BRITISH ROWING

HRSA Monthly Report

July 2018

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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 are routinely shared with the Honorary Medical Adviser. Those that contain potential safeguarding issues are shared with the Lead Safeguarding Officer.

There have again been several incidents of anti-social behaviour and violence. It should be noted that the reported incidents occurred at four clubs in different areas of the country. These incidents were repeated at two clubs and this shows the need to report them to the Police. There is an anonymised summary of these incidents in Appendix 1.

It is recommended that incidents of violence or antisocial behaviour are immediately reported to the Police, if possible carry a mobile phone to report these events directly to the Police. Gather evidence of the offence by means such as photographs, CCTV or other video recordings, if it is safe to do so. There is information on how to call the police in Appendix 2. Please also continue to report these incidents using the British Rowing Incident Reporting System.

In another incident a group of about "at least sixty" stand up paddleboarders were reported to have been spread across the full width of the Thames near the University of London boathouse. They were blocking the river and would not move to let a rowing boat pass. They were reported to be abusive to the rowers and claim that they have an absolute right to be where ever they want to be.

This incident was discussed with a colleague at British Canoeing who made enquiries with his London Regional Officer who had no knowledge of the group. British Canoeing is not the NGB for the sport of Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP) but it is included in "Paddling on the Tideway" a code of practice for paddling on the tidal Thames. This is similar to "Rowing on the Tideway".

The PLA subsequently contacted the leader of this group of paddleboarders to discuss the incident. It appears that there was about 20 novice paddleboarders in the group and they report that they tried to warn the rowers of their presence when crossing into the rowing/paddling pattern area. The rowers were thanked for reacting to this warning and stopping to assess the situation.

The PLA made it clear that paddlers do not have an absolute right to navigate wherever they want and should comply with the Paddling Code of Practice and all must keep a good look out. The PLA response also stated that "this near miss has reminded (them of) the need to get the PLA, the Thames Regional Rowing Council (TRRC) and British Canoeing together to review combining these two Codes together later this year for republication next year (2019), so that both sets of mariners have a clear understanding of each other's requirements more efficiently."

In another incident a boat, containing its crew, was taken in tow by a launch in rough water. The boat subsequently capsized. It is recommended that, in circumstances like these, crews are taken aboard the rescue launch and the empty boat is towed. If necessary the boat should be left and recovered later while the crew is taken to safety.

In another incident a sculler capsized and the boat was taken aboard the launch before the sculler was rescued. This is clearly not good practice.

In another incident a sculler capsized and was encouraged by the accompanying senior rower to right the boat and climb back in. She was not able to do this so she headed for the nearest bank and re-entered the boat from a standing position. The following comment was made on the incident report:-

"Righting an inverted boat and climbing back into it in deep water is not advised. It is better to climb on top of the inverted boat and paddle it by hand to shore and then either beach it and seek shelter, or right it and re-enter it.

The problem with trying to get back into an righted boat in deep water is that most attempts are not successful. In relatively warm water this may not be a problem, but in cold water it can have very serious consequences. Climbing back into a boat requires considerable energy and energy is a vitally important commodity in cold water. Even a small number of failed attempts can leave the rower in a much worse condition than when they started.

Have a look at the British Rowing Capsize Video."

The ability to see objects ahead of the boat.

Last month I asked for feedback on the effectiveness of head mounted mirrors. There has been very positive feedback from people who have persisted with their use; this is reproduced in Appendix 3. They agree that it is a useful safety aid, particularly for Masters rowers who may not be as flexible as they once were.

They also report that it takes time to learn how to get the best from these devices. It needs care and persistence, however the same applies to most skills associated with rowing.

There has also been mixed feedback from people who have not used these devices or have not persisted with them.

I bought one and tried it when rowing at bow in a 4+. The lake where we row is large (370 acres), empty, and £ shaped so this is probably a more severe test than one on a narrow river as the potential field of view is so wide. It takes some time to adjust it correctly and the movement of the head to scan the water ahead is counterintuitive (to see the water to the left then turn the head to the right). It is probably more difficult to use when rowing than when sculling due to the shoulder rotation at the catch. I will persist.

It would be helpful to have more feedback before making any recommendations. If you have used a head mounted mirror to see ahead when rowing or sculling then please write to me at safety@britishrowing.org.

