



# **Safety Manual**

**Policy, Procedures and  
Risk Management**

**2015**



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# CAPITAL LAKES ROWING CLUB SAFETY MANUAL

## PREAMBLE

This Safety Management Manual and its underlying policies and procedures applies to the Capital Lakes Rowing Club (CLRC) wherever it operates: whether that be from its boathouse, at training camps, at regattas or trips away. It is expected that the Executive, sub-committees and coaching staff will be familiar with its contents and that all club members will be aware of the Safety Manual and how to access it.

CLRC, through the Club's Executive is responsible for maintaining the highest possible safety standards at all time to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its members. Club members are equally responsible for maintaining a safe environment at all times on and off the water.

A condition of club membership is that members must read this Safety Manual. Invited guests, including Learn to Row participants, members from other clubs rowing in a composite crew, and those rowing temporarily from the Club are also required to read and acknowledge this Safety Manual prior to rowing at CLRC.

The CLRC Safety Manual comprises a Safety Policy and Safety Procedures.

The CLRC Safety Manual has been developed to comply with:

- *The Lake Act 1976*<sup>1</sup> and rules issued by the National Capital Authority (NCA). Legislative requirements take precedence over other rules, safety recommendations and this Safety Manual.
- Australian Federal Police (AFP), *Reminder to Lake Burley Griffin Users – Brief summary of requirements (undated)* as at **Attachment 1**
- Rowing ACT and Rowing Australia's safety guidelines including but not limited to:

Rowing Australia Member Protection Policy as at **Attachment 2a**

Rowing Australia On-Water Safety Guidelines as at **Attachment 2b**

Rowing Australia Safety Assessment Checklist as at **Attachment 2c**

CLRC is an incorporated association under the ACT *Associations Incorporation Act 1991*<sup>2</sup>. The effect of incorporation is to limit liability. However, office bearers, ordinary committee members and all other club members run the risk of incurring personal liability if a breach of duty by them causes personal injury or damage to property.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/1976-65/current/pdf/1976-65.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/sl/1991-31/current/pdf/1991-31.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from 'Ten Steps to a Safer Organisation' - Our Community.com.au

# SAFETY POLICY

Capital Lakes Rowing Club (CLRC), through the Club's Executive, will develop, communicate and maintain the highest possible safety standards at all times to ensure the safety and wellbeing of its members.

This safety manual will be continually revised to reflect good practices for the managements of hazards and safety issues and the changing nature of the environment in which CLRC operates.

This plan is designed to provide a basis for assessing the risks of rowing for the club and to introduce measures to reduce these risks to an acceptable level.

## CLRC EXECUTIVE AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Club's Executive will:

- develop and annually review the Safety Assessment Checklist (**Attachment 3**)
- develop and annually review the CLRC Safety Risk Assessment (**Attachment 4**)
- identify and communicate safety hazards and risks that club members may encounter
- identify and communicate safety controls to eliminate or reduce identified risks and hazards
- monitor compliance with the Club's Safety Manual and implement additional safety controls as needed
- review and update the Club's Safety Manual as required
- appropriately respond to safety incidents as they occur and communicate additional advice and instructions as needed.
- include Safety Procedures in the induction of new members and invited guests into the club

The Club, through the Club's Executive, will maintain its Affiliation with Rowing ACT to ensure ongoing insurance coverage under the Australian Rowing National Insurance Program<sup>4</sup> for:

- Public Liability / Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Personal Accident Insurance
- Association Liability (Directors and Officers) Insurance

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<sup>4</sup> <https://welcome.willis.com/rowing/default.aspx>



The Club will also maintain additional cover under this same scheme, Marine Hull / Rowing Scull Insurance for Club boats. Private boat owners are able to come under this scheme for a fee, or arrange their own boat insurance.

The Executive will lodge insurance claims following incidents (both on-water and off water) involving Club equipment.

The Club's Executive may, in accordance with the CLRC Constitution, appoint an individual (Safety Officer) or group (Safety Sub-Committee) to assist and advise the Executive on the implementation of appropriate safety procedures. The Executive may also delegate the authority to deem competent new rowers to: coaches, Safety Officer or the Boat Captain. The Executive will maintain a log of delegations.

Where the Executive appoints a Safety Officer or Safety Sub-Committee they will report to the Executive at least quarterly and more frequently if required. In the absence of a Safety Officer, the Club Captain will fulfil this function. Reports should cover:

- compliance with CLRC Safety Procedures
- identification of additional hazards
- recommendation of additional controls
- any other safety issues including those arising from Incident Reports.

## **SAFETY OFFICER**

The Safety Officer's primary responsibility is to advise members of the requirements of the clubs Safety Plan and observe, comply with and implement these requirements. The Safety Officer will advise the Executive on matters relating to safe conduct on and around the water and the Executive will consider any recommendations provided by the Safety Officer.

The Safety Officer shall conduct regular safety briefings (eg at the end of the AGM or prior to the rowing season commencing) and ensure novice or new participants receive this information prior to commencing on-water activities.

The following is a checklist of the duties to be undertaken by the Safety Officer:

- Be fully conversant with the CLRC Safety Plan
- Conduct a safety audit (annually as a minimum) of CLRC's facilities, equipment and operations using the Audit Form (Attachment 3)
- Assess the risks to CLRC both on and off the water in accordance with the Safety Plan
- Implement recommendations of the risk assessment in accordance with the Safety Plan
- Maintain an incident log and complete incident forms as required
- Report to the Executive on safety issues together with the results of the risk assessment and audit
- Engage with Rowing ACT on matters of safety for rowing

- Take due regard of any advice or direction provided by any relevant water authority relating to local water or weather conditions and amend risk assessments and safety plans accordingly
- Exercise authority, in conjunction with the Boat Captain, to suspend boating activities where the conditions are seen to be unsafe
- When hosting regattas or associated events, make available to participants details of safety arrangements and medical cover of the event being conducted

#### **CLUB MEMEBERS AND INVITED GUESTS**

Club members and invited guests will contribute to the maintenance of a safe environment at all times on and off the water. Club members and invited guests will:

- read this Safety Manual before using club facilities or equipment for the first time
- comply with Safety Procedures
- comply with other safety information and directions issued from time to time by the Club through the Club's Executive

This Safety Manual and associated documents will be made available both at the Club and on the Club's website.

