand the risks associated with the activities that they are leading.
- Take action, where necessary, to ensure that nobody is exposed to substantial or intolerable risk.
- Ensure that participants are aware of the hazards that are associated with the activities that they are leading.
- Report all occurrences of disregard for the Safety Rules to the club.
- Carryout a dynamic risk assessment before going on the water.

Club Rowing Safety Adviser

Club Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Actively promote Safety within the club and have a full knowledge of the Rowing Ireland Rowsafe policy.
- Lead or facilitate the completion and review of the club's Risk Assessment.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides online learning materials, examples and templates to assist with risk management and assessment.
- Provides advice and guidance on risk assessment and control.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#) reporting system
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland iROWsafe - [iROWsafe](#)
- [RowSafe 3.2](#) - Club Safety Plans and Rules
- [RowSafe 3.3](#) - Club Emergency Action Plan
- Information on flow over weirs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYI67uZkNvQ>

3.2 Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

Safety Plans describe how members should act in particular circumstances in order to keep themselves and others safe. Safety Rules specify the behaviours that the club requires of its members and any behaviours that it would find unacceptable.

Club Emergency Action Plans (see [RowSafe 3.3](#)) describe how the club will deal with emergencies and other incidents to minimise the harm that they would otherwise cause.

Clubs are also expected to consider how they keep their premises safe and use their Risk Assessment to

Safety Rules and Safety Plans stem from the Barriers and Controls in Risk Assessments. In most cases the Safety Rules are derived from the Barriers and the Emergency Action Plans are derived from the Controls.

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 must, or must not, happen and therefore can translate into rules.

Emergency Action 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. always have a launch alongside inexperienced rowers).

This is just expressing a control as a "must do action".

It is important to distinguish what constitutes advice in a Safety Plan (e.g. wear sunscreen on a sunny day) and when the advice has to be expressed as a Safety Rule (e.g. wear a lifejacket when coxing).

Safety Plans can also contain items such as:-

- the optional parts of the navigation plan e.g. areas where it is permissible but not obligatory to row fast
- keep hydrated
- wear hi-vis tops
- washing boats after outings
- checking boats before outings
- people in the boathouse when boats are being moved

In some clubs these could be rules and in others they could be guidelines. It all depends on the individual circumstances of the club. Clubs are advised to restrict themselves to only having the rules that they really need and ensuring compliance with those few rules.

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.

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

- check the contents of the first aid kit every month
- check the lifejackets every six months or as per manufacturers recommendations
- provide capsizing training every year

determine the need for plans covering electricity and gas checks and building maintenance.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others affected by their activities.
- Read, understand and follow the Safety Plans.
- Read, understand and abide by all the Safety Rules.
- Report all occurrences of disregard for the Safety Rules to the club.

3.2. Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

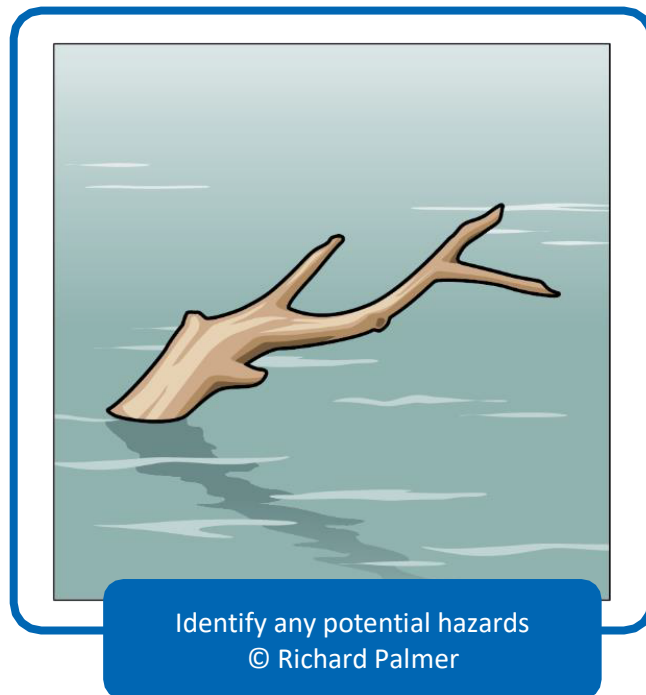
Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Produce and communicate Safety Plans and Safety Rules for all its members and coaches.
- Prominently publish and display the Safety Plan and the Safety Rules (for example, on the website).
- Modify the Safety Rules and the Safety Plan in light of incidents, Risk Assessments, Safety Alerts and developments in good practice.
- Actively promote a set of shared values and beliefs that make safe practice instinctive.
- Upload their Safety Plan as part of the annual Safety Audit.

Safety Plans should include:

- A plan of the local water highlighting hazards, navigation rules and circulation patterns and emergency access points (named and where necessary with postcodes or grid references).
- Instructions to cover any variation to normal procedures needed to manage risks resulting from tidal currents, stream, wind, floods or other climatic conditions.
- Instructions for reporting incidents orally, on paper in the club and online to Rowing Ireland.
- Vital telephone numbers relating to safety such as Club Officials, First Aiders, key holders, navigation authority, river or harbour police.
- Where appropriate, VHF radio channels and information about how to contact the navigation authority and coastguard.



Safety Rules should include:

- Rules for club members covering 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 water activity.
- Instructions to cox and steers to keep a good lookout and comply with the circulation plan and navigation rules at all times when afloat.
- Instructions to rowers to be conspicuous and wear high-visibility clothing at all times when afloat other than when they are required to wear club kit during competitions.
- Steers should be encouraged to use head mounted mirrors or similar devices.
- Rules relating to the training of junior members, people new to rowing and adaptive rowers.
- Rules relating to rowing in darkness, particularly for boats without coxes.
- Rules specifying the conditions, if any, under which crews may go afloat unaccompanied.
- Navigation rules based on the local environment, the requirements of the local water authority and agreements with other water users.
- Rules relating to the use of indoor rowing machines and gym facilities.
- Rules relating to the use of launches, including that drivers must be at least 16 years old unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

- If going to sea, rules on notifying the coastguard and navigation authority, radio channels to be used and monitored.

3.2. Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Educate and train their crews in understanding and following the club's Safety Plan and Safety Rules and those of other clubs when training away.
- Lead by example.
- Report all occurrences of disregard for the Safety Rules to the club.
- Ensure that they carry the safety equipment specified by the club at all times when coaching rowers afloat.
- Encourage rowers to report incidents using [iROWsafe](#).

Club Rowing Safety Adviser

Club Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Advise on the appropriate Safety Rules and Safety Plans and their specification.
- Ensure that the Safety Plans and Safety Rules are communicated to all members.
- Advise on the extent to which members comply with the Safety Rules.
- Advise on the implementation and effectiveness of Safety Plans and Safety Rules.
- Assist with reviews of the Safety Plans and Safety Rules and with keeping the Safety Plans and Safety Rules up to date.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#) Reporting system
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 3.3](#) - Club Emergency Action Plan
- Rowing Ireland - [iROWsafe](#)
- Safety Alert - Collision Avoidance,
- Safety in Club Premises
- Safety Alert - Rowing in Floods,

3.2. Club Safety Plans and Safety Rules

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

3.3 Club Emergency Action Plan

The Club Emergency Action Plan defines the actions to be taken if such an incident does happen. It will help to reduce the harm that such an incident could cause.

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. Club Emergency Action Plans stem from the Barriers and Controls in Risk Assessments. In most cases the Emergency Action Plans are derived from the Controls.

This all follows from the definitions. Controls that come into effect after the hazardous event has occurred and tend to limit its consequences. Emergency Action Plans tend to be based on Controls.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand and, in an emergency, follow the Club Emergency Action Plan.
- Follow the instructions of Club Officers and coaches.
- Report any incident or condition that could give rise to an emergency to a Club Officer or coach.
- [Report incidents](#) and near misses to Rowing Ireland using iROWsafe

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Use the club's Risk Assessment to produce or update the Club Emergency Action Plan.
- Brief members and others using the club facilities on the content of the club Emergency Action Plan and make it available. The plan should include:
 - The process for summoning assistance in case of an emergency.
 - The location of the club, including postcode and directions for emergency services.
 - A plan showing all emergency access points, with postcodes, Eircodes, or grid references where possible, to assist emergency services.
 - Emergency phone numbers and the location of the nearest landline telephone, if available.
 - Where appropriate, VHF radio channels to be used to contact navigation authority and coastguard.
 - The location of First Aid kits and, if available, the nearest Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).
 - List of qualified First Aiders (with photos where practical).
 - Instructions on what to do in event of a fire, how to evacuate the building and the location of Assembly Points.
 - Process for suspending or cancelling the club activities in case of an emergency.
- Where relevant, emergency arrangements for people with disabilities.
- Provide adequate First Aid cover including provision for people suffering from mild hypothermia (people with severe hypothermia should be taken to hospital).
- Provide sufficient, correctly positioned fire extinguishers and fire blankets, emergency lighting and clearly marked fire exits.
- Maintain emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, check that fire exits are clear and that emergency lighting and fire doors are in working order.
- Prominently display notices showing key location and contact information in the club.
- Brief members and others using the club facilities on what to do in an emergency and how to use any equipment.
- Establish contact details and any relevant medical or other information for each member in case of

emergency. Ensure that this information is kept confidential and only available to those who need it.

- Upload the Emergency Action Plan as part of the annual safety audit.

3.3.Club Emergency Action Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Where appropriate, ensure that someone in each boat knows how to use a VHF radio and the correct channels to use.
- If going to sea, ensure that someone in each boat knows how to describe where the boat is.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Read and understand the Club Emergency Action Plan.
- Ensure that rowers know what to do in an emergency and where to find the notices showing key location and contact information.
- Ensure that participants know the location of First Aid kits including an AED, if available.
- Where appropriate, ensure that someone in each boat knows how to use a VHF radio and the correct channels to use.
- If going to sea, ensure that someone in each boat knows how to describe where the boat is.
- Report any incidents to the Club Officers and Rowing Ireland.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#) reporting system
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 3.2](#) - Club Safety Plans and Rules
- Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#)

3.3.Club Emergency Action Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

3.4 Club Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description

It should be noted that Club Rowing Safety Advisers are not responsible for rowing safety but they are expected to provide advice on Rowing Safety. It is the responsibility of the individuals and their clubs to ensure that people are not harmed by the club's activities.

Expectations

Club

Club officers are expected to ensure a positive safety culture and safe practice within the club; they are expected to:

- Appoint a Club Rowing Safety Adviser(s), to lead and advise on promoting safe practice.
- Support the Club Rowing Safety Adviser and take their advice into account.
- Ensure that safety is a regular agenda item at meetings.

Club Rowing Safety Adviser

Club Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Be familiar with the guidance provided in RowSafe.
- Provide advice to the club committee and club leadership on all matters relating to safety as appropriate.
- Ensure the completion of the annual safety audit for the club.
- Undertake Safety Reviews of the club's activities and facilities.
- Undertake inspections and audits if requested to do so by the club and provide feedback to the club committee.
- Promote and monitor Incident Reporting within the club and the reporting of all incidents to Rowing Ireland.
- Periodically (perhaps annually) analyse the club's reported incidents to identify any common issues and trends and initiate action to address any opportunities for improvement.
- Lead or facilitate Incident Investigations as necessary.
- Lead or facilitate the completion and review of the club's Risk Assessment.
- Use the Risk Assessment to identify required safety rules.
- Work with the club committee and the leadership of the club to develop and maintain the club Safety Plan, Safety Rules and Emergency Action Plan.
- Be willing to be a member of the Club Committee.
- Attend local and branch safety meetings.
- Work with the Rowing Ireland Safety Advisory Committee.
- Work with other water and land users on safety as required.

3.5 Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides online training in Risk Assessment.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#) reporting system
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#)

3.4. Club Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaime

3.5 Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters

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

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Read, understand and implement the requirements of the Training Camp Safety Plan.
- Notify coaches, or others who need to know, of any relevant medical condition, medication or other requirements you may have. They may have to take extra care if you will be at an unfamiliar venue, or away from home.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Establish a Training Camp Organising Committee that includes the Club Rowing Safety Adviser, to plan visits to unfamiliar venues.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

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

Training Camp Organising Committee

Training Camp Organising Committees are expected to:

- Request safety information from the host club or venue management, this may include the venue's own Safety Rules and Navigation Plan, especially when visiting new stretches of water.
- Request a generic Risk Assessment from the host club or venue management.
- Use this information to prepare a Training Camp Risk Assessment for the club's planned activities; this should include travel to and from the venue.
- Use the Risk Assessment to establish a Safety Plan.
- Review the Training Camp Safety Plan with the host club or other local experts.
- Review the Risk Assessment on arrival, paying particular attention to sources of local information and amend the Training Camp Safety Plan as necessary.
- Ensure that all coaches and participants fully understand the Safety Plan before participating in the camp.
- Establish contact details and any relevant medical or other information for each participant in case of emergency. Ensure that this information is available to those who need it at the camp.
- Check that all participants planning to attend or visit the training camp are able to do so safely.
- Understand and implement the Rowing Ireland (Sport Ireland & Sport Northern Ireland) Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy where juniors (under 18 years old) are involved. Ensure that an appropriate provision is made for safeguarding.
- Consider contacting previous users of the location to identify any potential hazards.
- Ensure that drivers towing trailers are aware of the relevant guidance.

[3.5 Training Camps and Rowing on Unfamiliar Waters](#)

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Check appropriateness of the Safety Plan on arrival at the training camp location for:

- Circulation pattern,
- First Aid provision,
- Rescue launches, and
- Communications.
- Check local weather forecasts and other up-to-date safety information with the host club or local experts at the time of the visit.
- Check what equipment is available as required such as lifejackets, throw lines and bikes.
- Check if there are any restrictions on time, noise, age and other users.
- Establish a system for reporting incidents to Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).
- Identify the First Aid provision and communicate this to the participants.
- Carry out thorough equipment checks before travelling to the training camp.
- Conduct a post-visit review; communicate any significant lessons learned through the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).

Club Rowing Safety Adviser

Club Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Assist with the preparation of a Risk Assessment and Training Camp Safety Plan.
- Investigate any incidents and ensure that they are reported in the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#).
- Participate in the post-visit review.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe reporting system](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy - [HERE](#)

3.6 Swimming Competence

Ideally all participants in rowing should be competent and confident swimmers. However, some may not be as competent. A Risk Assessment should be used to determine the appropriate procedures for participants with limited swimming ability.

It should be recognised that the ability to swim in a pool does not guarantee the ability to swim in cold, exposed waters.

Ideally, everyone taking part in rowing should be able to swim at least 100 meters in light clothing (rowing kit).

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Inform the club of their current swimming ability.
- Attend any swimming tests as required by the club.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Record the swimming ability of each member of the club and make this available to all its coaches.
- Promote a higher level of care for junior, beginner and adaptive rowers.
- Have policies in place for those who cannot, or who have not demonstrated or declared, swimming competence, particularly junior, beginner and adaptive rowers.
- Reconfirm the swimming ability of all members at appropriate intervals.
- have life jackets available for non-swimmers.
- Determine whether lifejackets should be worn by juniors who have not completed a capsize drill based on a risk assessment that includes the circumstances and their ability.

The written declarations of adults, and their parents on behalf of juniors, relating to their swimming ability should be respected but clubs may choose to conduct swimming tests.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Be aware of rowers' swimming abilities.
- Follow the policies and rules set out by the club for those who cannot, or who have not demonstrated or declared, swimming competence.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an incident reporting system [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 3.7](#) – Capsize and Recovery
- [RowSafe 6.1](#) - People new to rowing
- [RowSafe 6.2](#) - Adaptive rowers
- RNLI advice on lifejackets - <https://rnli.org/-/media/rnli/downloads/rnli-guide-to-lifejackets-and-buoyancy-aids.pdf?fd=true>
- Rowing Ireland's Safety Video [HERE](#)
- British Rowing's Capsize and Recovery video - [HERE](#)
- Rowing Ireland iROWsafe .

3.7 Capsize and Recovery

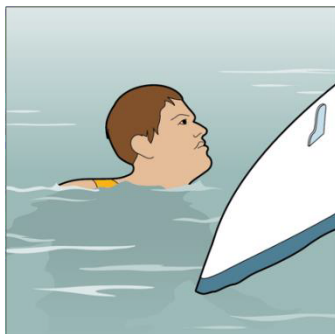
Capsize and Recovery training is important because it prepares rowers so that they will know what to do in the event of a capsize.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Know what to do in the event of capsize or swamping.
- Understand the need to stay with the boat and use it as a life raft, unless doing so results in greater danger.
- Take precautions before going afloat to reduce the risk of capsize or swamping.
- Understand that the key steps are to:
 - Get free from the boat,
 - Get out of the water
 - Get off the water.
- Attend any Capsize and Recovery training offered by the club. Be aware of the effects of cold water shock and hypothermia, described in the [Cold Water and Hypothermia online module](#) and the [Safety Alert - Cold Water Kills](#).



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Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that all members know what to do in the event of capsize or swamping.
- Ensure that all members are aware of the effects of cold water shock and hypothermia.
- Promote a higher level of duty of care for junior, beginner and adaptive rowers.
- Have policies in place for those who have not been trained, particularly junior, beginner and adaptive rowers. These could, for example, require the wearing of lifejackets.
- Record Capsize and Recovery training of each member of the club and make these records available to all its coaches.

3.7.Capsize and Recovery

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Organise Capsize and Recovery training in a local swimming pool or another safe setting to practise:
 - Getting free from an inverted boat (including releasing the feet from the shoes).
 - Getting on top of the boat, making rescue by launch and buddy rescue easier.
 - Getting back into the boat for those who feel capable and confident.
 - Lying on top of and paddling a boat (straddle and paddle).
 - Calling for help.
 - Buddy rescue.
 - Recovery using a throw line.
 - Developing confidence in the boat (balance drills).
 - Preparing a boat for use in the Capsize and Recovery training making sure that it has:
 - Well-sealed buoyancy compartments or added buoyancy.
 - No backstays.
 - No protruding bolts or other sharp projections.
 - Correctly adjusted heel restraints.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Instruct rowers on causes and avoidance of capsize and swamping.
- Coach rowers to routinely check heel restraints prior to going afloat.
- Remind rowers of the safe capsize and rescue techniques following capsize or swamping.
- Be aware of a rower's Capsize and Recovery training.
- Follow the policies set out by the club for those who have not been trained.
- **Instruct rowers on the effects of cold water shock and hypothermia described in the Cold Water and Hypothermia online module and the Safety Alert - Cold Water Kills.**

Competition

Competition Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Be prepared and equipped to provide assistance if capsize is identified as a hazard in their risk assessment.

Launch Drivers

Launch Drivers are expected to:

- Be competent and capable of assisting in the recovery of people in the water.
- Be at least 16 years old.



Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides a Capsize and Recovery [video](#) for clubs.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an incident reporting system [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 3.6](#) - Swimming Competence
- [RowSafe 8.1](#) - Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia
- [RowSafe 6.1](#) - People new to rowing
- Rowing Ireland's Capsize and Recovery video
- Royal Life Saving Society - rlss.org.uk

3.7. Capsize and Recovery

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer

3.8 Man Overboard

The risk of losing a person overboard can be particularly significant in sea and offshore rowing but can also be relevant where stable boats are used in other environments. This risk should be identified in risk assessments and the following guidance is intended to help in these circumstances.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand that the key principles are to:
 - Get free from danger,
 - Get out of the water, and
 - Get off the water.
- Shout “Man Overboard” as soon as anyone falls overboard.
- Know that everyone on board except the coxwain should then keep pointing at the Man Overboard.
- Know how to recover a conscious, and an unconscious, casualty into the boat.
- Know how to use a throw line.
- Attend any Man Overboard and Recovery training offered by the club.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that all members know what to do in the event of a man overboard.
- Ensure that adequate training opportunities are available to rowers and coaches.
- Ensure that boats carry the necessary equipment.
- Record Man Overboard and Recovery training of each member of the club and make these records available to all its coaches.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Know how to call for help using a mobile phone or VHF radio as appropriate.
- Coach crews to get the boat back to the man overboard using the quickest and easiest method.
- Coach crews on how to recover a person from the water, into the boat.
- Get the man overboard off the water by getting back to shore as quickly and safely as possible.
- Coach crews to manoeuvre their boats under control both forwards and backwards.
- Coach rowers in the use of a throw line.
- Be aware of a rower's Man Overboard and Recovery training.
- Follow the policies set out by the club for those who have not been trained.

3.8.Man Overboard

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Competition

Competition Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Be prepared and equipped to provide assistance if man overboard is identified as a hazard in their risk assessment.

Launch Drivers

Launch Drivers are expected to:

- Be competent and capable of assisting in the recovery of people in the water.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an incident reporting system: [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#)
- [RowSafe 3.6](#) - Swimming Competence
- [RowSafe 8.1](#) - Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

3.8.Man Overboard

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer

4. Competition Safety

This chapter addresses Safety at Competitions and Non-Competitive Events (such as Tours, etc.) where crews from several clubs come together for a particular purpose.

The term Competition is intended to include these Non-Competitive Events.

Participants and their clubs are expected to take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. Competition organisers are expected to provide a safe environment in which participants and others can enjoy their sport.

In the week before your competition consider whether it would be safe or fair to run it. Consider the weather forecast and its implications on:

- travel to the competition
- trailer towing
- parking of cars, towing vehicles and trailers
- unloading trailers
- moving people and boats on land
- walking in the launch area
- launching
- rowing to the start
- waiting on the water
- racing
- recovery of boats and people onto the land
- loading of boats onto trailers
- travel home

It is dangerous to tow trailers in icy or very windy conditions. The risks during transit to and from a competition are often more serious than those at the competition. Do not ask people to put themselves at risk.

The presence of ice on the water, or in the launching or recovery areas, and the presence of slippery conditions on land should also be taken into account. Do not expose people to these risks. Also consider the strength of the stream and the water conditions generally.

It is neither fair or safe to expect people, especially juniors, to wait on the water for extended periods. If it is too cold for people to be waiting on the water then consider whether the competition should take place. Sometimes waiting on the water can be the result of an unplanned incident, this should be taken into account too.

Consider the welfare of officials, coaches, spectators, etc. You have a duty to care for them too.

Do not leave it too late. An early decision to postpone or cancel will be much appreciated. It means that clubs will not need to load their trailers and gives people time to find something else that they can usefully do on the day of the competition.

Whilst the financial implications of cancelling a competition can be significant it is also worth taking into account the goodwill that an early decision will deliver. People will remember the negative experiences they have had travelling to competitions that were cancelled late and be less keen to travel there again. The same applies to competitions that were not cancelled but should have been.

4. Competition Safety

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

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Further Information

- [Schematic showing a model for the organisation of competitions](#)
- [RowSafe 2.3](#) - Radio Procedure

4. Competition Safety

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer

4.1 Competition Risk Assessment

Hazard identification and risk assessment are the basis for planning to maintain and improve safety. These provide competitions with the ability to understand the ways in which harm can be caused and to minimise both the probability of that harm occurring and the severity of harm should it occur. It puts competitions in control of their risks. The Risk Assessment only adds value when the actions that it identifies as being needed are completed.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand, and abide by the rules that the competition has defined as a result of its Risk Assessment.
- Be aware of the hazards associated with each of the competition's activities that they take part in.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Appoint a Competition Rowing Safety Adviser (CoRSA) (see [RowSafe 4.4](#)).
- Ensure that their competition has completed a Risk Assessment and that this covers activities under its influence or control, both on and off the water. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify any further barriers or controls needed to ensure the safety of everyone involved. Factors to be considered include:
 - Location of the competition, for example remote or in a built-up area, easy or difficult access.
 - Type and extent of boating area (e.g. narrow canal, wide river or lake, estuary or the sea) and the effect that this has on the type of rescue that may be needed.
 - Type of race such as large head race or short, contained regatta.
 - Potential hazards such as obstructions, weirs, cold or hot weather, and limited access points. There is more information about flow over weirs [here](#).
 - The need for a boating schedule that ensures that there are no long periods of exposure to cold or hot weather.
 - People, for example number of competitors (age and rowing experience), spectators and supporters.
 - Hazards in other competition facilities such as catering.
 - Travel time to the nearest hospitals with an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit providing the required cover.
 - Details of the service provided by the local ambulance service.
 - Availability of other rescue services such as air ambulance and lifeboat.
- Publish the competition's Risk Assessments on the website or make them available to participating clubs in other ways.
- Use its Risk Assessment to identify risk controls that depend critically on participants' behaviour and specify appropriate (local) rules and the consequences of non-compliance (For example: "Impeding a race by rowing on the course on the way to the start will result in disqualification").
- Publish suitable Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules (see [RowSafe 4.2](#)) and an Emergency Action Plan (see [RowSafe 4.3](#)) based on the issues identified in the Risk Assessments.
- Take action, where necessary, to ensure that nobody is exposed to substantial or intolerable risk.
- Take action to ensure the welfare of umpires and other officials.
- Review, and if necessary, update, the Risk Assessments in preparation for each competition.
- Review, and if necessary, update, the Risk Assessments following any significant incident at the competition or elsewhere.

4.1. Competition Risk Assessment

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Competition Rowing Safety Adviser

Competition Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Lead or facilitate the completion and review of the competition's Risk Assessment.