If you have not tried this yet but would like to then please do so then it may help you to know that I bought mine from Amazon, where it is currently unavailable, for £15 (including postage and packing). It is available from Rowperfect for £19.99 + delivery. Other products may also be available. If you do try it then please let me know what you think.

Defective Throw Lines

I attended a meeting at the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) headquarters to "assist the Chief Inspector in developing suitable recommendations to help prevent a reoccurrence" of the defective throw line incident initially reported by Warrington Rowing Club.

The meeting was held under "Chatham House Rules" so statements cannot be attributed, the identities of persons present cannot be shared. However, there were people present from the MAIB, MCA, RNLI, RYA, Fire Service, British Standards, British Marine, and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (DBEIS).

Throw lines are not currently rated as Life Saving Apparatus and there are no standards relating to their performance or construction. There was discussion of the need for a standard and I offered to provide some information that could be used in drafting such a standard.

I have appended some notes that I offered to produce for British Standards (see Appendix 4). If you have any thoughts, comments, or suggestions then please write to safety@britishrowing.org so that they can be incorporated into this submission.

Actions to comply with the recommendations in the Toby Wallace Report.

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) investigated the fatality that resulted when a rower was lost overboard from an Ocean Rowing boat in the mid-Atlantic. The report can be found here.

The actions taken to implement these recommendations were discussed with the Acting Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents (at the MAIB) and the Assistant Director: Ship Standards at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) with a request to provide feedback on the extent to which the actions assigned to British Rowing in the report have been completed. These actions were summarised and this summary is included in Appendix 5.

Canoeists and Rowers on the Trent at Nottingham

It is understood that a reasonable working relationship has developed between the Rowing clubs and the Canoe clubs in the Nottingham area. However, it is understood that there have been problems when the National Water Sports Centre (MWSC) is being used for major events and the British Canoeing High Performance squad has to use the Trent.

It is reported that their behaviour, when on the Trent, is not the same as that of the local canoeists and that they do not follow the navigation plan and tend to act aggressively around rowers.

This was explained to a colleague at British Canoeing and he passed the information on to their Head of Performance Operations who will source a copy of the Navigation plan and brief coaches and paddlers accordingly.

Safety Audit at a School Rowing Club

Bryanston School has requested a safety audit of their rowing club. The onsite phase was conducted on 5th June and a report has been issued. The report will highlight the various good practices but will also identify some opportunities for improvement.

Hants & Dorset ARA Portable Defibrillator

The H&D ARA has recently purchased an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). This will be passed from event to event along with the Race Officials safety Kits and Life Jackets ensuring that there is a defibrillator at every H&D ARA event regardless of whether there is already one available nearby, or one is provided by the host club and/or their First Aid Provider. The unit is being funded by contributions from H&DARA Affiliated Clubs.

Additional information on the Defibrillator can be found on the Hants & Dorset ARA Web site at – www.hdara.co.uk, in the Safety section at http://coastalrowing.squarespace.com/safety/ .

This new piece of safety equipment was available for the first time at Newport Regatta weekend – on the 27th/28th July – and should be at every subsequent H&D ARA event.

Resuscitation and Defibrillators

This Hants and Dorset ARA initiative was discussed with the Honorary Medical Adviser, Dr David Zideman, who was delighted that the H&D ARA had taken this very sensible step. He did suggest, however, that great care should be taken if any defibrillator is taken afloat (the H&D ARA report that they currently have no plans to do so) as water, particularly salt water, could damage the equipment. Some defibrillators are provided in a soft shell casing and some of these may not be waterproof. If a defibrillator is to be taken afloat then he suggests that it is transported it in a waterproof container and a towel in a waterproof container is carried to dry the casualty's chest before sticking the pads on.

Dr Zideman has kindly invited anyone considering acquiring a defibrillator to contact him if they need any advice on the type to buy or the way it should be managed; you can contact him at dzideman@doctors.net.uk .

Advice on using a defibrillator.

General instructions on using a defibrillator can be found at https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/how-to-save-a-life/defibrillators/how-to-use-a-defibrillator . **Please be aware that, depending on the model used, you may need to push the "ON" button.**

If you want to learn more about basic life support in an emergency then download the Lifesaver app from https://life-saver.org.uk/ and learn from the interactive films. This was published by the Resuscitation Council (UK) and is a very high quality educational resource. It may be a challenge but it provides a rewarding learning experience. Try it.

Power8 Sprints

Comments were provided on the instructions to competitors and other safety documentation.

