

HRSA Monthly Report

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Incident Reports

Incident reports were reviewed (other than those of simple capsizes). Comments were made on a few and some were forwarded to others for information. Incident Reports that describe medical treatment beyond first aid and those that describe medical issues when rowing or training are routinely shared with the Honorary Medical Adviser. Several reports were linked where two or more reports related to the same incident.

There continue to be too many incidents involving motor boats on inland waterways. The following text is extracted from an Incident Report, this is typical of these incidents.

Experienced masters rower was single sculling downstream, turned at the weir and paddled upstream on the correct right hand side of the river. He observed a narrow boat in the middle of the stream so tucked well in to the right hand side in accordance with the river circulation pattern. He next observed that the narrow boat had turned diagonally across the river giving the sculler nowhere to go, he pulled up and started to back down.

The narrow boat hit the scullers bow ball pushing the boat downstream. The narrow boat driver did not reduce speed or try to take evasive action by going into reverse and was fully aware of the scullers presence as the sculler was clearly visible and wearing a high viz vest, the sculler could also hear the driver shouting abuse at him. If the sculler hadn't backed down quickly he would have been pushed under the narrow boats bows and possibly killed.

The sculler asked the driver of the narrow boat why he was on wrong side the river and why he had failed to give way, the driver responded that he wanted to moor up to queue for the lock. The driver of the narrow boat sounded his horn only after he had struck the scullers boat. The narrow boat registration number was xxxxx."

Learning from Incident Reports

The use of cola style carbonated drinks to prevent illness following capsized - myth

It is quite common to read comments in Incident Reports to the effect that a rower was given a can of a cola style carbonated drink after he had capsized, to prevent sickness and diarrhoea. Expert medical advice has shown this to be a myth. The following is a summary of advice procured by the Honorary Medical Adviser.

"Cola style carbonated drinks will not protect against illness from swallowing contaminated water. It may contain phosphoric acid but, the concentration in these drinks are not that high and they are about 10x less acidic than normal stomach acid. There is also some experimental evidence confirming the lack of affect from cola style carbonated drinks."

It is therefore recommended that cola style carbonated drinks are not used as a medical treatment for people who have capsized as it is not an effective treatment."

Avoid the use of bungees to hold boats on trailers and racking

A rower was hit in the eye by the end of a bungee cord when it slipped as she was using it to secure a boat to racking. The club will replace its bungee cords with boat ties. The incident caused much swelling and bruising but, fortunately, the rowers sight was not impaired.

Take care when moving trailers

A trailer was being pushed out of the boathouse; rowers pushing from rear and children helping push at sides. As the trailer left the concrete apron outside the boathouse for the gravel track, a child tripped in a pothole in the track and fell; the trailer ran over her ankle. The trailer was stopped as soon as possible. As the trailer was too heavy to lift it had to be rolled back over the child's leg to release her (it is presumed to be a twin axle trailer). The club member running the session is a doctor, and a cold compress was applied. Following medical treatment it became clear that there is some soft tissue damage below the knee but no bones were broken.

Remove protruding bolts

A rower walked into a bolt protruding from a boat on racking. This resulted in a deep laceration to the side of her shin. This was treated at an A&E unit with six stitches and twelve steri-strips. A skin graft may be required.

ClubHub

The concept and structure of ClubHub was discussed with the Director of Membership & Rowing Community. It was concluded that a structure similar to the “chapter and section” structure of RowSafe could be considered.

RowSafe was thought to be an interesting model. Drafts of parts of ClubHub should be produced, as a prototype, using its structure, “look and feel” and “language style”. These can then be reviewed before more extensive work is started.

Work has started on advice on Facilities Safety, as previously discussed. This relates to non-rowing safety; these are topics that are not, and should not be, included in RowSafe, but could be included in ClubHub.

The outline of a chapter (chapter X) is included below. The "X" simply stands for the chapter number that has not yet been assigned, it will subsequently be replaced by a number. Drafts have been produced of the sections printed in black below.