Umpires and Other Officials

Umpires and other officials are expected to:

- Be aware of the content of the Competition Safety Plan(s) and Safety Rules, and Emergency Action Plan(s).
- Support the Organising Committee by ensuring that the competition is conducted safely and in accordance with the Competition Safety Plan(s) and Safety Rules, and Emergency Action Plan(s).
- Take disciplinary, or other, action specified by the Organising Committee in the event of non-compliance with any Specified (local) rule.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.4](#) - CoRSA Job Description
- [RowSafe 4.2](#) - Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules
- [RowSafe 4.3](#) - Competition Emergency Action Plan
- Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#)
- Information on flow over weirs [HERE](#)

4.1. Competition Risk Assessment

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

4.2 Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules

The primary purpose of a Competition Safety Plan and Safety Rules is to ensure the safety of participants, officials, other water users and the public at large. The Competition Safety Plan describes how officials, participants and others should act in order to ensure a safe competition.

Safety Rules and Safety Plans stem from the barriers and controls in Risk Assessments. In most cases the Safety Rules are derived from the Barriers and the Emergency Action Plans are derived from the Controls.

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 must, or must not, happen and therefore can translate into rules.

Emergency Action 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 must wear lifejackets). This is just expressing a control as a "must do action".

It is important to distinguish what constitutes advice (e.g. wear sunscreen on a sunny day) and when the advice has to be expressed as a rule (e.g. obey the instructions of marshals).

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.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others affected by their actions.
- Read, understand and follow the Competition Safety Plan.
- Read, understand and comply with all the instructions to competitors including any local rules.
- Report any incidents to the Competition Organisers and to Rowing Ireland.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Use the Competition Risk Assessment to produce or update the Competition Safety Plan and Rules.
- Define an Alternative Arrangements Plan (see [RowSafe 4.6](#)) that outlines the criteria that will cause the competition to be suspended, abandoned or altered if the conditions or circumstances become unacceptable, and the related actions.
- Prominently publish (e.g. on the website) the Competition Safety Plan and Safety Rules, and distribute them to participating clubs, race officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, and other relevant parties.
- Hold briefings for officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, participants and other relevant parties.
- Where appropriate discuss the Competition Safety Plan with emergency services, local navigation authorities and other interested parties allowing time to implement agreed changes.
- Ensure that visiting officials, umpires and marshals are familiar with the venue and have all the required venue-specific information.

Competition Safety Plans should include:

- A map or diagram showing vehicle and trailer access routes, parking areas, boat rigging areas.
- A plan of the local water and site highlighting hazards, navigation rules, circulation patterns and emergency access points (named and where necessary with postcodes).

4.2. Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Circulation patterns to be followed during periods of racing.
- Circulation patterns to be followed during practice sessions on, or in the neighbourhood of, the course and times when crews can practise, warm up and cool down on the water.
- A boating schedule that ensures that there are no periods of delay and exposure during cold or hot weather.
- Safety boat type, numbers and locations.
- Number and location of Marshals, Umpires and Officials.
- Safety equipment required for the competition.
- Methods of communication between officials, to competition personnel and participants.
- Racking and boat storage arrangements.
- Launching and landing provision.
- Arrangements for adaptive rowers (see [RowSafe 4.8](#)).
- Instructions for reporting incidents to the Competition Organisers and to Rowing Ireland.

Competition Safety Rules should specify:

- The venue-specific rules that everyone should abide by in order to keep themselves and others safe.
- The consequences of failing to abide by those rules.
- Local rules should permit the use of head mounted mirrors or similar devices by steers.

Note: Safety Rules should be few and specific. They should relate to behaviours that could have a significant impact on safety. For example, at some venues, it may be appropriate to have a rule that states that any crew that rows onto the course and impedes a race shall be disqualified.

Officials

Race officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews and other personnel are expected to:

- Understand and follow the Competition Safety Plan and Safety Rules.
- Support the competition by enforcing the rules and by taking the specified disciplinary action.
- Inform the Organising Committee of any incidents or safety concerns.

Participating Clubs

Officers of participating clubs are expected to:

- Ensure that the crews that they enter into a competition have sufficient skill and ability to participate in that competition.
- Brief their participants on the Competition Safety Plan and ensure that they understand any local rules.
- Provide a representative to attend any Safety Briefings.
- Brief participants on any further information provided at the Safety Briefings.
- Ensure that their members are aware of, and abide by, the competition's rules.
- Take action, as appropriate, to ensure that nobody is exposed to substantial or intolerable risk.
- Ensure that participants are aware of the hazards that are associated with the activities that they will undertake.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Read and understand the Competition Safety Plan and Safety Rules to participants.
- Discuss the contents with crews and check that they know what they should do in an emergency.
- Report any incidents to the Competition Organisers and Rowing Ireland.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an incident reporting system [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides advice on Rowing Ireland run Competition Safety Plans.
- Reviews and approves Rowing Ireland run Competition Safety Plans.
- Provides advice on adaptive rowing.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.6](#) - Alternative Arrangements Plan
- [RowSafe 4.8](#) - Adaptive Competitions
- Rowing Ireland iROWsafe
- [RowSafe 2.3](#) - Radio procedure
- Rules of Racing.

4.3 Competition Emergency Action Plan

The Competition Emergency Action Plan defines the actions to be taken if such an incident does happen. It will help to reduce the harm that such an incident could cause.

The Competition Safety Plan and Safety Rules (see [RowSafe 4.2](#)) describes what should be done to make an incident less likely to happen.

Competition Emergency Response Plans stem from the Barriers and Controls in Risk Assessments. In most cases the Emergency Response Plans are derived from the Controls.

This all follows from the definitions. Controls that come into effect after the hazardous event has occurred and tend to limit its consequences. Emergency Response Plans tend to be based on Controls.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand and, in an emergency, follow the Competition Emergency Action Plan.
- Follow the instructions of organisers and officials.
- Report any incident or condition that could give rise to an emergency to the Competition Organisers.
- Report incidents and near misses to Rowing Ireland on [iROWsafe](#).

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Use the competition's Risk Assessment to produce or update the Competition Emergency Action Plan. The appropriate level of cover may require the appointment of a Medical Officer or the provision of an ambulance or paramedics.
- Provide information about the Competition Emergency Action Plan to all involved in the competition and make it available. The plan should include:
 - Process for summoning assistance in an emergency.
 - Location of the competition, including postcode and other relevant location information, and directions for emergency services.
 - Plan of the competition showing all emergency access points, with postcodes, Eircodes, or grid references where possible to assist emergency services.
 - Emergency phone numbers and the location of the nearest landline telephone if available.
 - Number and location of First Aid Points and, if available, the nearest Automatic External Defibrillator (AED).
 - How injured persons will be transported to the First Aid Point or ambulance.
 - Number and type of safety boats.
 - Number and location of marshals and instructions to marshals in an emergency.
 - Instructions on what to do in event of a fire, how to evacuate the building and the location of Assembly Points.
 - Where relevant, emergency arrangements for adaptive rowers.
- Provide adequate First Aid cover including provision for people suffering from mild hypothermia (people with severe hypothermia should be taken to hospital).
- Provide a process and an effective means of communication, such as radios, to summon support in an emergency and ensure that officials, launch drivers, first aiders and other personnel know what to do and how to use any equipment. (see [RowSafe 2.3 – Radio Procedure](#)).

- Provide sufficient, correctly positioned fire extinguishers and fire blankets, emergency lighting and clearly marked fire exits.

4.3.Competition Emergency Action Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Maintain emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers and fire blankets, check that fire exits are clearly marked and that emergency lighting and fire doors are in working order.
- Notify the local ambulance control of the date, time and location of the competition, an estimate of the number of people likely to be present and make arrangements with the ambulance service for an emergency response.
- Offer to provide the emergency services with the Competition Safety Plan and Competition Emergency Action Plan.

Participating Clubs

Officers of participating clubs are expected to:

- Brief their members on the Competition Emergency Action Plan.
- Provide a representative to attend any Safety Briefings.
- Brief participants on any further information provided at the Safety Briefing.
- Ensure that their members are aware of, and abide by, the competition's rules.
- Establish contact details and any relevant medical or other information for each participant in case of emergency. Ensure that this information is kept confidential and only available to those who need it at the competition.
- Ensure that they have an official at the competition with their crews and that this official's contact details (e.g. mobile phone number) are known to the Competition Organisers.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Read and understand the Competition Emergency Action Plan.
- Discuss the contents with crews and check that they know what they should do in an emergency.
- Ensure that participants know the location of First Aid Points including an AED, if available.
- Report any incidents to the Competition Organisers and Rowing Ireland.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an incident reporting system [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.2](#) - Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules
- [RowSafe 2.3](#) - Radio Procedure

4.3.Competition Emergency Action Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

4.4 Competition Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description

It should be noted that Competition Rowing Safety Advisers are not responsible for rowing safety but they are expected to provide advice on Rowing Safety. It is the responsibility of the individuals, their clubs and the Competition Organisers to ensure that people are not harmed by the activities at the competition.

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to promote safe practice within the competition; they are expected to:

- Appoint a Competition Rowing Safety Adviser(s), to lead and advise on promoting safe practice.
- Support the Competition Rowing Safety Adviser and take their advice into account.
- Ensure that safety is a regular agenda item at meetings.

Competition Rowing Safety Advisers

Competition Rowing Safety Advisers are expected to:

- Be familiar with the guidance provided in RowSafe and the safety requirements of the Rules of Racing.
- Provide advice to the Competition Organisers on all matters relating to safety as appropriate.
- Undertake Safety Reviews of the competition's activities and facilities.
- Undertake inspections and audits if requested to do so by the Competition Organisers and provide feedback.
- Promote and monitor incident reporting within the competition and ensure that all incidents are reported to Rowing Ireland.
- Lead or facilitate incident investigations as necessary.
- Lead or facilitate the completion and review of the competition's Risk Assessment.
- Use the Risk Assessment to identify required safety rules.
- Work with the Competition Organisers to develop and maintain the competition Safety Plan, Safety Rules, Emergency Action Plan and Alternative Arrangements Plan.
- Be willing to be a member of the Organising Committee.
- Attend local and regional safety meetings.
- Work with the Rowing Ireland Safety Advisory Committee.
- Work with other water and land users on safety as required.

4.4.Competition Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides a iROWsafe System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Rowing Ireland Rules of Racing
- Rowing Ireland iROWsafe reporting system

4.4.Competition Rowing Safety Adviser Job Description

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer

4.5 Competition Navigational Arrangements (Traffic patterns)

It is important that participants in competitions are aware of the navigational arrangements and the consequences of non-compliance with the navigational rules.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand and follow the navigational arrangements for the Competition (including arrangements in the competition of an emergency).
- Understand the consequences of non-compliance with navigational rules.
- Report any incidents to the Competition Organisers and to Rowing Ireland.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Brief participants on the navigational arrangements (including arrangements in the event of an emergency) and ensure that they understand what they should do.
- Ensure that crews understand the consequences of non-compliance with navigational rules.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Communicate the navigational arrangements for a competition to participants (including arrangements in the event of an emergency).
- Ensure that crews understand the consequences of non-compliance with navigational rules.
- Discuss these with the crews and check that they know what they should do.
- Coach rowers and coxes to keep warm when waiting for head races to start

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Use the Competition Risk Assessment to identify any hazards that affect the navigational arrangements for the competition.
- Prominently publish (such as on the website) the navigational arrangements and distribute to participating clubs, officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, and other relevant parties. These should include any Alternative Arrangements Plan (see [RowSafe 4.6](#)).
- Include information about the navigational arrangements in briefings for officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, participants and other relevant parties.
- Define and communicate navigational arrangements to be used in the competition of an emergency.
- Enforce the navigation rules and define sanctions to be applied for non-compliance.

4.5.Competition Navigational Arrangements

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Launch drivers, safety boat crews and other personnel are expected to:

- Understand and follow the navigational arrangements (including arrangements in the event of an emergency).
- Inform the Organising Committee, umpires, marshals or race officials of any non-compliance with navigational rules.
- Inform the Organising Committee of any incidents or safety concerns.

Umpires, marshals and race officials are expected to:

- Understand and follow the navigational arrangements (including arrangements in the event of an emergency).
- Inform the Organising Committee, umpires or officials of any non-compliance with navigational rules.
- Inform the Organising Committee of any incidents or safety concerns.
- Enforce the navigational rules and, if necessary, in the event of non-compliance apply the defined sanctions.

Information about the navigational arrangements for a competition should include a map showing:

- Boat launch and recovery areas
- Hazards
- Route to start
- The course
- Route from finish to boat recovery area
- Where it is safe to warm up and cool down on the water
- Where it is safe to practise starts, etc.
- Circulation patterns to be followed during periods of racing
- Circulation patterns to be followed during practice sessions
- Local navigation rules.
- Arrangements in event of an emergency (see [RowSafe 4.3](#)).
- Consequences of non-compliance with navigational rules.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides training on Risk Assessment.
- Provides advice on Competition Planning.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.6](#) - Alternative Arrangements Plan
- [RowSafe 4.3](#) - Competition Emergency Action Plan
- Rowing Ireland iROWsafe Reporting System

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.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Respond as instructed if conditions dictate that a competition has to be abandoned, suspended or altered.
- Consider the conditions at the competition and decide whether they are able to take part safely and withdraw from the competition if they conclude that they cannot.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Define an Alternative Arrangements Plan that outlines:
 - The criteria that will cause the competition to be abandoned, suspended, or altered.
 - How a decision to abandon, suspend or alter the competition will be taken.
 - Who will take that decision.
 - How the decision will be communicated to participants and officials.
 - The action that should be taken as a consequence of the competition being abandoned or suspended.
 - The criteria that must be satisfied to enable a suspended competition to be restarted.
- Ensure that they have the contact details, such as mobile phone number, of an official from each club present.
- Alter a competition, where circumstances permit, so that it can be completed safely.
The following alterations should be considered:
 - Restricting the competition to specified boat types.
 - Restricting the competition to specified participants.
 - Changing the direction or length of the course.
 - Moving to an alternative course.

Participating Clubs

Officers of participating clubs are expected to:

- Ensure that they have an official at the competition with their crews and that this official's contact details, such as mobile phone number, are known to the Competition Organisers.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Assist crews in responding to instructions.
- Work with their crews to decide whether they should withdraw from a competition if the conditions deteriorate.

4.6. Alternative Arrangements Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.2](#) - Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules

4.6. Alternative Arrangements Plan

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

4.7 Competition Safety Boat Providers

Some competitions use external providers to supply safety cover on the water. Even though the people involved may be suitably qualified, it should not be assumed that they know enough about rowing and rowing boats to be able to operate effectively and safely in this role. Further instruction may be required.

Expectations

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that Safety Boat Drivers:
 - Have the required level of competency.
 - Are at least 18 years old.
 - Understand how to provide assistance to rowing boats, provide additional briefings if necessary.
 - Understand the load capacity of the boat.
 - Keep wash to a minimum, except in an emergency.
- Provide drivers with the Competition Risk Assessment, Safety Plan and Alternative Arrangements Plan.
- Define and communicate to all participants and personnel what is required of Safety Boat Drivers:
 - Areas to be patrolled.
 - How to summon assistance, including medical attention.
 - Where to take casualties.
- Ensure that safety boats are in good working order.
- Ensure that safety boats carry an effective means of communication and that someone in the safety boat knows how to use it and what channels to use.

Safety Boat Providers

Safety Boat Providers are expected to:

- Ensure that Safety Boat Drivers:
 - Hold at least a RYA Level 2 Powerboat Certificate or equivalent.
 - Understand the launch driving guidance (see [RowSafe 5.2](#)).
 - Understand the load capacity of the boat.
 - Keep wash to a minimum, except in an emergency.
- Communicate the Competition Safety Plan to Safety Boat Drivers and crew.
- Provide a crew member to assist the Safety Boat Driver.
- Ensure that safety boats are correctly equipped with launch safety kits (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).
- Agree the extent of the safety cover required and the safety procedures with Competition Organisers.
- Maintain safety boats in good working order.
- Where appropriate, ensure that someone in the safety boat knows how to use a radio and what channels to use.

4.7.Competition Safety Boat Providers

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Safety Boat Drivers

Safety Boat Drivers are expected to:

- Hold the appropriate qualifications and be competent to provide safety cover for the type of competition.
- Understand how to provide assistance to rowing boats.
- Understand what is required of Safety Boat Drivers at the competition:
 - Areas to be patrolled.
 - How to summon assistance, including medical attention.
 - Where to take casualties.
 - The need to keep wash to a minimum, except in an emergency.
- Follow the launch driving guidelines (see [RowSafe 5.2](#)).
- Helm the boat and use the crew to effect a rescue unless assistance is required.
- Know the load capacity of the boat and not exceed it.
- Check that the boat is correctly equipped (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 5.2](#) - Launch Driving
- [RowSafe 7.4.1](#) - Launch Safety Kits
- [RowSafe 2.3](#) - Radio Procedure

4.7.Competition Safety Boat Providers

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

4.8 Adaptive Competitions

There may be additional hazards and risks associated with adaptive rowers depending on the extent of their disability. Safety Plans and Rules should include any additional actions required to keep adaptive rowers safe.

Adaptive rowers may need extra guidance, support and supervision to keep themselves and others safe.

The competition may also need to provide additional facilities or equipment.

Competitions need only to review risk and take action for the adaptive rowers who participate in the competition, not for all types of disabilities.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for themselves and others and understand how their actions could affect the safety of adaptive rowers.
- Understand what actions are required to keep adaptive rowers and themselves safe.
- Report any incidents or concerns about the safety of adaptive rowers.

Adaptive rowers

Adaptive rowers are expected to:

- Provide the competition with information about their disability that may affect their own safety and the safety of others.
- Operate within their capabilities.
- Ask a competition official about any aspects of safety they are concerned or unsure about.



Provide the Competition Organisers with information on your disability

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Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that the Competition Risk Assessment includes risk for adaptive rowers who participate in the competition.
- Define any additional Safety Rules required to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Provide any additional safety equipment or facilities required to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Establish and practise procedures for managing incidents, including capsize, involving adaptive rowers.
- Ensure that sufficient and appropriate safety cover is available for adaptive rowers.
- Ensure that umpires, officials, boat drivers and other competition personnel are aware of any specific issues and know what to do in an emergency.
- Ensure that access arrangements for adaptive rowers participating in the competition are suitable and safe.
- Ensure that adequate medical support is provided for adaptive rowers.
- Ensure that coaches can maintain effective communication for adaptive rowers with a sensory impairment (visual, hearing impaired) who may require additional support using radio and/or signage as appropriate.
- Ensure that all safety boats have at least two crew. All crew members should wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket and one should be prepared to enter the water to effect a rescue.
- Ensure that all safety boats are on the water before adaptive rowers go afloat and ready for immediate use during rowing activities. Rigid inflatables with low freeboard, or drop-nose safety boats are preferred.

For adaptive rowers, Competition Safety Plans should include:

- Procedures for launching and recovering boats with adaptive rowers.
- Access arrangements for adaptive rowers.

For adaptive rowers, Competition Safety Rules should include:

- Criteria for assessing risks associated with adaptive rowers.
- Actions to be taken in an emergency involving adaptive rowers, including capsize.

Officials

Race officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews and other personnel are expected to:

- Inform the Organising Committee of any incidents or safety concerns relating to adaptive rowers.
- Understand any additional Safety Rules relating to adaptive rowers.
- Be familiar with any additional safety equipment or facilities provided to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Be familiar with procedures for managing incidents, including capsize, involving adaptive rowers.
- Be aware of any specific issues relating to adaptive rowers participating in the competition and know what to do in an emergency.

Participating Clubs

Officers of Participating Clubs are expected to:

- Check that the Competition Safety Plan and Rules accommodate the needs of the club's adaptive rowers participating in the competition.
- Ensure that rowers with a lower leg prosthesis are able to release themselves from the prosthesis (or the prosthesis from the boat) in the event of an emergency.
- Brief adaptive rowers on the Competition Safety Plan and ensure that they understand how it relates to them.
- Check that equipment is both appropriate and safe when adaptations are made.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Provide feedback to the competition organisers to help ensure that the Competition Safety Plan and Rules and Emergency Action Plan are appropriate for their participant.
- Discuss the contents of the Competition Safety Plan and Rules with adaptive rowers and check that they know what they should do in an emergency.
- Where appropriate maintain effective communication with rowers with a sensory impairment (visual, hearing impaired) who may require additional support using radio and/or signage as appropriate.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides advice on adaptive rowers.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 6.2](#) - Adaptive rower

4.9 Touring

Many rowers just row for the delight of the experience of moving a boat efficiently over water. Some take this further and prefer to explore more distant waters and travel to less familiar places.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Ensure that they have the competence and are physically able to meet the stamina and fitness demands of the planned tour.
- Wear and carry clothes suitable for the weather conditions likely to be encountered during the tour.
- Know when a lifejacket or buoyancy aid should be carried and worn and be familiar with fitting it.
- Bring boats suitable for the conditions and in accordance with organiser's directions
- Bring and carry safety equipment as specified in the Safety Plan e.g. paddles, boat hook, ropes, bailers, lifejackets/buoyancy aids.
- Check the boat and other equipment at the start of each day and ensure that it is in good condition.
- Take care of their own safety and that of their fellow rowers.
- Understand the Tour Safety Plan and Emergency Action Plan.
- Understand the route and any navigation hazards.
- Attend briefings as required. When acting as a "Boat Captain", cascade briefings to the crew.

Tour Organiser

Tour Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:-

- Undertake a risk assessment prior to the tour and implement necessary controls.
- Appoint "Boat Captains" as focal points for route and safety briefings in tours where there is more than one boat.
- 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 brought by participants are safe and suitable for the conditions likely to be encountered.
- If providing boats and equipment for participants, ensure that they are suitable and maintained in good order.
- Produce a risk assessment (see [RowSafe 4.1](#)) for the tour and ensure that all the barriers and controls are in place.
- Ensure that appropriate safety equipment, as specified in the Safety Plan, is carried. This may include a First Aid kit, a tool kit, lifejackets for each member of the tour, a means of communication (mobile phone or radio), lights and any other equipment identified in the risk assessment.
- Know how to transit through locks safely, if appropriate, and be able to explain this to the members of the tour.
- Ensure that there is sufficient food and water for the participants.
- Plan the route and be aware of any hazards and all road access points.
- Have an Emergency Action Plan (see [RowSafe 4.3](#)) and a Safety Plan (see [RowSafe 4.2](#)) based on the risk assessment.
- Ensure that the boats used are suitable for the tour.
- Ensure that the participants understand the plan for the tour.

4.9. Touring

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.1](#) - Competition Risk Assessment
- [RowSafe 4.2](#) - Competition Safety Plans and Safety Rules
- [RowSafe 4.3](#) - Competition Emergency Action Plan

4.9 Touring

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

5. Competence

Competence is task specific. People are competent to perform a task if, by virtue of their experience, education and training, they can perform the task to the required standard.

Safety comes from people knowing what they are doing and being careful not to do what they do not know how to do. It is an attitude of mind.

People's competence tends to expand with learning, experience and practice. It is the ability to manage this process that leads to safe behaviour. On the contrary, confidence without competence can lead to unsafe or at-risk behaviour.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

5.1	Steering and Navigation	67
5.2	Launch Driving	71

5. Competence

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

5.1 Steering and Navigation

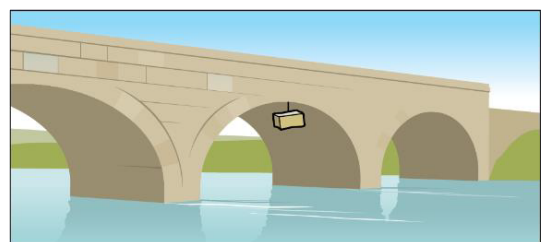
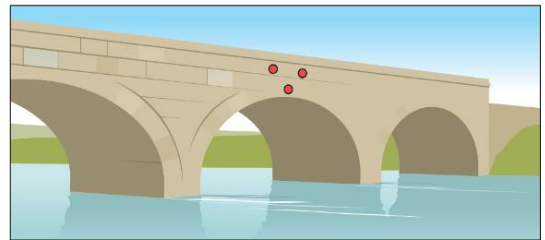
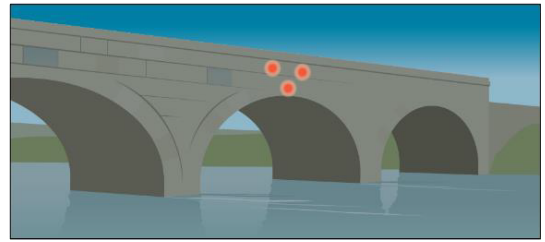
Most rowing accidents result from steering and navigation errors and these often result from lack of competence and lack of attention. Competence issues can be addressed by good coaching.

Expectations

Coxes and Steers

Coxes and steers (including scullers) are expected to:

- Keep a good lookout at all times when afloat. Coxes who cannot see directly ahead should enlist the help of members of their crew. Steers should consider using a head mounted mirror or similar device.
- Check the steering equipment before the outing as part of the boat checking procedure.
- Report any defects in steering equipment to the club responsible and quarantine the boat.
- Follow correct steering procedures and navigation rules.
- Communicate effectively with their crew.
- Pay attention and be aware of their position at all times in relation to circulation patterns, hazards and other water users.
- Inform the club of any change in the location or type of hazard encountered.
- Know how to stop the boat quickly and safely in an emergency as demonstrated [here](#) and practise this skill with their crews.
- Ensure that any voice projection equipment and deadweight is fixed to the boat, not to the cox.
- Wear a lifejacket, as a cox, at all times when afloat but not use an auto inflation lifejacket in a bow loaded boat.
- Recognise and respect the rights and needs of other water users, especially anglers.
- Be aware of the effects of flow round bends in rivers and being swept into danger.
- Watch out for swimmers at all times and be alert to unexpected floating objects.
- In coastal waters, understand the [sound signals](#), [day shapes](#), [navigation marks](#) and, where appropriate, [lights](#) displayed by other vessels.



