



# **BAINBRIDGE ISLAND ROWING SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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Document Change Tracking: Add another row to this table whenever changes are made to this document.

Date	Ver.	Author	Change Description
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1/1/2020	7.0	Marc Stewart	Major revision, new basis for future.
8/1/2020	7.1	Rob Hershberg	Review & edits to 7.0
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Jan 2024 Feb 2024	9.0 9.1	Laura Bottger, Safety Committee	Revised some standards/advice, updated traffic & safe haul out maps.

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## Introduction

Safety is the responsibility of every rower, volunteer, and staff member. Rowers, coxswains, launch operators, and coaches complement the BIR Board of Directors' commitment to safety. Lapses in safety consciousness can result in serious injury or death and/or costly repairs to expensive equipment. Leadership in safety consciousness and preparedness can significantly reduce these incidents and improve their outcome when they occur.

The *Bainbridge Island Rowing (BIR) Safety Policy and Procedures* consists of policies and procedures recommended by the BIR Safety Committee and approved by the BIR Board of Directors to better ensure the safe handling and operation of shells, launches, and equipment, and the supervision of crews. The intent of this document is to reduce the likelihood of personal injury or equipment damage, mitigate the seriousness of such incidents, and to promote safe and responsible behavior. Adherence to the BIR *Safety Policy and Procedures* is required under BIR's [Code of Conduct](#). The *Safety Policy and Procedures* do not guarantee complete rower safety.

# Leadership

Leadership plays an important role in avoiding incidents and dramatically improves the outcomes. Leadership requires preparedness and moxie. BIR members are required to read and understand these Safety Policies annually as a part of membership renewal, and as such should be prepared to take a leadership role ("person in charge" or "PIC") in an incident and bring it to the best possible outcome.

BIR Safety Committee membership will be determined by the Board of Directors and will nominally consist of the following:

- Safety Officer (Committee chair and Board Officer position),
- Vice President,
- Director of Rowing,
- Head Coaches (Adults and Juniors as established),
- BIR Equipment Committee Chair.

The Board may appoint others to the Committee as desired.

BIR's policy is that the Coach or Launch Operator has authority in all matters regarding on-water and off-water matters that involve BIR rowers.

## 1. Safety Committee

Led by the BIR Safety Officer, the BIR Safety Committee is responsible for:

### **Establishing and amending the *Safety Policy and Procedures*;**

The Committee will establish and amend this document as necessary with approval from the Board of Directors on major revisions.

The BIR Safety Committee will develop, implement, and keep updated an on-water Emergency Response Plan separate from this document. This plan will be developed with the help of the Bainbridge Island emergency medical services.

### **Affecting training and testing on *Safety Policy and Procedures*;**

The Safety Committee will develop and implement certain rower, coxswain, launch operator, and coach qualification standards, training, and testing methods, and document the results.

### **Affecting BIR rowing equipment and vessel inspections, reporting the results, and affecting subsequent corrective actions;**

The Safety Committee shall arrange with the Equipment Committee Chair a safety inspection of shells and launches prior to each season of rowing. Shell inspections shall cover the following items:

- Hull and deck integrity inside and out
- Riggers and oarlocks secure, functional.
- Seats and tracks functional, tracks secure.
- Foot stretcher shoes for wear and 3" heel-tie integrity
- Cox box communication through all speakers
- Bow-ball secured properly

Launch inspections shall cover items listed in [Section 2: Safety Checklists, Policies, Procedures](#) at [Appendix 2-B: Launch Operator's Checklist](#) and [Appendix 2-A: BIR Safety Gear and Locations](#), which include items both aboard the launch and in the boathouse.

## **Processing of incident reports through closure of follow-up actions and training;**

The Safety Committee will respond to all incident reports, which will be initiated using iCrew. The Committee will discuss the incident in detail with the reporting person and others involved in the incident to determine root and secondary cause(s), and determine and ensure the execution of follow-up actions. The Committee will document closure actions for each incident including possible inclusion as a topic for the annual safety seminar.

## **Preparing and holding an annual Safety Seminar.**

The BIR Safety Committee, working with the Director of Rowing and Head Adult Coach, will hold an annual Safety Seminar for coaches, launch operators, coxswains, and rowers. Incident reports from preceding years will be reviewed.

## **2. Director of Rowing (DOR)**

The Director of Rowing is responsible for maintaining the safety culture at BIR. He/she:

- Qualifies launch operators, coaches, and advanced rowers who may use typically smaller shells without a launch (*see BIR Boat Use Policy*).
- Is an integral part of the Incident Reporting process, follows up on all cases in which he/she is not directly involved, and works with the BIR Safety Committee to address closure on all incidents / emergencies.
- Encourages each squad to exercise simple emergency procedures from time to time on the water and promotes a recurring Water Safety Training Day open to all BIR members and nearby rowing clubs.
- Hosts the annual BIR Safety Seminar/Review.

When the DOR is absent from the local area, he/she will designate an alternate and report this to all coaches and the BIR Board President and Vice President.

## **3. Coaches and Launch Operators**

Coaches and launch operators are the backbone of BIR's safety program. They are responsible for and set the example of safe day to day operations in and around the Rowing Center and shell operation on-water. Coaches represent the senior element of the Coach-Launch Operator-Cox team through which safe on-water operations are afforded.

## **4. Individuals**

Safety is an individual and collective responsibility. Members need to be cognizant of the risks inherent in rowing, to know and respect their own capabilities and limitations, and to understand these safety policies and procedures. Adherence to the *BIR Safety Policy and Procedures* is required under BIR's [Code of Conduct](#). Members are required to submit medical-related information in their iCrew profile as a part of annual registration. Medications required by rowers are the responsibility of the rower. Rowers must attend to their personal medical needs and let others know enough to allow them to render assistance in an emergency. In addition, a member's smartphone can be a helpful resource if medical needs are documented and the emergency medical ID is enabled.

Alcohol or any other intoxicant is not permitted for rowers, launch operators, or staff at any time during rowing; nor is participation in any aspect of on-water activity permitted by anyone under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicant.

# Policy and Procedures - Road Map

## Section 1 – BIR groups, Training and Qualification, and Responsibilities

Four appendices (A-D) provide explicit requirements, including training and qualification, for, respectively, rowers, coxswains, launch operators, and coaches. These appendices are meant to be stand-alone. One will see redundancy! Each appendix outlines relevant off-water preparatory safety responsibilities and on-water safety responsibilities for each group. Members are expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements pertinent to their role(s). Coaches should familiarize themselves with the requirements for all roles.

## Section 2 - Safety Checklists, Policies, Procedures

Nine appendices (A-I) comprise this section covering topics from launch and safety bag checklists to the captain's test for scullers and rowers of pairs to policies for operating shells in inclement weather conditions, in hours of darkness, and outside the boundaries of Eagle Harbor. This section also contains the BIR Eagle Harbor Regatta checklist.

Members should familiarize themselves with the requirements pertinent to their role(s) and anticipated situations. Coaches should familiarize themselves with the requirements for all roles.

## Section 3 - Incidents, Emergencies: Definitions, Procedures, Reporting, Review

This section addresses how to respond when something goes wrong. The four steps of incident / emergency response are listed and described.