#### **BREACHES OF THE SAFETY PLAN**

Breaches of the CLRC Safety Plan are to be identified and advised to offenders in the first instance verbally. If no immediate correction is taken, then they will be advised in writing, specifying a period of correction. Repeated breaches of the Safety Plan shall be brought to the attention of the Executive and appropriate disciplinary action taken. Continued infringements may incur penalties or cancellation of club membership

# **SAFETY PROCEDURES**

## **BACKGROUND**

All water sports are potentially dangerous. Club members and invited guests must comply with legislative, government and Club safety requirements and are responsible for their own safety and for maintaining a safe environment for others around them - both on and off the water.

## **TRAINING WATERWAY DETAILS**

CLRC trains primarily on Lake Burley Griffin (LBG). LBG is a long stretch of water with a number of bridges and fixed pylons, along with bends and small islands. As the lake is surrounded by natural and planted vegetation and is river fed, it can be subject to vegetation debris after storm events resulting in submerged and floating hazards.

LBG is used by a significant number of rowing shells and associated coaching tinnies, as well as occasional recreational users including kayakers, canoeists, dragon boaters, and triathlon and swimming clubs. Larger powered and unpowered boats include recreational fishers and sailors. There is also a small commercial fleet of motorised boats. LBG is prone to strong wind conditions, fog episodes, and cold water, particularly during the cooler months of May – September.

## **SAFETY NOTICEBOARD**

CLRC must provide within the boathouse a Safety Noticeboard. The Noticeboard will contain the following information:

- CLRC Club Contact List
- Emergency Services information and Contacts
- Warnings and Hazards List
- Equipment Safety and Maintenance Checklist
- Visual Aids on safe practice: capsizing, hypothermia, heat stress, rescue and resuscitation
- LBG Waterways and Regattas Plan – with flow direction
- Tinny Protocol and Checklist
- Location of First Aid Kit
- Risk assessment notice

## **SIGN IN / SIGN OUT REGISTER**

All participants rowing out of the CLRC boatshed are required to sign their boats in and out of the boathouse. For crewed boats, this is the responsibility of the Stoke.

Any incidents or damage to individuals and/or property are also to be reported at this time.

During the period May – September the 4 oar rule is to be observed. A minimum of 4 oars is required on the water at the same time. No singles are permitted to row from CLRC during this period.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

A list of emergency contacts (**Attachment 5**) is available on the Club's Safety Notice Board and in all club tinnies. Members and guests are advised to make a note of these numbers and carry a mobile phone in a water proof case on and off the water in the case of an emergency.

A list of emergency contacts regarding the Club's facilities is available on the Club's Safety Notice Board.

## **FIRST AID**

A register of accredited first aiders is to be kept by the club.

A First Aid kit is to be maintained for use at the Boathouse and a kit available for travel to regattas and other events. The First Aid kit is to be readily available. The First Aid kits are to be checked and maintained annually.

## **SAFETY AIDS AND RESCUE DEVICES**

Where rowing takes place on exposed expanses of water, or where the risk assessment dictates, additional safety measures should be considered, such as:

- Life-rings
- Throw lines and bags
- Lifejackets/buoyancy aids

The CLRC Safety Plan requires those travelling in tinnies to wear Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) at all times. This includes coaches, rowers, officials, guests etc. Observance of these requirements is mandatory, and breeches will be reported and acted upon.

The PFDs must be of an approved design and should be checked annually in accordance with the manufacturers instructions..

## **SAFETY INDUCTION**

All new club members and guests will be briefed on the Club's Safety Manual by the Boat Captain, Safety Officer or delegate.

This will be evidenced by signing of a Membership Application Form, or Learn to Row application form. The Boat Captain will ensure guests not signing an application form read and sign this Safety Manual prior to rowing from CLRC.

## **SAFETY INDUCTION OF MINORS (UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE)**

Parents or guardians are responsible for counter-signing membership application forms for minors and ensuring that they comply with the Club's Safety Manual.

Minors are not permitted to row without a coach or their parent/guardian in a safety tinnie. Exceptions may be made with the agreement of their coach or the Boat Captain and with written permission from their parents/guardian.

Minors must wear a PFD when coxing.

Parents are responsible for supervising non-rowing children at all times while on Club premises.

## **INCIDENT REPORTING (Attachment 6)**

CLRC will maintain an incident reporting log which is available for inspection upon request. The incident report form to be used is available at Attachment 7 and from the Safety Noticeboard. Keeping a log of incidents will assist in identifying incident trends. The observation of trends and unforeseen incidents forms a valuable part of any future risk assessment. Completion of incidents is also a requirement of Rowing ACT and our insurer.

Members will report what Rowing Australia defines as an Incident, which is an event causing or involving:

- Loss of person from a boat where harm/ injury/ damage is caused, or in the event of a near miss. Rowing ACT additionally requires all winter capsizes/ loss of person from a boat to be reported from 1 May to 30 September
- Death of, serious bodily harm, or danger to a person caused by a boat's operations
- Material damage, or danger of serious damage of a boat,
- material damage caused by a boat's operations
- Loss, presumed loss, stranding or abandonment of a boat
- Collision with a boat
- Danger of serious damage to a structure caused by a boat's operations

All serious incidents must be immediately reported to the Club Captain and/or Safety Officer in person, by phone or by email.