British Rowing Junior Championships

The safety documentation has been reviewed and a few opportunities for improvement were identified and feedback was provided. This documentation is acceptable.

British Rowing Offshore Championships and Commonwealth Sprints

The Risk Assessment and Safety and Emergency Plans were reviewed and a few opportunities for improvement were identified; feedback was provided. Copies of supporting documents have been requested.

British Rowing Sculling Festival

The safety documents have been received and are being reviewed. Some initial feedback on the Risk Assessment has been provided.

Other Advice

The following questions were received:

Q I am concerned that rowers do not understand and respond to the terms port and starboard, they are not incorporated into the Rules of Racing or Coaching Material. This causes a problem to umpires and others.

A I share this concern and would like to see the correct and universal use of port and starboard throughout rowing. When I see references to bow side on a sculling boat I wonder why we bother trying to bring some sense and logic into rowing.

If rowers faced their direction of travel then things could be easier (for many reasons) and there would be little potential for confusion. However, they do not and there are a great many ways in which confusion can lead to harm. It is imperative that we use the correct terminology.

I umpire in the West of England. Umpires will give instruction to crews to move to port or starboard and point their flag in the appropriate direction. In general, crews respond quickly and accurately.

This not only applies on rivers, it also applies on estuaries and the sea. Other water users will refer to port and starboard and expect the terms to be understood. If rowers do not have the same understanding then communication will be difficult. Everyone else on the water uses port and starboard, why should rowers be different.

In RowSafe we already use port and starboard. We do not use red, green, left, right, bowside or strokeside in this context at all.

Q Are you aware if FISA and British Rowing have different rules for Heel restraints? I am talking to Shimano rowing, who tell me they believe there are plans in UK to accept the Shimano safety system, which doesn't need heel restraints in the normal way. Are you aware of this and can verify the situation please?

A The FISA and British Rowing rules on heel restraints are currently different but, as I understand it, they will be harmonised next year, in effect the FISA rule will be incorporated into the Rules of Racing .

I think the simple answer here is that British Rowing, as an NGB, does not accept or reject or endorse any products. If anyone tells you that British Rowing does "accept" a product then they are, at best, confused.

It is possible that there may be some confusion here with British Rowing and the GB Rowing Team (GBRT). However, I understand that the team does not use Shimano shoes (this was subsequently confirmed by the GBRT Facilities Manager).

In general, shoes that easily detach from the footplate and do not have heel restraints would comply with the Rules of Racing. The rules state:-

heel restraints. All boats where "fitted shoes" are employed must have effective heel restraints. These must be properly adjusted (each heel shall be restrained to prevent it from rising higher than 7cm measured at right angles from the footplate) and in working order. Likewise, the foot release from any other type of fitment that may be used must be self-acting and not require the intervention of the athlete or a rescuer. *The heel restraint rule will be changed in 2019 to bring it into line with the equivalent FISA rule. (see rule 7.2.8.c.)*

I believe that the GBRT uses the BAT logic ShoePlate system, there is more information on these at https://batlogic.net/product/quickrelease-system/.

Q Does BR have an advice on how to deal with angry swans, we have a very angry cob on our lake which has taken to attacking swimmers. I have since been in touch with the RSPB, The Swan Sanctuary and David Barber (Her Majesties Official Swan Marker) as well as British Canoeing and British Triathlon but have not been given much information. Hoping that there is an official line or some advice from BR that we can pass on to our users.

A Sorry, but we have not needed to develop comprehensive guidance on swans. All I know is that they tend to be territorial and defend their nests and their cygnets. I would have thought that the season for defending nests has now passed. You have consulted the experts and I doubt that I can add anything to what they have told you but it may help simply to keep away from the swan so that it does not feel threatened. This may mean using a different part of the lake.

Q I would like to compete as a Masters H sculler. However, it's over 30 years since I last took part in any rowing events in Southern England, and things seem to have changed in some respects.

I live in a remote part of Scotland. The nearest rowing club is 80 miles away. I am, however, able to train on inland lochs locally. My old College Boat Club, are happy for me to join as a rowing member thereof, and to represent them as a sculler. So, I have the following questions:

It appears that old-style lace-up shoes in boats are not permitted in competition anymore - is this correct?

A Simply, there is nothing explicit in the current British Rowing rules of racing about laces in shoes. The rule on shoes is as follows:

"• *heel restraints*. All boats where "fitted shoes" are employed must have effective heel restraints. These must be properly adjusted (each heel shall be restrained to prevent it from rising higher than 7cm measured at right angles from the footplate) and in working order. Likewise, the foot release from any other type of fitment that may be used must be self-acting and not require the intervention of the athlete or a rescuer.