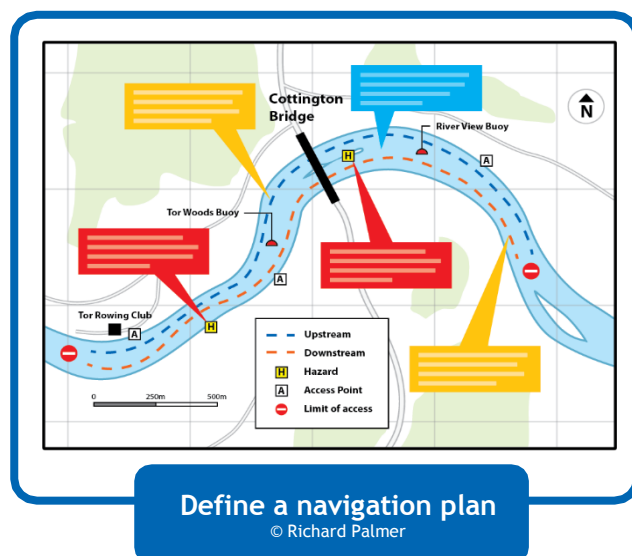
5.1. Steering and Navigation

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Define a Navigation Plan, in consultation with other [water users](#) and the local navigation authority, as appropriate, this plan should show:
 - The navigation pattern.
 - All permanent hazards.
 - Sites of any potential temporary hazards – if appropriate.
 - Locations of emergency life belt sites and safety aids.
 - Sites of public telephones.
 - Easy access points for emergency vehicles where it is easy to get out of the water.
 - Sites where it is difficult, or impossible, to get out of the water.
- Display this plan prominently and ensure that all coxes and steerspersons are aware of it.
- Ensure that those who steer boats are familiar with the information on the local Navigation Plan.
- Check that people responsible for steering boats are in good health with adequate vision and hearing.
- Encourage people responsible for steering boats to abide by the Navigation Plan by providing positive consequences for those who do and negative consequences for those who do not.
- Ensure steering equipment is suitably maintained.
- Ensure that in coastal waters, someone on the boat understands the [sound signals](#), [day shapes](#) and [navigation marks](#), where appropriate, [lights](#) displayed by other vessels.
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Ensure that someone on the boat knows how to describe the location of the boat to the coastguard, RNLI or navigation authority.



Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- 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.
- Coach crews to stop the boat quickly and safely in an emergency as demonstrated [here](#).
- Wear a lifejacket at all times when afloat.
- Report any transgression of navigation rules that they have observed to the club and to Rowing Ireland.
- Ensure that in coastal waters, someone on the boat understands the [sound signals](#), [day shapes](#) and, where appropriate, [lights](#) displayed by other vessels.
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Ensure that someone on the boat knows how to describe the location of the boat to the coastguard, RNLI or navigation authority.

Launch Drivers

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

- Be at least 16 years old (18 in N.I.) unless accompanied by a responsible adult..
- Check the steering equipment before the outing as part of the boat checking procedure.
- Report any defects in steering equipment to the club responsible and quarantine the boat.
- Keep a good lookout in all directions at all times when afloat.
- Follow correct steering procedures and navigation rules.
- Pay attention and be aware of their position at all times in relation to circulation patterns, hazards and other water users.
- Inform the club of any change in the location or type of hazard encountered.
- Report any transgression of navigation rules that they have observed to the club and to Rowing Ireland.
- Be conversant with safety and rescue procedures in the case of accident.
- Wear a lifejacket at all times when afloat.
- In coastal waters, understand the [sound signals](#), [day shapes](#) and [navigation marks](#), and where appropriate, [lights](#) displayed by other vessels.
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use. Know how to describe the location of the boat to the coastguard, RNLI or navigation authority.
- Launch Drivers should be aware of the actions they take and their effect on other river users.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Provide participating clubs with clear information, including an annotated plan, showing the navigation rules for the competition. This should include warm-up and cool-down areas (see [RowSafe 4.5](#)).
- Encourage people responsible for steering boats to abide by the Navigation Plan by providing negative consequences for those who do not.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides training on coxing and steering.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.5](#) – Competition Navigational Arrangements
- RNLI advice on lifejackets - <https://rnli.org/-/media/rnli/downloads/rnli-guide-to-lifejackets-and-buoyancy-aids.pdf?fd=true>

5.2 Launch Driving

Risk assessment should be used to determine how many launches are required, in each specific circumstance, for safety purposes. Competition Risk Assessments should be used to determine the requirement for safety launches, umpire's launches and other uses.

Launches may also be used primarily for coaching but risk assessment may determine that even those that are used for coaching should be equipped so that they can perform a rescue.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Only drive a launch if they are competent, qualified and permitted by the club to do so.
- Report any incidents or poor practice with the club's launches to the club and to Rowing Ireland.
- Wear a lifejacket whenever they are afloat in a launch.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Identify those members and others who are permitted to use the club's launches.
- Maintain a register of people permitted to drive its launches.
- Ensure that everyone who is permitted to drive launches is competent and suitably qualified to do so. The level of qualification required will usually be determined by the Risk Assessment. (It is recommended that drivers attain RYA Level 2 Powerboat certification or equivalent.)
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Provide sufficient lifejackets for everyone who is likely to go afloat in its launches and require that they are used. Auto inflation lifejackets are preferred.
- Provide sufficient kill cords and safety kits (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).
- Check the competence of its launch drivers from time to time.
- Periodically check that its launches are in good condition, including periodic motor checks (see [HERE](#) for further info)
- Ensure that any launch that is not in good condition is quarantined so that it cannot be used.
- Periodically check that all its lifejackets are in good condition.
- Ensure that each launch has effective and appropriate lights if it is used after dusk or before dawn.

5.2.Launch Driving

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.



Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that the number and type of safety launches provided is sufficient to enable the Competition Safety Plan to be implemented. The Competition Safety Plan should be based on the Competition Risk Assessment. Safety boats should be dedicated to that purpose and not also used for umpires or marshalling.
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Identify those people who are permitted to drive the launches.
- Ensure that everyone who is permitted to drive launches is competent and suitably qualified to do so. The level of qualification required will usually be determined by the Competition Risk Assessment but, in most cases, RYA Level 2 Powerboat or equivalent should be sufficient.
- Ensure that sufficient lifejackets are available for everyone who is likely to go afloat in its launches and require that they are used. Auto inflation lifejackets are preferred.
- Ensure that there are sufficient kill cords and safety kits (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).
- Ensure that the launches are in good condition, including periodic motor checks.
- Ensure that each launch has effective and appropriate lights if it is used after dusk or before dawn.



Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Be appropriately qualified and competent to drive a launch correctly in the conditions that are likely to be encountered.
- Check the launch prior to each use (see [RNLI Outboard Pre-Start Checks](#)) and that the lights, if needed, are working correctly.
Always wear a correctly fitted lifejacket when afloat.
- Always:
 - Carry a Safety Kit (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)) and paddle.
 - Use a kill cord correctly.
 - Carry an appropriate communication device.
 - Use the correct lights
- Comply with the local navigation code and the Club Circulation Plan at all times.
- Keep a good lookout at all times when afloat and warn other water users of any hazards or developing hazardous situations.
- When necessary, instruct rowers in the water to climb on top of their inverted boat to facilitate their recovery into the launch.
- Where a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Report any safety incidents both to the club or competition and Rowing Ireland using the iROWSafe Reporting System.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Keep a good lookout at all times when afloat and warn other water users of any hazards or developing hazardous situations.
- Report any safety incidents both to the club or competition and Rowing Ireland using the iROWsafe Reporting System.



Make sure you are appropriately qualified

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Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides advice on launch safety.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides courses that include safety.

6. People

Rowers and their clubs are expected to take responsibility for their own safety and that of others and Competition Organisers are expected to provide a safe environment in which rowers and others can enjoy their sport.

There are additional risks associated with some groups of rowers and these are covered in this chapter. This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

6.1	People new to Rowing	75
6.1.1.	Safety Advice for People new to Rowing	78
6.2	Adaptive rowers	79

6. People

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

6.1 People new to Rowing

People who are new to rowing may not be aware of the hazards and risks associated with an activity and need additional support and supervision so that they can keep themselves and others safe.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Provide extra guidance and support for people who are new to the sport.
- Ensure that new rowers are not exposed to risks that they would find substantial or intolerable.

New Rowers

New rowers are expected to:

- Attend the club's Induction Programme and follow the advice and guidance in the Club Induction Pack (see [RowSafe 2.2](#)).
- Provide the club with relevant information such as swimming ability.
- Inform the club of any reason that they may be at risk due to current or previous illness or injury.
- Operate within their competence level by recognising their growing level of knowledge and understanding.
- Ask a coach or Club Official about any aspects of safety they are concerned or unsure about.
- Take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others affected by their activities.
- Be aware of key club and sport policies and rules and where to find them.
- Report incidents to the club and Rowing Ireland.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that the Club Risk Assessment includes risks associated with new rowers.
- Provide an Induction Programme for new rowers. This should have an emphasis on safe behaviour.
- Explain the Club Safety Rules to new rowers.
- Ensure that all new rowers take part in the Club Induction Programme. The Club Induction Programme (see [RowSafe 2.2](#)) should include information about:
 - Local hazards, including weather conditions, and navigation rules
 - First Aid facilities and Emergency Action Plan
 - Club Safety Plan and rules
 - Safety aids
 - Clothing and hair
 - Cold water immersion and hypothermia
 - Club structure and communications
 - Boats – types, manual handling, boat checking and quarantining
 - What to do in the event of a capsize or man overboard
 - Incident reporting

People New to Rowing

- Ensure a higher level of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and adults at risk.
- Support the principle that safety is everyone's responsibility.
- Encourage all members to set an example for beginners to follow.
- Ensure that sufficient coaches and safety cover are available to train and supervise new rowers.

- Make life jackets available to all rowers and ensure that they are worn by non-swimmers.
- Determine whether lifejackets should be worn by juniors who have not completed a capsize drill based on a risk assessment that includes the circumstances and their ability.
- Record personal information about the new rower including contact details, swimming ability, emergency contact and parental or guardian consent for juniors.
- Provide advice on any health or injury issues that may affect their safety, particularly when rowing, or refer them to their medical professional as appropriate.
- Record training information regarding capsize drill.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Ensure all rowers have an adequate Club Induction Programme - and check their understanding of what is expected of them.
- Set standards that rowers will follow - lead by example.
- Ensure a higher level of duty of care is promoted with beginners, juniors, adaptive rowers and adults at risk.
- Encourage new rowers to ask about anything they are unsure of.
- Encourage rowers to adopt safe behaviour.
- Provide advice on any health or injury issues that may affect their safety, particularly when rowing, or refer them to their medical professional as appropriate.
- Ensure that all beginner juniors use sculls with appropriate spoon size, blade length and handle size.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides the framework for Learn to Row courses. See [START ROWING](#)
- Provides coach education that helps coaches to support people new to rowing.
- Provides advice on adaptive rowing.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 2.2](#) - Make up of Club Induction Pack

6.1.1. Safety Advice for People new to Rowing

These are the 4 key things that new rowers should keep in mind.

- If you do not know what to do then do not guess; ask someone who does.
- If you have any medical or fitness concerns then talk to your coach or safety adviser.
- Do not do anything that would put yourself or anyone else at risk.
- Be prepared for the activity that you are about to do, eat, drink (hydrate), and dress appropriately.

As a new rower, you are expected to:

- Attend the club's Induction Programme and follow the advice and guidance in the Club Induction Pack (see RowSafe section 2.2).
- Be aware of and comply with the club's safety rules.
- Provide the club with relevant information such as your swimming ability.
- Inform the club of any reason that you may be at risk due to current or previous illness or injury; explain how the club can help you.
- Operate within your competence level by recognising your growing level of knowledge and understanding.
- 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.
- Be aware of key club and sport policies and rules and where to find them.
- Report all incidents both within the club and to Rowing Ireland.

Understand that everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for their own safety both on and off the water.
- Ensure that their actions both on and off the water do not put others at risk.
- Examine their own actions if they are involved in an incident and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Ensure that they have prepared for the activity that they are about to undertake, including having eaten appropriately and have sufficient drinking water.
- Ensure that they are dressed appropriately for the conditions.
- Be aware of, and abide by, the Club Safety Rules.
- Follow the guidance in the Club Safety Plans.
- Report all incidents both within the club and to Rowing Ireland.

6.2 Adaptive rowers

There may be additional hazards and risks associated with adaptive rowers depending on the extent of their disability. They may need extra guidance, support and supervision to keep them and others safe. They may also need additional facilities or equipment.

Safety Plans, Rules and Emergency Action Plans should include any additional actions required to keep adaptive rowers safe. Clubs and competitions only need to review risk and take action for the adaptive rowers who row at their club or competition.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take responsibility for themselves and others and understand how their actions could affect the safety of adaptive rowers.
- Understand what actions are required to keep adaptive rowers and themselves safe.
- Provide support and guidance for adaptive rowers.
- Ensure that adaptive rowers are not exposed to risk that they would find substantial or intolerable.
- Report any incidents or concerns about the safety of adaptive rowers to the club and to Rowing Ireland.

Adaptive rowers

Adaptive rowers are expected to:

- Provide their club with relevant information about their disability that may affect their own safety and the safety of others and any known "warning signs".
- Operate within their capabilities.
- Provide the club with emergency contact details and information about actions to be taken in event of a medical emergency.
- Ensure that if they have a lower leg prosthesis then they are able to release themselves from the prosthesis (or the prosthesis from the boat) in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure that any medicines that are needed are carried by the rower and that the people who are in a position to do so know how to find them and administer them.
- Ensure that their needs are included in the Club Safety Plan and Emergency Action Plan and, where appropriate, Competition Safety Plans, Emergency Action Plans and Alternative Arrangements Plans.
- Ask a coach or club official about any aspects of safety they are concerned or unsure about.
- Check that equipment is safe for them to use and report any defects.
- Seek additional medical advice when appropriate.

Carers

Carers are expected to:

- Attend initial discussions with the club and attend its induction programme.
- Ensure that the club, coaches and competition organisers are provided with relevant information relating to the disability, warning signs and requirements.
- Ensure the club is kept up-to-date with any relevant changes in the disability, requirements and emergency contact details.

6.2. Adaptive Rowers

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that the Club Risk Assessment includes risk for those adaptive rowers who row at the club.
- Ensure an appropriate level of care is promoted for adaptive rowers.
- Discuss the rower's needs and aspirations.
- Define any additional Safety Rules required to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Provide and maintain any additional safety and rescue equipment or facilities required to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Ensure that sufficient coaches and safety cover are available to train and supervise adaptive rowers.
- Provide adaptive rowers with advice on any issues associated with their disability that may affect safety, particularly when rowing, or refer them to their medical professional as appropriate.
- Ensure that coaches and others supporting adaptive rowers know what to do in an emergency and have access to emergency contact details for adaptive rowers.
- Establish and practise procedures for managing incidents, including capsizing or man overboard, involving adaptive rowers.
- Check equipment is appropriate and safe when adaptations are made.
- Seek advice on equipment that is suitable for each adaptive rower.
- Where necessary, make modifications to club facilities to accommodate adaptive rowers.
- **Understand the Adaptive Rowing Safety Guidance for Event Organisers** For adaptive rowers, Club Safety Plans should include:
 - Procedures for launching and recovering boats with adaptive rowers.
 - Access arrangements for adaptive rowers. For adaptive rowers, Club Safety Rules should include:
 - Criteria for assessing risks associated with adaptive rowers.
 - Actions to be taken in an emergency involving adaptive rowers, including capsizing or man overboard.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Ensure an appropriate level of care is promoted for adaptive rowers.
- Encourage adaptive rowers to ask about anything they are unsure of.
- Provide advice on any issues associated with their disability that may affect their safety, particularly when rowing, or refer them to their medical professional as appropriate.
- Identify ability and develop a needs analysis for each individual.
- Ensure that adaptive rowers understand how the Club's Safety Plan and Rules apply to them.
- Use any specialist knowledge that they may have to assist the club and the athlete.



- Maintain effective communication with rowers with a sensory impairment (visual, hearing impaired) who may require additional support using radio and/or signage as appropriate.
- Understand the rower's disability and know what action to take in an emergency and who to contact.
- With the rower's permission, communicate any information that affects safety to other rowers and coaches.
- Check equipment is suitable and safe when adaptations are made for each adaptive rower.
- Seek advice on equipment that is suitable for each adaptive rower.
- Where appropriate, ensure that adaptive rowers understand how Competition Safety Plans, Emergency Action Plans and Alternative Arrangement Plans apply to them.

Competitions

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that the Competition Risk Assessment includes risk for those adaptive rowers who are participating in the competition.
- Cater for the needs of adaptive rowing participants, including access, medical support, equipment and buddy support.
- Permit coaches to maintain effective communication with rowers who have a sensory impairment (visual, hearing impaired) and require additional support using radio and/or signage as appropriate.
- Be aware and communicate any rescue issues for individual adaptive rowers.
- Ensure that safety boats have at least two crew. Both crew should wear a buoyancy aid or lifejacket and one should be prepared to enter the water to effect a rescue.
- Ensure all safety boats are on the water before adaptive rowers go afloat and ready for immediate use during rowing activities. Rigid inflatables with low freeboard, or drop-nose safety boats are preferred.
- Ensure all umpires, officials and safety boat drivers have the information that they need to keep adaptive rowers safe.
- Ensure people who need to know are aware when adaptive rowers are on the water.
- Know what action to take in an emergency.
- Communicate information where appropriate with other athletes and coaches.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWSafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides advice on adaptive rowing for clubs, competitions, coaches and rowers.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 4.8](#) - Adaptive Competitions

Useful Websites

- Attention Hyperactivity Deficit Disorder: www.adhd.org.uk
- Vision Sports Ireland www.visionsports.ie
- LimbPower: www.limbpower.com

7. Equipment

There are hazards and risks associated with equipment and some equipment is used to reduce risk. These are covered in this chapter.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

7.1	Boats and Blades	84
7.2	Transport and Trailers	87
7.3	Safety Aids	89
7.4	Launches	91
7.4.1	Launch Safety Kits	93

7. Equipment

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

7.1 Boats and Blades

Equipment Checklist

A thorough [boat and equipment](#) check includes the following:

- No visible signs of damage to the hull, for example scrapes or cracks.
- Buoyancy compartments, seals, hatch covers, boat hull and ventilation bungs are secure and watertight. Buoyancy Bags are fully inflated and installed if no under-seat buoyancy compartments are fitted.
- Bow ball is in good condition and securely fixed (where the construction of the boat, or its composition, is such that the bow is properly protected or its shape does not present a hazard in the event of a collision, then this requirement need not apply).
- Fixing screws or bolts do not represent a hazard in the event of an accident. Any sharp protrusions should be covered or removed.
- In all boats the foot stretchers, shoes or other devices holding the feet of the rowers shall be a type which allows the rowers to get clear of the boat with no delay in an emergency.
- Heel restraints are strong, secure and durable and the correct length (laces and cable ties are not appropriate). Shoes shall be in good condition so that they do not break or become partially detached from the boat in the event of a rower trying to remove their feet during a capsize.
- Where shoes or other devices holding the feet will remain in the boat, each shoe or device shall be independently restrained such that when the heel reaches the horizontal position the foot will be released from the shoe.
- Shoe fastenings such as laces or Velcro or similar materials should not be too tight and must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap.
- Where shoes or other devices holding the feet will not remain in the boat, each shoe or device must be able to be released by the rower without using their hands or with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap or release device
- No part of the rigger, or any other structure, restricts the ability of rowers to remove their feet from the shoes in an emergency.
- Rudder lines, steering mechanisms and rudder (where fitted) and fin, are secure and in good working order.
- Outriggers, swivels, gates, seats, runners and stretchers are secure and operating correctly and show no signs of cracking or fatigue.
- Thole pins are in good condition, correctly placed (hard forward, soft astern) and spares are carried.
- Blades are undamaged and buttons are secure and properly set.
- The boat is suitable for the situation in which it is to be used, for example maximum crew weight.
- Lighting, if required, is suitable for the outing and working correctly
- Consider the use of "splash boards" if the water conditions are difficult.

7.1.Boats and Blades

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand that equipment with defects can cause accidents.
- Know how to check equipment.
- Routinely check equipment prior to each use.
- Only use equipment that is in good condition.
- Routinely check equipment after each use.
- Report any defects found to a coach or other appropriate Club Official.



Know how to check the equipment you are using

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Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Provide storage for boats and equipment in an orderly fashion, in well-lit premises where possible, to minimise damage to people or other equipment.
- Provide information to members on how boats should be checked. Ensure that all boats have sufficient buoyancy and provide extra buoyancy if needed.
- Ensure that the cox's area of bow loaded boats has no protrusions or other obstructions that would catch on the cox's lifejacket straps, or clothing, or hair in such a way that it could impede their exit from the boat. Also ensure that the straps and clothing are adjusted so that they will not catch on any part of the boat.
- Keep a record of the manufacturer / supplier's information regarding the inherent buoyancy of the boat.
- Maintain all equipment in good working order and suitable for the conditions in which it will be used.
- Require members to report any damage to boats and equipment to a responsible official without delay.
- "Quarantine" a damaged boat or piece of equipment, with the nature of the damage clearly marked, and ensure that it is not used.
- Ensure that any damage to boats or equipment is repaired before the boat or equipment is used again.
- Ensure that all incidents are reported to Rowing Ireland using the iROWsafe Reporting System.



Maintain all equipment in good working order and suitable for the conditions in which it will be used

© Richard Palmer

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Coach others on:
 - The need to check equipment.
 - How to check equipment.
 - What to do if defects are found.
- Ensure that equipment is checked prior to it being used.
- Ensure that equipment is checked after it has been used.
- Ensure that quarantined equipment is not used.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Inform participating clubs of the arrangements for boat checking.
- Facilitate boat checking prior to launch.
- Ensure that all significant defects are reported using the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe Reporting System.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website, including training on how to check boats.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Boat Safety Checks - <https://youtu.be/Jv294UHbj0s>
- FISA's Minimum Guidelines for the Safe Practice of Rowing - Section II A Safe Rowing Equipment - worldrowing.com/mm/Document/General/General/10/90/86/Minimum_Guidelines_for_Safe_Rowing_English.pdf

7.1.Boats and Blades

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

7.2 Transport and Trailers

The club risk assessment can be used to identify the hazards associated with the use of vehicles and trailers by the club. If these risks are overlooked then the results can be significant.

Expectations

Everyone

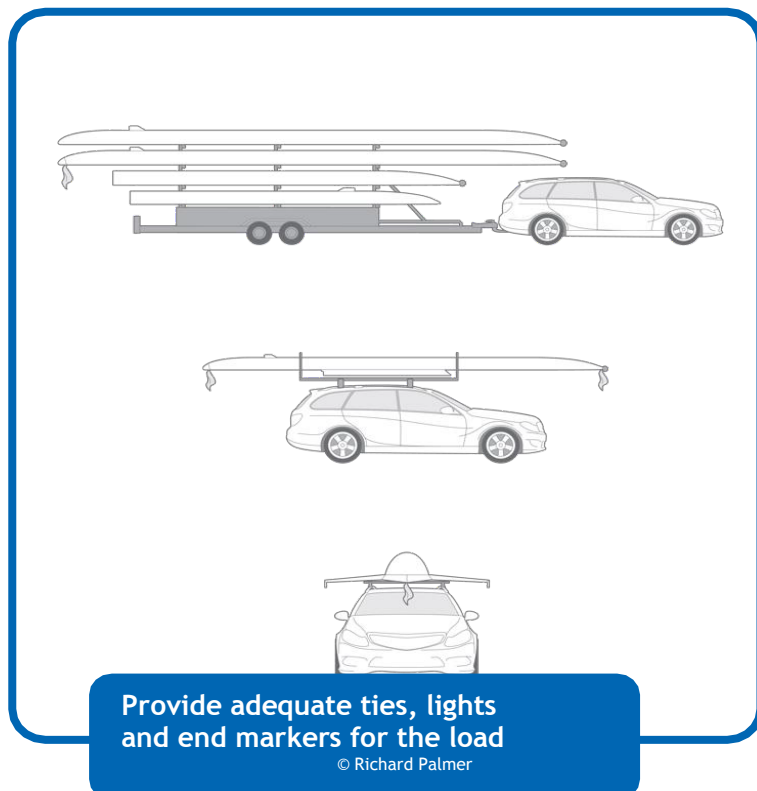
Everyone is expected to:

- Follow the club's guidance on loading the trailer.
- Take care when handling boats and loading a trailer.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that any vehicle or trailer used by the club is maintained in a roadworthy condition. See www.rsa.ie
- Ensure that trailers are correctly labelled with the Maximum Allowed Mass (MAM), tyre pressures and jacking points.
- Confirm that all drivers have the appropriate vehicle licence and insurance for the trailer type, length and load.
- Provide information on towing and loading the trailer
- Ensure that the risks associated with loading and trailing boats are included in the club's Risk Assessment and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risk to an acceptable level.
- Provide adequate ties, lights and end markers for the load.
- Provide spare bulbs, spare wheel, jack and tools for changing a wheel.
- Provide an assistant who can help the driver with navigation, manoeuvring and emergencies.