The Club Captain will request the person reporting the incident or stroke of crewed boats to complete the CLRC Rowing Incident Report Form as at **Attachment 7**, which must include the following details:

- Names of people involved, both in the boat and witnesses to the incident
- Seat position/s in the boat (as applicable)
- Any injuries sustained, including the name of the injured person/s
- Extent/ type of injury
- Whether medical treatment was needed and/or sought, what treatment was provided, along with the details of the hospital, doctor or any other agency involved.

The completed form will be submitted to the Safety Officer.

The Boat Captain will submit the form to the Club President for final sign off and forwarding to Rowing ACT, cc'ing the Club Safety Officer for information and action as required.

The crew involved, and/or witnesses to the Incident will provide any additional information requested. This will be requested by the Club President or Boat Captain who will consider advice provided by the Safety Officer.

All Incidents will be an agenda item at Committee meetings to consider:

- safety implications and actions needed
- whether an insurance claim is applicable including recouping out of pocket expenses from the crew involved

The Incident Report Procedures and Incident Report Forms are available on the Club's Safety Notice Board.

## PARA-ROWING SAFETY POLICY

This section sets out CLRC's safety policy for para-rowing. Para-rowers are subject to the same policies and procedures as all CLRC members. This document is intended to explain additional requirements specific to the para-rowers and the para-rowing program.

The CLRC para-rowing program subscribes to Rowing Australia's rowing safety guide:

[http://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/about\\_ra\\_policies\\_on-water-safety.shtm](http://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/about_ra_policies_on-water-safety.shtm)

### **CLRC para-rowing program**

*Under no circumstances may para-rowers row without the supervision of a coach or qualified volunteer. A minimum of two coaches/volunteers is generally required for each para-rower. One of these may be the parent/carer of the para-rower. The CLRC Safety Officer or a delegated official may approve an exemption to this requirement.*

During the Winter period (May-September), no individual should row in a single scull without floats, due to the risk of capsize and associated hypothermia. Continuation of the para-rowing program over Winter will be at the discretion of the Safety Officer or a delegated official of CLRC.

### **Competence**

All those involved with rowing need to have a level of competence appropriate to their involvement in the sport, whether that be as a participant (competitive or recreational), coxswain, official, coach or club member. CLRC must recognise and act on individuals who have not reached the necessary level of competence to carry out their rowing activities safely. The Safety Officer or a delegated official can assess a rower's competence.

Every new rower is required to be assessed to determine their level of rowing competence. Single scullers should be supervised, on and off water, until they have been assessed as being competent. Once level of competence has been determined, a risk assessment by the Safety Officer will determine whether any additional measures are required (rescue, first aid) or if the rower will be permitted to row at all.

All rowers must be able to understand and respond to directions provided from coaches or volunteers.

### **Consent**

Para-rowers must apply to join CLRC by completing a membership registration or learn-to-row application. Required information for membership includes personal, emergency contact and medical information that is relevant to an individual's ability to row and be safe on the water. Applications must be approved by the para-rowing coordinator or a delegate of CLRC before undertaking Learn-to-Row or other club activities. This is a requirement of CLRC and RACT for the purposes of insurance.

### **Risk awareness**

CLRC takes all reasonable precautions to make rowing as safe as possible and that duty of care

expectations are met. That said, participants must recognize that accidents do occur and risks are never zero. CLRC requires that para-rowers and/or the parents/carers of para-rowers are made aware of the risks involved in rowing and receive a safety brief prior to commencing rowing. Applying for CLRC membership is taken as acknowledgment of the associated risks of a water-based activity/sport.

### ***Swimming ability***

All para-rowers must be assessed as being competent in and around water. This includes the following mandatory requirements:

- able to swim at least 30 metres unaided
- capable of hanging onto a body board and being towed to shore
- won't panic if capsized (assessed via a training capsize activity by Safety Officer or delegated official)

### ***Safety equipment***

**Clothing.** It is the responsibility of rowers to wear clothing that:

- fits tightly and can't get caught in boat fittings
- allows freedom of movement in the event that you fall into the lake.
- socks or wear light-weight shoes or boat shoes that fit into the foot-rests.

**Safety vests.** It is a requirement of CLRC that all para-rowers wear a life jacket or surf safety vest when rowing. The Safety Officer or a delegated official can authorize an exemption to this during Summer rowing (Sept-April). During Winter (May-Sept) it is a requirement for all rowers to wear a life-jacket. CLRC provides inflatable life jackets – blue (toggle inflated) and red if self-inflating. Both have a mouth piece for manual inflation. The use of a surf vest in Summer is approved if authorised by the Safety Officer or a delegated official.

**Other safety requirements:** It is recommended that all rowers follow these precautions when undertaking rowing:

- use of sun protection - long sleeve, hat
- sunblock
- drink bottle
- spare clothes and towel in case of capsize

### ***Capsize and Recovery***

Every effort is made to avoid rowers falling into the water, but all para-rowers must be prepared for possibility of capsize. Para-rowers are required to undergo capsize training as part of their learn-to-row program and annually as per the CLRC safety policy.

Two assistants are needed to effect the above recovery operation. Towing back to the boat shed or the nearest shore should be undertaken if it can be done safely and the para-rower can not be recovered back into the boat or tinnie.



If a para-rower is unable to successfully recover from a capsize (into the rowing boat, a tinnie or be towed to the nearest shore), in order for CLRC to meet our duty of care, the rower will be unable to continue rowing with the club.

### ***Radio/emergency communications***

Tinnie operators/coaches must carry a UHF radio and/or a mobile phone. CLRC has a set of waterproof Digitech UHF radios with a range of 10km. These radios will float, but should not be submerged. Channel 10 is the authorised channel unless an alternative channel is agreed.