The heel restraint rule will be changed in 2019 to bring it into line with the equivalent FISA rule."

The FISA rule states:-

"2.5 Quick release foot stretchers – 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. 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. In addition, where laces, Velcro or similar materials must be opened before the rower can remove his feet from the shoes or other device, all such materials 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 his hands or with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap or release device."

The concern here is that in the event of a capsize the feet must come out of the shoes easily. If your feet are laced tightly into your shoes then you may find it difficult to remove them quickly. It is difficult for umpires to judge how tightly your feet are laced in so if they see laces then they may start to worry.

There is a statement in RowSafe section 7.1 that:-

"Shoe fastenings such as laces or Velcro must be able to be released immediately by the rower with a single quick hand action of pulling on one easily accessible strap."

I am less concerned about your safety at competitive events than I am when you are rowing alone, particularly in inland lochs. At events there will be other competitors and safety boats, etc. If you get into trouble then there will be someone there to help you. This will not be the case when you are training. I am very concerned at your plan to train on remote inland lochs. Please consider how you can do this safely.

Q I am a solicitor acting for a client who wishes to charter their ocean rowing boat for the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge 2019. They are concerned as they have heard that the law is changing with regard to allowing these boats to be formally chartered. I have read the MAIB report concerning the man overboard on TOBY WALLACE and note recommendations were made to both British Rowing and the MCA. I haven't been able to establish the position re chartering and should be grateful if you would let me know if you are aware if there is a definitive answer.

A British Rowing has extended our safety advice to include the more serious risks associated with Ocean Rowing. This can be found in Chapter 10 of RowSafe (see https://www.britishrowing.org/about-us/policies-guidance/rowsafe/). I do not try to track changes in legal requirements as Ocean Rowing is not one of our core topics and we have not been notified of any proposals.

I can recommend two sources of further advice. The first is the MAIB. The Inspector who conducted the Toby Wallace enquiry is currently unwell, I wrote to him yesterday asking him to review our guidance when he is feeling better. I believe that the guidance we have provided in RowSafe, and the consultations we conducted in preparation, will fulfil our obligations derived from the recommendations in their report. Others at the MAIB should be able to assist on legal requirements.

The other person who I have found to be extremely helpful is a friend at Atlantic Campaigns. I have copied this note to her and she may contact you if she is able to answer your questions.

The response from the friend at Atlantic Campaigns was:-

First of all I can advise you that there is currently no law governing Ocean Rowing, the sport is largely self-regulated. However as a race we take forward guidance set by the MCA and findings and recommendations from the recent MAIB report, along with the RowSafe report as a close to conforming to law as is possible within the sport.

The chartering of an ocean rowing boat has been deemed largely 'frowned upon' particularly if the vessel is British flagged. As we understand it, this is due to a code of practice scale that the MCA have in place for vessels ranging from small pleasure vessels to large commercial ships. As we understand it, for a vessel to be commercially chartered, as in for people to pay money to be onboard, the owner of the vessel must deliver a certain level of safety requirements. These requirements vary accordingly to the use of the vessel. For example a pedalo in a lake would be coded to a certain level, and then the other end of the scale would be a yacht taking on a transatlantic passage. You can imagine the sliding scale of safety requirements changes due to the severity of the task. This is a very nutshell explanation, and I have not recently read the MCA's notices on this subject, so I would advise you to visit their website for the most up to date information!

One of the points that we took from the Toby Wallace report/incident was that there is a hugely varying scale of the standards that are expected to be delivered when a 'pay for place' ocean rowing boat is being used. Sadly we (Atlantic Campaigns) found that in our opinion, the Toby Wallace incident could possibly have had a different ending if the vessel has been closer to the MCA's guidance from a 'Category ZERO' transatlantic crossing.

This being said, it is actually impossible to make an ocean rowing boat conform to these standards, due to design and the ability to carry the equipment as stated. Which is where we turn back into the loop of the sport not having its own guidelines or laws.

In our race we advise our teams against chartering a vessel due to the number of grey areas that are possible with responsibility of owner vs charterer and the lack of legal governing guidelines.

From a personal view point (this is my 8th Atlantic Rowing race and my 11th year in Ocean Rowing) I do not see a cost advantage of chartering a boat to be re-used in the next race or independently, however I understand that the attachment to a boat can be a great thing.