Trailer Towing Vehicle Drivers and Minibus Drivers

Drivers are expected to:

- Have the appropriate licence and insurance for the vehicle and trailer
- Understand the regulations and responsibilities of trailer towing and minibus driving.
- Plan the route so as to avoid areas and times where conditions are likely to be difficult.
- Be aware of the reduced speed limits when towing

7.2.Transport and Trailers

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

If towing, then before each trip, check:

- The nose weight of the trailer.
- That the trailer is correctly loaded.
- That the load is secure.
- The lights, brakes, safety chain and jockey wheel.
- The weather forecast and road conditions.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Ensure that members know how to load and check the trailer.

Competition

Competition Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure there is easy access and adequate parking for towing vehicles and trailers.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides advice and guidance on the loading and towing of rowing boat trailers.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

Advice on towing abroad is available from:

- The AA - theaa.com/motoring_advice/overseas/index.html and theaa.com/motoring_advice/general-advice/towing-advice-what-you-need-to-know.html

7.2. Transport and Trailers

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

7.3 Safety Aids

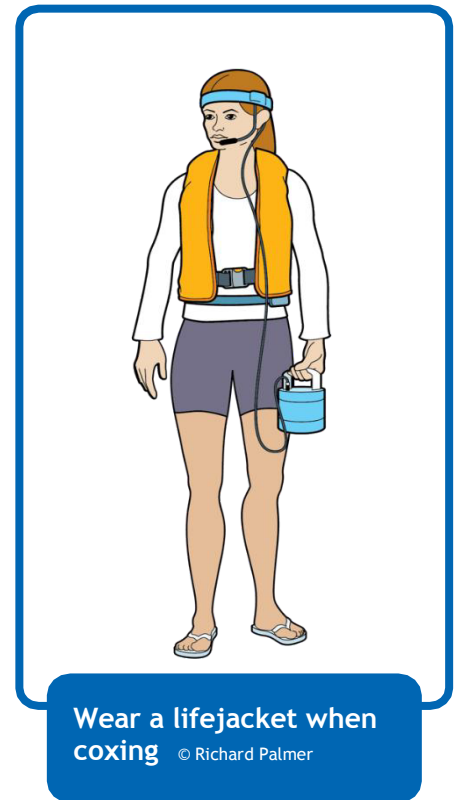
Safety aids, such as lifejackets, throw lines and emergency blankets, can save lives. It is essential that they are readily available and maintained in good condition, and that everyone knows how to use them correctly.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Know how to use the club's safety aids.
- Follow the club's rules on their use.
- Wear a lifejacket when coxing, in a launch or as required by the club or a coach. Coxes in bow-loader boats must wear a manual inflation lifejacket.
- Not wear an inflatable lifejacket under any other garment.
- Check the lifejacket before use and ensure that it is fitted correctly.
- Report any safety equipment that is damaged, missing or deployed within the club.
- Wear a lifejacket if:
 - They cannot swim.
 - They are juniors who have not completed a capsized drill if a risk assessment determines that this is appropriate.
 - Because of a medical condition, there is a risk that they may become unconscious or immobile whilst afloat.
- Wear or carry a lifejacket if rowing in a gig or other fixed seat boat (coxes should always wear a lifejacket).
- Report any incidents involving safety aids to the club and to Rowing Ireland.



Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Use the Club Risk Assessment and Safety Plan to determine the type and quantity of safety aids (such as lifejackets, throw lines, lifeguard tubes, and emergency blankets) for the needs and size of the club.
- Provide and maintain safety aids (see [RYA - How to wear a lifejacket correctly](#)).
- Provide training to club members in the use of safety aids including the use of crotch straps on lifejackets.
- Ensure that safety aids are readily available to members and are stored correctly.
- Make lifejackets available to all rowers and ensure that they are worn by non-swimmers.
- Determine whether lifejackets should be worn by juniors who have not completed a capsized drill based on a risk assessment that includes the circumstances and their ability.
- Implement a procedure to manage damaged, missing or deployed safety aids.
- Review the requirements for, and the use of, safety aids and implement any changes in their type or use.
- Check lifejackets for leaks, damage and gas cylinder integrity at regular intervals (at least once a year) and record the results
- Provide a boat safety kit for each rowing boat as determined by the risk assessments. See [RowSafe 10.2.1](#) Gig and Other Fixed Seat Rowing Boat Safety Kit.

7.3.Safety Aids

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Set an example by following the club's procedures on the use, maintenance and storage of safety aids.
- Train participants in the correct usage of safety aids including the use of crotch straps on lifejackets.
- Make lifejackets available to non-swimmers and participants who are nervous about the water.
- Carry a throw line and practise using them.

Competition

Competition Organisers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Provide sufficient lifejackets and other safety aids to officials and those involved in running the competition.
- Ensure that people wearing lifejackets provided by the Competition Organisers know how to fit them correctly, including the use of crotch straps on lifejackets, and know how to use other safety aids.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- RYA - How to wear a lifejacket correctly - [youtube.com/watch?v=NNfXMLG5pI4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NNfXMLG5pI4)



7.4 Launches

Launches should be properly maintained and used "within their capabilities". Some launches are intended as coaching launches but can still be used as a safety launch providing launch drivers and crew understand what to do and providing that the boats are suitable for the conditions in which they are used.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Follow the club's guidance on using a launch.
- Take care when using a launch.

Club

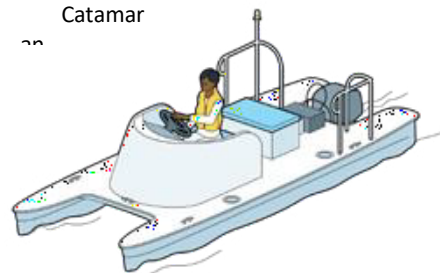
Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that any launch, including its motor, used by the club is maintained in good working order and safe [condition](#).
- Ensure that any launch that is not fit for use is labelled and quarantined so that it will not be used until it has been repaired.
- Ensure that the maximum load is known and adhered to.
- Define procedures for recovering rowers.
- Provide information on the safe use of the launch.
- Ensure that the risks associated with using a launch are included in the club's Risk Assessment and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risk to an acceptable level.
- Provide a kill cord and safety kit for use in the launch (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).
- Provide spare parts for the maintenance of the launch.

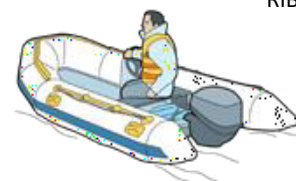
Aluminium



Catamar



RIB



Ensure you are using a launch suitable for the conditions

Launch Drivers

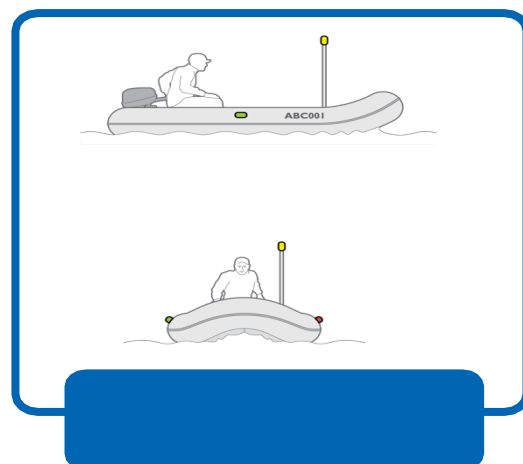
Launch drivers are expected to:

- Wear a correctly fitted lifejacket whenever afloat and ensure that all the crew of the launch do so.
- Before each use, check that:
 - The launch, including the motor is in good condition before starting to use it.
 - There is adequate fuel for the outing.
 - The engine is secure and properly mounted.
 - The kill cord mechanism is working correctly
 - The safety kit is on board.
 - If necessary, the lights are working.
 - If a radio is carried, it is charged and tuned to the correct channel.
- If a radio is carried, ensure that someone in the launch is competent to use it and knows which channels to use.
- Report any defects or problems.

Competition

Competitions and Competition Organisers are expected to:

- Ensure that any launch used by the competition is in good working order and safe condition.
- Ensure that the maximum load of the launches is known and adhered to.
- Define procedures for recovering rowers.
- Provide information on the safe use of the launches.
- Ensure that the risks associated with using a launch are included in the Competition Risk Assessment and that appropriate action is taken to reduce risk to an acceptable level.
- Provide kill cords and safety kits for use in the launches (see [RowSafe 7.4.1](#)).
- Ensure that there is adequate fuel for the competition.



Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

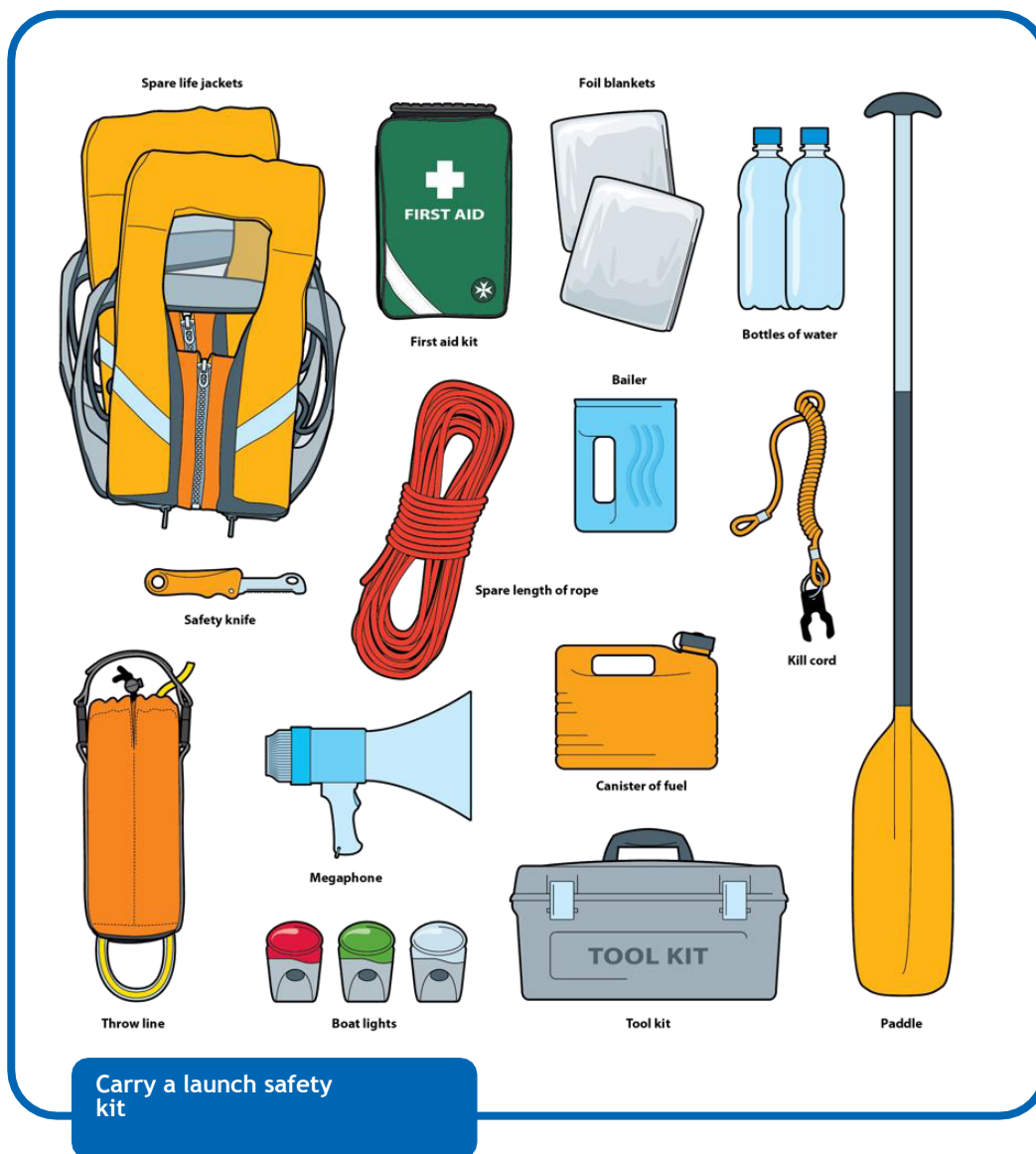
Further Information

- Safety Alert - Outboard Motor Safety Checks - Link [HERE](#)
- [RowSafe 7.4.1](#) - Launch Safety Kits
- RNLI Guidance on Lifejackets - <https://rnli.org/-/media/rnli/downloads/rnli-guide-to-lifejackets-and-buoyancy-aids.pdf?fd=true>

7.1.1. Launch Safety Kits

It is recommended that the following equipment should be included in a Launch Safety Kit.

- A First Aid kit in a waterproof bag, checked monthly.
- A whistle.
- A throw line or equivalent grab line.
- A serrated safety knife with rope cutter.
- Enough survival equipment or 'Bivvi bags' for the launch's passenger capacity. (Note: Foil blankets tend to keep cold people cold and are not recommended.)
- Sufficient lifejackets for the maximum number of passengers and crew.
- A spare kill-cord for crewman or passenger in the competition in case the driver falls overboard.
- A spare length of rope.
- A bailer.
- A paddle.
- Fire extinguisher.



As a result of the risk assessment of the location, water and weather conditions, the following equipment may also be required.

- A toolkit including spares for rowing boats (such as spanners, nuts and washers and cord).
- A minimum toolkit and spares for the engine.
- An anchor and line appropriate for the water and weather conditions.
- A communications device such as a waterproof VHF radio transceiver or mobile phone.
- A boathook.
- An audio signalling device: air horn, loudhailer or megaphone.
- A pump for the sponsons (buoyancy chambers) plus a spare valve, valve cap, and a repair kit for inflatables or Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs).
- Spare fuel.
- Simple handholds on the side of the launch to provide assistance to anyone being rescued or for the driver if they fall overboard.
- Spare lifejackets, spare fuel tank (open water use), and alternative means of propulsion adequate for the expected conditions, in-date flares, maps, navigation aids or GPS system.
- Suitable lights in low visibility conditions.

- Life raft (valise) able to hold the appropriate number of people and suitable for inshore use.
- Rescue tube - an approximately 1 metre long, high-buoyancy foam tube developed for water rescue or other flotation device capable of supporting a casualty in the water.
- Ladder, rope sling, or similar equipment to help when retrieving a casualty from the water into the boat.
- Rescue strop for pulling the casualty up a steep or vertical bank.
- Sea anchor to prevent the launch drifting with the wind; this could be a canvas bucket on a rope.
- Searchlight with a beam strong enough to locate a casualty at night.

8. Health

In general, rowing delivers many health benefits but there are some hazards and risks that must be assessed and managed. This chapter explains some of these hazards and risks and provides guidance on how to deal with them.

However, the effectiveness of general guidance is limited and should never be used as a substitute for individual guidance from a medical specialist.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

8.1	Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia	96
8.2	Sunburn, Heat Illness and Exhaustion	98
8.3	First Aid	100
8.4	Waterborne Infections and Diseases	104
8.5	Concussion	106
8.6	Coping with Illness and Diseases	108
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8.7	What To Do If Someone Collapses	117

8. Health

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Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

8.1 Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

No matter how good a swimmer you are, sudden unexpected immersion in cold water can cause an initial cold shock that affects muscular co-ordination and impairs the 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.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Know and watch for the symptoms of mild hypothermia (such as complaints of feeling cold and tired, poor comprehension, disorientation, poor concentration, irrational behaviour, violent outbursts and confusion).
- Understand the effects of cold water immersion and hypothermia.
- Be prepared for those effects if immersed in cold water.
- Wear clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Report incidents to the club and Rowing Ireland.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that the risks of cold water immersion and hypothermia are included in the club's Risk Assessments.
- Provide members with information about cold water immersion and hypothermia.
- Provide facilities for the initial treatment of hypothermia.
- Include hypothermia in their Emergency Action Plan.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Know and watch for the symptoms of severe hypothermia (such as shivering, pale, blue lips and nails, rapid breathing, wheezing and coughing, fast pulse and slurred speech).
- Know how to respond if they detect any of these symptoms.
- Set an example by always wearing clothing appropriate to the conditions
- Ensure that their coxes wear clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Ensure that they are equipped to deal with people with hypothermia.



8.1. Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that the risks of cold water immersion and hypothermia are included in the competition's Risk Assessments.
- Provide officials, umpires, launch drivers, safety boat crews, other personnel and participants with information about cold water immersion and hypothermia.
- If appropriate, provide facilities for the initial treatment of hypothermia.
- If appropriate, include hypothermia in their Emergency Action Plan.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides advice and training materials on cold water immersion and hypothermia.

Further Information

8.1. Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.2 Sunburn, Heat Illness and Exhaustion

Prolonged exposure to sun can cause sunburn or skin damage at any time of the year, not just in the summer. The body produces a lot of heat when exercising. When dehydration occurs, body temperatures can rise to levels that cause heat illness (hyperthermia).

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the effects of hyperthermia.
- Be prepared for those effects if exposed to heat or sun.
- Use a high factor sunscreen and wear clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Carry drinking water and remain hydrated.
- Observe fellow rowers and watch out for signs of hyperthermia or sunburn

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Include the risks of exposure to sun and heat leading to sunburn, heat illness and exhaustion in the club's Risk Assessments.
- Provide members with information about sunburn, heat illness and exhaustion.
- Include hyperthermia in their Emergency Action Plan.
- Provide First Aid facilities.
- Ensure that drinking water is available.

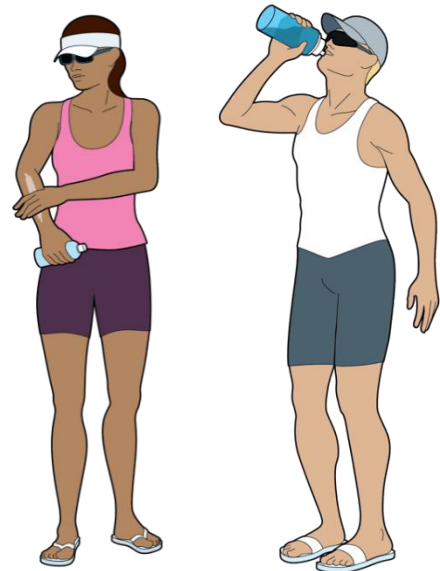
Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Know and watch for the symptoms of heat exhaustion (such as high levels of fatigue/tiredness, dizziness, nausea/vomiting, chills or shivering, fast weak pulse, clammy cool skin, appearing pale, numbness or tingling in head, neck, back or hands).
- Know and watch for the symptoms of heat illness (such as confusion/lack of mental clarity, inability to hold a conversation, bizarre behaviour, hot, red skin, fainting, headache, rapid strong pulse and sweating).

Use a high factor sunscreen

© Richard Palmer



Carry drinking water and remain hydrated

© Richard Palmer

8.2.Sunburn, Heat Illness and Exhaustion

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Know how to respond if they detect any of these symptoms.
- Set an example by always wearing sunscreen and clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Ensure that their crews wear sunscreen and clothing appropriate to the conditions.
- Ensure that their crews remain hydrated and take breaks and rest in the shade.
- Ensure that they are equipped to deal with sunburn and heat illness and exhaustion.
- Consider rescheduling outings to cooler parts of the day.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Include the risks of exposure to sun and heat leading to sunburn, heat illness and exhaustion in the competition's Risk Assessments.
- Provide competitors and officials with information about sunburn, heat illness and exhaustion.
- Include hyperthermia in their Emergency Action Plan.
- Provide First Aid facilities.
- Ensure that sufficient drinking water is available.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides information about the causes, effects and symptoms of sunburn and heat illness in relation to rowing.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- NHS Choices - Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/>
- NHS Choices - Heat exhaustion and heatstroke, signs and symptoms - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/-signs-and-symptoms>
- NHS Choices - Heat exhaustion and heatstroke, what to do - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/#things-you-can-try>
- NHS Choices - Heat exhaustion and heatstroke, when to get medical help - <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion-heatstroke/#when-to-get-medical-help>

8.2. Sunburn, Heat Illness and Exhaustion

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.3 First Aid

Many of the provisions identified in the Risk Assessments are means of reducing the probability of a hazardous competition occurring, but it is also appropriate to make provisions to reduce the severity of harm should a hazardous event occur. First Aid is one of the most commonly used of those provisions.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Report any injuries to First Aiders or Club Officers.
- Report any deficiencies in First Aid cover or problems summoning emergency assistance to the club.
- Report First Aid and medical incidents to the club and to Rowing Ireland.

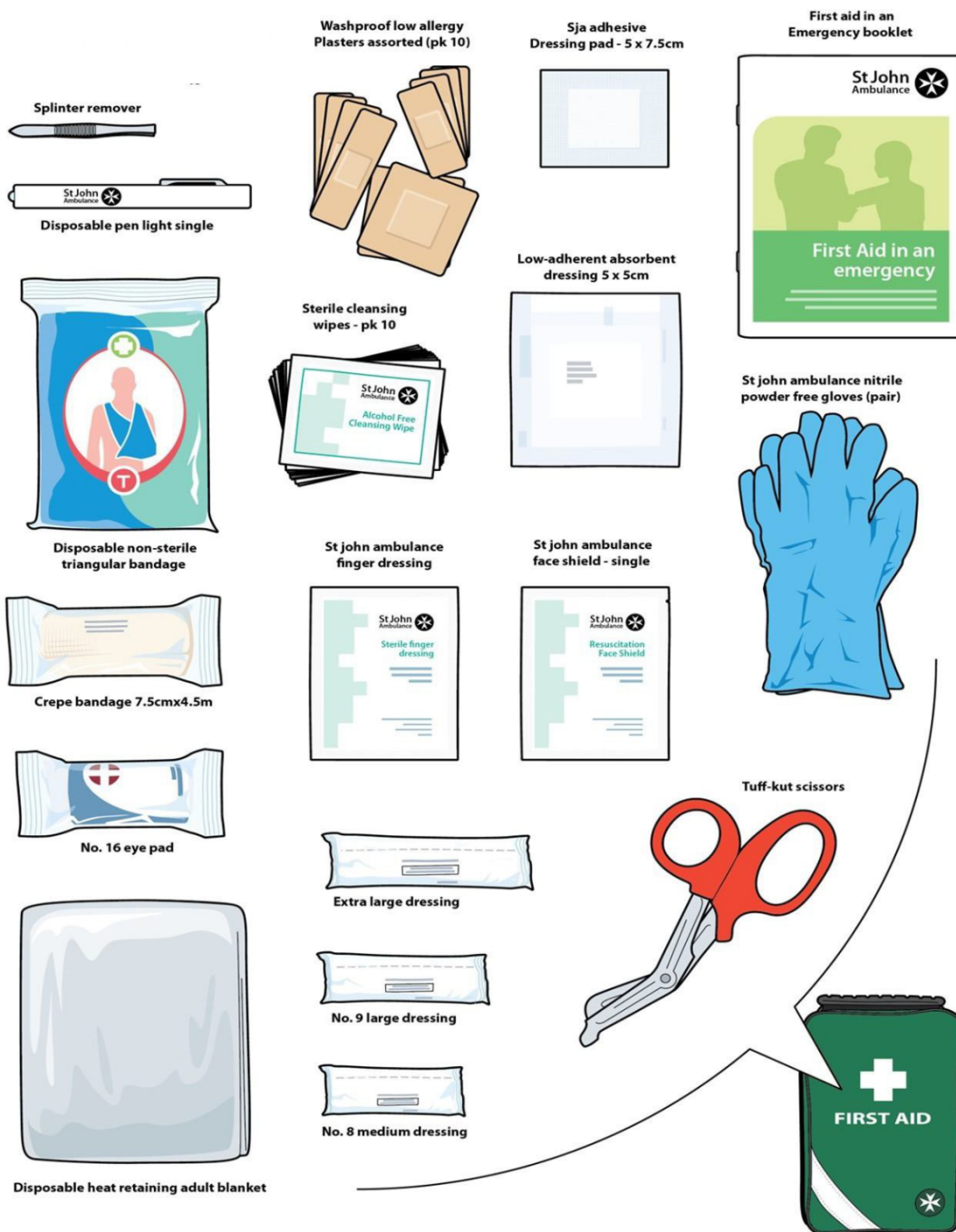
Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Use the Club Risk Assessment to define the requirements for First Aid provision. Factors to be considered include:
 - Location of the club for example, remote or in a built-up area, easy or difficult access.
 - Type and extent of boating area.
 - Potential hazards such as obstructions, weirs and limited access points.
 - People, for example number of members, age and rowing experience.
 - Hazards in other club facilities such as kitchen or workshop.
 - Travel time to the nearest hospitals with an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit and type of cover offered.
 - Details of the service provided by the local HSE & NHS ambulance service (this varies from region to region).
 - Availability of other rescue services such as air ambulance and lifeboat.
- Include First Aid provision in the Club Emergency Action Plan (see [RowSafe 3.3](#)), brief members on the content and make the plan available.
- Ensure that the club has sufficient First Aiders and that adequate First Aid cover is available during all club activities.
- Make provision for people suffering from mild hypothermia (people with severe hypothermia should be taken to hospital).
- Keep a record of coaches and other members who hold a First Aid qualification and encourage First Aiders to keep their qualification up to date.
- Prominently display a list of qualified First Aiders (with photos if possible).
- Provide sufficient and clearly marked First Aid kits in easily accessible areas of the club premises. Each kit should contain a list of contents.
- Regularly check contents against the list of contents, record and date the inspection and replenish supplies.
- Ensure that all launches carry a First Aid kit and sufficient thermal blankets for the crews concerned.
- Maintain adequate supplies of First Aid consumables and equipment including emergency blankets) in good condition.
- Consider providing Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) technique training to all club members. There is online training material [here](#).
- Consider providing an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) in the club.