When para-rowing programs are undertaken, a responsible person should be stationed at the boatshed to be on radio/phone standby in case of emergency. This is mandatory in winter.

### **Emergencies**

For help in emergencies contact:

- Boatshed
- Emergency Services: 000
- Canberra Water Police telephone: 131444
- Canberra Water Police radio: 27.88 MHz or VHF 16 (duty hours only).

### ***Coaches and Volunteers***

The following qualifications are mandatory for coaches and volunteers supporting the para-rowing program:

- Tinnie licence (for any individual operating a tinnie)
- Working with Vulnerable People Card (all coaches and volunteers)

It would be desirable to also hold:

- Coaching accreditation: Learn-to-Row Level 1 Coaching Course
- First aid certificate - [St John's Ambulance](#) or [Royal Life Saving](#)

Responsibilities of coaches:

- Be aware of and abide by the CLRC Safety Policy and Procedures
- Ensure that para-rowers and parents/carers are aware of their responsibilities and risks of water-based activities
- Ensure para-rowers are in boats suitable to their abilities and requirements
- Ensure para-rowers are appropriately dressed and protected from the elements

## *Tinnies*

One or more tinnies will normally be on duty during para-rowing sessions.

The level of tinnie support required will depend on the skill level of the rower and water conditions. The standard tinnie crew is two persons, eg coach and a parent/carer or volunteer. If a para-rower requires a carer, the carer should not leave the boatshed precinct and be available in case of emergency.

If the tinnie can not be crewed by two people, on-land coaching for that session should be considered. All tinnie crew members must wear a life jacket at all times.

Before taking a tinnie out, ensure that the following equipment is available.

- Life jacket for each person plus one spare
- Paddle
- Tow rope
- Bailer
- Fire extinguisher
- Space blanket
- Whistle
- Radio (channel 10 normally) and/or mobile phone.
- Body board or life belt with tow rope and clip
- Loop of rope around outboard for towing, with clip
- Ladder for getting into a tinnie + rope to secure it to the wooden seat beams
- Whistle
- Space blanket and/or spare outer clothing

## **RISK ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION PROCEDURES**

Risk assessment is a process carried out to identify potential safety hazards and to ensure that each hazard is properly understood. Once hazards are understood, risk assessment checks whether existing safeguards and plans are adequate to reduce risks to a tolerable level, or whether more action is needed. Risk in this context arises from the likelihood of an accident occurring as a result of a hazard.

The Safety Officer must access the accident/incident log book to develop an understanding of CLRC's incident/accident history.

Items of note for development of risk profiles include:

- Hazards that have been encountered in the past during rowing activities
- Recent changes to waterways that may add or remove hazard
- Relationship between waterways and boating activities
- Level of supervision of rowers
- Competency of rowers
- Time of day and year
- Visibility
- Water temperature
- Weather conditions
- Damaged equipment

### **PARTICIPANTS**

Consideration should also be given as to whether the rowers are a hazard themselves.

- Can they swim and what tests are taken out to ensure they can
- Are they properly clothed for the conditions
- Is the coxswain adequately protected against the elements
- Are their abilities limited due to physical or intellectual impairment
- Are they able to cognitively understand and respond to directions from coaches and or volunteers
- Are they able to safely deal with a capsize or on water incident

### **Competence**

All those involved with rowing need to have a level of competence appropriate to their involvement in the sport, whether that be as a participant (competitive or recreational), coxswain, official, coach or club member.

To obtain the required competence proper instruction in the appropriate area should be obtained. Rowing ACT and CLRC conducts training and education programs for rowers, coaches, officials, and coxswains covering topics such as watermanship, technique and capsize recovery.

Junior and novices rowers should receive particular attention. Rowers, coaches and Safety Officers should be encouraged to become conversant with lifesaving and resuscitation techniques. However, in all activities, each individual or their carer must consider their own safety and the safety of those around them. Individuals must accept responsibility for their own actions.

CLRC must recognise and act on people who have not reached the necessary level of competence to carry out their rowing activities safely. The Safety Officer or a delegated official can assess a rower's competence. Every new rower is required to be assessed to determine their level of rowing competence. Single scullers should be supervised, on and off water, until they have been assessed as being competent.

Once level of competence has been determined, a risk assessment by the Safety Officer will determine whether any additional measures are required (rescue, first aid) or if the rower will be permitted to row at all.

### **Physical Condition and Medical Considerations**

It is a participant's responsibility to notify the CLRC of any condition which may affect their ability to be involved or which may increase the risk of an accident or incident. This may include:

- Physical condition
- Disability
- Illness and/or medical condition

Avoidance must be the first consideration at all times in relation to potential medical issues. CLRC's coaches must be aware of any condition of a rower which may require special risk management.

### **CLRC Members**

Members must understand their responsibilities for safety as rowers, bow, coxswains, coaches, tinny drivers (**Attachment 8**):

#### **All rowers, coaches and tinny drivers must**

- understand and comply with the CLRC Safety Manual
- understand and take action to mitigate against risks posed by common on water and off water hazards (refer above)
- be familiar with Lake Burley Griffin *Traffic Flow Guide* and the *ACT Regatta Reverse Flow*
- be vigilant for other craft including kayaks, motor and sailing boats and other rowers
- not row in cordoned off areas
- note that the law requires an overtaking boat to keep out of the way of the boat it is passing, although on the course slower boats are advised to move out of the way of faster boats
- note that the law requires to give way to a boat approaching from the starboard side, which is the right hand side facing in the direction you are travelling (bowside)
- be able to swim 50 metres, tread water for 2 minutes, and swim 5 metres under water in rowing kit. If not, rowers to wear a Personal Flotation Device.