1. Designation of a Person In Charge<sup>1</sup> (PIC) is the first step. The PIC is that person who stands up and takes responsibility for leading the execution of responsive actions to gain control of the incident to ensure personal safety and minimize equipment damage.
2. Execution of safety actions is the second step. Five types of incidents and emergencies can be expected and are sequentially defined. These are man overboard/capsizing, collision, grounding, equipment malfunction, and medical emergencies. For each, various safety actions are specified. These actions should be generally understood by all rowers and especially by coxswains, launch operators, and coaches.
3. Reporting is the third step. Incidents, emergencies, and equipment damage are reported by the PIC or someone knowledgeable of the details of what happened via iCrew. This ensures that BIR leadership is promptly made aware of incidents and is positioned to make any necessary communications to members and the community at large. The Safety Committee will follow up on the initial reporting to ensure that all relevant facts are gathered.
4. Analysis of the incident/emergency is the fourth step and is a function of the Safety Committee. Its purpose is to help BIR improve safety. Procedural changes and/or training arising from the lessons learned are then communicated and implemented.

The bulk of Section 3 addresses step 2, the detailed safety actions for each of the five casualties noted.

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<sup>1</sup> The PIC will typically be a person with a level of knowledge and courage to assume this leadership role at the spur of the moment. That person is protected by the Good Samaritan Law in the State of Washington, which offers legal protection to people who give reasonable assistance to those who are, or whom they believe to be, injured, in peril or otherwise incapacitated. The protection is intended to reduce bystanders' hesitation to assist for fear of liability.



# Section 1: Qualification, Training, Responsibilities

## Appendix 1-A: Rower requirements

### 1. General requirements before rowing for the first time in any calendar year

- Read this document, the *BIR Safety Policy and Procedures*, which is posted on BIR's website: <https://bainbridgerowing.org/forms-documents/>
- Provide a current Emergency Point of Contact and notice of any medical needs or allergies via your iCrew profile.
- Become a member of *US Rowing* and complete the online *US Rowing Liability Waiver* for the current year, regardless of regatta participation. ([www.usrowing.org](http://www.usrowing.org)). (Membership above the basic level includes additional personal insurance coverage and is highly recommended.)
- Complete role-based SafeSport training through your USRowing membership. See <https://bainbridgerowing.org/safesport/>
- Sign the *BIR Code of Conduct* seasonally as requested.
- Sign the current *BIR Waiver of Liability Form* via your documents page in iCrew. Returning participants only need to sign the form if it has been revised, which iCrew will flag. For Juniors (and their parents), the form is part of the Junior Registration Packet. Confirm physical capability to swim and row, including the capability to lift 35 pounds (one's share of the weight of a shell), get in and out of, and row boats safely, in consultation with a physician as appropriate. This sport typically involves significant exertion and potential exposure to cold and wet conditions. The rower accepts responsibility for being both cognizant of these risks and prepared to deal with them.
- Perform a BIR float test within the past ten years. ([Form](#) available on BIR's website.) In the event that no BIR float test is scheduled at our local pool in the near term, completing the BIMPR's (Parks & Rec) *swim test* at Bainbridge Island Aquatic Center, which is different, will satisfy the requirement until a float test is available. Any rower who cannot pass the float test must wear a PFD, such as a life belt.
- Carry any necessary medications. Please inform others (coaches, rowing colleagues) of any medical or other conditions as appropriate so they may assist you if necessary. (Assistance may be available, for example, to carry certain medications, such as for asthma or bee stings, and to assist with moving shells to and from the water.)
- Junior rowers - complete Junior Registration Form for the season found on the BIR website.
- New adult rowers - complete New Adult Rower Registration Form.
- Pay membership dues, program fees, and rack fees as appropriate.
- Be prepared to attend the annual BIR safety seminar.
- Acknowledge that alcohol, drug, or tobacco use is incompatible with rowing or launch on-water operations.

- Learn-to-Row participants—new rowers or those without recent rowing experience— watch the [US Rowing Safety video](#) PRIOR TO ROWING:  
[https://usrowing.org/sports/2016/6/19/1138\\_132107067295656159.aspx](https://usrowing.org/sports/2016/6/19/1138_132107067295656159.aspx)

## 2. Off-water/preparatory safety

- Adhere to the BIR [Adverse Weather](#), [Air Quality](#), [Water Quality](#), [Minus Tides](#), and [Appendix 2-D: BIR Dark Condition Operation Policy](#) policies in Section 2. The coach/launch operator has final authority. In brief,
  - ❖ Do not row if there exists or is a threat of (a) high winds, (b) lightning, or (c) reduced visibility (fog or driving rain/snow), as detailed in the Adverse Weather Policy.
  - ❖ Do not row if the air temperature is below 32°F (including wind-chill), the air quality index (AQI) is above 150, or there is a no contact order due to water quality issues.
 

Note: If the AQI exceeds 100, coaches have discretion to adapt the workout or move it indoors. Members of sensitive groups should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion, take any necessary health precautions, or skip practice (toggle out late).
  - ❖ Adults do not row if the tide will be lower than -.5 feet at launch/landing. Juniors do not row if the tide will be lower than -1 foot at launch/landing.
  - ❖ Use navigation lights if the rowing workout extends past sunset or starts prior to sunrise.
- Dressing in layers in the Northwest is a seasonal necessity. Rowers should avoid cotton because it will make you feel colder if it gets wet. Instead, wear performance fabrics like synthetics or wool that help regulate your temperature and have moisture wicking and/or insulating properties. Add a rain protective layer as needed. Bring hydration with you in the shell (please in plastic bottles to reduce hull wear). Consider applying or carrying first aid tape for blister control. Wear some version of snug fitting, hard soled water shoes. Walking barefoot or in flip flops puts you at risk.
- All bow seats and anyone seated in a single, double, or pair are *required* to wear bright colors. The bright clothing requirement can be met by wearing a bright hat, top, or BIR supplied pinney. All rowers in any boats are encouraged to wear bright colors. Wearing bright colored clothing increases visibility on the water and aids in the identification of rowers in case of emergency.
- Do not row BIR boats unless supervised by a coach in a safety launch. (Exceptions apply at regattas and in the limited circumstances noted below, involving coach-certified rowers in small boats.)
- The coxswain is responsible for coordinating *every* movement of four and eight-person shells. Rowers will respect and help coxswains by minimizing talking when boats are being moved unless directed by the coxswain or otherwise absolutely necessary.
- Prior to launch, check A) your foot stretcher for (i) alignment, (ii) tight fasteners, (iii) 3 inches or less heel-tie movement, and (iv) unacceptable wear of shoes; B) your rigger to ensure that NO bolts are loose (only finger tight); and C) your seat for smooth operation and proper orientation. Wipe out tracks with any sign of debris.

- When launching or landing at minus or low tides, use exceptional care while transporting the boats. Stability is jeopardized in soft, deep sediment, and will result in potentially hazardous load shifting to other rowers. It is possible to lose footwear in the muck. Choose footwear that will stay on your feet. When entering the boat, rinse your feet to avoid depositing sediment on the tracks.
- Alert the coach if you need assistance lifting the boat overhead. (Such assistance may not be available.)