8.3. First Aid

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.



Keep all first aid kits well stocked

© Richard Palmer

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Keep their First Aid qualification up-to-date by attending a First Aid course at least every three years.
- Encourage members to report First Aid and medical incidents in the Rowing Ireland iROWSafe Reporting System.
- Ensure that rowers know where the First Aid kits are kept and which members are qualified First Aiders.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Use the Competition Risk Assessment to define the requirements for First Aid provision. Factors to be considered include:
 - Location of the competition, for example, remote or in a built-up area, easy or difficult access.
 - Extent of boating areas and type of race such as large head race or short, contained regatta.
 - Potential hazards such as cold or hot weather, capsize and limited access points.
 - People, for example number of competitors (age and rowing experience), spectators and supporters.
 - Hazards in other competition facilities such as catering.
 - Travel time to the nearest hospitals with an A&E Department or Minor Injuries Unit and type of cover offered.
 - Details of the service provided by the local HSE or NHS ambulance service (this varies from region to region).
 - Availability of other rescue services such as air ambulance and lifeboat.
 - First Aid Point(s) - How many and where should they be positioned; how First Aiders will be identified.
- Include First Aid in the Competition Emergency Action Plan (see [RowSafe 4.3](#)), brief participants and make it available to all involved in the competition.
- Ensure that the competition has adequate First Aid cover. The appropriate level of cover may include the appointment of a Medical Officer or the provision of an ambulance or paramedics.
- Make provision for people suffering from mild hypothermia (people with severe hypothermia should be taken to hospital).
- Where First Aid cover is provided by a third party, agree the scope of the cover to be provided.
- Provide information and signage to ensure that competitors and spectators are aware of the location of the First Aid facilities.
- Ensure that all launches carry a First Aid kit and sufficient thermal blankets for the crews concerned.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWSafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.
- Provides advice on First Aid training.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 3.3](#) - Club Emergency Action Plan
- Rowing Ireland iROWSafe
- [RowSafe 4.3](#) - Competition Emergency Action Plan

Other

- HSE First aid at work leaflet (See page 2 for First Aid kit contents) - hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg214.pdf
- Royal Life Saving Society - rlss.org.uk
- St John Ambulance - sja.org.uk
- There is online training material at <https://www.resus.org.uk/apps/lifesaver/>

8.4 Waterborne Infections and Diseases

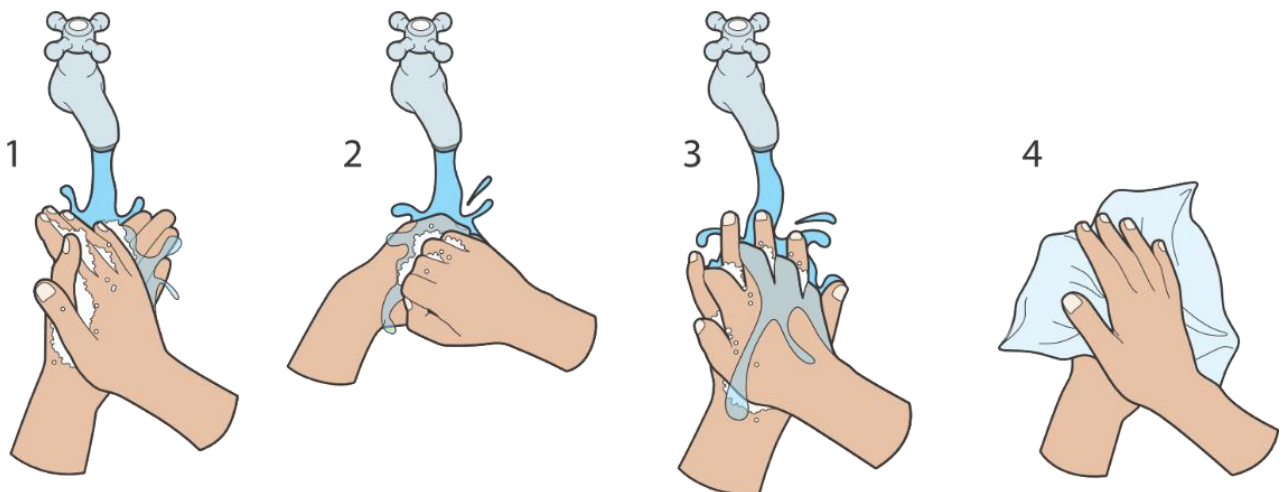
Diseases can be caused by waterborne infectious agents such as bacteria or viruses, or contracted due to exposure to other contaminants in the water. These can include, for example, algal blooms, jelly fish (at sea), faecal matter and chemical contamination.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Read and understand any information on waterborne infectious agents and contamination provided by the club.
 - See their own doctor as soon as they think that they may have any relevant symptoms.
 - Inform the club if they have contracted a disease associated with a waterborne cause so that others can be encouraged to take greater precautions.
 - Cover all cuts or grazes with waterproof dressings if the water is contaminated.
 - Wash or shower after any significant contact with water from the river, lake, canal or sea especially if they have any exposed cuts or grazes.
 - Never drink water from sources such as rivers, lakes, canals or sea.
 - Wash hands thoroughly before eating or drinking.
 - Clean open wounds, such as blisters or calf abrasions with an anti-bacterial substance.
 - If contaminated water has been swallowed, refer to their doctor with full details of the incident.
 - Wear suitable footwear when launching or recovering 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.
- Hose down all equipment after outings to remove any potential contamination.
- Report incidents to the club and Rowing Ireland.



Wash hands thoroughly before eating or drinking

© Richard Palmer

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Determine the extent to which the waters that they use may be infected with relevant bacteria, viruses or other agents (the Local Authority Environmental Health office, Irish Water and the local Water Authority may be able to help).
- Include these risks in the club's Risk Assessments.
- Provide information (such as posters) to members as appropriate. This information should include:
 - Precautions to be taken to avoid exposure.
 - Early signs and symptoms of any relevant disease so that early medical intervention can be sought.



Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Be aware of the extent to which their participants are at risk of contracting a disease associated with a waterborne cause.
- Bring information about the risks and appropriate actions to the attention of participants.
- Monitor the behaviour of any persons at risk and ensure that they act appropriately.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Determine the extent to which the waters that they use may be infected with relevant bacteria, viruses or other agents (the Local Authority Environmental Health office, Irish Water and the local Water Authority may be able to help).
- Include these risks in the competition's Risk Assessments.
- Provide information (such as posters) to umpires, officials, launch drivers, safety boat crews, other personnel and participants as appropriate. This information should include:
 - Precautions to be taken to avoid exposure.
 - Early signs and symptoms of any relevant disease so that early medical intervention can be sought.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides an iROWSafe Reporting System.
- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

8.4. Waterborne Infections and Diseases

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer

8.5 Concussion

Concussion is the sudden but short-lived loss of mental function that occurs after a blow or other injury to the head. It is the most common but least serious type of brain injury.

Concussion does occur in rowing. It is important that it is recognised and that appropriate action is taken. Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Recognise the signs and symptoms of concussion, (see [Symptoms of concussion](#)).
- Know how to get help if someone is concussed.
- Take care to avoid head injuries.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that their First Aid provision can assist a person with concussion.
- Ensure that their members know how to get help in the event of an emergency.
- Ensure that the boathouse is kept tidy so as to reduce the probability of a head injury.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Recognise the [signs and symptoms of concussion](#).
- Know how to [help someone who is concussed](#).
- Coach crews to handle boats on land carefully so as to reduce the probability of a head injury.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that their First Aid provision can assist a person with concussion.
- Provide information to participating clubs on how to get help if needed.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

8.5. Concussion

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Further Information

- Symptoms of concussion - [nhs.uk/Conditions/Concussion/Pages/Symptoms.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Concussion/Pages/Symptoms.aspx)
- Treating concussion - [nhs.uk/Conditions/Concussion/Pages/Treatment.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Concussion/Pages/Treatment.aspx)

8.5. Concussion

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.6 Coping with Illness and Diseases

People who are not feeling well, recovering from an infection, or suffering from a chronic condition should take care when exercising. It is important to seek medical advice in these situations.

Rowing is a team sport. Rowers should be encouraged to look after their fellow rowers. If they look unwell, then they should be asked how they feel and if there is concern, they should be encouraged to recover or to seek medical advice before they exercise.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Not attend training or competition if they have an infectious illness.
- Inform the club, their coach and other crew members if they are suffering from or recovering from an infectious illness or are feeling unwell.
- Practise good hygiene (wash hands, disinfect equipment – many gastro-intestinal and upper respiratory tract infections can be prevented by good basic hygiene).
- If unwell then:
 - Refrain from training until they feel they have fully recovered.
 - Follow medical advice about how much exercise is appropriate.
 - Withdraw from competition.
- Look after other club members - if they look unwell ask them how they are feeling and, if they are not well, encourage them to rest.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Encourage members to refrain from training and competing when unwell.
- Avoid putting pressure on members to compete when unwell.
- Make members aware when there is a danger of passing on infectious diseases.
- Provide hand washing/cleansing facilities.
- Provide disinfection materials for cleaning equipment.
- Encourage members to seek and follow medical advice when appropriate.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Check that rowers are fit to row.
- Encourage rowers to refrain from training and competition when unwell.
- Avoid putting pressure on rowers to compete when unwell.
- Take account of rowers' known health issues when training or planning training programmes.

8.6.Coping with Illness and Diseases

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWSafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 8.6.1](#) - Common Illness and Diseases
- [RowSafe 8.6.2](#) - Chronic Conditions and Diseases
- [RowSafe 8.6.3](#) – Asthma

8.6. Coping with Illness and Diseases

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.6.1. Common Illnesses

From time to time most people suffer from common illnesses like gastroenteritis and respiratory disease. Here are some general guidelines:

- If you don't feel well, do not exercise to make yourself feel better.
- If you are unwell and wish to train or compete, you should seek medical advice.
- If you are uncertain, do not train or compete.

Rowing is a team sport - look after your fellow rowers. If they look unwell, ask them if they are feeling well and, if necessary, encourage them not to row.

There are two common illnesses that require particular care:

- Gastroenteritis (Diarrhoea and Vomiting), and
- Respiratory disease.

Gastroenteritis

Gastroenteritis is extremely contagious and can be passed on readily and rapidly if adequate precautions are not observed.

People who have gastroenteritis (the symptoms are diarrhoea and vomiting) should avoid mixing with friends and colleagues until they have fully recovered. They should take full hygiene precautions (such as hand washing) to limit cross-infection risks.

It is recommended to avoid exercise immediately following gastroenteritis as this can lead to myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart.

People who have gastroenteritis should:

- Not exercise until 48 hours after all the symptoms have disappeared and their appetite has returned.
- Withdraw from training and competition.
- Practise good hygiene (wash hands, disinfect equipment).
- Not put themselves and others in their crew at risk - be socially aware.
- If their symptoms persist, seek medical advice.

Respiratory Disease - Such as colds and coughs

People who are suffering from respiratory disease such as colds and coughs:

- Should not exercise if they have difficulty breathing when exercising.
- If their symptoms persist, then they should seek medical advice.

Viral illnesses can make the symptoms of asthma worse. Rowers, and others, who use an asthma inhaler may have to submit a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE), if they need to exceed the daily maximum dose. Check the advice on asthma (See [RowSafe 8.6.3](#)) and check medications using [GlobalDro](#).

General Illness

People who are feeling generally unwell should:

- Limit or withdraw from training.
- Consider whether they are fit to row.
- Not return to training until they are fully recovered.
- If they continue to feel unwell, seek medical advice.
- Follow the medical advice given

Remember, if you train or compete when feeling unwell, even from a minor illness, then you will not perform to your best potential and thereby you will let down your rowing colleagues. If you are unwell during training or competition and require emergency medical treatment this will cause serious concern and alarm amongst your colleagues. It may even put your colleagues at risk.

8.6.1. Common Illnesses

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 8.6.3](#) - Asthma
- Anti-Doping: [Sport Ireland](#)

8.6.1. Common Illnesses

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.6.2. Chronic Conditions and Diseases

Rowing can help people who suffer from a chronic condition or disease to maintain and improve their health.

Rowers may need medical advice to help them to determine how they can safely exercise with their illness. Medical advice is individual and personal. It would be wrong to copy or extrapolate from what other people have been told and to take medicines prescribed for someone else.

Clubs and competitions often ask members and participants if they have any medical issues that may affect their safety and the safety of others. It is not necessary to provide details of any conditions, this information is confidential, but it would be appropriate to share information about what type or extent of activity would be helpful and any that may be harmful.

This will help clubs and coaches to keep rowers safe.

Cardiac Disease

People who suffer from cardiac disease (including hypertension) that may compromise their rowing or training, are advised to seek medical advice from a Cardiac Specialist, Sports Medicine Doctor or Sport Physiotherapist, and to follow this advice. These specialists can advise on how much exercise should be undertaken, the limiting factors and on fitness to row or train.

When exercising, rowers should monitor:

- Their heart rate, and
- The effects of different types of exercise. For example, the reaction to longer steady state exercise compared with short sprint type exercise.

Tolerance to exercise can be built over a period of time.

Some people with heart disease have an Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) - a small defibrillator implanted into the chest wall. Rowers with an ICD are not required to disclose this but should consider doing so. It could help if their coach and fellow crew members know what may happen if it self-activates and what, if anything, they should do.

Joint Injury or Illness

Rowers who are suffering from joint injury or illness should seek specialist advice on how to rest and exercise to avoid further injury. This particularly applies to weight training. Although rowing and indoor rowing are not weight bearing exercises, it is still possible to injure joints.

Epilepsy

It is important to avoid being on the water until the risk of further seizures has become tolerable. Seizures of either a crew member or cox may put that person or others at risk of serious injury.

Rowers, coaches (driving launches) and coxswains with epilepsy should not be allowed on the water when there is a possibility of further seizures placing themselves and others at significant risk.

Asleep seizures (nocturnal seizures) are seizures that occur whilst falling asleep, when asleep, or on waking up. Rowers, launch drivers and coxswains who have an asleep seizure should not row, drive a launch or cox until they are seizure-free for one year.

Those who continue to have only asleep seizures should contact their General Practitioner or medical specialist to be assessed as to their suitability to row, drive a launch or cox.

8.6.2. Chronic Conditions and Diseases

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

In certain circumstances awake seizures may not affect consciousness, attention and the ability to act in any situation, nor cause any functional impairment. Rowers, launch drivers and coxswains who have awake seizures where they:

- remain fully conscious during the seizures;
- the seizures do not impair or stop the individual functioning normally;
- have only ever had awake seizures;
- have never had a seizure that affects their consciousness, attention and ability to act in any situation;
- may be permitted to row or cox following

medical review. Clubs and rowing facilities should be informed that:

- an individual has had epilepsy
- a suitable period of time has elapsed since the last seizure
- medical consultation has taken place

The club/rowing facility should risk assess the situation and develop an action plan with the individual to manage a seizure, with appropriate medical advice where required.

There is no restriction to indoor rowing. Clubs and rowing facilities should be made aware of the possibility of seizures in an individual. The club/rowing facility should risk assess the situation and develop an action plan with the individual to manage a seizure.

Asthma

Asthma is common amongst athletes, even elite athletes. The general advice is:

- To take the prescribed inhaler just before exercise (although the initial effect is dilation of the bronchi this can last for three to four hours).
- To always carry the prescribed inhaler in the boat (or close by in the gym) so that symptoms can be treated without delay.
- To warm up and cool down carefully and effectively, especially in hot, dry dusty or 'asthma inducing ambient weather'.
- To minimise exercise with upper respiratory tract infections (such as colds and flu) as this will hasten the onset and make the asthma worse.

Care should be taken to check that the normal use of the inhaler complies with UK Anti-Doping rules. Increased dosing may require a Therapeutic Use Exemption. (see [RowSafe 8.6.3](#)).

Diabetes

There is an article based on an [interview with Sir Steve Redgrave](#). There is more information on the Diabetes Ireland [website](#).

Further Information

- RowSafe [8.6.3](#) - Asthma
- Sir Steve Redgrave on diabetes - bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/8095622.stm

8.6.2. Chronic Conditions and Diseases

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

8.6.3. Asthma

Asthma is common, it is most common in children, but also affects about a quarter of all elite athletes. But if managed correctly asthma should not be a barrier to a normal life or participation in sport.

The diagnosis of asthma is usually made by the GP, and treated with a variety of prescription inhalers – often a blue “reliever” and/or a brown “preventer”. It is important to comply with the medication prescribed and to liaise with healthcare professionals if symptoms persist. It is important to remember that particularly for asthma, prevention is easier than cure.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Recognise the symptoms of an asthma attack.
- Know how to support a person who is suffering from an asthma attack.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Review the information below and communicate it to their members.
- Discuss it with their coaches, particularly coaches of juniors.
- Display relevant information wherever it will be most helpful.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Be aware of exercise induced and seasonal asthma.
- Ensure that all asthmatic rowers carry their inhalers on the water in a dry bag.
- Recognise the symptoms of an asthma attack and the difference between asthma and hyperventilation.
- Be aware of the Asthma Recovery Position.
- Understand how to support a person having an asthma attack.
- Know how to access help.

Rowers with Asthma

Rowers with asthma are expected to:

- Carry their relieving inhaler at all times.
- Take the prescribed inhaler just before exercise (although the initial effect is dilation of the bronchi this can last for three to four hours).
- Always carry the prescribed inhaler in the boat (or close by in the gym) so that symptoms can be treated without delay.
- Warm up and cool down carefully and effectively, especially in hot, dry dusty or ‘asthma inducing ambient weather’.
- Minimise exercise with upper respiratory tract infections (such as colds and flu) as this will hasten the onset and make the asthma worse.
- Ensure that coaches and fellow rowers are aware of their condition and how best to manage it.
- Attend regular asthma reviews as advised by their GP.
- Check that their medication complies with Sport Ireland Anti-Doping rules ([HERE](#)) and follow the guidelines for applying for a Therapeutic Use Exemption if the dose schedule is exceeded.

8.6.3. Asthma

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Further Information

- WADA - www.wada-ama.org
- Asthma Society of Ireland - www.asthma.ie
- Netdoctor - [Asthma brought on by exercise - netdoctor.co.uk/diseases/facts/asthma_exercise.htm](http://netdoctor.co.uk/diseases/facts/asthma_exercise.htm)

Recognition Features

- Difficulty in breathing, with trouble exhaling.
- Wheezing as the casualty breathes out.
- Difficulty speaking and whispering.
- Distress and anxiety.
- Coughing.
- Features of hypoxia, such as a grey-blue tinge to the lips, earlobes and nailbeds (cyanosis).

Treatment

Your aims during an asthma attack are to ease the breathing and, if necessary, get medical help.

- You need to keep the casualty calm and reassure them.
- Keep them upright
- Do not leave them alone.
- If they have a blue reliever inhaler, then encourage them to use it. Children may have a spacer device and you should encourage them to use that with their inhaler also. It should relieve the attack within a few minutes.
- You can improvise a spacer device using a polystyrene cup if necessary.
- Encourage the casualty to breathe slowly and deeply.
- Encourage the casualty to sit in a position that they find most comfortable, often leaning forward with arms resting on a table or the back of a chair. Do not lie the casualty down.
- A mild asthma attack should ease within a few minutes but if it doesn't encourage the casualty to use their inhaler again.
- The casualty may take one or two puffs of their inhaler every two minutes, up to a maximum of 10 puffs.

If this is the first attack, or if the attack is severe and any one of the following occurs:

- The inhaler has no effect.
- The casualty is becoming worse.
- Breathlessness makes talking difficult.
- The casualty is becoming exhausted. Dial 999 (or 112) for an ambulance.
- Monitor and record the breathing and pulse rate every 10 minutes.

If the patient becomes unresponsive, open the airway and check their breathing and be prepared to give emergency aid. If the symptoms improve quickly then:

- Continue to sit with them until they are feeling completely well and can go back to previous activity.

If the casualty is a child or vulnerable adult then:

- Contact their parents or carers as appropriate and inform them about the situation.

8.7 What To Do If Someone Collapses

Would you know what to do if someone collapsed and was unresponsive? How can you prepare for this situation?

Someone who has collapsed, is unresponsive and not breathing normally, is likely to have no heartbeat. It is vital to summon help and start chest compressions immediately.

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

Early recognition and a call for help – to prevent cardiac arrest

Early CPR (chest compressions) – to buy time Early defibrillation – to restart the heart

Clubs are advised to review the Medical Panel guidance and consider the need for an AED to be available in the club.

Advice states that "the victim's chance of survival falls by around 7 - 10% with every minute that defibrillation is delayed".

There is also a statement that "Survival rates for people who had a rhythm that could be treated by a shock from the defibrillator, were 53% following intervention by bystanders." from the National Institute for Health Research.

Finally it is important to emphasize that it is the combination of chest compressions and AED that produces success not AED alone. So it is essential to deliver good chest compressions until an AED can be sourced.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Read and understand notices displayed in your club showing:
 - How to call 999 for an ambulance and provide directions so that the ambulance can respond to your location quickly and easily.
 - How to perform hands only Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
 - Where to find an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED), if there is one nearby.
- Watch the videos that show [what to do if someone collapses](#) (these videos can also be found by searching YouTube for "cpr vinnie" and "cpr mini vinnie").
- Download a CPR app on your mobile phone and practice CPR.
- Be aware that the casualty will need further assessment and advanced medical care and must be taken to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered.

8.7. What To Do If Someone Collapses

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Provide detailed information on how to call 999 for an ambulance and their club's location and access points by road.
- Encourage members to learn what to do if someone collapses.
- Provide training and learning opportunities for resuscitation and First Aid.
- Display information on resuscitation.
- Display a notice on the front door of the club, and elsewhere, saying where it is kept if the club has an AED.
- Display information showing how to retrieve one if the club does not have an AED, and if there is one nearby.
- Offer support and counseling to anyone who was present when someone collapsed.

Although AEDs are expensive, they are emergency medical devices and should be readily accessible, and not locked in cupboards.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Ensure that they have an adequate number of appropriately trained Healthcare Professionals and First Aiders available.
- Have the ability to call 999 and the Emergency Services, especially in areas of poor mobile phone reception.
- Provide detailed information of the competition's location and access points by road.
- Display a notice saying where it is kept if the competition has an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED). It should be made available to the Healthcare Professionals and First Aiders attending the competition.
- Display information showing how one nearby can be retrieved if the competition does not have an AED.
- Ensure that all umpires and boating staff understand the rescue and medical facilities and how to use them.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Set an example by ensuring that they are fully competent to assist with a person who has collapsed.
- Encourage participants to learn how to assist with a person who has collapsed.
- Practise retrieval of collapsed rowers from boats.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Lifesaver online learning at <https://life-saver.org.uk/>
- How to call an ambulance to the site (see Calling an ambulance section)
- NHS - Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTD) - [nhs.uk/conditions/Post-traumatic-stress-disorder/Pages/Introduction.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Post-traumatic-stress-disorder/Pages/Introduction.aspx) and NHS - Can I get free therapy or counselling? - [nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/free-therapy-or-counselling.aspx](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/free-therapy-or-counselling.aspx)
- Samaritans - [samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)
- ChildLine - [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk)

Procedure

What to do if someone collapses, is unresponsive and not breathing normally

If you are on your own:

- Check that you are safe and shout for help.
- Start doing chest compressions to the rhythm of "Staying Alive".
- Call 999.
 - Ask for ambulance
 - Keep the phone line open
 - Put the phone on speaker
- Try to keep doing chest compressions while answering the call centre's questions.
- Keep doing the chest compressions until help arrives.

If you do not know or are uncertain how to perform chest compressions, then the call centre will take you through the procedure. If there are two or more persons present:

- Person 1
 - Call 999 and ask for an ambulance
 - Answer the call centre's questions
 - Leave the phone line open
 - Put the phone on speaker
 - Get the AED if one is available
- Person 2
 - Do chest compressions to the rhythm of "Staying Alive"
- When you have finished talking to the call centre, you can both:
 - Share chest compressions until help arrives
 - Use the AED if available

Automatic External Defibrillators (AED)

If an AED is available:

- Call for help.
- Start chest compressions.
- Get or send someone for the AED.
- When the AED has arrived:
 - Switch on the AED
 - Follow the instructions from the AED while continuing with chest compressions

If CPR or an AED is used then the casualty will need further assessment and advanced medical care and must be taken to hospital, even if they appear to have recovered.

Internal Defibrillators

Some people have an Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator (ICD) which activates automatically if their heart stops. People with an ICD, do not have to tell anyone as this is confidential medical information. However, it could help others to help them if they explain what happens if the ICD is activated and what others should do to help.

If someone with an ICD has collapsed and is unresponsive, react as described above. It is safe to do chest compressions and you may see the casualty 'jump' as an internal shock is delivered. Call 999 for an ambulance and apply an AED if available and follow the instructions. It is important to follow routine cardiac arrest procedures and not to assume that the ICD is functioning.