As you mention that your client is looking to compete in our race, I can possibly be of further assistance directly with them or of course if you would like to chat about any of the above further, please do feel free to call me.

Appendix 1 – Summary of incidents involving violent or anti-social behaviour

Brief description of the incident: Youths were jumping from the launch pontoon. They were requested to stop as boats were being launched. Some boats got away without incident, but with verbal abuse. Another boat was splashed with the youths kicking water and jumping in near the boats.

On return, the youths were still jumping in the water. One boat landed and removed blades. The youths would not keep away. One even stepped on the boat as he jumped in. One girl was swimming in the water trying to push the boat away so we tried to lift it onto the pontoon. At this stage one of the youths pushed a rower into the water. The rower and boat was rescued. The rower then retrieved his phone and reported the incident to the police.

More boats then returned. Swimmers were around the boats, despite requests to keep clear. Much verbal abuse was given by the youths. The two rowers on the pontoon went to lift a boat out of the water. The rower near the bow was pushed into the water and landed on the bows of a boat. Another person saw the incident and called the police. Most of the youths (there were about 11 in all) then slid away so that by the time the police appeared most had gone. Statements were taken.

Measures taken: Police called and the said they would be keeping an eye on the area. They expected the group to return with the hot weather.

Were there any consequences?: 1 person bruised and not likely to be able to row for several days. Possible minor damage to the boats

Were there any consequences?: 1 person bruised and not likely to be able to row for several days. Possible minor damage to the boats - they were not inspected fully as they were returned to the boathouse.

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Brief description of the incident: Group of Kids 10 - 14 throwing rocks and stones at boat, missed Cox by 2 ft. One kid jumped in to river swam towards the blades, we think the intent was to try to capsize the boat. The crew rowed hard and got away.

Measures taken: Reported to Police incident

Later at the same club

Brief description of the incident: Group of unaccompanied boys throwing rocks and debris at boats

Measures taken: Spoke to them, but they continued and then ran off. Have reported to police.

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Brief description of the incident: Approximately thirty youths aged between fourteen to sixteen threw stones at several Rowing crews. One rower was hit on the left wrist by at least one stone. He was unable to paddle at firm pressure at any time back to the rowing club 3km downstream. The final crew approached the location was being coached from a launch. The coach videoed the gang of youths who cleared the location. When the crews returned back past the location the crews were again stoned and the coach again videoed the youths throwing stones and reported the incident at the Police.

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Brief description of the incident: Two groups of juniors were on the water with 2 coaching launches. The first group returned to the pontoon, and the other returned minutes later. There was shouting between the juniors returning and a group of around 20 youths, they were blocking access to the pontoon, intimidating the juniors, throwing equipment such as trestles in the water, throwing logs/sticks/launch paddles at the juniors and the people who came out to help.

Measures taken: Police were called, enforcement officers were called, the panic alarm was sounded.

Equipment was taken inside as fast as possible. I hid a junior who had shouted back at the youths, as they were especially trying to target him.

Enforcement officers have agreed to be present for the beginning and of junior water sessions.

Were there any consequences?: We were very lucky and no equipment was damaged or anyone injured. Enforcement officers took all CCTV footage and tracked down the youths the next day.

Two days later at the same club.

Brief description of the incident: We were putting a launch in the water. Youths were on our pontoon, jumping in and messing around, however when we approached with the launch they took an interest and came over. We politely asked them to keep out the way but they got closer- we had removed the key from the launch. We managed to put the launch in the water, however despite us trying to block access to it they pushed past, jumped on, attempted to start it, then jumped up and down filling it with water. Our captain arrived, they were not bothered and continued messing around, and making lewd and inappropriate comments to us. My rowing partner went and got me a life jacket, and I sat on the launch with the key- as soon as I had a gap the captain pushed me off and I drove the launch away, and remained on the water until our coach arrived. Police were called, however the youths disappeared when they realised someone had filmed the entire incident from the balcony of the club.

Appendix 2 – How to call the Police

The following is taken from the Police website at https://www.police.uk/

Emergency calls

In an emergency please **telephone 999**.

If you are deaf, deafened, hard of hearing or have a speech impairment, a **text phone is available on 18000**.

You should use these numbers if:

- A crime is happening right now.
- Someone is in immediate danger, or there is a risk of serious damage to property.
- A suspect for a serious crime is nearby.
- There is a traffic collision involving injury or danger to other road users.