*Specific provisions for singles, doubles, and pairs:*

- Wear bright colored clothing, as noted above. Also carry a personal emergency whistle.
- A flip test is *required* prior to rowing BIR single and double sculls or pairs to demonstrate the ability to safely get back into a capsized shell or to use it as a paddleboard to get to shore. Absent that showing, a PFD must be worn in small boats. Flip tests expire after 10 years and are tracked in iCrew. Flip tests are held in either the pool or Eagle Harbor.
- Interested scullers and pair rowers may complete [Appendix 2-C: BIR Captain's Test for Single and Double Scullers](#) and Pair Rowers. (Section 2, Appendix 2-C)
- Only adult rowers who have passed the Captain's Test and been authorized by the DOR may use certain small BIR owned boats (generally doubles and singles) without a safety launch under an exception in the *BIR Boat Use Policy*. Unsupervised use of these boats is only allowed during daylight hours and is not permitted outside Eagle Harbor. \*In a pair or double, only one of the rowers needs to have passed the Captain's Test.

### 3. **On-water safety**

- Rowers will respect and help the coxswain and coach by executing commands given by the coxswain or coach. A rower with safety concerns afloat will bring these concerns to the attention of the coach or coxswain. Otherwise talking in the boat should be minimized and limited to breaks in rowing to avoid distracting others from the coach or coxswain's commands.
- If sculling a single or double or rowing in a pair, a) give strong consideration to rowing with a buddy/buddies in another shell and b) stay close to shore. If sculling alone, you are strongly advised to have a PFD. According to USRowing, the sport's biggest risk to life is adults in small boats having medical issues.
- Strictly observe traffic patterns if other shells are underway. *See*

- [Appendix 2-G: Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern/Policy](#).
- Make note of equipment issues in the boat and work with the coxswain to ensure they are both recorded on the equipment status board in the boathouse upon landing and brought to the attention of the coach. If the issue is serious, recommend the coxswain seek help from the coach/launch operator and return the boat to shore to prevent further damage and stage for repair.
- All rowers should be familiar with and prepared to carry out the Incident/Emergency Procedures described in [Section 3: Incidents, Emergencies – Procedures and Reporting Process](#) of these policies.

## Appendix 1-B: Coxswain requirements

### 1. General requirements before executing coxswain duties for the first time

- Review the [US Rowing Safety video](#) referenced in the Rowers section:  
[https://usrowing.org/sports/2016/6/19/1138\\_132107067295656159.aspx](https://usrowing.org/sports/2016/6/19/1138_132107067295656159.aspx)
- Ride in a launch with an experienced operator or row in a shell with an experienced coxswain or rower over the entire length of Eagle Harbor (east of the Aquatic Conservancy for launches).
- Participate in BIR Cox Training Class and receive training from coaches, experienced coxswains, and/or experienced rowers. An experienced rower/coxswain should be assigned as stroke for new coxswains or for coxswains desiring such support.
- A coxswain who is not also a rower must still satisfy the general requirements for rowers detailed in [Appendix 1-A: Rower requirements](#), except that non-rower coxswains are not required to lift a share of the boat or to pay BIR annual membership dues or program fees.

### 2. Off-water/preparatory safety

- Discuss with the coach/launch operator—who has final authority— (1) weather, light, tide, and traffic conditions, (2) capabilities of shells getting underway, and (3) the workout plan and (4) *develop a corresponding safety plan*. If the safety plan includes taking a VHF radio alone or with a walkie talkie, confirm with the coach/launch operator that the equipment functions and has sufficient battery energy before launching.
- Adhere to the BIR [Adverse Weather](#), [Air Quality](#), [Water Quality](#), [Minus Tides](#), and [Appendix 2-D: BIR Dark Condition Operation Policy](#) policies in Section 2. In brief,
  - ❖ Do not row if there exists or is a threat of (a) high winds, (b) lightning, or (c) reduced visibility (fog or driving rain/snow), as detailed in the Adverse Weather Policy.
  - ❖ Do not row if the air temperature is below 32°F (including wind-chill), the air quality index (AQI) is above 150, there is a no contact order due to water quality issues.

Note: If the AQI exceeds 100, coaches have discretion to adapt the workout or move it indoors. Members of sensitive groups should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion, take any necessary health precautions, or skip practice (toggle out late).
  - ❖ Adults do not row if the tide will be lower than -.5 feet at launch/ landing. Juniors do not row if the tide will be lower than -1 foot at launch/ landing.
  - ❖ Use navigation lights if the rowing workout extends past sunset or starts prior to sunrise.
- Life jackets with an attached whistle are required. Wear one if coxing an 8+ or a stern-coxed quad or 4+. If coxing a bow-loader 4+, it is generally safer to take the life jacket along. (Bring cushioning too as appropriate for the shell and your body type.)
- When launching or landing at minus or low tides, use exceptional care while transporting the boats. Stability is jeopardized in soft, deep sediment, and will result in potentially hazardous load shifting to other rowers. It is possible to lose footwear in the muck. Choose footwear that will stay on your feet.

- Ensure that the shell bow ball is present and fastened securely.
- Ensure that your cox box is charged, the shell speaker in a (4+) or two speakers in a (8+) and the stroke meter are functioning, the skeg and rudder are intact, and the steering mechanism is working.
- Remind all rowers to conduct their seat checks ([Off-water/preparatory safety](#)).
- Take charge of boat handling from rack to slings, slings to water, and return to storage using standard commands with which rowers are familiar. Know these commands and exercise them clearly and with authority.

### 3. **On-water safety**

- Work closely with the coach/launch operator to ensure rower and shell safety during the practice. The coach/launch operator has final authority.
- Take charge of boat operations from launch to landing using standard commands with which rowers are familiar. Know these commands and exercise them clearly and with authority. Your primary duty when launching and landing is to protect the fin and hull from grounding.
- Know and adhere to the Eagle Harbor traffic pattern. *See Section 2,*

- [Appendix 2-G: Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern/Policy](#). Know the location of permanent mooring balls, pencil buoys, and lighted buoys. Vigilantly make note of frequent changes within the harbor that pose new navigation hazards.
- All shells underway must be within line of sight of a safety launch at all times unless otherwise authorized by the DOR—who may delegate this authority to an experienced coach. Coordination for visibility is a shared responsibility between the Launch Operator and the Coxswain.
- Be alert for the unexpected entry of row boats into the channel between live-aboard boats and docks, entry of power or sailing vessels from the marinas into the channel that may not see you, other rowing shells, logs or other objects adrift on the water, boats moored in unexpected locations, and wakes from passing power boats.
  - Do not hesitate to rapidly stop the shell if necessary by yelling “Way enough! Hold water!”
  - Stop the shell immediately if you hear a boat horn. Launch drivers will sound them if they see that a collision is imminent.
- Know the tide levels to avoid grounding, especially at the head of Eagle Harbor at Strawberry Park, at Stetson Point, and near Pritchard/Bill Point.
- Return to the boathouse or the shore immediately if there arises (a) lightning, (b) high winds, or (c) reduced visibility (fog or driving rain/snow). Which destination is the most prudent will require judgment. If thunder is heard within five seconds of seeing lightning, lightning is less than a mile away. Head immediately for the nearest shore and not the boathouse unless the boathouse lies nearby and in a safe direction! Rowers and coxswain should debark at the shoreline, attempt to secure the shell in a way that will minimize hull damage – including resting the hull on the beach, and seek appropriate shelter.
- Make note of equipment issues in the shell and bring them to the attention of the launch operator or coach before or upon landing. If the issue is serious, seek help from the coach/launch operator and consider returning the boat to shore to prevent further damage and stage the shell for repair.
- Be familiar with and prepared to carry out the Incident/Emergency Procedures described in [Section 3: Incidents, Emergencies – Procedures and Reporting Process](#) of these policies.
- Know the emergency take-out places on the BIR map of Eagle Harbor. See Section 2, [Appendix 2-F: Eagle Harbor Safe Haul Out Locations and Addresses](#).