Calling an Ambulance

If you need an ambulance:

- Call 999 or 112.
- Ask for Ambulance.
- Stay on the phone.
- Give your phone number when requested in case of accidental disconnection.
- If you are using a mobile phone, make sure you stay where there is a signal.
- You may be asked for the following information:
 - Age and gender of the casualty
 - Medical history (you may not know this)
 - Time of incident
 - What happened
 - Injuries or symptoms of the casualty
 - Vital signs - are they breathing, conscious, bleeding
 - Where the casualty is
 - What treatment have they received

You will receive advice from the call taker as to how to perform resuscitation, if necessary, or how best to manage the casualty until the emergency services arrive.

You will need to give the emergency services directions to reach the casualty quickly and easily. If the location is difficult to find or does not have a specific address, the emergency services may need more than an address and Eircode/post code to find it, such as "it has blue gates, it's behind St. Mary's Church".

Your club should display posters showing how to contact the emergency services and containing directions. Competition Organisers should ensure that umpires, race officials and other personnel have this information for the competition venue. If possible, the club or Competition Organisers should check these directions with the emergency services to ensure that they can be understood by someone who is not familiar with the location.

9. Topics Covered in Risk Assessments

The process of undertaking risk assessments can be made simpler by considering the various topics. This section of RowSafe identifies those topics, gives some general guidance and outlines some potential Hazards, Barriers, Hazardous Events and Controls.

Risk Management Plans are a step in developing a Risk Assessment. They list Hazards and possible Hazardous Events, together with Barriers (to reduce the probability of a Hazardous Event occurring) and Controls (to reduce the severity of harm should a Hazardous Event occur).

These topics are:

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9. Topics Covered in Risk Assessments

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

9.1 Weather

Rowing activities are affected by the current local conditions. It is important to know about the expected weather conditions at the time of an outdoor activity. These conditions include wind strength and direction, visibility, temperature, and precipitation. These considerations should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Please note that in the event of Lightning rowers are particularly vulnerable as they are often in wide open spaces where they are the highest thing around.

If you are on water, get into shelter as quickly as possible; water will transmit strikes from further away. Proximity to water is a common factor in lightning strikes.

Find shelter inside a large building or a motor vehicle. The inside of a car is safe as lightning will spread over the metal of the vehicle before earthing through the tyres.

Do not shelter beneath tall or isolated trees, one in four people struck by lightning are sheltering under trees.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Learn about local weather peculiarities.
- Be aware of personal limitations, rules and guidelines associated with the weather conditions.
- Assess the weather for the duration and type of outing they are undertaking.
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of other crew members if boating in adverse conditions.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Set out rules and guidelines for outings covering:
 - Local weather conditions.
 - Assessment of unsafe rowing conditions by boat type and rowers' abilities to include:
 - Weather, including lightning.
 - Temperature.
 - Persons authorised to allow, restrict or stop boating activities.
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Implement a process to inform members what activities are currently restricted.
- Amend Risk Assessments and Safety Plans to take account of any advice or direction provided by local navigation or other relevant water authority relating to local weather conditions.
- Adopt the [30:30 rule on lightning](#).
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Learn about local weather peculiarities, and local rules of navigation particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Assess the weather conditions for the duration and type of outing they are leading.
- Amend outing plans to take account of any updated advice relating to local weather conditions.
- Consider each crew member's personal limitations, limitations of their equipment and safety facilities available.

9.1. Weather

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of all crew members if boating in adverse conditions.
- Ensure that the whole crew 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.
- [Adopt the 30:30 rule on lightning.](#)
- Understand the causes, symptoms and effects of hypothermia and hyperthermia.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Establish a process to inform participants of any activities that are currently restricted.
- Ensure there are facilities for competitors, support staff and officials to cope with the expected weather conditions.
- Monitor the weather conditions leading up to and throughout the competition.
- Provide information to competitors covering:
 - Local weather conditions.
 - Procedure to stop or suspend racing in total or by class of competition.
- Amend Risk Assessments and Safety Plans to take account of any advice or direction provided by local navigation or other relevant water authority relating to local weather conditions.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail the competition if conditions are assessed as unsafe.
- Establish a boating schedule that ensures that there are no long periods of exposure to cold or hot weather.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- The 30:30 rule on lightning - <http://www.rosipa.com/leisure-safety/advice/lightning/>

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with the weather

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Hot sunny weather	• Avoid outings in the middle of the day • Adjust activity levels to suit conditions • Rest in shade (e.g. under bridges, in the shade of a tree) • Wear appropriate clothing (thin, breathable) • Use water for cooling	Hyperthermia (sun stroke)	• Move into a cooler area, remove outer clothing • Use shower with cool, not cold, water or cool in river/lake • Seek medical treatment if severe
	• Use sunscreen • Avoid outings in the middle of the day • Wear appropriate clothing (hat and covered arms, etc.)	Sunburn	• Use after sun cream • Seek medical treatment if severe
	• Carry water and drink regularly	Dehydration	• Continue to drink, carry drinking water • Seek medical treatment if severe
Cold weather	• Wear appropriate clothing (including hats and pogies) • Structure activity levels to keep warm • Monitor crew comfort (particularly coxes) • Shorten outing as needed • Use coxless rather than coxed boats	Hypothermia	• Move into warmer area and warm gradually • Provide warm (not hot) drink • Seek medical treatment if severe or if in doubt
	• Training and capsize/man overboard drills • Good explanations of cold shock and its short term effects.	Cold shock	• Training • Rescue training
	• Avoid rowing at times or in places where significant ice is expected.	Ice causing inability to row or boat damage	• Use throw lines and launch to tow boat clear of ice

Strong winds	• Use larger boats (4x rather than 1x) • Use more stable boats • Fit stabilisers (adaptive rowing floats) to boats • Have mixed crews (Mix juniors/inexperienced rowers with more experienced rowers) • Coach good technique • Avoid holding crews in unstable positions	Capsize	• Rescue with launch • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use lifejacket or buoyancy aid
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Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
	• Restrict rowing to sheltered areas • Have mixed crews (Mix Juniors/inexperienced rowers with more experienced rowers)	Man overboard from gig	• Rescue with gig • Rescue with safety boat • Teach man overboard drill • Wear lifejacket or buoyancy aid • Carry life ring and throwline
	• Avoid being upwind of hazards (circulation plan?) • Keep a good look out • Use coxed rather than coxless boats • Avoid being close to the downwind bank	Blown into bank, pontoon, bridge, shallows, etc.	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat • Use throw lines from the bank to pull the boat clear. • Carry first aid kit and radio or mobile phone to contact emergency services • Have trained first aiders available
	• Stay upwind of the boathouse • Use larger, faster boats (4x rather than 1x) • Mix Juniors with experienced, fit adults	Cannot get back to boathouse against the wind	• Have a safety boat available for towing • Land boat somewhere else and carry it back await improved conditions
	• Use anchor to hold position • Row in sheltered areas	Drifting in strong winds	• Carry tow rope for being towed to safety
Lightning	• Avoid rowing when lightning is present or forecast • Get off the water asap if lightning starts • Adopt the 30:30 rule on lightning	Struck by lightning causing burns or electrocution.	• Treat with First Aid • Call an ambulance and evacuate to hospital

Poor visibility caused by fog or very heavy rain	• Avoid rowing far from land when fog is present or forecast • Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout • Local knowledge • Know and understand the lights and sound signals on navigation marks • At sea, avoid rowing in poor visibility	Collision with the bank or other fixed object	• 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 • 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
	• Avoid rowing far from land when fog is present or forecast • Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout and listen out for other boats	Collision with another boat	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
	• Follow rules of the road (river) • Local knowledge • Know and understand the lights and sound signals used by other vessels. • At sea, check for large ship movements with VTS or port control • At sea avoid rowing in poor visibility		• 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 correctly fitted backstays on the forward port and starboard rigger as these tend to reduce the severity of impacts with the rigger • Have trained first aiders available
Poor visibility caused by fog or very heavy rain	• Avoid rowing far from land when fog is present or forecast • Avoid rowing in fog or when fog is forecast	Inability to find way back	• Use radio or other means to contact the navigation authority or club • Use navigation lights to make boat easier to find
Poor visibility caused by darkness	• Avoid rowing in dark areas • Safety boat in attendance with spotlights • Know and understand the lights and sound signals on navigation marks • Avoid rowing or sculling without a cox in darkness • At sea, avoid rowing in darkness	Collision with the bank or other fixed object	• 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 • 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)

	• Fit navigation lights (and check that they are working) • Avoid rowing in dark areas • Safety boat in attendance with spotlights • Know and understand the lights and sound signals used by other vessels • Avoid rowing or sculling without a cox in darkness • At sea, avoid rowing in the darkness	Collision with another boat	• Carry first aid kit and radio or mobile phone to contact emergency services • Have trained first aiders available • 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
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9.2 The Rowing Environment

Rowing activities are affected by the current local conditions. It is important to understand the local environment, including local hazards and the circulation plan and also to take account of current conditions like temporary hazards and changes to the circulation plan. These considerations should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and navigation marks particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Be aware of personal limitations and the local conditions, rules and guidelines.
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of other crew members if boating in adverse conditions.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Set out rules and guidelines for outings covering:
 - Local navigation rules.
 - Assessment of unsafe rowing conditions by boat type and rowers' abilities to include:
 - Current/stream and tides.
 - Rowing or sculling in the dark or in poor visibility including lighting requirements.
 - Persons authorised to allow, restrict or stop boating activities.
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Implement a process to inform members what activities are currently restricted.
- Set up a communication network with the local navigation authority and communicate relevant information to members.
- Agree restrictions on boating activities with other water users.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe.

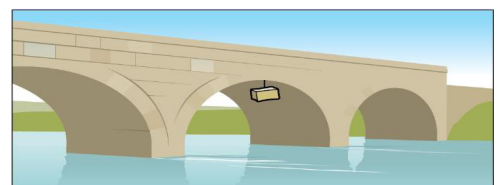
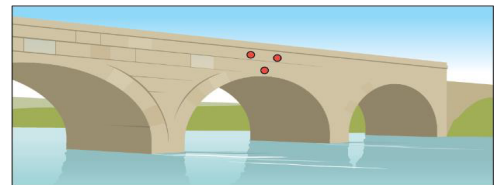
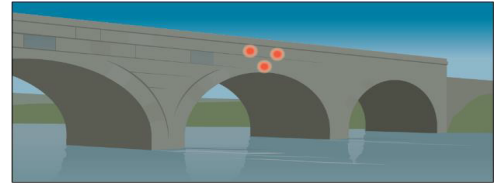
Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and navigation marks particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Consider each crew member's personal limitations, limitations of their equipment and safety facilities available.
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of all crew members if boating in adverse conditions.
- Ensure that the whole crew is aware of, and understands, the rules and guidelines for the activity being undertaken.

9.2.The Rowing Environment

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.



Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Establish a process to inform participants of any activities that are currently restricted.
- Provide information to competitors covering local navigation rules.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail the competition if conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with the local environment

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Bends in river or lake	- Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout - Coach good steering - Coxed rather than coxless - Circulation plan - Lookout on bank or launch - Local knowledge	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 - 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
	- Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout - Coach good steering - Coxed rather than coxless - Circulation plan - Follow rules of the road (river) - Lookout on bank or launch - Local knowledge	Collision with another boat on the water	- 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
Stationary objects in or near the water e.g. bridge, pontoon, overhanging trees, locks, moored boats, buoys, rocks, shoals, shallows, other submerged objects, etc.	- Coach scullers and steers persons to keep a good lookout - Coach good steering - Coxed rather than coxless - Circulation plan - Follow rules of the road (river) - Lookout on bank or launch - Local knowledge - Understand the meaning of local navigation marks (e.g. buoys, etc.)	Collision with a stationary object on the water	- 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 - On gigs, carry a tow line to tow the boat to safety - Rescue gig crew and tow boat to safety
	- As above + - Avoid being upstream or upwind of the stationary object.	Swept or blown into stationary object on the water	- Use Rescue boat and throw-lines - Evacuate crew to land - On gigs, carry a tow line to tow the boat to safety - Rescue gig crew and tow boat to safety

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Weirs & sluices	• Ensure that weirs and sluices are marked on local maps • Keep well upstream of warning markers • Keep further clear in strong stream conditions	Swept over weirs or through sluices	• Use Rescue boat and throw-lines • Evacuate crew to land
Steep banks or walls (makes landing difficult) or reeds or overhanging trees extending over a large length of bank.	• Avoid areas with steep banks or high walls. • Practise buddy rescue technique (to avoid the need to land)	Unable to land from boat if capsized, etc.	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use lifejacket or buoyancy aid
Reeds or overhanging trees near bank	• Avoid stopping upwind of reeds or overhanging trees	Blown or swept into reeds or trees (usually scullers)	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to tow boat clear • Teach other scullers rescue technique
Mud flats	• Show any mudflats on map • Keep clear of mudflats near low tide	Running aground and being unable to get off before outgoing tide falls	• Have process to get people off mudflats

9.3 The Water

Rowing activities are affected by the current local conditions. It is important to understand the local water conditions, including local hazards and the circulation plan and also to take account of current conditions in regions where flow speed is high. These considerations should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Learn about local hazards such as rough water, fast flowing water, areas of shallow water and water borne hazards, local rules of navigation and navigation marks particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Be aware of personal limitations and the local conditions, rules and guidelines.
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of other crew members if boating in adverse conditions.
- Understand what measures to take to deal with water that is polluted or where blue-green algae or Weil's disease is present (see [RowSafe 8.4](#)).

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Set out rules and guidelines for outings covering:
 - Local navigation rules.
 - Assessment of unsafe rowing conditions by boat type and rowers' abilities to include:
 - Current/stream and tides
 - Rough water
 - Areas of shallow water
 - Pollution, blue-green algae and Weil's disease
 - Persons authorised to allow, restrict or stop boating activities
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Implement a process to inform members what activities are currently restricted.
- Set up a communication network with the local navigation authority and communicate relevant information to members.
- Agree restrictions on boating activities with other water users.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Learn about local hazards associated with water conditions, local rules of navigation and navigation marks particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Consider each crew member's personal limitations, limitations of their equipment and safety facilities available.
- Respect the individual concerns and capabilities of all crew members if boating in adverse conditions.
- Ensure that the whole crew is aware of, and understands, the rules and guidelines for the activity being undertaken.
- Ensure that the crew understands the procedures to be followed if the water is polluted or blue-green algae or Weil's Disease is present.

9.3.The Water

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Establish a process to inform participants of any activities that are currently restricted.
- Provide information to competitors if the water is contaminated.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail the competition if conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 8.4](#) - Waterborne Infections and Diseases
- Information on flow over weirs - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYI67uZkNvQ>

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with the water

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Rough Water	• Use larger boats (4x rather than 1x) • Use more stable boats • Fit stabilisers (adaptive rowing floats) to boats • Have mixed crews (Mix Juniors/ inexperienced rowers with more experienced rowers) • Coach good technique • Avoid holding crews in unstable positions • Restrict rowing to sheltered areas	Capsize	• Rescue with launch • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use Lifejacket or buoyancy aid
	• Avoid areas of rough water • Fit wash boards • Use a bailer to prevent water accumulation	Swamping	• 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) • Row or tow boat to shore then carry or tow empty boat to boathouse or relaunch and row back • Adequate boat buoyancy
	• Restrict rowing to sheltered waters • Have mixed crews (Mix juniors/inexperienced rowers with more experienced rowers)	Man overboard from gig	• Rescue with gig • Rescue with safety boat • Teach man overboard drill • Wear lifejacket or buoyancy aid • Carry life ring and throwline • Inflate lifejacket.
Rough Water	• Avoid rowing in rough water. • Take extra care approaching the shore where the shallowness of water increases the wave height. • Do not allow the gig to become beam-on to the waves.	Swamping or capsize of a Gig (traditional wooden gigs have very little inherent buoyancy)	• Operate a buddy systems and rescue with another gig. • Rescue with a safety boat • If necessary, call the coastguard and request lifeboat support. • Fit boats with buoyancy bags to provide extra buoyancy and stay with the boat until rescued. • Tow the boat back to the shore.
Fast Flowing water	• Avoid being upstream of hazards (circulation plan?) • Keep a good look out • Use coxed rather than coxless boats	Swept over weir or into bridge, pontoon, shallows, etc.	• Use Rescue boat and throw-lines • Evacuate crew to land

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
	- Stay upstream of the boathouse - Use larger, faster boats (4x rather than 1x) - Mix Juniors with experienced, fit adults	Cannot get back to boathouse against stream	- Have a safety boat available for towing - Land boat somewhere else and carry it back await improved conditions
Areas of Shallow water (permanent or tidal)	- Provide information on areas of shallow water - Avoid areas of shallow water hazards (circulation plan?) - Keep a good look out - Use coxed rather than coxless boats - Be aware of the tide times and heights and plan accordingly	Grounding	- 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
Water-borne hazards	- Avoid areas that are known to be polluted. - Minimise crew contact with polluted water - Wash open wounds, cuts and blisters properly on return to land and seek medical attention	Pollution (e.g. animal waste)	Seek medical attention
	- Avoid areas where this is expected to be present. - Minimise crew contact with water containing Blue Green Algae	Blue Algae Green	Seek medical attention
	- Avoid areas where this is expected to be present. - Cover cuts and abrasions with waterproof dressings - Wash open wounds, cuts and blisters properly on return to land and seek medical attention - Wash thoroughly after outings	Weil's disease (Leptospirosis)	- Seek medical attention - Coach rowers to understand the symptoms and seek immediate medical treatment.

Very cold water	- Find an alternative activity ashore. - Use larger boats (4x rather than 1x) - Use more stable boats - Fit stabilisers (adaptive rowing floats) to boats - Have mixed crews (Mix Juniors/ inexperienced rowers with more experienced rowers) - Coach good technique - Avoid holding crews in unstable positions - Keep rowers close to the clubhouse or close to the rescue boat.	Capsize resulting in hypothermia	- Rescue with launch - Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique - Use Lifejacket or buoyancy aid - Provide first aid treatments for hypothermia - Move into warmer area and warm gradually - Provide warm (not hot) drink - Seek medical treatment if severe or if in doubt
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Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Tides	- Check tide times before going afloat - Avoid having to return against a fast- flowing tide	Unable to make way against the tide	- Hold position with anchor - Carry tow line - Rescue with motorboat
	- Check tide times before going afloat - Avoid having to return against a fast- flowing tide - Have a plan for leaving the boat in a secure place	Unable to return because tide has gone out	- Land boat and secure in another place, crew walk back - Moor boat and recover crew with safety boat
	- Check tide times before going afloat - Avoid having to return against a fast- flowing tide	Being swept out to sea or past harbour entrance	- Hold position with anchor - Carry tow line - Rescue with motorboat

9.4 Other Water Users

Rowing activities are affected by other water users such as motorboat users, sailing clubs, canoe clubs and water-skiers. It is important to know who else uses the local water, what activities they undertake and the hazards that these may present. These considerations should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Know who uses the local water and the hazards their activities may present, for example anglers on the bank, large or fast boats creating wash.
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Be aware of local navigational rules and guidelines put in place to allow different activities to take place safely.
- Respect the needs of other water users.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Set out rules and guidelines for outings covering:
 - Local navigation rules.
 - Shared use of the water with other water users.
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Implement a process to inform members what other activities are taking place.
- Set up a communication network with the local navigation authority and other water users and communicate relevant information to members.
- Agree restrictions on boating activities with other water users.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Know about the activities of other water users and take account of the risks when planning outings.
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Ensure that the whole crew is aware of, and understands, the rules and guidelines for the activity being undertaken and the activities of other water users.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Coordinate the competition's activities with organisations representing other water users.
- Establish a process to inform participants of the activities of other water users and any activities that are currently restricted.
- Provide information to competitors covering local navigation rules.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail the competition if conditions are assessed as unsafe.

9.4. Other Water Users

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with other water users

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Wash from large or fast boats	• Avoid areas where wash is expected • Use larger boats (4x rather than 1x) or more stable boats if wash is expected • Agreements with other water users to allocate different areas for different activities • Coach crews in how to handle wash.	Capsize	• Rescue with launch • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use Lifejacket or buoyancy aid
	• Avoid areas where wash is expected • Agreements with other water users to allocate different areas for different activities • Coach crews in how to handle wash.	Man overboard from gig	• Rescue with gig • Rescue with launch • Teach man overboard drill • Use lifejacket or buoyancy aid • Carry life ring and throw line
	• Avoid areas where wash is expected • Use larger boats (4x rather than 1x) or more stable boats if wash is expected • Agreements with other water users to allocate different areas for different activities • Coach crews in how to handle wash. Use a bailer to prevent water accumulation	Swamping	• 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) • Row or tow boat to shore then carry or tow empty boat to boathouse or relaunch and row back • Adequate boat buoyancy
Anglers on the bank or in boats	• Avoid areas where angling is expected • Agreements with angling clubs, etc. different areas or times for different activities • Coach crews to be aware of and avoid the hazard	Entanglement with fishing lines and contact with hooks	• Rescue with launch • Cut fishing lines • First aid treatment
Vandals on the bank or bridges	• Avoid areas where this can be expected • Notify the Police to prevent further occurrences	Stone throwing from vandals on the bank or bridges	• First aid treatment • Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired

Incompetent or ignorant motorboat users	• Avoid areas where this can be expected • Note the identity of the boat and notify the Navigation Authority to prevent further occurrences	Collision or swamping	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use throw lines from the bank to pull the boat into the bank (or shallow water)
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Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
			• Row or tow boat to shore then carry or tow empty boat to boathouse or relaunch and row back • Adequate boat buoyancy
Commercial shipping such as cargo vessels, ferries, naval ships	• Avoid shipping channels and other areas where large vessels operate. • Check the VTS (Vessel Traffic Service) radio channels for shipping movements and plan outing accordingly. • Be prepared to take action to avoid collision.	Collision or swamping due to wash	• Have safety boat and throw lines available to rescue rowers and recover boat • Row or tow boat to shore then carry or tow empty boat to boathouse or relaunch and row back • Carry tow rope for towing boat to safety
		Swamping or capsize of a Gig (traditional wooden gigs have very little inherent buoyancy)	• Operate a buddy systems and rescue with another gig. • Rescue with a safety boat • If necessary, call the coastguard and request lifeboat support. • Fit boats with buoyancy bags to provide extra buoyancy and stay with the boat until rescued. • Tow the boat back to the shore.

9.5 Going Afloat and Landing

The hazards associated with going afloat and landing, both on land and on water, should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the local hazards associated with going afloat and landing.
- Take care when handling boats.
- Understand the Circulation Plan for launching and recovery.
- Follow the local procedures and instructions from the cox or coach.
- Wear the correct footwear.
- Take care when handling boats.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Define the procedures for going afloat and landing and communicate to members.
- Define the Circulation Plan for launching and recovery.
- Ensure that there are procedures for quarantining damaged boats and equipment.
- Maintain launching areas in a safe condition.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Coach rowers in the correct procedure for going afloat and landing.
- Coach rowers to take care when handling boats.
- Coach rowers in the Circulation Plan for launching and recovery.
- Ensure that damaged equipment is quarantined.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Include the hazards in the boat launch and recovery area in their Risk Assessments.
- Define the procedures for going afloat and landing and communicate to participating clubs.
- Define the Circulation Plan for launching and recovery.
- Maintain launching areas in a safe condition.

9.5. Going Afloat and Landing

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Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with going afloat and landing

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Steep banks in launch/recovery area	- Careful coaching - Good control by coach or cox - Correct footwear - Well defined procedure - Extra people (helpers)	Slipping and falling when lifting or carrying boat	First aid treatment
Steep or irregular steps in launch/recovery area	As above	Slipping or tripping and falling when lifting or carrying boat	First aid treatment
Steep banks in launch/recovery area	- Careful coaching - Good control by coach or cox - Correct footwear - Well defined procedure - Extra people (helpers)	Slipping and falling when lifting or carrying boat	First aid treatment
Steep banks in launch/recovery area	As above	Slipping or tripping and falling when lifting or carrying boat	- Rescue with launch - Cut Fishing lines - First aid treatment
Slippery or muddy ground in launch/recovery area	As above	Slipping and falling when lifting or carrying boat	First aid treatment
Slippery surface on slipways	- As above - Clean slipway surface - Take care not to trap hands or feet	Slipping, falling or trapping hands and feet when lifting or carrying boat	First aid treatment
Boat rolling down slipway out of control	- Careful coaching - Good control by coach or cox - Well defined procedure - Extra people (helpers) - Have means to control descent of boat (winch, rope etc.) - Well maintained equipment (e.g. brakes on trailers).	Collision with wall Boat falls off slipway Impact with people People are trapped against wall or under boat	- First aid treatment - Additional medical treatment - Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired
Manual handling of boats	- Define and implement a safe procedure for boat handling, launch and recovery. - Use correct posture when lifting - Additional people to move boats onshore and launch and recover	Musculo-skeletal disorder due to manual handling	- First aid treatment - Additional medical treatment - Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Strong and variable currents during boat launching	• Assistance from other crews or helpers • Find a more suitable location	Injuries and damage due to inability to control a boat in the launch area	• First aid treatment • Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired
Strong and variable currents during boat recovery	• Plan approach (into stream) and include in circulation plan • Use throw lines from land • Find a more suitable location	Injuries and damage due to inability to control a boat in the recovery area	• First aid treatment • Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired

9.6 In and Around the Boathouse

The hazards in and around the boathouse, including the handling and storage of equipment, should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Keep the boathouse and the surrounding area tidy.
- Use the correct technique when lifting equipment.
- Follow the instructions of the cox or coach.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that appropriate and adequate storage is available for equipment.
- Define a procedure for quarantining equipment.
- Encourage members to keep the boathouse and the surrounding area tidy.
- Ensure that the hazards in and around the boathouse are included in their Risk Assessment, take care to include:
 - Hazards associated with the movement of boats both inside and outside.
 - Hazards associated with the movement of people both inside and outside.
 - Hazards associated with the storage of boats.
 - Hazards associated with other work conducted in or around the boathouse such as boat repair, painting, trailer loading and unloading (include chemical, electrical hazards, and fire).
 - Other people in the vicinity of the boathouse.



Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Coach rowers to keep the boathouse tidy.
- Coach rowers to use the correct technique when lifting equipment.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Include the hazards in and around the boat storage area in their Risk Assessments.
- Communicate appropriate advice to participants or participating clubs.

9.6. In and Around the Boathouse

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards in and around the boathouse (including handling boats on land)

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
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)	Collision of person with fixed object (e.g. walking into rigger)	• Have first aid kit available • Have trained first aiders available
	• Keeping floor clear	Tripping over object on floor	• Have first aid kit available • Have trained first aiders available
Boats, oars, etc. falling from racks	• Good control and instruction (coxing) • Fixing objects so that they cannot fall	Person struck by falling object Damage to falling object or something else as it falls or lands	• Have first aid kit available • Have trained first aiders available • Mark and quarantine damaged equipment until it is repaired • Record in damage log • Repair equipment
Lifting and carrying boats, oars, etc.	• Coach good lifting technique • Assistance from additional people • Good control and instruction (coxing)	Strains and Musculo-Skeletal Disorders	• First aid • Rest • Gentle exercise • Physiotherapy
	• Good control and instruction (coxing) • Keep a good lookout (coach/cox) • Good technique (oars)	Person struck by object being carried	• First aid treatment

9.7 Faulty, Incorrectly Set and Poorly Maintained Equipment

It is important to understand that faulty, incorrectly set and poorly maintained equipment can put rowers and others at risk. Care should be taken to ensure that the risks associated with these issues are incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand how to adjust equipment for their own use.
- Check equipment before going afloat.
- Know how to quarantine defective equipment.
- Not use defective equipment.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Define a procedure for quarantining equipment.
- Ensure that equipment is maintained in good working order.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Coach rowers in adjusting equipment for their own use.
- Coach rowers to check equipment before going afloat.
- Coach rowers to know how to quarantine defective equipment.
- Not allow rowers to use defective equipment.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Define how they intend to check equipment used at the competition.
- Communicate this decision to participants or participating clubs.
- Report any failed boat checks to their region.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

9.7. Faulty, Incorrectly Set and Poorly Maintained Equipment

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Further Information

Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with incorrectly set and poorly maintained equipment

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Incorrect stretcher placement	• Check adjustments • Coach rowers to check	Capsize due to hands going past chest	• Rescue with launch • Teach capsize drill and buddy rescue technique • Use Lifejacket or buoyancy aid
	• Check adjustments • Coach rowers to check	Musculo-Skeletal Disorders and strains	• First aid • Rest • Gentle exercise • Physiotherapy
Incorrect gearing	• Check adjustments • Coach rowers to check	Musculo-Skeletal Disorders and strains	• First aid • Rest • Gentle exercise • Physiotherapy
Gate not fastened	• Check equipment before going afloat • Coach rowers to check equipment	Capsize due to lost oar	• Rescue with safety boat or attempt rescue with another rowing boat.
Steering	• Check adjustments • Coach rowers to check	Inability to steer correctly	• 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)
Heel restraints broken or too loose, shoes not securely fixed to the stretcher	• Check equipment before going afloat • Coach rowers to check equipment • Do not go afloat until fixed	May be trapped in capsized boat by feet caught in shoes	• Rescue with safety boat or attempt rescue with another rowing boat.
Seats, shoes or footplates loose or broken	• Check equipment before going afloat • Coach rowers to check equipment • Defect/maintenance log • Mark and quarantine faulty equipment	May struggle to get back to boathouse against stream or wind	• 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 an anchor • Carry extra clothing, drinking water, radio to call for assistance, etc.

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Steering failure	• Check equipment before going afloat • Coach rowers to check equipment • Defect/maintenance log • Mark and quarantine faulty equipment	May struggle to get back to boathouse against stream or wind	• 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 an anchor • Carry extra clothing, drinking water, radio to call for assistance, etc.
Steering failure (continued)	• Check equipment before going afloat • Coach rowers to check • Defect/maintenance log • Mark and quarantine faulty equipment • Coach coxes and rowers to steer by pressure	Collision with bank, another boat or a solid object	• 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
Hatch covers missing	• Ensure covers are all fitted correctly	Boat may sink if swamped	• 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) • Row or tow boat to shore then carry or tow empty boat to boathouse or relaunch and row back • Adequate boat buoyancy

9.8 Pre-existing Health Conditions and Low Levels of Fitness

These considerations should be incorporated into the Risk Assessment.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Discuss any health and fitness concerns with the coach or club.
- Refrain from rowing if they are unwell or not sufficiently fit.
- Refrain from training if they feel unwell or if to do so would be unsafe.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Include rower health and fitness in their Risk Assessment.
- Support rowers who feel that they are unfit or unwell.
- Ensure that no pressure is put on rowers who are unfit or unwell.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Check that rowers are sufficiently fit and well for the planned activity.
- Support rowers who feel that they are unfit or unwell.
- Ensure that no pressure is put on rowers who are unfit or unwell.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

DISCLAIMER:

- **Rowing & Club Volunteers Health:** Rowing is a physical activity, and should not be undertaken by anyone who cannot engage in strenuous activity.
- **Capacity of Coaches/Club Officials:** It is important to note that officials and coaches in rowing clubs are not medical experts and for any that may have medical or allied medical backgrounds, regardless of their professional standing, are not acting or required to act in a medical capacity in their roles within the club. Responsibility for each rower's or club volunteer's health rests solely with the individual.

- **Rower Health Responsibility:** While it is the responsibility of each individual rower or club volunteer to inform the club of pre-existing medical conditions that the individual themselves may have to give consideration to when rowing or volunteering; the ultimate decision as to whether rowing or volunteering is appropriate for each individual rests entirely with the rower and their medical practitioner.
- **Medical Guidance:** Rowers and club volunteers must obtain professional medical advice to ensure any pre-existing medical condition they have allows them to partake in rowing or volunteering with the club. The club has the right to ask the rower or club volunteer to provide proof in writing from a medical professional that states the rower or volunteer is fit and healthy enough to partake in the sport of rowing or volunteering within the club. The club, when in possession of such medical guidance, reserves the right, pending circumstances, to seek additional guidance which may impact on the club's decision to facilitate the member's participation within the club.
- **RowSafe Guidance:** RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing, any information provided is only for guidance. Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third-party websites accessed through links in this publication.
- **Club Responsibility:** While RowSafe provides information, for guidance purposes only, it is the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments; to define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities and to disseminate any safety guidance and information arising from the risk assessments to its members. It is the responsibility of each club to ensure its members shall comply with the same.

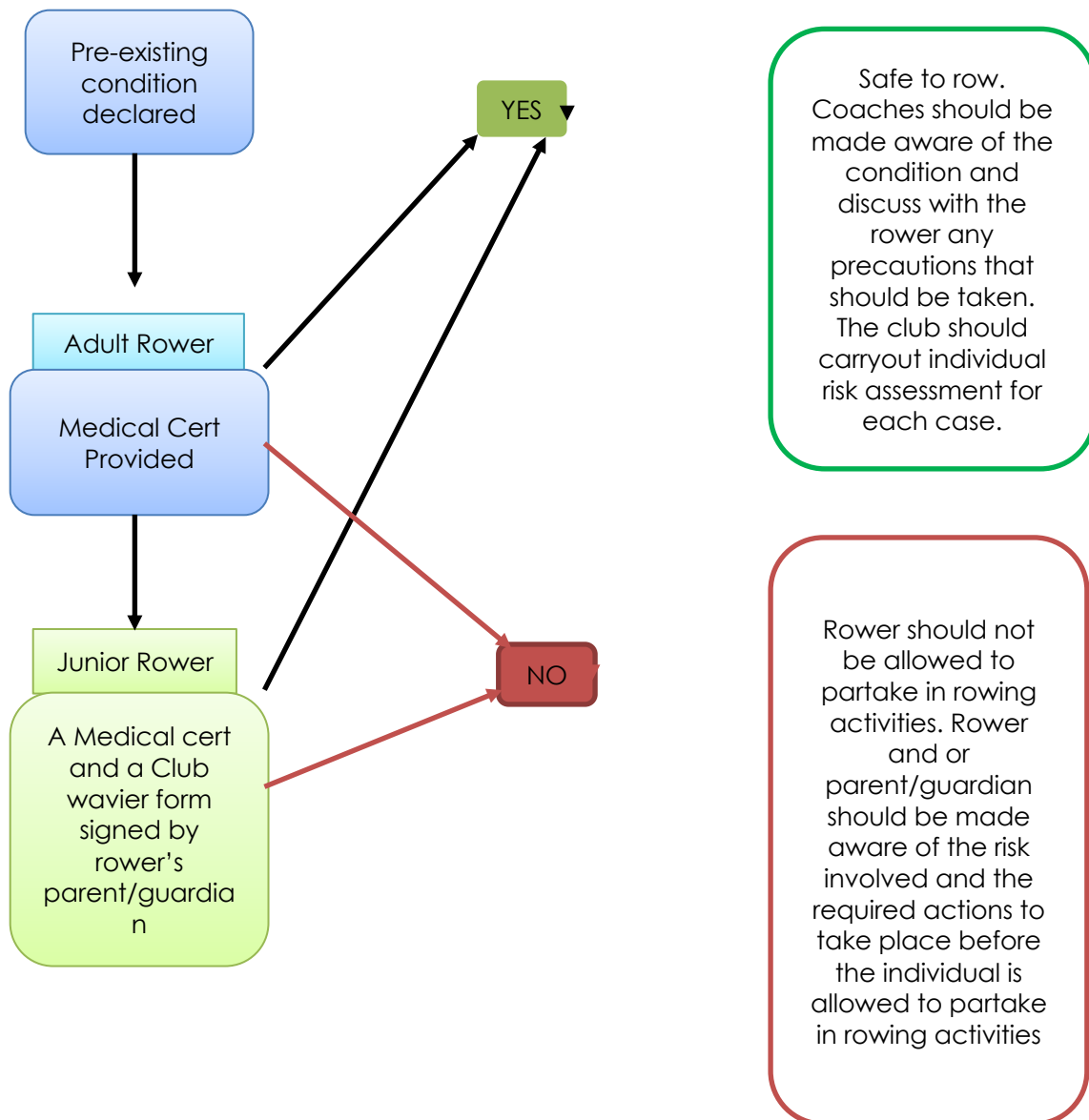
9.8. Pre-existing Health Conditions and Low Levels of Fitness

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 6.1](#) - People new to rowing
- [RowSafe 8.6](#) - Coping with Illness and Diseases
- [RowSafe 8.6.1](#) - Common Illness and Diseases
- [RowSafe 8.6.2](#) - Chronic Conditions and Diseases
- [RowSafe 8.6.3](#) - Asthma

Flow chart to help decide if a rower with a pre-existing medical condition can row.



Please note; the responsibility is with the individual adult rower or parent/guardian of junior rowers to keep the club informed of any changes in the declared medical condition that may affect the individual's ability to partake in the sport of rowing.

9.9 Example Risk Management Plan

Hazards associated with pre-existing health conditions or low level of fitness

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Rowers with low level of fitness	- Understand fitness capabilities and work within them - Improve fitness levels	Collapse or illness	- First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request assistance from ambulance, coastguard or navigation authority
Pre-existing health conditions (See RowSafe 8.6)	Ensure that relevant people know of the condition so that appropriate action can be taken to prevent an incident.	Medical incident afloat or on land	- First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request assistance from ambulance, coastguard or navigation authority
Crew member or sculler with asthma (See RowSafe 8.6.3)	- Ensure that an inhaler is carried and used when appropriate - Avoid stressful situations - Take extra care if person is in a 1x or 2x	Asthmatic incident afloat	- Bring Casualty ashore - First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request assistance from coastguard or navigation authority
	- Ensure that an inhaler is carried and used when appropriate - Avoid stressful situations	Asthmatic incident on land	- First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request an ambulance
Crew member or sculler with diabetes (See RowSafe 8.6.2)	- Ensure that appropriate food and medicines (if necessary) are available - Take extra care if person is in a 1x or 2x	Diabetic incident afloat	- Bring Casualty ashore - First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request assistance from coastguard or navigation authority
	Ensure that appropriate food and medicines (if necessary) are carried	Diabetic incident on land	- First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request an ambulance
Crew member or sculler other known disorder (See RowSafe 8.6)	Carry appropriate items	Incident afloat	- Bring Casualty ashore - First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request assistance from Coastguard or navigation authority
	Ensure that appropriate items are available	Incident on land	- First aid treatment - Seek Medical attention - If necessary, request an ambulance
Flu/viral infection	Discourage rowers from taking exercise when they are ill.	Disease may spread or worsen	Seek Medical attention

9.10 Rowing in floods

From time to time, the area around rowing clubs floods. Under some conditions it may be safe to continue rowing over flooded areas of land but this will require great care. This should only be attempted once a venue specific risk assessment has been completed and used to define the safety rules for this activity.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Learn about the hazards of rowing in floods, and the relevant club safety rules.
- Take care and comply with the rules when rowing in floods.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Complete a venue specific risk assessment and define the related safety rules before allowing this activity to commence.
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Agree restrictions on boating activities with other water users.
- Ensure that rules and guidelines are observed.
- Suspend or curtail boating activities where the conditions are assessed as unsafe.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Understand the club rules about rowing in floods.
- Explain these rules to rowers.

Example Risk Management Plan

There are five different issues with floods. They are:-

1. The water in flooded rivers tends to move quickly.
2. The water in flooded rivers tends to be turbulent.
3. Stationary objects, such as buoys, in fast moving water are hazardous.
4. The water over flooded land may hide solid objects (e.g. fence posts) slightly below the surface.
5. Flood water is often contaminated with sewage, farm animal waste and other materials, and may contain other debris.

The water in flooded rivers tends to move quickly

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Event	Controls
The speed of the water flow	• Finding a land based alternative activity • Finding an alternative stretch of water (e.g. a canal) where the water is moving less quickly • Starting the outing by rowing upstream so that it is downstream back to the boathouse • Using bigger, faster boats (e.g. eights rather than singles) • Mixing crews so that Juniors row in boats with stronger, more experienced rowers • Staying close to the bank and the inside of bends where the water speed is likely to be a little less	Inability of rowers to make headway against the flow	• Using a launch to rescue the crew and then returning for the boat • Landing the boat and carrying it back to the boathouse

The water in flooded rivers tends to be turbulent

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Event	Controls
Turbulence in fast moving water particularly problem downstream of obstructions (e.g. bridges) Turbulence is often just below the surface and invisible from the bank or boat Swimming can be very difficult or impossible due to undertows	• Finding a land based alternative activity • Finding an alternative stretch of water (e.g. a canal) where the water is less turbulent • Avoid areas that can be expected to be turbulent • Using coxed rather than coxless boats • Use larger boats	Steering and retaining control of boats becomes difficult as turbulence can cause a boat to veer off course surprisingly quickly Singles and pairs in particular can capsize	• 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

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

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Event	Controls
The flow of water past anchored stationary objects such as:- • Moored boats • Buoys (both for navigation and mooring) • Bridges • Pontoons • Weirs • 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 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

The water over flooded land may hide solid objects (e.g. fence posts) slightly below the surface

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Event	Controls
Fixed obstructions just below the water in flooded areas	• Finding a land alternative activity • Careful navigation and local knowledge to avoid obstructions • Keeping a good look-out for indicators of obstructions • Operating a buddy system	Collision with a fixed obstruction just below the water in a flooded area	• Check the depth and, if appropriate, carry the boat back to the boathouse • Provision of support by a properly trained and equipped First Aider • Buddy Rescue

Flood water is often contaminated with sewage, farm animal waste and other materials, and may contain other debris

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Event	Controls
Flood water contaminated with untreated sewage or with animal urine and faeces	• Finding a land based alternative activity • Avoiding or minimising exposure to the water • Keeping all cuts and grazes covered with a water-proof dressing • Avoid eating when afloat and maintain good hand hygiene	Serious illness (e.g. Weil's disease) if the water is ingested or enters the body through uncovered cuts or grazes	• Washing or showering after the outing • Seeking medical treatment as soon as any symptoms are noticed
Debris in the water	• Finding a land based alternative activity • Keeping a good lookout and taking care to avoid the debris • Using coxed rather than coxless boats • Having a coach in a launch supervise the outing and provide an extra lookout	Collision with debris	• Using a launch to rescue the crew and then returning for the boat • Provision of support by a properly trained and equipped First Aider

9.11 Indoor Rowing

Indoor rowing is usually a low risk activity but it is not risk free. There are serious risks from overexertion and using poor technique. Care is needed to ensure that risks are kept to acceptable levels.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Take care when indoor rowing and follow the rules specified by the club.
- Be aware of the correct indoor rowing technique.
- Stop if it hurts.
- Avoid encouraging others to overexert.
- Control their own training and aim for small incremental improvements.

Club, School or Gym

Club, School and Gym Officers are expected to:

- Complete a venue specific risk assessment and use it to develop rules for indoor rowing.
- Provide information to members as appropriate.
- Ensure that appropriate provision is made for first aid care.
- Consider the need for Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training.
- Consider the provision of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

Competitions

Competition organisers are expected to:

- Complete a venue specific risk assessment and use it to develop rules for the competition.
- Use the risk assessment to develop the safety plan for the competition.
- Ensure that appropriate provision is made for first aid care.
- Consider the need for Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training.
- Consider the provision of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Coach the correct indoor rowing technique.
- Instruct rowers to stop if it hurts.
- Avoid encouraging rowers to overexert.
- Coach rowers to control their training and aim for small incremental improvements

Risk Management Plans are provided for the following activities:

- Indoor Rowing Training or Competition.
- Pre-existing Medical Conditions when Training or Competing.
- Setting up for an Indoor Rowing Competition.
- Transport of Indoor Rowing Machines.
- Storage of Indoor Rowing Machines.
- Assembly and disassembly of Indoor Rowing Machines.

Further Information

[RowSafe 11.1](#), Indoor Rowing.

Indoor Rowing Training or Competition

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Use of poor technique when rowing.	• Good Coaching.	Musculoskeletal injury.	• Administer First Aid as appropriate. • Possible referral to a Physiotherapist.
Insufficient space between machines.	• Ensure that there is adequate space.	Rower trips and falls over the machine	• Administer First Aid
Too many people around the machines.	• Ensure that there are not too many people around the machines.	Rower trips and falls over the machine	• Administer First Aid
Rower fails to ensure adequate nutrition before starting exercise.	• Briefing for participants.	Rower collapses or feels unwell due to lack of nutrition.	• First Aid and administration of high glucose food or drink.
Rower fails to ensure adequate hydration before starting exercise.	• Briefing for participants, provision of drinking water.	Rower becomes dehydrated and feels ill.	• First Aiders or coaches, etc. provide drinking water.
Abnormal Temperature	• Ensure that the temperature is within acceptable ranges for physical exertion.	Rower becomes hypothermic or hyperthermic when rowing.	• Administer First Aid.
Overexertion by rower.	• Event officials and coaches monitor effort from a distance and intervene as appropriate.	Collapse, possible cardiac issues.	• First Aid, possibly Life Support (CPR & AED), evacuation to hospital.
Peer pressure from colleagues, coaches etc. causing rowers to overexert.	• Event Officials and coaches keep people not using ergs away from those that are.	Overexertion leading to collapse, possible cardiac issues.	• First Aid, possibly Life Support (CPR & AED), evacuation to hospital.
Rowers feel ill and vomit.	• Tell rowers to stop if they feel ill. Have buckets or containers to vomit into available.	Rowers vomit contaminating the machine and causing a slipping hazard on the floor.	• Have materials available to clean the machines and the floor.
Unclean rowing machines.	• Clean machines (particularly handles and seat) as deemed appropriate.	Transmission of viruses and bacteria.	• Recognise symptoms and seek medical advice as appropriate.
Long tops (clothing) catching between seat rollers and the track machine.	• Coach people with long tops on to tuck them in.	Rower pulled backward off seat.	• Administer First Aid.
Liquid spill on hard floor (slip hazard).	• Cleaning up any spills as they happen.	Slips and falls.	• Administer First Aid.
Rower with long hair holding feet during relay races	• Ensure that rowers with long hair do not hold feet unless the hair is tied back up	Hair becomes entangled in the machine	• Cut hair to free the rower from the machine

Pre-existing Medical Conditions when Training or Competing

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Rower with epilepsy.	Tell rowers to stop if they feel unwell.	Rower has an epileptic episode.	Administer First Aid, call for ambulance support if needed. Provide extra space around the machine.
Rower with diabetes.	Help rowers to be properly prepared Tell rowers to stop if they feel unwell.	Rower has a diabetic episode.	Administer First Aid, call for ambulance support if needed.
Rower with asthma.	Use inhaler prior to starting exercise, tell rowers to stop if they feel unwell.	Rower has an asthmatic episode.	Administer First Aid, call for ambulance support if needed.
Unknown medical issues.	Tell rowers to stop if they feel unwell.	Rower collapses or feels ill.	Administer First Aid, call for ambulance support if needed.

Setting up for an Indoor Rowing Competition

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Trip hazard from cabling of race system, extension leads/AV equipment.	• Tape down cabling where needed and define no go zones.	Person trips over cable and falls.	• Administer First Aid.
Electrical equipment in poor working condition.	• Schedule of portable electrical equipment testing of electrical equipment.	Electric shock or fire.	• Administer First Aid. Evacuate site.
Water (or aqueous solution) spilled onto electrical equipment.	• Keep water, etc. away from electrical equipment.	Electric shock or fire.	• Administer First Aid. Evacuate site.
Other people in the vicinity when equipment is being moved.	• Wait for quiet time to move equipment if possible or position equipment before the people arrive.	Collision between machines or people moving them and other people in the vicinity.	• Administer First Aid.
Competition volunteers do not understand their responsibilities	• Ensure that event volunteers are fully briefed.	Various	• Administer First Aid, etc.

Transport of Indoor Rowing Machines

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Loading and unloading machines into vehicles	Brief the people not familiar with equipment Have sufficient people, some on the vehicle	Falling from rear of van with equipment in hand	Administer First Aid
Equipment moving in a vehicle during transit	Ensure that load is adequately secured	Movement of heavy equipment in the event of a harsh braking or a collision	Call for help Administer First Aid
Moving equipment up or down stairs	Find another possible route (lift or ramps) or briefing on extra care if no other alternate routes, have sufficient people	Fall or trip with equipment or Musculoskeletal injury	Administer First Aid as appropriate Possible referral to a Physiotherapist

Storage of Indoor Rowing Machines

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Fall of machines stored upright	- If possible split machines in two or store secured to fixed object - Keep people clear of the area around upright machines	Machine(s) topple over hitting a person	Administer First Aid

Assembly and disassembly of Indoor Rowing Machines

Hazards	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Splitting rowing machines	Briefing for people not familiar with the equipment	Trapped fingers	Administer First Aid
Movement of seat on the monorail section	Briefing for people not familiar with the equipment	Trapped fingers	Administer First Aid
Lifting and carrying heavy parts of rowing machines	Briefing for people not familiar with equipment on correct lifting technique	Musculoskeletal injury	Administer First Aid as appropriate Possible referral to a Physiotherapist
Injury due to equipment failure or incorrect assembly	Before use check equipment is in full working order and correctly assembled	Machine fails during use	Administer First Aid

10. Rowing on the Sea

Many of the hazards and risks associated with coastal rowing, together with their barriers and controls, are similar to those for other types of rowing. This chapter deals with the issues specific to rowing on the sea.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following section:

10.1	Coastal and Inshore Rowing	168
10.2	Fixed Seat Sea Rowing	171

10. Rowing on The Sea

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

10.1 Coastal and Inshore Rowing

Coastal and inshore rowing in this context refers to rowing on the coast but within a short distance of land. Coastal rowers typically use sliding seat boats that are specifically suited for this purpose. These boats are self-bailing and have buoyancy chambers. Generally known as World rowing Coastal boats (formerly known as FISA boats).

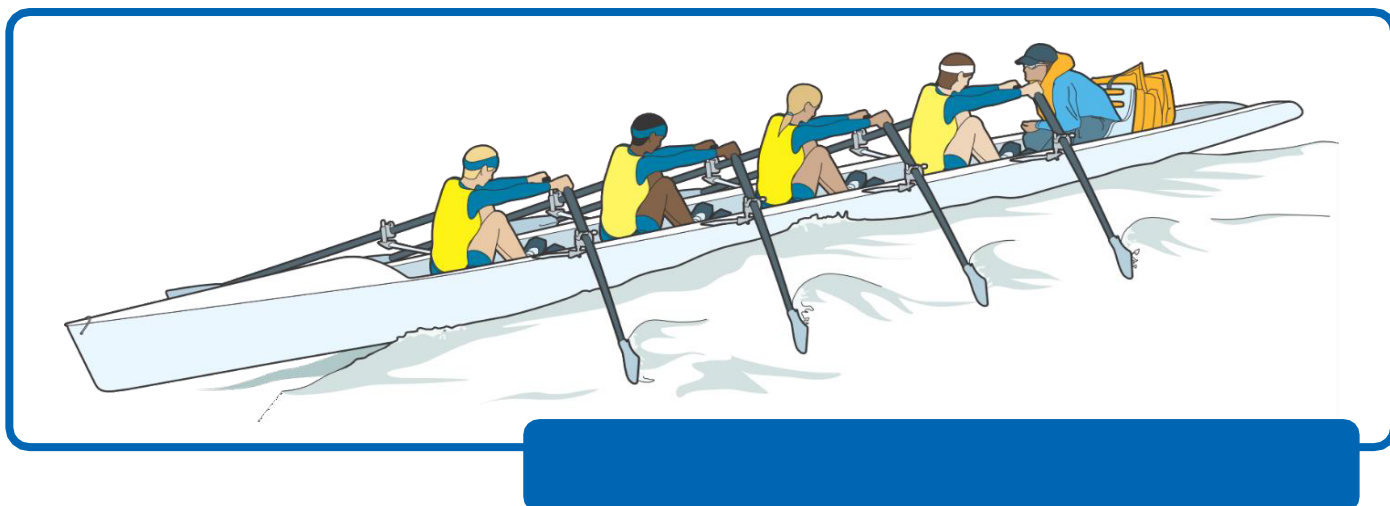
Expectations

The other sections of RowSafe also apply to coastal and offshore rowing. However, the following additional expectations are also appropriate.