- never scull alone from 1 May to 30 September
- take great care in moving boats, undertake simple repairs to boats they row in, and report damage they are unable to fix in the repair book, and advise Captain of same

### **Bow**

- assumes primary responsibility for safety in looking out for other boats, hazards on the water
- where there is a cox, bow shares this responsibility as coxswain's vision is sometimes obscured

### **Stroke**

- assumes responsibility for the boat being put onto and taken off water correctly and safely for people and the boat
- ensures the boat and equipment such as oars is washed properly
- checks for damage and reports same in the book if required
- completes the Incident Report if required

### **Coxswains**

For a coxswain to participate in CLRC programs they need to be accredited under Rowing ACT programs, and be undertaking or completed a learn to row program, or be assessed by the Safety Officer or a coach as being competent due to prior experience. A coxswain must also demonstrate that they are physically capable of coxing a boat and have adequate vision, hearing and that they meet the minimum swimming requirements.

Steering a boat is a highly responsible role. Coxswains must:

- Maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing to minimise the risk of collision
- Learn and use simple and concise commands for boat control both on and off the water and be able to use them correctly, clearly and authoritatively
- Understand and observe local navigation rules and audible and visual signals given by others
- When visiting unfamiliar water, take particular care to learn the local hazards, weather and local rules of navigation
- Be aware of safety and rescue arrangements available in case of an emergency
- Recognise and respect the rights and needs of other water users
- Watch out for unexpected floating and submerged objects
- Know and understand person overboard drills
- Report water hazards

Voice projection and radio communication when carried in the boat must be securely fixed to the boat and not the coxswain. Similarly in competition, deadweight must not be attached to or carried in the clothing of the coxswain.

Junior coxswains should wear PFDs while training or competing.

## **Coaches**

Coaches have the responsibility for the rower's safety. Coaches should be aware of and take full account of a rower's capability and limitations, the limitations of the equipment and the weather conditions that may be encountered.

All CLRC coaches should be accredited under Rowing Australia's accreditation scheme or working towards accreditation. All coaches must obtain and maintain:

- A working with Vulnerable People check
- A coaching accreditation through Rowing Australia
- A current tinnie licence

Coaches should be

- familiar and comply with traffic flow, rules for rowing and the CLRC Safety Manual
- be familiar with the weather forecast and evaluate if it is safe to row
- carry a means of communication with the crew (megaphone etc)
- a means of communication with the club or emergency services in case of emergency (radio, mobile phone)

## **Volunteers**

CLRC appreciates the efforts and resources of volunteers within the club. Any volunteers working with the junior or para-rowing programs are required to obtain and maintain a Working with Vulnerable People check. If volunteers intend to drive the tinnys, they also require the appropriate licensing. Further details are contained in the tinny section.

## RISKS AND HAZARDS

Key risks, their causes and the controls put in place to reduce these risks are identified in the Club's Risk Assessment. Key risks to the club and its members are death or serious injury rising from club activities. Their causes include, but are not limited to:

- on water hazards
- off water hazards
- capsize/drowning
- cold shock
- hypothermia
- sun stroke and heat induced conditions
- rowing equipment failure
- boat collisions
- muscle/ skeleton injuries due to hazards in and around the Club and/or poor rowing technique
- infections (including skin/gastrointestinal infections) acquired from the shed/lake environment
- poor tinny management
- trailer/ towing hazards

### On water hazards

Members should be aware of the hazards they may encounter while on the lake and will:

- familiarise themselves with the National Capital Authority's *Watercraft Safety Traffic Flow Guide* which includes instructions for navigating under the two bridges on the Lake, and rules for overtaking (**Attachment 9a**)
- be familiar with ACT Regatta Reverse Traffic Flow (**Attachment 9b**)
- maintain a proper look out to avoid collisions noting,
  - other boats
  - pontoons, pylons and poles in the water, safety buoys and beacons
  - anchored vessels, sailing boats (have right of way)
  - bridge pylons, jetties at Reconciliation Place
  - submerged rocks, shallow water
- not row in low visibility due to fog, where the opposite bank (Tarcoola Reach) from the Club is not visible
- comply with lighting requirements prior to sunrise, after sunset, and under poor light conditions
- white flashing light to be attached to bow, or static light at both bow and stern
- light/s to be visible over 360° and should not impede vision of people in the boat
- additional mitigating factors to be considered by rowers such as rowing with other boats, being accompanied by a safety boat, wearing reflective clothing
- not row where there is a small boat alert, where there are high winds causing whitecaps or where it would put you in the path of an active storm cell or lightning

- comply with National Capital Water Authority Lake closure instructions

If other hazards are identified these should be reported to the Captain immediately. These include but are not limited to debris on the lake following heavy rain, and water level fluctuations.

### **Off water hazards**

Members should also be aware of hazards around the shed such as fishing hooks on the pontoons, broken glass and safety hazards caused by nearby trees. Where possible, members should remove the hazard. Where this is not possible – hazards should be reported to the Club's Safety Officer.

Care must also be taken by individuals of crews on and around pontoons:

- Take care lifting boats. As a general rule there should be one person carrying a boat for every seat in the boat. Carry boats using correct lifting techniques.
- When taking the boat in and out of the water ensure that the fin on the bottom, and impeller where relevant does not hit the dock or slings. DO NOT set a boat on the dock.
- Boats landing have priority over boats being put on the water. Do not leave boats unattended. Enter and exit pontoons quickly especially at times of high traffic.

Common on water and off water hazards are summarised in **Attachment 10 (Warnings and Hazards)**.

### **REGATTAS AND EVENTS**

The primary consideration of every Race official is to care for the safety of competitors, officials, other water users and the public at large. At regattas and similar events, a large number of participants of varying degrees of competence may be participating.