- X.1 Manual Handling
- X.2 Fire Arrangements including alarms, evacuation procedures and practice, and firefighting equipment
- X.3 Safety of Electrical equipment and installations
- X.4 Gas Safety including LPG & LNG
- X.5 Hazardous Chemicals
- X.6 Storage of Petrol
- X.7 Asbestos in the building structure
- X.8 Work at height
- X.9 Lifting equipment
- X.10 Housekeeping (e.g. avoidance of tripping hazards)
- X.11 Legionnaires' Disease (typically in relation showers)
- X.12 Food Safety

Drafts of the sections shown in grey will be provided soon.

The next process steps are to: -

1. complete the drafting of the contents,
2. invite volunteer expert colleagues to review the drafts and comment,
3. add any other suggested topics,
4. review the format and decide on its suitability, and, if appropriate
5. finalise the documents and prepare for publication.

It should be noted that the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act, 1974, and its Regulations, does apply to sports clubs to the extent that the clubs are responsible for "premises". Concern has been expressed that clubs may not be fully aware of the non-rowing related safety matters, and legal requirements, associated with their occupation of premises.

Work with the Cornish Pilot Gig Association (CPGA)

There has been a continuing ongoing conversation with a Gig club in Dorset. There was an initial meeting on 11th July at which there was a wide ranging discussion on safety. The structure of the discussion was:-

- Introduction and Opening Remarks
- What can go wrong
- Management & Leadership
- Available Resources
- What happens next?

The discussion of Safety Management and Safety Leadership included information on the meaning and importance of these two concepts and the need to strengthen both Management and Leadership in order to improve the performance of any organisation.

It is understood that the club has formed a working group to review its safety provisions and arrangements.

It is expected that this initial meeting will be followed by additional meetings in August and September to assist with the development of Safety Leadership and Safety Management in the club.

The Chairman of the CPGA suggested that this activity should be reported in Gig Rower.

Safety Alert – Blue-Green Algae

Exposure to Blue-Green resulted in four rowers suffering distressing skin disorders. All 4 rowers who went into the water suffered “either an all over body rash or rash to contact areas”.

A Safety Alert was produced and has been issued; it is included with this report.

Safety Alert - Diabetes and Launch Driving

An incident reported in June described the effects of a coach suffering a diabetic episode. Concern was expressed that this episode could have been more serious had the coach been driving a launch at the time. A Safety Alert has been produced and is about to be published.

Drones

The draft drone guidance has been reviewed and comments were provided.

The use of drones in gig rowing was included in a recent edition of Gig Rower, the CPGA will be provided with a copy of the guidance once it has been issued.

British Rowing Offshore Championships

Advice has previously been provided on safety at this event and draft documents were produced. The final documentation has been reviewed and found to be acceptable.

Home International Regatta

The Risk Assessment and safety arrangements for the Home International Regatta have been reviewed. The Risk Assessment was of poor quality but the other safety documents were reasonable.

These documents were provided so late that it was not possible to develop a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Further advice has been provided on the other safety documents and the Event Rowing Safety Adviser has worked hard to produce good safety plans and other items.

British Rowing Junior Championship

The risk assessment and safety plans for this event were reviewed and found to be satisfactory except for the radio procedure document that contained many errors. Some additional advice was provided on the proposed radio procedure and the document was extended as recommended.

Other Advice

There was a request for clarification from a person who had been told that there would be a change to the **heel restraint rules**. It was explained that:-

- Long heel restraints are implicated in very few incidents (~0.1%) not counting boat inspections as these cannot involve harm. This was also true before the rule changed. The new rule does not provide a measurable change in protection to an issue involving very little harm.
- The 7cm rule is meaningless as it does not define the point at which the heel restraint becomes taut. I have shown mathematically that this is strongly dependant on footplate angle and weakly dependant on shoe size.

It was also explained that no decision has yet been made but that a vote by the National Rowing Safety Committee (NRSC) is expected soon. The NRSC will then be in a position to make a recommendation.

There was a request on the **minimum size for a safety boat engine** for use at sea. There is no general advice available as it depends on the size of the boat, so reference was made to the RNLI Inshore Rescue Boats specifications, these use 30hp outboards.

Advice was provided on the safety of **adaptive rowers**. This is included references to sections 4.8 and 6.2 of RowSafe.

Advice was provided on a lifejacket to be used by a rower. The Getek lifejacket was recommended (see <http://www.getek.co.uk/>).

Some advice has been provided to British Rowing on encouraging volunteers, and rewards and recognition.