When should I use 101?

You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. For example, if:

- Your car has been stolen
- Your property has been damaged
- You suspect drug use or dealing in your neighbourhood

Or to:

- Give the police information about crime in your area
- Speak to the police about a general enquiry

You should always call 999 when it is an emergency, such as when a crime is in progress, someone suspected of a crime is nearby, when there is danger to life or when violence is being used or threatened.

Appendix 3 – Feedback on the use of head mounted mirrors

In my case the mirror is attached to my glasses.

I will give you the down side first. There is a blind spot! I wear the mirror to the right side of my glasses so I occasionally look to the left when in close quarters to mooring buoys and moored craft. I can understand if someone was trying a mirror for the first time they could quite easily collide with a mooring buoy or channel marker on the blind side.

I have and still suffer with Cervical Spondylosis and my ability to look over my right side is somewhat restricted. The rowing club has always known me to use a mirror because of my inability in keeping a comfortable look out ahead. With the mirror I am able to see the bow ball of my single and anything that might be ahead of me. The distances are as the normal line of sight and as long as the river is clear ahead then I can continue to row but with the occasional look over my left side when I am aware that I am passing moored boats or mooring buoys, this blind spot is diminished when comfortably moving through the water and being able to view my route ahead. It is usual for rowers to continually look round whilst rowing and by doing so breaking the sequence of rowing. I am able to row without looking round and this gives me an uninterrupted rowing sequence and certainly an advantage.

I would certainly encourage the use of a mirror to anybody who wishes to give it a good try but it will take some getting used to. The principle is that you are looking with one eye into this mirror so the beginner might close the other eye in order to focus with the opened eye. I am accustomed to using a mirror and look both astern and into the mirror at the same time getting a split image within my mind I then naturally concentrate on what I need to see.

I know this all sounds impossible but it works.

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I have been using a mirror for 3 years and I believe personally it has prevented a number of collisions, particularly with floating obstacles like logs or other river debris. Things that do not stand out like other river users, tend to float silently. However they are not to be relied on entirely and do not replace looking properly. I find they are very useful for rowing comfort as not to be turning round all the time. I would heavily recommend them.

I really do love using a mirror and hope you find use in it too. As long as you remember to "calibrate" it before you get on the river, but also they do take a little getting used to for obvious reasons. In summary, they essentially give you a wider range of vision, but not much resolution. I'm aware of more obstacles, but I still need to turn around to consider finer evasion tactics.

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I have been using a rear view mirror for the last four years, for both training and racing. It is invaluable. Having become habituated (getting used to working with one eye takes at least a month), I now scull a single without ever having to turn my head (as a master, this is very pleasant). Now, without the mirror, I feel blind. With the mirror, I can check the view ahead at any point in the stroke, at any speed. I am in entire agreement with your kayaker, and feel that this is one of the ways forward in reducing risk (in a similar fashion to the use of Hi-Viz tops). There is a specific relationship between the two. The only drawback to mirror use is the size of the image, and the use of Hi-Viz makes recognition at a distance much easier. As the amount of masters rowing increases (with the concurrent increase in stiff necks - in both senses), the combination of the two approaches makes sense, and will reduce risk.

Appendix 4 - Draft Specification for a throw line

Purpose

Throw lines are used in rowing in order to pass a line across water, usually to connect a person able to give assistance to a person needing assistance. For example, they can be used by a coach on a river bank to pull a rower who has capsized back to the bank.

Function

Throw lines must be capable of effective use by people with little or no training. Heaving lines, as used by professional seamen, would not be an effective alternative as they need more skill and care for effective use.

Throw lines can be thought of as emergency equipment, they must be capable of being stored or carried and continue to be available for immediate, effective use without further preparation.

Specification

The following specification describes the performance required of each component and the construction or materials that will deliver that performance. Many of the required features for the rope are mirrored by those of the throw bag, however, these are listed separately for clarity.