All regattas and events should appoint a Safety Officer. The duties of the Safety Officer will be to:

- Advise on the observance of Safety Plans
- Implement control measures as required in the risk assessment for the event
- Be responsible for making available the safety plan which sets out the procedures to be followed by competitions and officials in the event of an accident, emergency or incident
- Advise and where necessary direct the organising committee to suspend racing or practice if they believe that conditions are unsafe for whatever reasons

Regatta organisers should ensure that there is:

- Appropriate medical first aid available
- A first aid post with suitably qualified first aiders available in the boat area with easy access to both the water and to the road network during all hours that safety cover is required for the event or activity
- Identify and potentially notify hospitals or medical centres of an event taking place
- Adequate means of rescue are provided. Safety boats should be suitable for the task, be properly equipped and be crewed by persons training in boat handling and rescue techniques. Provision for rescue should be available for the duration of the event.



## Regatta Course

The regatta course should, where ever possible:

- Be marked with clearly visible buoys
- Provide notices warning other water users of the event and advising actions required of them
- Prominently display the signs or diagrams of the regatta course and its immediate surrounding, highlighting local hazards, traffic rules and launching areas
- Prominently display important telephone numbers and location of emergency and first aid facilities.

## Capsize/ Drowning

Members must be able to swim 50 metres, tread water for 2 minutes and be able to swim under water for 5 metres – in rowing kit. Members must maintain this level of swimming ability throughout their membership. If members are not confident swimmers they are advised to wear lightweight inflatable 'kayakers' personal flotation devise (PFD). Inexperienced single scullers are also advised to wear a 'kayakers' PFD.

Members should be familiar with how to get back in a boat in the event of capsizing. This is taught as part of Learn to Row, and members are encouraged to practice a capsize drill annually.

Members should know what to do in the event of capsizing where they are unable to get back into their boat:

- stay with the boat and use it to keep afloat
- get on top of the boat and attract attention immediately
- if you have to stay in the water, retain warmth by keeping arms and knees tucked into the body
- stay calm and breathe deeply
- do not waste energy by trying to right the boat
- it is generally recommended that you do not swim away from the boat because your swimming ability in cold conditions is dramatically reduced

What to do if you are on the water and witness a capsize will depend on the boat you are in, for example in an 8 you may have the ability to get the person out of the water and into your boat, without putting yourself or the crew at risk of capsize. In **winter**,

- Give the person/s helpful instructions to assist them back into their boat.
- If after a couple of attempts, they are unable to get back into their boat don't let them tire. Urge them to get as much of their body as possible out of the water and over the boat, and to use their boat as a flotation device.
- Signal and call for help. Carrying a mobile phone in a waterproof case is recommended.
- If you don't have a phone and no one is around, note the person's location and get help as quickly as possible.
- Never put yourself or others at risk of capsize through helping someone else.

- The person who has capsized should not leave their boat or attempt to swim to shore. Swimming ability is severely compromised in cold water. The same principles apply in summer but may not be as time critical depending on the temperature of the water.

The risk of drowning following capsize is increased for inexperienced rowers and for all rowers in extreme weather conditions such as cold (during the winter months of 1 May to 30 September), heat, heavy rain, strong winds and fog. In particular during the winter months the temperature of the lake can drop to below 10 degrees creating extremely dangerous conditions.

Members are advised to never to scull alone during these months and to observe the 'Four Oar Rule', that is, do not venture out unless there are at least 4 oars together: a quad or four; a double; or two singles as a **minimum**. This advice is consistent with the advice issued by other ACT rowing clubs and Rowing ACT. Members are advised to seek advice from the Captain or Safety Officer about their own level of experience and precautions they should take.

Other recommended safety strategies include:

- arranging to be accompanied by a tinnie
- remaining as close as practical to the shore at all times, while maintaining a good look out and avoiding hazards
- rotating one crew member as a coach in a tinny, especially in winter (provided the member holds a current tinny licence).
- carrying a lightweight emergency blanket
- carrying a whistle to attract attention
- carrying a mobile phone in a waterproof case.
- practice capsize drills during warmer months

The Club keeps a supply of warm clothing at the shed for use in the event of a capsize.

Where a number of risk factors are present (for example winter, extreme heat, wind, inexperience, insufficient people on the water), it is recommended that members participate in alternative exercise regimes such as erg training, cycling or running rather than rowing in single sculls or pairs.

ACLRC capsize guide is included at Attachment 11.

## **Cold Shock**

Members should be aware of the effects of cold water immersion/cold shock. In water below 15°C, the effects of immersion become life-threatening. The lower the temperature, the more severe the symptoms. The effects of cold shock are completely out of a person's conscious control.

Cold shock is caused by rapid skin cooling and can kill within three to five minutes after immersion. On initial immersion, a huge inspiratory gasp is taken and is followed by severe hyperventilation. Hyperventilation on its own can cause muscle spasms in the limbs and chest. These breathing irregularities increase the risk of drowning if you dip underwater or have a wave splash over your face. Only 150 ml of water is needed to cause drowning. Water in the lungs compromises the ability to exchange oxygen, and because respiratory movements may occur for up to five minutes when underwater, water can continue to be drawn into the lungs.

Cold shock also causes a massive increase in heart rate and blood pressure. These cardiac responses may cause death, particularly in older, less healthy people.

The intense effects of cold shock last two to three minutes and will settle down after about five minutes of immersion. This period of involuntary reaction occurs at the critical stage while sorting yourself out after your boat has capsized and you are working to adjust to the weather and wave conditions, whilst trying to avoid inhaling water.

## **Hypothermia (Attachment 12a)**

Hypothermia can be life threatening. Members should be able to recognise its signs and understand its treatment. The St John's Ambulance Brigade provides advice on managing hypothermia which is available on the Club's Safety Notice Board:

## **Sun Stroke, Heat induced conditions (Attachment 12b)**

Members should be able to recognise the signs and understand the treatment of sun stroke and heat induced conditions. The St John's Ambulance Brigade provides advice on managing these conditions which is available on the Club's Safety Notice Board:

Members should wear sun appropriate clothing, including sunglasses, a cap or hat and apply sun screen. Members are encouraged to drink plenty of water in hot conditions and to carry drinking water while rowing.