## Appendix 1-C: Launch Operator requirements

### 1. Required Training and Qualifications for Launch Operators

The Coach or Launch Operator has final authority in all matters regarding on-water and off-water matters that involve BIR rowers.

Launch Operators will be certified by the BIR Safety Officer or the Director of Rowing.

A Launch Operator must (hard requirements):

- Have a current USRowing Membership
- Have signed a USRowing Waiver
- Have watched the [US Rowing Safety video](#) (referenced in the Rowers Appendix 1-A)
- Completed Safe Sport on-line "SafeSport Trained Core Course"
- Have signed a BIR Waiver
- Have a Washington Safe Boater card (if born after 1/1/1955)
- Initiated an on-line Background check
- Completed online CPR/AED/First Aid
- Passed a BIMPRD (Parks & Rec) "SWIM" test (or a BIR Float test – see below)
- Completed on-water launch training

Soft requirements – to be completed at the soonest opportunity no later than in six months:

- Passed a BIR float test (get it with the next group to visit the Aquatic Center)
- Completed Hands-on CPR/AED training (get with next session)
- Completed BIR hands-on AED/First aid (this will be part of future Launch operator off-water training)
- Completed off-water launch training (get with the next session)

Launch Operators are expected to be familiar with:

- How to operate each unique launch/engine configuration. Demonstrate launch operational skills to the Safety Officer or a qualified coach.
- The Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern and incident/emergency take-out places on the BIR map of Eagle Harbor kept in launch bags, posted in the boathouse, and described in [Section 2: Safety Checklists, Policies, Procedures](#) of these policies at



- [Appendix 2-G: Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern/Policy](#) and [Appendix 2-F: Eagle Harbor Safe Haul Out Locations and Addresses](#).
- The location of permanent mooring balls, pencil buoys, and lighted buoys. Vigilantly make note of frequent changes within the harbor that pose new navigation hazards.
- The proper responses to incidents that can arise on-water, including collision, grounding, man overboard, rower medical emergencies, as well as mechanical failures affecting normal rowing. The appropriate responses to incidents, including reporting requirements, are described in [Section 3: Incidents, Emergencies – Procedures and Reporting Process](#).
- How shells of various sizes function on the water, including their limited stability, limited visibility, and the substantially higher speed at which they can travel in relation to Coast Guard inner-harbor speed limits, as well as their fragility when it comes to even minor collisions or wave-induced hull damage.

## 2. **Off-water/preparatory safety**

- Launch Operator/Coach will discuss with coxswains (1) weather, light, tide\*, and traffic conditions, (2) capabilities of shells getting underway, and (3) the workout plan and (4) *develop a corresponding safety plan*. (For example, if a shell is allowed to be out of sight of the launch, consider issuing coxswains a walkie talkie or VHF radio, confirming that they function and have sufficient battery energy before launching.)
- Know the tide height throughout the workout period to avoid groundings in shallow water during the workout. (Tide chart apps are readily available.)
- Adhere to the BIR [Adverse Weather](#), [Air Quality](#), [Water Quality](#), [Minus Tides](#), and [Appendix 2-D: BIR Dark Condition Operation Policy](#) policies in Section 2. In brief,
  - ❖ Do not row if there exists or is a threat of (a) high winds, (b) lightning, or (c) reduced visibility (fog or driving rain/snow), as detailed in the Adverse Weather Policy.
  - ❖ Do not row if the air temperature is below 32<sup>0</sup>F (including wind-chill), the air quality index (AQI) is above 150, there is a no contact order due to water quality issues.
 

Note: If the AQI exceeds 100, coaches have discretion to adapt the workout or move it indoors. Members of sensitive groups should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion, take any necessary health precautions, or skip practice (toggle out late).
  - ❖ Adults do not row if the tide will be lower than -.5 feet at launch/landing. Juniors do not row if the tide will be lower than -1 foot at launch/ landing.
  - ❖ Use navigation lights – including a 360-degree (32-point) suction-cup mounted white light mounted on the launch engine - if the rowing workout extends past sunset or starts prior to sunrise.
- Use the [Launch Operator’s Checklist](#) in Section 2 to ensure the proper safety equipment and communications equipment is carried on board the safety launch. Many items on the list are contained in BIR Life Jacket bags.
- Wear a life jacket while operating a BIR safety launch and require any passengers to wear a life jacket. The launch operator/coach will assess the coxswain’s skill level and exercise additional cautions as appropriate.

### 3. **On-water safety**

- Work closely with the coxswains to ensure rower and boat safety during the practice.
- Alert coxswains to hazards for navigation *before* a crisis occurs. This includes low water and grounding, boat traffic, debris in the water, unexpected boat moorings, proximity of shells to shoal water, other shells on a collision course, obstacles routinely encountered in the waterway, and waves induced by power boats.
- Alerting coxswains to hazards is especially critical in the dark. A spot light should be used to illuminate obstacles for the coxswain to see.
- If necessary to avoid having a shell run aground or collide, do not hesitate to clearly and with authority order it to rapidly stop, by yelling “Way enough! Hold water!” If the shell(s) is/are out of voice range, sound the launch’s handheld boat horn to signal the boat to stop.
- All shells underway must be within line of sight of a safety launch at all times unless otherwise authorized by the DOR—who may delegate this authority to an experienced coach. Coordination for visibility is a shared responsibility between the launch operator and the coxswain.
- Make note of equipment issues in shells. If the issue is serious, consider directing the shell to return to shore to prevent further damage and stage the shell for repair. For smaller issues, attempt to fix them either on the water or upon return ashore. If issues can’t be fixed directly, flag the issue with a pink ribbon. If the issue prevents safely rowing the shell again, place a pink ribbon on the bow ball. In either case, submit a damage report in [iCrew](#).

## Appendix 1-D: Coach requirements

Coaches are also Launch Operators who ensure the safety of BIR rowers and coxswains and the safe operation of BIR equipment. Coaches must satisfy the requirements for Launch Operators at Section 1 [Appendix 1-C: Launch Operator requirements](#).