Component	Performance	Construction
Rope (strength)	The rope should be strong enough to withstand the horizontal pull that can be exerted by a person.	Any rope with a breaking load of 500 kg or more. (a safety factor of 5x has been incorporated).
Rope ("gripability")	The rope should be capable of being gripped and held by a person.	The rope shall have a diameter of not less than 10mm and be constructed from a "soft" material, or materials assembled in such a manner that the resultant rope is soft. The rope should not have an excessively smooth surface (although it must not be so rough that it does not "flow" smoothly from the bag when thrown – see below)
Rope (rot resistance)	The rope should be capable of being stored when wet or damp without any degradation.	The rope should be constructed from a synthetic material that does not degrade when wet. It should also be impervious to moulds and fungi.
Rope (conspicuity)	The rope should be easy to see in poor light conditions.	The external surface of the rope should be brightly coloured and contain two contrasting colours.

Component	Performance	Construction
Rope (evenness)	The rope should be able to pass through the bag opening smoothly and without significant restriction.	The rope should be contiguous with no knots or joins. It should be of constant diameter (± 5%) and have a relatively smooth surface.
Throw line bag (strength and durability)	The bag should be strong and durable enough contain and protect the rope and remain intact during normal use.	The bag should be of substantial construction.
End of rope or bag ("gripability")	The thrown end of the rope or bag should be capable of being gripped and held by a person. It should be noted that it must be able to be gripped by the hand and arms rather than by the fingers as finger dexterity and grip strength are degraded by the cold.	The bag should be of substantial construction and fixed to the end of the rope. Alternatively the rope should pass through the bag and a loop should be provided at the end of the rope preferably with a tube or other stiffening device to assist the person being rescued to pass their arm or hand through the loop. The circumference of the loop should be at not less than 300mm.
Bag (rot resistance)	The bag should be capable of being stored when wet or damp without any degradation.	The bag should be constructed from a synthetic material that does not degrade when wet. It should also be impervious to moulds and fungi.
Bag (resistance to degradation by daylight)	The bag should not be significantly degraded by prolonged exposure to daylight.	The bag should be constructed from a material that does not degrade when exposed to daylight.
Bag (conspicuity)	The bag should be easy to see in poor light conditions.	The external surface of the bag should be brightly coloured and preferably include retro-reflective surfaces.
Bag (closure)	The bag should be able to retain the rope until needed.	The opening to the bag through which the rope flows should be capable of being closed but opened easily and quickly when needed. This may be achieved, for example with a flap secured by Velcro or a draw string closure.

Component	Performance	Construction
Instructions for use	Instructions for use shall be provided in clear pictogram form.	The external surface of the bag should have pictograms instructing the user on the correct method of deployment.
Marking of length	The user should be able to see an indication of the length of rope inside the bag.	The length of rope should be clearly marked on the outside of the bag.
Repacking instructions	The rope will only flow freely from the bag if it is packed correctly. Repacking instructions shall be provided.	Repacking instructions shall be provided. These should be clear and concise and, preferably contain pictures or diagrams.

Appendix 5 – Actions to comply with the Recommendations in the Toby Wallace report

The actions for British Rowing were:-

"Liaise with stakeholders to develop and promulgate a best practice guide or a code of practice for ocean rowing, taking into account, inter alia:

- *Boat design, construction and stability,*
- *Minimum training requirements*
- *Minimum equipment requirements*
- *Onboard procedures*
- *Shore based and seaborne support"*

The process by which we addressed these recommendations is as follows:-

- facilitated a meeting with the key figures from the "industry"
- interviewed a further key figure who could not be present at this meeting
- identified best practice within the "industry"
- produced a draft guidance for people considering ocean rowing
- circulated the draft within the "industry" group for comment
- addressed those comments
- finalised the guidance
- integrated this guidance into RowSafe (our general rowing safety guidance document)

The meeting with key figures from the "industry" was held on 24th November 2017 at British Rowing Headquarters at Hammersmith. Our private note from this meeting is attached.

In December 2017 we had a further meeting with Nikki Holter of Atlantic Campaigns, this was very helpful. Nikki was not able to attend the November meeting. If you wish to consult with one person from the "industry" then I would recommend Nikki.

I have contact details of the people involved, please let me know if you would like to contact them and I will forward your note to them.

The British Rowing guidance for Ocean Rowers has been integrated into RowSafe. This is freely available on our website and a copy is attached; guidance for Ocean Rowers can be found in RowSafe sections 9.9 and 10.3. RowSafe is updated every year in April so please let me know by the end of this year if you have any suggestions for this or any other topics. It may interest you to know that we also produce Safety Alerts and annual Analyses of Incidents based on our incident reporting system.

I believe that boat construction is not a significant cause of problems. In general, boats tend not to suffer structural failures and they are self-righting. The main issues are associated with the behaviour of the crews.