The club provides sunscreen, however, members should provide their own sunscreen if they have special requirements.

## **BOATS AND EQUIPMENT - Rowing Equipment Failure (Attachment 13)**

All equipment used for rowing and coaching required to be properly and regularly maintained to ensure that it is safe and adequate for its intended purpose and does not expose its users to danger.

It is the responsibility of all members of CLRC to ensure that all equipment is safe for the purpose for which it was intended and that it complies with the Safety Plan.

To reduce the risk of incidents caused by equipment failure, members are required to carry out pre and post-row equipment checks. Members should ask for advice if uncertain. An Equipment Safety and Maintenance Check list is available on the Club's Safety Notice Board. This ensures consistent practices in checking boats prior to rowing, care of oars when launching and landing, care of boats when racking and un-racking, boat washing and checks before leaving the shed.

Members should try to fix minor maintenance issues themselves (for example replacing worn or missing shoe ties) and should record any damage they cannot fix themselves in the boat repair book/board located at the Club. The boat should be labelled damaged and not rowed again until the maintenance has been completed.

### **Boat Buoyancy**

All boats constructed after 1 April 2007 must carry a plate indicating the average maximum crew weights that the boat can carry and support seated in the event of being swamped. Boats must be inherently buoyant sufficient with their oars to support a seated crew of the design weight in the event of being swamped. Buoyancy components must be water tight to ensure effective operation.

### **Boat Equipment**

#### *Bow Balls*

The bows of racing and training boats shall be properly protected. A solid ball of not less than 4cm diameter, made of rubber or material of similar resilience, must be firmly attached to the bows. These should be checked on a regular basis.

#### *Fitted shoes*

All boats with 'fitted' shoes must have effective heel constraints. These must be properly adjusted and in working order. Shoes should be checked regularly to ensure they are effectively attached to the footplate and all screws are present.

#### *Oar & Scull Buttons*

The buttons on oars and sculls must be secure and properly set

#### *Lights in Poor Visibility*

At all times in poor visibility (after sunset early morning or in fog) boats shall be fitted with white lights showing fore and aft and visible through 360 degrees.

## **Boat Collisions**

It is not uncommon for collisions involving rowing boats to occur. These can result in serious injury and major equipment damage.

Collisions have occurred with other rowing boats, with the bank, pontoons, fishing boats and other hazards.

Members should familiarise themselves with the lake rules and traffic flow map, available on the club's Safety Notice Board. In general, you should keep right and as close to the bank as reasonably practical but keeping a look out at all times for hazards (refer to the list of hazards, which includes submerged logs, pontoons and pylons).

It is a legal requirement for members to keep a good look out at all times. It is important for members to be aware of the seriousness of all on water incidents and that prosecution may be pursued by the AFP for careless, reckless or dangerous navigation.

In line with the *Traffic Flow Guide*, never train in lanes 1 & 2 on the course in either direction.

Overtaking boats must keep clear of the boat they are overtaking. This is a legal requirement and applies on the rowing course as well as other parts of the lake.

Keep a good look out at all times.

Be aware that other lake users, including ferries, sailing boats and kayakers follow different paths from rowers.

Recreational fishing boats may be found anywhere on the lake and their movements can be unpredictable.

## **Muscle/ skeleton injuries due to hazards in and around the Club and/or poor rowing technique**

Members should be vigilant and report hazards they may notice at the club to the Club's Safety Officer.

Musculoskeletal injuries can occur from,

- Trip hazards in the car park, on the path to and in around the boatshed. The car park area is not well lit and uneven surfaces may develop due to erosion following rain. The parking area is not sealed and care should be taken if pushing trailers on the uneven ground.
- Lifting boats from a high or low rack. Some boats are racked higher than the reach of people attempting to lift them and in positions that require bending or twisting. The risk is compounded by rowers using incorrect lifting techniques, by attempting to carry a boat with insufficient people and heavy boats being racked in awkward positions.
- Carrying boats between the shed and pontoon. Rowers may trip on uneven surfaces. Particular care is needed during the winter months when there may be ice on the pontoon.
- Moving the club trailer, this is heavy and difficult to move manually.

Risks also exist in relation to injuries caused by limbs falling from trees around the club.

The Club, through the Club's Committee, will:

- seek to ensure boats at ground level are fitted on rolling racks or dollies
- ensure sturdy steps are available
- provide adequate lighting between shed and pontoon, taking into account limits to the lighting that can be provided on public land
- educate members on correct boat carrying techniques
- report tree safety/maintenance issues to the ACT government.

Members should ensure:

- that steps are positioned safely
- they work together to safely lower boats
- access is clear when moving boats
- they evaluate the size and weight of the load and, if required, get help
- be alert to other rowers who may need assistance
- before starting to lift, adopt a wide, comfortable and balanced stance
- their bodies are correctly positioned by bending legs and not backs, so that they are as close as possible to the load
- take a firm but comfortable grip and tighten core muscles when they begin lifting
- leg muscles are used during the lift, maintaining a straight lower back and keep their shoulders parallel
- they avoid twisting when lifting or lowering. If a turn is required while holding a boat (or other object) the leg muscles are used to shuffle feet around to the required direction.
- when lowering an boat or other object, the above sequence is used in reverse order
- ensure enough people are available to manually move the boat trailer when required
- they are using correct rowing technique using leg drive, protecting back muscles, and consider core strengthening exercises such as pilates to minimise risk of back injury
- that they report safety concerns to the Safety Officer

### **Infections, skin/ gastrointestinal conditions acquired from the shed/ Lake Environment/ other rowers**

Rowing exposes members to blue-green algae, water bird and other animal faeces, coliform bacteria and other harmful and infectious agents. Members can become infected following capsizing, through blisters, cuts and abrasions. If not attended to properly, these can require hospital treatment.