In addition, a Coach will:

- Have completed the US Rowing Coaching Level 1 training, have equivalent prior coaching experience, or for assistant coaches be working toward that level of experience;
- Review the iCrew profiles of each rower under their charge and make note of medical conditions listed. Review active “Protocols Restricting Rowers to Address Medical Issues” (a limited access document).
- Offer flip tests, and administer the [Appendix 2-C: BIR Captain’s Test for Single and Double Scullers and Pair Rowers](#) (at Section 2, Appendix 2-C) to certify scullers and pair rowers to use BIR singles, doubles, and pairs without a safety launch present;
- Train launch operators, coxswains, and rowers; and

Coaches and Assistant Coaches are expected to be familiar with:

- The level of supervision that the participating rowers require, based on the rowers’ skills and experience, for example:
  - *Learn to Row (LTR)* participants will row in BIR shells only under the direct supervision of an experienced coxswain (for 4s and 8s) or an experienced bow seat (2x) and within visual range of a coach in a safety launch. One coach will be responsible for no more than 16 Learn-to-Row category rowers.
  - *Novice Rowers* may row in BIR shells under the direct supervision of a coach/launch operator. (Novice rowers have rowed for less than a year and completed a LTR course, private lessons, or are high school students enrolled in the BIR Junior Rowing Program.)
  - *Experienced Rowers* may scull (1x, 2x, 4x-) or row in fours or pairs without a coxswain while supervised by a coach/launch operator. A coxswain and safety launch is required for rowing in eights.
- The requirement that BIR boats be supervised by a coach in a safety launch except at regattas and as otherwise provided in the *BIR Boat Use Policy*. For instance,
  - Small BIR-owned General Use boats (doubles and singles only unless otherwise authorized by the DOR) may be used without a safety launch within Eagle Harbor in daylight hours only if at least one of the rowers per boat is an adult who has passed the Captain’s Test.
  - If authorized by the DOR, a coach may permit an adult or Junior coxswain to cox General Use boats, as defined in the *Boat Use Policy*, beyond line of sight of a launch in certain conditions.

## Section 2: Safety Checklists, Policies, Procedures

### Appendix 2-A: BIR Safety Gear and Locations

1. BIR maintains two **AED's** (Automated External Defibrillators): one on the upper level at the north end of the common room near the door to the kitchen and one on the lower level of the **boathouse** at the south end between the two roll-up doors. A third AED, not owned by BIR, is located at the information shed at City Dock.
2. BIR maintains **several large first aid kits** and a small one for each of the life jacket bags. The large kits are normally stored on racks in the center of the ground floor of the **boathouse**. One coach takes out one kit during practices and makes it available to other coaches as needed. Contents of the large first aid kits include the following items. Those asterisked are present in the small kits.
  - a. Gloves\*
  - b. Band-aids\*
  - c. Gauze bandages
  - d. Athletic tape\*
  - e. CPR masks
  - f. Instant cold packs
  - g. Tweezers
  - h. Splints
  - i. Q-tips
  - j. Extra zip lock bags
  - k. Kleenex
  - l. Saline
  - m. Aspirin
  - n. Ibuprofen
  - o. Benadryl
  - p. Antiseptic ointment\*
  - q. Cortisone cream
  - r. Sunscreen
  - s. Space blankets
  - t. Hand sanitizer
  - u. Wipes
  - v. First aid booklet
  - w. New Skin Liquid bandage blister first aid pack only

(An additional small first aid kit is kept in the kitchen on the upper level.)

3. Six **life jacket bags**, sometimes referred to as Kippy Liddle bags, are stored on racks on the ground floor of the **boathouse**. Coaches take out one bag per launch when supervising on-water shell operations. They are to contain the following eight items:
  - a. Bag containing 8 Type II PFDs
  - b. Nine emergency blankets
  - c. Up-to-date incident/emergency reporting contact information and response outline
  - d. Emergency response map of Eagle Harbor showing four haul out locations.
  - e. Throwable flotation with 25' of line (USCG)
  - f. Rescue lifting strap
  - g. First aid kit (US Rowing): band-aids; athletic tape; gloves; antiseptic ointment
  - h. Three flares (USCG)
4. One additional "Kippy Liddle" bag contains 9 sets of dry warm long pants and 9 sets of dry warm tops for use in the event a rower or group of rowers suffers from hypothermia while rowing. In addition, consideration should be given to having a rower use a warm shower either on the lower or upper level of the boathouse to elevate body temperature.
5. BIR maintains two types of portable **radios**:
  - (1) walkie talkies, for local coaching use between multiple coaches on-water, and
  - (2) VHF marine radios, normally set to channel 74, also enable Channel 16 communication for U.S. Coast Guard "911" help. Accompanying these radios will be a USCG-required whistle.

6. **Fire extinguishers** are mounted at two locations on the lower level of the boathouse and two on the upper level:
  - a. At the lower level entrance between the two roll-up doors
  - b. On the lower level outside the laundry room
  - c. Near the upper level entry, just inside the interior double doors , and
  - d. On the upper level outside the kitchen.

## Appendix 2-B: Launch Operator's Checklist

Obtain launch key from the boathouse.

Check fuel tank by lifting it and, if the fuel tank seems nearly empty, carry with you one of the small ethanol-free gasoline bottles from the fuel locker.

Underway equipment Inventory:

- Registration (USCG)
- Paddle
- Hand Pump
- B-1 fire extinguisher (USCG)
- Air whistle/boat horn (with charge of air!)
- Check hand-carried equipment inventory:
  - Life jacket bag
  - Your or a friend's cell phone
  - Charged and tested VHF radio or walkie-talkie
  - Megaphone
  - Coach's toolbox - as appropriate - with spare rowing parts, including spare spacer/bolt/washer/nut sets; 7/16" and 1/2" wrenches and a spacer tool.
  - Charged spotlight if it is or will become dark during practice (Dark Operations)
- Mount a 360-degree (32-point) suction-cup mounted white light on the launch's engine AND turn launch navigation lights on at sunset, before sunrise, or if visibility is poor.
- Consider:
  - Environmental conditions
  - Time of sunset or sunrise,
  - Harbor conditions including tides,
  - Which boats will be launching and nature of rower/coxswain experience on board.
- Make note of any missing components aboard launch, low gas supplies, or problems with equipment, and enter same on the launch status board inside the key locker so the problem can be fixed. File an [iCrew Equipment Damage Report](#) as appropriate.

## Appendix 2-C: BIR Captain's Test for Single and Double Scullers and Pair Rowers

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Safely un-rack shell
- Check rigging
- Adjust foot stretcher
- Safely carry boat and place in water (water launch) without assistance\*
- Mount oars properly
- Board and launch smoothly
- Row smoothly feathering with oars off the water
- Check way ahead clear of navigation hazards looking over both shoulders as frequently as appropriate for harbor location/conditions (minimum of every 10 strokes or so)
- Turn boat smoothly 180 degrees in both directions rowing with both oars
- Spin boat in place smoothly 180 degrees in both directions
- Row, back, and spin the boat with a single oar, alternating oars to keep course
- Execute a controlled emergency stop starting from a stroke rate of 28
- Back boat 15 strokes smoothly
- Prepare for and land boat smoothly without grounding
- Safely return boat to yard without additional assistance\*, rinse off, properly wipe down
- Rack stow boat without assistance\*, rinse and stow oars.
- Completed a flip test in past five years
- Pass verbal test (rules of road, shell vulnerability and keys to visibility, harbor knowledge, BIR Safety Policy)

\*For independent boat use

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

File with the Director of Rowing

## Appendix 2-D: BIR Dark Condition Operation Policy

Throughout the existence of Adult programs at BIR and most other clubs, early morning and evening rowing programs have confronted the need to navigate in dark conditions well before sunrise and after sunset. Several steps taken by small boats, coxswains of larger shells, and by launch operators can effectively reduce the risks of collision during dark conditions.