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the hazards associated with coastal/offshore rowing (such as tide, wind strength and direction and waves) and the barriers and controls to be used.
- Check, prior to each launch, that:
 - Their boats have sufficient buoyancy, and adequate numbers of PFD's on board for the crew.
 - All boats are self-bailer type.
- Understand the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway. There is further information on [boat handling in rough water](#).
- Understand how to fit and adjust a lifejacket, especially coxes are expected to wear correctly fitted lifejackets at all times when afloat.
- Abide by club rules, local navigation rules and any other rules.



10.1. Coastal and Inshore Rowing

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Ensure all boats and equipment used by their members are fit for their intended purpose and safe to use in the intended environment.
- Ensure that all coxes and rowers understand the hazards (such as tide, wind strength and direction and waves), and the barriers and controls to be used.
- Ensure that crews abide by local navigation and other rules.
- Ensure that all boats have sufficient buoyancy and adequate numbers of PFDS on board for the crew.
- Ensure that crews keep a good lookout for swimmers
- Ensure that self-bailers, where fitted, are in full working order. If self-bailers are not fitted then ensure that there is a method of manual bailing. This does not apply to those single sculling boats where the boat design ensures self-bailing.
- Ensure that crews are educated in the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway. There is further information on [boat handling in rough water](#).
- When no launch is available then ensure that no crew goes out without an experienced coastal rower supervising the session, in the boat with them (either as rower or cox) or from the beach keeping them close to shore.
- Ensure that there is a method of radio communication with the shore in the boat if a safety launch is not available and ensure that there are at least two rowing boats afloat at any one time and that they operate a buddy system. Marine Mobile Band VHF's are preferred as these can be used to call the Coastguard directly.
- Ensure that coxes' lifejackets have crotch straps fitted and that coxes are trained to fit and adjust them correctly.
- The club should ensure that all members are familiar with the capsize drill.

Coxes

Coxes are expected to:

- Wear a lifejacket at all times when afloat
- Ensure that the crew has checked the boat
- Check, prior to each launch, that:
 - Their boats have sufficient buoyancy for the conditions likely to be encountered and adequate numbers of PFDS on board for the crew
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and [navigation marks](#) particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Read and understand the [principles of coxing](#).

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Understand the hazards associated with coastal/offshore rowing and also understand their barriers and controls.
- Assess risk prior to each outing and either modify the planned outing or find a safer alternative if the level of risk is not low or moderate, taking into account the capabilities of the crew.
- Coach crews in the hazards, and the barriers and controls to be used (such as understanding tide, wind strength and direction and waves).
- Coach crews so that they are able to check that:
 - Boats have sufficient buoyancy,
 - Adequate numbers of PFDs are on board the boat.

- Self-bailers, are in full working order, and
 - All boats are self-bailer type.
- Coach crews in the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway. There is further information on [boat handling in rough water](#).

Launch Drivers

Launch drivers are expected to:

- Hold qualifications of, or equivalent to, at least RYA Level 2 Powerboat.
- Ensure that they have an effective means of communications with the shore and emergency services.
- Ensure that they are competent to rescue crews from rowing boats in coastal conditions.
- Ensure that their launches are suitable to rescue rowers in the conditions that they are likely to encounter.
- Ensure that their launches contain the recommended rescue and safety equipment ([Guidance link](#))
- Understand the correct technique for recovering a person to a safety boat.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Boat Handling in Rough Water - coastalrowing.org/storage/downloads/safety/BoatHandlingInRoughWater.pdf

10.2 Fixed Seat Sea Rowing

Fixed seat sea rowing in this context refers to fixed seat rowing on the open sea or in estuaries. The types of boats can vary widely and can include Skiffs, Coastal 4s, Gigs, Cots, Yawls, Kerry 4 oars which are crewed by 4 rowers and a cox with the exception of the Seine boat which has a crew of 12 plus cox

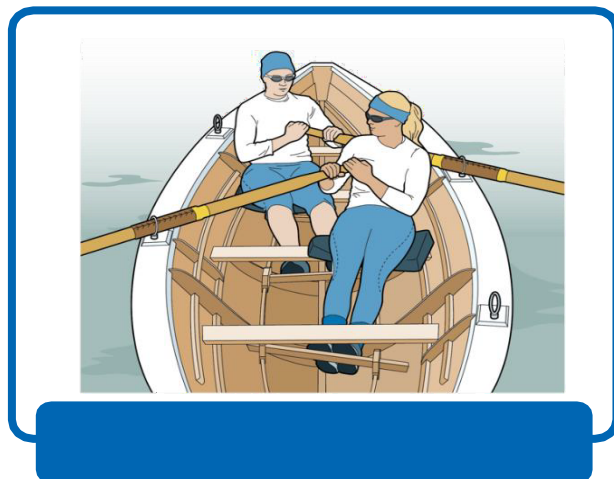
Expectations

The other sections of RowSafe also apply to fixed seat sea rowing. However, the following additional expectations relate specifically to this style of rowing.

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the hazards associated with sea rowing (such as tide, wind strength and direction and waves) and the barriers and controls to be used.
- Understand the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway.
- Understand how to fit and adjust a lifejacket, especially coxes who are expected to wear correctly fitted lifejackets at all times when afloat.
- Abide by club rules, local navigation rules and any other rules.



Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Use their club's Risk Assessment (see [RowSafe 3.1](#)) to determine the club's safety plans, safety rules and emergency procedures (see [RowSafe 3.2](#))
- Use the Risk Assessment to determine under what conditions, if any, it is safe for a boat to go afloat alone (i.e. not accompanied by another rowing boat or a safety boat). Where it is not safe for a boat to go afloat alone then boats should stay in close contact with each other and inform the Designated Person Ashore (DPA) of their outing details..
- Use the Risk Assessment to determine under what conditions rowers should wear lifejackets.
- Ensure all boats and equipment used by their members are fit for their intended purpose, safe to use in the intended environment and that boats are not used in conditions that would expose rowers to an unacceptable risk.
- Ensure that all boats have sufficient buoyancy for the conditions in which they are to be used. Boats without additional buoyancy should not be used in areas and at times when sea conditions are rough. This is particularly important in traditional wooden gigs as, without additional buoyancy, they may not support their crew when swamped.
- Ensure that all coxes and rowers understand the hazards (such as tide, wind strength and direction and waves), and the barriers and controls to be used.
- Ensure that crews abide by local navigation and other rules.
- Ensure that crews keep a good lookout for swimmers
- Ensure that crews are educated in the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway.
- If a radio is carried, ensure that someone on board is competent to use it and knows which channels to use. (see [RowSafe 2.3](#))
- Ensure that coxes' lifejackets have crotch straps fitted and that coxes are trained to fit and adjust them correctly.
- Ensure that all juniors under the age 16 years of age wear an appropriate PFD (Personal Floatation Device).

10.2. Fixed Seat Sea Rowing

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Coxes

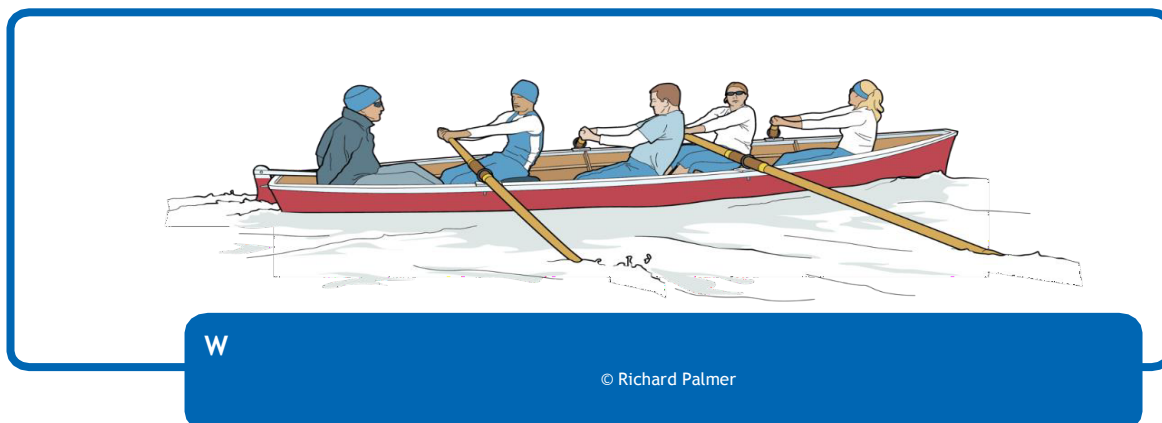
Coxes are expected to:

- Take command of the boat, although coxes who are juniors should be guided by a senior rower or a coach in the immediate vicinity (e.g. in a launch).
- Wear a lifejacket at all times when afloat
- Ensure that all juniors under the age 16 years of age wear an appropriate PFD (Personal Floatation Device).
- Check, prior to each launch, that:
 - Their boats have sufficient buoyancy for the conditions likely to be encountered
 - That there is a method of manual bailing
 - Seals and bungs are correctly fitted
 - Seats and stretchers are secure
 - The rudder and rudder lines are in good condition and working order
 - The oars are in good condition
 - Oar locks or gates are in good condition correctly placed
 - The safety kit and other safety equipment (see RowSafe [10.2.1](#)) are aboard the boat
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and [navigation marks](#) particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Read and understand the [principles of coxing](#)

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Understand the hazards associated with sea rowing and also understand their barriers and controls.
- Assess risk prior to each outing and either modify the planned outing or find a safer alternative if the level of risk is not low or moderate, taking into account the capabilities of the crew.
- Coach crews in the hazards, and the barriers and controls to be used (such as understanding tide, wind strength and direction and waves).
- Coach coxes so that they are able to check their boats and equipment as described above.
- Coach crews in the correct techniques for launching and recovery from a beach or slipway.
- When no launch is available then ensure that no crew goes out without an experienced sea rower supervising the session, in the boat with them (either as rower or cox) or from the beach keeping them close to shore.
- Have a means of communication with the boat and with someone on shore.
- Coach coxes to fit and adjust their lifejackets (including crotch straps) correctly.
- Ensure that a boat safety kit is carried in each boat when afloat (see [RowSafe 10.2.1](#) Gig and Other Fixed Seat Boat Safety Kit).
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and [navigation marks](#) particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.



Launch Drivers

Launch Drivers are expected to:

- Hold qualifications of, or equivalent to, at least RYA Level 2 Powerboat.
- Ensure that they have an effective means of communications with the shore and emergency services.
- If a radio is carried, ensure that someone on board is competent to use it and knows which channels to use. (see [RowSafe 2.3](#))
- Ensure that they are competent to rescue crews from rowing boats in offshore conditions.
- Understand the correct technique for recovering a person to a safety boat.
- Ensure that their launches are suitable to rescue rowers in the conditions that they are likely to encounter.
- Know and understand the [sound signals](#) and [lights](#) used by other vessels.
- Learn about local hazards, local rules of navigation and [navigation marks](#) particularly when visiting unfamiliar venues.
- Ensure that a boat safety kit is carried in each launch and that it is properly stocked ([guidance link](#))

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an [iROWsafe](#).
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- Launching and recovery – Principles of Coxing – Lyme Regis Gig Club, <http://www.lymeregisgigclub.com/media/pg/97/1458123262/principles-of-coxing.pdf>
- Sound Signals - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lkFhf9Cz68c>
- Navigation Lights - <http://www.bosunsmate.org/seamanship/lights.php>
- Navigation Marks -

10.3.1. Ocean Rowing Safety Equipment

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

11. Land Training

Many rowers spend considerable time training on land as part of the physical training for competition or simply as a means of keeping fit. There are specific hazards and risks associated with land training. These are very different from most of the risks associated with being afloat.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

11.1 <u>Indoor Rowing</u>	181
11.2 <u>Gym Training</u>	184

10 Land Training

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

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11.1 Indoor Rowing

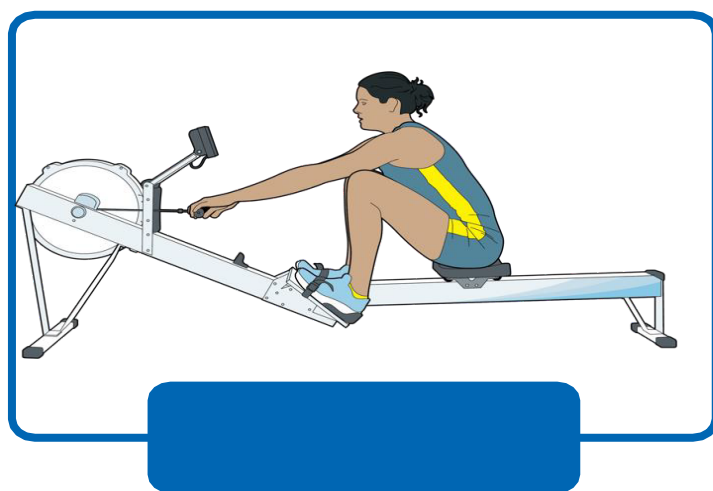
There are risks associated with indoor rowing and these should be assessed and managed in the same way as other risks. It is important that indoor rowers are trained to use rowing machines safely and correctly, and with the correct technique.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Follow rules on the use of rowing machines including:
 - Wearing appropriate clothing.
 - Cleaning of the rowing machine after use.
- Inform the club, school or gym of any reason that they 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 rowing machine prior to use.
- Report any incidents or defects to the rowing machine.
- Work at appropriate intensity and overall workload.
- Ensure that the drag or resistance is set at the appropriate level.



Club, School or Gym

Club, School or Gym Officers are expected to:

- Promote a positive safety culture (see [RowSafe 1.2](#)) for indoor rowing.
- Complete a Risk Assessment for this activity.
- Maintain rowing machines in safe working order and quarantine damaged rowing machines.
- Provide materials for cleaning and disinfecting the rowing machines.
- Ensure that sufficient space is provided between rowing machines.
- Provide appropriate induction sessions for beginners. This should have an emphasis on safe behaviour.
- Provide appropriate notices and instruction on safe use (including clothing, storage and monitor set up) and potential health issues.
- Report all incidents relating to indoor rowing on the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe Reporting System.

11.1. Indoor Rowing

RowSafe is a safety guidance document.
Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Adequately manage activities of all users and exercise a higher level of care for those persons who present a higher risk - beginners, the elderly, juniors and those with special needs or health problems.
- Know how to deal with specific health-related issues that have been identified.
- Promote safe use of the facility and equipment.
- Check the facility and the equipment is safe to use.
- Train users to use the rowing machines correctly including:
 - Identifying and naming the key parts of the rowing machine.
 - Setting the rowing machine up and adjusting the damper and feet height.
 - Demonstrating good technique and posture.
 - Cleaning the rowing machine after use.
- Take care to ensure that their rowers do not overexert themselves or encourage others to do so.
- Ensure that their rowers work at appropriate intensity and overall workload.
- Ensure that the drag or resistance is set at the appropriate level for the rower.
- Ensure that the rowers adopt good posture and correct technique

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees of indoor rowing competitions and other competitions where rowing machines are provided are expected to:

- Complete a Risk Assessment for the competition.
- Ensure that rowing machines are in safe working order and quarantine damaged rowing machines.
- Provide materials for cleaning and disinfecting the rowing machines.
- Provide appropriate notices and instructions on safe use (including clothing, storage and monitor setup) and potential health issues.
- Report all incidents relating to the competition on the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Review competitions/incidents relating to indoor rowing to promote good practice.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides advice and guidance on indoor rowing.
- Provides safety guidance through RowSafe.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 1.2](#) - Positive safety culture

11.2 Gym Training

Many rowers use gym training to improve their strength and conditioning and to improve their fitness. This form of training can be very beneficial for athletes but there are risks that should be managed.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Not exercise if they feel unwell.
- Ensure that they are fit and healthy enough to perform the exercises that they are attempting, checking with their doctor if they are not sure.
- Exercise keeping their limitations in mind and pushing themselves in a sensible and controlled way.
- Keep the gym clean and tidy.
- Not loiter around the gym or get in the way.
- Be conscious of other people's needs to access items of equipment.
- Put away equipment when the exercise is complete unless someone else is about to use it.
- Check equipment before use and only use equipment that is in good condition.
- Perform an appropriate warm up before starting training and stretch thoroughly when the exercise is complete.
- Never exercise alone, only exercise if there is someone else in the gym.
- Use good technique, this will provide the maximum benefit from the exercise and avoid injury, use relatively light weights until the technique is established.
- Pay attention and be alert to what is going on around them.
- [Report incidents](#) to the club, school or gym and to Rowing Ireland.

Club, School or Gym

Club, School or Gym Officers are expected to:

- Ensure that materials are provided so that equipment can be kept clean.
- Encourage members to keep the gym tidy.
- Ensure that the gym is not overcrowded either with equipment or people.
- Ensure that the equipment is thoroughly checked at appropriate intervals and maintained in good condition.
- Ensure members have access to a full First Aid kit and are aware of where it is kept.
- Ensure a list of current first aiders is displayed prominently in the gym.

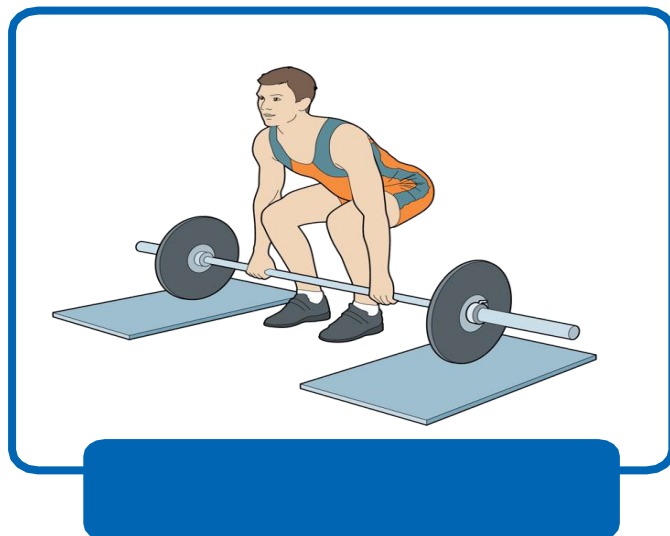
10.2 Gym Training

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Check that their rowers are fit and healthy enough to perform the exercises that they are attempting, discourage rowers from starting an exercise if they feel unwell.
- Encourage rowers to work with a partner when training with weights.
- Ensure that rowers work with spotters when lifting heavy weights.
- Encourage rowers to breathe in time with the exercise; exhale when lifting the weight, inhale when lowering.
- Stop the exercise if a rower becomes unwell.
- Coach rowers to keep their limitations in mind and push themselves in a sensible and controlled way.
- Encourage rowers to keep the gym clean and tidy.
- Discourage rowers from loitering around the gym or getting in the way.
- Encourage rowers to put away equipment when the exercise is complete unless someone else is about to use it.
- Encourage rowers to check equipment before use and only use equipment that is in good condition.
- Encourage rowers to warm up thoroughly before starting training and stretch thoroughly when the exercise is complete.
- Coach rowers to use good technique.
- Encourage rowers to pay attention and be alert to what is going on around them.
- Report incidents to the club, school or gym and to Rowing Ireland.



Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides training in Strength and Conditioning training for coaches.
- Provides safety guidance through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.

Further Information

10.2 Gym Training

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

12. iROWsafe Incident Reporting

Everyone can help to improve safety by reporting incidents on the Rowing Ireland [iROWsafe](#). This confidential reporting system is for everyone; clubs, individuals (members and non-members) and competitions to report an incident or concern.

Incidents that cause harm or damage, however trivial, should be reported as well as those where an injury, health issue or damage has occurred. Near misses should also be reported as these can provide useful information that may help someone to avoid a serious incident.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Understand the importance of reporting incidents, including near misses, in which they are involved or that they witness.
- Report incidents on [iROWsafe](#).

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Promote a no-blame culture of reporting all incidents in order to improve safety.
- Encourage club members to report all incidents and near misses using the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe.
- Ensure all club members know what types of incidents should be reported and how to use the iROWsafe.
- Regularly monitor the iROWsafe to gather information on club incidents and use the information to develop safer practices.
- Communicate relevant information from Rowing Ireland Safety Alerts to members.
- Keep the members informed of relevant incidents and ways in which action must be taken to avoid reoccurrence.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Promote a no-blame culture of reporting all incidents in order to improve safety.
- Ensure that rowers understand the importance of reporting incidents, including near misses, in which they are involved or that they witness.
- Encourage rowers to use the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe.
- Ensure that rowers act on advice in notices such as Rowing Ireland Safety Alerts.

Competition

Competition Officers and Organising Committees are expected to:

- Understand the importance of reporting incidents, including near misses, in which they are involved or that they witness.
- Report incidents that occur at the competition on the Rowing Ireland iROWsafe.

11. Incident Reporting

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Promotes a no-blame culture of reporting all incidents in order to improve safety.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides a periodic analysis of reported incidents.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.

Further Information

12. Incident Reporting

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

13. Auditing

An audit is a periodic, independent, documented, objective assessment of the extent to which an activity or process complies with the stated criteria. In other words, it is a gap analysis that helps an organisation to identify opportunities for improvement.

In rowing we have an annual (as part of the affiliation process) Safety Audit that each club is required to submit to show that it has complied with the requirements specified in the audit document. This is completed by each club and reviewed and, if acceptable, accepted by Rowing Ireland. Clubs are expected to work with Rowing Ireland to ensure that they have made suitable and sufficient arrangements to keep people safe.

This chapter of RowSafe contains the following sections:

13.1 [Safety Inspections](#)

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13. Auditing

DISCLAIMER: RowSafe provides general guidance to clubs and their members on safe practice in rowing. It is however the responsibility of each club to maintain up-to-date risk assessments and define and monitor its own safety practices, guidance and procedures specific to its environment and activities, which clubs shall ensure are made known to their members and members shall comply with the same.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure that the medical and other similar information and guidance in this manual is accurate and reflective of best practice at the time of publication, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that such information and guidance is up-to-date before acting upon it. Rowing Ireland accepts no responsibility for the content of third party websites accessed through links in this publication.

13.1 Safety Inspections

Safety Inspections are relatively frequent checks to ensure that the provisions needed to maintain safe operation of a club continue to be effective. Many of these provisions will have been identified in the club's Risk Assessment; they include the barriers that reduce the probability of a hazardous event occurring and the controls that will reduce the severity of its consequences.

Expectations

Everyone

Everyone is expected to:

- Report any issues or concerns with the club's safety equipment or procedures.
- Assist with Safety Inspections as requested.

Club

Club Officers are expected to:

- Define the frequency and scope of Safety Inspections.
- Delegate one or several members to undertake the inspections.
- Receive reports on these inspections.
- Consider and act on these reports.

Coaches

Coaches are expected to:

- Report any issues or concerns with the club's safety equipment or procedures.
- Assist with Safety Inspections as requested.

Rowing Ireland

Rowing Ireland:

- Provides guidance to clubs through RowSafe.
- Provides an iROWsafe Reporting System.
- Provides Safety Alerts and other safety communications.
- Provides safety training material on its website.
- Provides courses that include safety.



13.1. Safety Inspections

RowSafe is a safety guidance document. Please read our safety message and disclaimer.

Examples of items that could be in a monthly Safety Inspection

Including but not limited to:

- The condition of the boats and blades.
- The condition of the coaching launch and its engine.
- The condition of gym equipment, (such as indoor rowing machines and weights).
- The condition of any boat trailers.
- The condition of bikes, provided by the club, for use by coaches and others.
- The condition and availability of safety equipment such as:
 - Throw lines
 - Lifejackets
 - First Aid kits
 - Lights used on boats
- The contents of Safety, and other, notice boards.
- The general state of housekeeping and tidiness in the boathouse and other areas used by members.
- The condition of other club facilities such as the landing stage and parking area.
- The condition of gas and electrical equipment.

Further Information

- [RowSafe 7.1](#) - Boats and Blades
- [RowSafe 11.1](#) - Indoor Rowing
- [RowSafe 11.2](#) - Gym Training
- [RowSafe 7.2](#) - Transport and Trailers.
- [RowSafe 7.3](#) - Safety Aids
- [RowSafe 7.4.1](#) - Launch Safety Kits
- [RowSafe 8.3](#) - First Aid
- [RowSafe 2.1](#) - Communication of Safety Information

13.1. Safety Inspections

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