Members should observe the *National Health and Medical Research Guidelines for recreational use of natural waterways*.<sup>5</sup>

Do not drink or swim in water with high levels of blue-green algae. Wash off splashes with clean water as soon as possible.

Wash hands immediately after rowing, shower as soon as practicable, cover wounds including blisters with clean dressings, and apply antiseptic ointments to fresh wounds.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/\\_files\\_nhmrc/publications/attachments/eh38.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/eh38.pdf)

A first aid kit is available at the Club and basic first aid items are available in all club tinnies.

Additionally, rowers will reduce risk of infection by:

- wearing socks in boats
- cleaning up any blood from oar handles as part of washing a boat

## **TINNY MANAGEMENT, DRIVERS AND RESCUES**

For whatever purpose a boat is used, the driver must be licensed as required by local regulations. The driver and passengers will act in accordance with the local laws and carry the relevant safety equipment as required. If a tinny is being used for coaching or marshalling activities, these activities must be put aside for rescue or safety situations as required.

Club tinnies are **only** to be driven by members who hold a **current** licence. All passengers in tinnys including coaches, officials, rowers and guest must wear PFDs at all times. All tinny drivers must have the appropriate boat handling skills, and be able to effect a rescue if required.

Tinnies must show navigation lights before sunrise and after sunset and in poor visibility conditions (red and green marine lights – denoting starboard and port side and a static white light that can be seen over 360 degrees).

Tinnies must not be driven while under the influence of alcohol or drugs – penalties apply.

In case of emergency, all tinnies will be kept fuelled and mounted on a trailer for ease of access to the lake, however, CLRC is unable to guarantee the availability of a tinny driver at all times. Rowers need to make their own safety plan including rowing in groups, and/or with an arranged safety tinny.

To drive a CLRC tinny, operators:

- must be familiar and comply with traffic directions, rules for rowing, and the CLRC Safety Manual, as well as legislative requirements for operating motor vessels
- must wear a PFD at all times and ensure that all passengers also wear one
- Obtain and maintain a current boating licence
- Review and comply with the
  - Tinny Checklist which ensures compliance with legislative requirements (**Attachment 14a**)
  - Tinny Protocol as recommended by Rowing ACT (**Attachment 14b**)
- check that fuel connections are secure and in good repair
- only fill fuel tanks in the open air, away from naked flames
- use the “dead man’s handle” wire on the outboard motor.
- Keep a good look out at all times
- Don’t overload the boat – a maximum of 3 passengers in CLRC boats
- Obey speed limits
- Keep clear of swimmers, fishermen, canoeist, kayakers dinghy sailors and windsurfers
- Think of how the boats wash will affect others
- Look out for deteriorating weather conditions

Tinny drivers must comply with tinny requirements and the *Tinny Protocol* issued by Rowing Act.

### **Tinny Safety and Rescue**

Club tinnies will carry the full range of mandated safety equipment. This equipment should not be removed from the tinnies. Those taking a tinnie should check the serviceability of equipment in the boat (refer *Tinny Checklist*). Tinny drivers should advise the Committee if safety equipment is damaged or needs replacing.

The Club, through the Club's Committee, will ensure that Club tinnies are well maintained and that the following checks are undertaken at the time of registration renewal each year:

- tinny registrations are up-to-date and up-to-date stickers issued by the NCA are attached to the tinny for which they are issued
- fire extinguishers are serviced
- safety equipment is checked and replaced as required.

Only approved fuel/ is to be used in tinnies – 2 stroke fuel for the 2 stroke motors, and 4 stroke fuel for the 4 stroke motor.

As registration becomes due, the NCA will forward new registration stickers to the Club Secretary.

### **Recovering rowers from the water**

The following precautions must be observed when recovering a rower from the water:

- The only time high-speed manoeuvres should take place is when making the approach to the scene of trouble or when taking injured rowers back to the landing stage
- The final approach to the rower in the water must be made carefully and at low speed, in order to weigh up the situation and to avoid alarming the person in the water
- On approach, talk to the person in the water and make them understand what you intend to do and what you want them to do
- Approach from downstream or downwind as appropriate to maintain control over speed and steering
- When bringing the rower aboard, the engine should be turned off so that no injury can be inflicted by the propeller blades
- Should the rower require urgent medical attention, this should be applied before moving off.
- When there are several rowers in the water, priority should be given to any injured or younger rowers.
- Leave the boat and ensure the safety of the rower/s first

### **TRAILER/ TOWING HAZARDS**

Towing of boats must be undertaken in a safe manner and in compliance with the current rules and regulations of the applicable state.

Drivers towing a trailer on behalf of the Club must:



- ensure that there are at least two drivers available to tow trailers to help with navigation, manoeuvring and any emergency, which may arise, and to be aware of the dangers of high winds and icy road conditions and consult the weather forecast before setting off
- take a break or rotate drivers every two hours on trips longer than 2 hours
- ensure that no driver tows a trailer for more than a total of eight hours in any 24 hour period
- check the trailer tyres (including spare), lights, projection markers and the security of the load, jockey wheel and brakes before each trip
- the vehicle used for towing is appropriate for the length, load and type of trailer
- hands free mobile phones are used while driving

The Club, through the Club's Committee, will ensure that:

- trailers used by the Club are well maintained
- an assessment of maintenance needs is made annually at the time of registration each year
- the trailer carries a spare wheel and suitable tools and jack for changing a wheel
- information and diagrams are available showing the recommended arrangements for loading, including the maximum allowable load and maximum 'overhang' and appropriate indicators as per local road regulations
- have a method to check the nose weight of the trailer
- provide projection markers and lights
- ensure that adequate ties in good are available