1. Use navigation lights on launches and shells. This will include carrying a 360-degree (32-point) suction-cup-mounted white light to mount on launch engines at dark.
2. Be sure shell navigation lights are adequately bright.
3. Operate in bodies of water that are largely free of obstacles.  
For BIR, typically row between the ferry yard and Bill Point north of the two pencil buoys along the south shore and south of channel can buoy #5 just east of the ferry docks while also observing a wide counter-clockwise circulation to avoid head-on collisions.
4. The launch operator should stay close to shells being supervised.
5. Use a spotlight to illuminate the path ahead of shells to help the coxswain and bow seated rowers see buoys, anchored boats, and other obstacles.
6. This is best done by driving the launch within about 20 yards quartering the shell(s) and providing illumination that doesn't blind rowers/coxswain but rather illuminates specific obstacles to be avoided. The spotlight is especially helpful in the cluttered part of the harbor west of the ferry yard and into the back bay where north-channel, Stetson Point, and Strawberry pencil buoys, with their reflective coatings, can be illuminated from a distance. The spotlight can also be used to search for drifting semi-submerged logs or other debris along the course. These obstacles can be expected to move considerably during the tidal shift during practice.
7. To avoid shells' collision with or swamping by other boats underway, the launch should position itself between that boat and shell(s). Use the spotlight to illuminate the launch first – as a mobile stern light - and then in the direction of the crew(s). Do not aim the spotlight at the on-coming boat which will momentarily blind that skipper.



## Appendix 2-E: BIR Environmental Conditions Policies

### Adverse Weather

Lightning, high winds, and heavy precipitation (rain, hail) factor heavily on whether or not shells should be launched, and if such conditions arise, shells and launches should return to the rowing center.

Multiple factors contribute to the risk of hypothermia to rowers and coxswains when a boat capsizes, including water temperature, time in the water, extent of the body immersed, air temperature, wind, precipitation, etc. Hypothermia is also a risk for rowers who will cool rapidly in the boat during chilly weather once covered with perspiration and/or wet from splashing even during a workout. Coxswains are particularly vulnerable since they aren't working as the rowers are. Finally, standing in cold water too long during launch and recovery will cool the body down. Rowing centers across the country exercise a wide range of control measures for rowers during colder months of the year, and some are complex. As a result of experience at regattas, we have a policy based on the air temperature, wind speed, and precipitation.

#### **BIR Policy:**

##### **Do not row under any of these conditions:**

- Air temperature less than 32F\* (including wind chill as measured from launches tied at the city dock - use Kestrel 3000 or equivalent at the boathouse)
- Hear thunder or threat of lightning, heavy rain, hail, or high winds (check weather channel on your radio)
- Reduced visibility (cannot see the south shore from the launching beach)

\*If air temperature is less than 40F including wind-chill, keep launch within 250 yards of all shells.

### Air Quality

In recent years, forest fires have contributed to significant degradation of air quality in our region. The local weather service posts an EPA-determined local air quality index (AQI) each day, particularly during summer months. Several apps provide live, local air quality readings, including from a station at Bill Point.

#### **BIR Policy:**

If the AQI exceeds 150 at Bill Point, no rowing or outdoor erging or other strenuous exercise is allowed.

If the AQI exceeds 100, coaches will exercise discretion and limit the intensity of practice or move it indoors. Members of sensitive groups should avoid prolonged or heavy exertion. Members should take appropriate precautions, know their personal limits, and skip practice as needed. Late toggling out from practice is allowed.

## **Water Quality**

Be aware of any water quality advisories announced by Kitsap County or the City of Bainbridge Island. In particular, be on the lookout for “No contact” signs posted at or near the waterfront, and also any warnings posted in the boathouse (normally found on the inside south wall in the vicinity of the person door). These advisories, which often occur in relation to a sewage spill or contamination event, come at unpredictable times and with no advance warning.

### **BIR Policy:**

If a “No contact” advisory is in place, no rowing is allowed. Rowing may not resume until the “No contact” warning has been lifted by the pertinent agency.

## **Minus Tides**

Water launching shells adjacent our city dock presents added risks during minus tides.. Below -.5 feet and more so below -1 foot, sufficiently soft, mucky sediment at the shore line poses a stability hazard and risk of a) losing one’s balance – which shifts heavy loads to one’s colleagues, b) dropping shells, and c) losing one’s shoes! In these conditions, tracking sediment into the shell or launch is unavoidable and accelerates wear of hull and seat/seat track components.

### **BIR Policy:**

In the adult programs, no rowing is allowed if the tide will be below -.5 feet at launch or landing. In the junior programs, no rowing is allowed if the tide will be below -1 foot at launch or landing. Land training and/or shell maintenance are alternatives when minus tides impact scheduled practices.

When boats are launched during low tides, extra care should be taken in rinsing feet/shoes off before stepping into shells.

## Appendix 2-F: Eagle Harbor Safe Haul Out Locations and Addresses

Three safe haul-out sites are shown with red. The Strawberry and Waterfront Parks safe haul outs (on the north shore of Eagle Harbor) are more readily accessible to emergency response teams than Pritchard Park (on the south shore). If you must land at Pritchard Park, be mindful and avoid the submerged pylons nearer Bill Point. (See hazards marked on the Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern Map. Appendix 2-G)

The map also gives address numbers at the ends of many docks and piers around the harbor. Note most of those docks are difficult to safely access in our shells and are generally not workable landing sites.

A copy of this map is in each life jacket bag.



## Appendix 2-G: Eagle Harbor Traffic Pattern/Policy

Adhering to a consistent set of traffic patterns helps to ensure the safety of rowers, shells, and launches, and other boaters. An aerial photo of the Eagle Harbor traffic pattern posted in the boathouse is annotated with traffic patterns and certain hazards to rowing. That annotated aerial photo is provided at the end of this appendix and is also posted in higher resolution on the [BIR website](#) and in iCrew sessions as @boathouse. Become familiar with this resource and with the names and locations of harbor and shoreside landmarks shown on it and the Safe Haul Out map.

1. While exceptions are frequently authorized by coaches, know that navigation rules require boats to always “stay to starboard.” This means stay to the right if you are facing forward (coxing or driving a launch), to the left if you are facing backward in a “blind” boat (1x, 2x, 4x-).
  - All traffic patterns are counter-clockwise.
2. Heading *west* from Bill Point/Pritchard Park:
  - a. Take a straight line from Bill Point to the Washington State Ferry maintenance yard.
  - b. Proceed through the Middle Harbor in the North Channel, staying to starboard. Watch out for traffic coming out of the Waterfront Park boat launch area, along all slips from the Queen City Yacht Club outpost past Winslow Wharf Marina, and from private slips adjacent to The Harbor House Pub.
  - c. Stay close to shore as you turn to starboard into the Inner Harbor at Stetson Point being considerate of shoal water that can develop there at low tide. Head directly toward the base of the docks at the Sunday Cove condominiums until clear of the two white round buoys, then turn to port as you pass the end of Sunday Cove docks and the Strawberry Plant pencil buoy into the Aquatic Conservancy.
  - d. Stay to starboard, leaving room for west-bound traffic, as you proceed into the Aquatic Conservancy.
  - e. Let the height of tide dictate how close your course is to shore. If you go to the head of the harbor, be cognizant of sand bars approaching 231 Gowan Place, a pylon there, and several pylons in a north-south line along the south shore.
3. Heading *east* from the head of the harbor:
  - a. Head along the south shore.
  - b. Hug the corner as you turn to starboard into the Inner Harbor but avoid the docks close aboard.
  - c. Stay on the south (right hand) side of the waterway south of the round white buoy that usually holds a trimaran and around two white buoy that rarely hold boats.
  - d. At Stetson Point east bound, three options are available – CONSULT YOUR COACH: north channel (stay on south side), center channel through the Dave Ullin Open Water Marina, and south channel. The latter two paths can be very difficult to navigate due to the presence of mooring buoys and/or moored or anchored boats.
  - e. After passing along the three marinas on the south shore, well south of the Washington State Ferry maintenance yard, take a straight line to Bill Point. You will pass two white pencil buoys (Dewey and Louie) that define an east-west line off-shore of Pritchard Park.



## **Appendix 2-H: Bill Point – Pritchard Park to Blakely Harbor Traffic Pattern/Policy**

Leaving the protected water of Eagle Harbor poses additional risks including swells and waves from passing vessels, reflected waves from the metal seawall at Bill Point, and the potential for weather changes affecting rowing conditions more dramatically than they might within Eagle Harbor. Boats operate in Puget Sound at high speed and produce a substantial wake. Swells can strain shells unless negotiated properly. Standing waves and steeper boat/ship waves can potentially flip shells. Neither Blakely Harbor nor passage along Rockaway Beach offer address-marked docks available that can serve as landmarks for directing emergency responders in case of emergencies, but homes line the entire route and provide accessibility for emergency help. The passage to Blakely Harbor does provide nearly 2.5 kilometers of obstacle-free rowing.

Any BIR-owned shells must be accompanied by a launch or launches on this route. Launch operators should use only Stillwater launches (Labrador and Retriever) to accompany rowers on this route. Our Stillwater launches have been demonstrated to hold 11 adults, while our Wintech launches hold just 7-8. If more than one 8+ is involved, consideration should be given to matching the number of launches to the number of rowers from an emergency recovery perspective.

1. Weather is a substantial consideration when deciding to row outside of Eagle Harbor. The wind must be nearly calm as should be the near-term forecast, and the seas must be virtually flat. Fetch is long enough north and south that any developing breeze except westerly can quickly turn a decent row into a rough row.
2. Should any rower, coxswain, or the coach have concerns about starting south or, once committed, to continue, the entourage should either not leave Eagle Harbor or, having done so, should return to those protected waters.
3. From Bill Point, proceed south along Rockaway Beach staying reasonably close to shore. Be alert for the rare possibility of standing waves (reflections of west-bound waves interfering with in-bound waves) adjacent to the metal seawall. Also, two promontories extend from the shoreline creating grounding danger at low tide. The first is mid-way between Bill Point and the mouth of Blakely Harbor and the second is at the north entry point to Blakely harbor. It is advisable to pick a landmark southbound midway between Blakely Rocks and the harbor mouth and northbound between Wing Point and Bill Point.
4. A good route in Blakely Harbor is to circumnavigate the moored/anchored boats

## **Appendix 2-I: Eagle Harbor Regatta Checklist**

### **Course/warmup safety launch**

Place marker buoys to delineate warmup, start, and finish lines as required.

Regattas will not be scheduled if the tide during the event is to be lower than negative 1 foot.

### **Beach Master**

Race schedule

Bow Numbers

Marine Band Radio

Slings/lowboys

Clipboard

Wrench and parts

Tide schedule

Plastic cover for clipboard

### **Finish Line Judges - one with horn, one with flag**

Blue ocean megaphone

Clip board

Motorola radio

Flag

Air horn

Race schedule with lineups

Cell phone

Plastic cover for clip board

Pens to record

### **Referee Launch**

Clipboard

Stop watch

Schedule

Motorola radio (walkie-talkie)

Marine band radio (VHF)

Cell phone

Plastic cover for clip board

### **Every Coaching Launch**

Schedule

Marine band radio

Split watch

Motorola radio (walkie-talkie)



# Section 3: Incidents, Emergencies – Procedures and Reporting Process

## Incident/Emergency Procedures

Essential to a smoother outcome in any incident/emergency is having willing and prepared leadership at the scene regardless of where it happens involving BIR members - Eagle Harbor, in or around the boathouse, or enroute to or at a regatta. Someone must show courage and take charge and guide the incident / emergency actions that follow tailored to the specific nature of the casualty. On water, this will be the Launch Operator or coach present or the coxswain in cases where a shell is involved. But it may also be any BIR member willing to take a lead role.

In every case, incident / emergency response involves four steps:

- 1) recognition of the problem and determination of the Person In Charge (PIC),
- 2) execution of safety actions (PIC) appropriate to the nature of the incident,
- 3) reporting via iCrew Incident Report and if warranted, an iCrew Damage Report
- 4) a post-mortem analysis of the incident to identify corrective actions

Five types of incident / emergency may occur when rowing: **man overboard** (includes capsizing), **collision, grounding, mechanical failures**, and **medical**. Responsive actions for these five categories of incidents/ emergencies follow.

Cards listing the four Incident/Emergency Procedure steps and emergency contact information are maintained by the Safety Committee on each BIR launch.

### A. Man overboard/capsizing:

1. If a boat capsizes or a rower falls overboard:
  - a. Coxswain/rowers, do a head count and attempt to calm each other. **STAY WITH THE BOAT**. Use the buoyant ends of the shell to get the body's core out of the water.
  - b. If a Safety Launch is available, coxswain and rowers work together with the launch operator to get people out of the water as quickly and carefully as possible. Those still in the water must **STAY WITH THE BOAT**. Use buoyant ends of the shell to get the body core out of the water. The launch operator will dispense life jackets while maneuvering the launch to recover people in the water, dispense emergency blankets once aboard, and then get the rowers/coxswain ashore to dry off and warm up. Anticipate hypothermia and be prepared to treat it. There is a life jacket bag in the Rowing Center that contains nine sets of warm clothing, top and bottom, for such instances.
  - c. If a Safety Launch is not available, **STAY WITH THE BOAT**. Only attempt to right the boat, re-board it, and continue rowing or row ashore if the shell is a single or double and if cold weather conditions do not exist. If it's not possible to right and reboard a smaller boat after two attempts or if cold weather conditions prevail, use it as a float/surfboard, and attempt to paddle toward nearest shallow water and seek means to dry off and get warm. Anticipate hypothermia and be prepared to treat it. There is a life jacket bag in the Rowing Center that contains nine sets of warm clothing, top and bottom, for such instances.
2. If a rower is ejected from their seat (this only occurs if a shell is traveling at high speed):
  - a. Rower: attempt to stay calm. Try to maneuver clear of passing riggers and skag.



- b. Coxswain: your response depends in part on whether the man overboard occurs during a practice, a head race, or a sprint race.
  - i. If man overboard occurs during a practice and it is safe to do so, yell “Way enough!” and yell for launch operator assistance to recover the person. If unsafe to stop immediately, maneuver the boat out of traffic and seek to recover the person or, if a safety launch is nearby, yell for launch operator assistance.
  - ii. If man overboard occurs during a head race and it is safe to do so, yell “Way enough! Hold water!” Direct a portion of rowers to set the boat and avail others to assist recovery of the person. If unsafe to stop immediately, maneuver the boat out of traffic and seek to recover the person or, if a safety launch is nearby, yell for launch operator assistance.
  - iii. If man overboard occurs during a sprint race (launches available behind the racing boats), yell for a launch operator to recover the person. If not responsive or immediately available, stop the boat and call attention to the launch operator to recover the person.
- c. The launch operator will maneuver the launch to retrieve the person in the water, provide an emergency blanket, and get the person to shore as fast as possible. Anticipate hypothermia and be prepared to treat it. There is a life jacket bag in the Rowing Center that contains nine sets of warm clothing, top and bottom, for such instances.

## **B. Collision:**

Collisions can occur with other shells, other boats, and fixed or drifting obstacles in the water. Collisions can result in capsizing, particularly with smaller shells. Collisions can result in minor to serious injury and minor to serious equipment damage. In the event of a collision, personal safety comes before equipment safety.

1. Coxswains/rowers: If appropriate (almost always), stop the boat. Focus on personal injury first by requesting each rower/coxswain report. Hail a launch operator for assistance if available. Assess damage to the boat and determine if it can be safely returned ashore.
2. The launch operator will render aid to the injured person/people, if available, including the possibility of taking them aboard the launch and/or directing the shell be taken directly to shore or launching area.
3. In the absence of a Safety Launch, the coxswain/rowers will render assistance to the injured and then seek to return the shell to shore if appropriate or continue the race. Seek assistance once ashore as necessary.
4. If equipment damage occurs, follow the [Damage Reporting Process](#).

## **C. Grounding:**

Minor grounding can occur when launching or landing. Groundings underway can result in capsizing, particularly with smaller shells. Groundings rarely result in personal injury but can result

in minor to serious equipment damage. In the event of a grounding, personal safety remains a priority, but early attention to minimizing equipment damage is important.

1. Coxswains/rowers: Stop the boat. Assess water depth, the status of hull integrity, the nature of the grounding, and how best to un-ground the boat or prevent it from sinking or subject it to further damage. Unload only the number of people needed to float the boat safely with minimal damage.
2. Launch Operator: render assistance taking care not to ground the launch.
3. If equipment damage occurs, follow the [Damage Reporting Process](#).

## **D. Mechanical failure:**

Shells can suffer rigging, seat, and foot stretcher failures that make normal operation of the boat infeasible. Shells can also suffer hull damage from waves that can affect hull integrity. Shells can also suffer damage in the boathouse and during transportation to/from the water and to/from trailers. Rowers: identify the failure to the coxswain and jointly assess the resolution. If a Launch Operator is present, the coxswain may seek recommendations. Even with minor mechanical failures, serious thought should be given to carefully returning the boat ashore for repair to avoid compounding damage.

1. If hull integrity is breached, follow the procedure for a capsized boat if appropriate.
2. If repairs cannot be made during the rowing session in progress, follow the Damage Reporting Process. Incident reporting is not required for normal wear of equipment.

## **E. Medical:**

This section addresses serious medical emergencies such as heart attack/stroke/seizure and may be applied to the vast majority of emergencies that might be expected around or within the boathouse or enroute to/from or at a rowing regatta involving BIR members.

1. Afflicted rower or person: make the emergency known to other rowers or people nearby and to the coxswain if present. A PIC should step up.
2. Coxswain: immediately stop the boat and hail launch operator assistance.
3. Launch Operator or PIC: will assess the situation and call 911 and direct emergency responders to the nearest feasible dock or beach or other location at which to meet either the shell or the launch or the affected person. Quickly determine which mode of conveyance is the safest and fastest and commit to it. The Safety Launch will most often be the fastest way to get the afflicted person ashore. Look for dock-posted house numbers on the water to help EMS personnel find you.
4. If possible, transfer the afflicted person to the launch using an emergency rescue strap or to the nearest emergency clinic if ashore. A second rower from the affected boat (assuming a 4+ or 8+) should board the launch with the victim to either administer CPR or otherwise stabilize the victim and keep them warm. Note that a 4+ becomes a 2+ (coxed pair) for remaining rowers.

5. If no Safety Launch is present, the coxswain will call 911 (if possible) and direct the boat at best speed to the nearest emergency take out point (see [Map](#), Appendix 2-F) or dock. Other rowers will go ashore to reach and direct emergency responders as fast as possible.

## Incident Reporting Process

The incident report process involves four steps:

- (1) The reporting person: Coach, Launch Operator, PIC, or coxswain will file an incident report in iCrew using [this link](https://www.icrew.club/incident) (<https://www.icrew.club/incident>) **within 4 hours** of the incident, completing as much of the report as practicable.
- (2) For information not supplied, the Safety Committee will contact the PIC to complete remaining sections as part of step 4.
- (3) If the incident is serious, the Safety Committee will consult with the BIR Executive Committee to determine communication needs for the BIR community and Bainbridge Island Community as appropriate. **The goal for this communication is to be transmitted within 48 hours.**
- (4) The Safety Committee will ensure the incident report is completed and review and analyze it to determine root and secondary causes. The committee will prepare and submit to the Board of Directors a report that delineates, among other things, follow-up actions, and close (electronically file) the report. To identify the root and secondary causes, ask, for each "initial" cause stated, "why?" If the answer remains the same, the actual root cause has been identified.

## Damage Reporting Process

When an incident results in damage to equipment, both an incident report and a damage report is required. The [iCrew Equipment Damage Report](#) alerts key people to facilitate repairs, can apprise coaches that equipment may not be available, and aids in recordkeeping.

Damage that occurs or is discovered needs to be brought to the coach's attention. If it cannot be fixed immediately, the launch operator or coach will flag the shell at the bow ball and/or the site of damage with pink ribbon. If the issue prevents safe rowing, they must attach a pink ribbon to the bow ball to alert teams not to use the shell until it is repaired. The coach will also submit a damage report in iCrew. The coach will note in iCrew if the damage is "major." This will indicate that the shell is un-rowable in the [iCrew list of available shells](#).