

Singapore Rowing Association

WATER SAFETY CODE

1. Responsibilities of Association and its Affiliated Clubs

1.1 Every club should have at least one member who is a registered SRA Safety Officer. It shall be the duty of a Club Safety Officer to ensure that SRA Water Safety Code is implemented by all members of the club.

1.2 Clubs shall display prominently the SRA Water Safety Code and any visual aids on water safety, life saving or resuscitation procedure as may be provided by the SRA, or by other organisations with the approval of SRA.

1.3 Club shall display the SRA Regulations for Rowing at each venue that is used by its members for rowing.

1.4 A list of vital telephone numbers referable to water safety shall be displayed prominently in rowing centre, to include:

Fire/Ambulance	995
Police	999

If there is no telephone readily available at the Rowing Centre, clear directions of the nearest available telephone must also be displayed.

1.5 Safety and first aid equipment shall be readily available in the Clubhouse/Rowing Centre, to include:

First Aid Chest (To be fully stocked and regularly checked)
Life rings/Buoys and lines

1.6 Clubs shall ensure that all equipment used for rowing and coaching is safe equipment.

1.7 Clubs shall ensure that all members who use rowing equipment hold valid SRA Authorised Rower Cards issued by SRA and that they have passed the SRA Water Safety Test.

1.8 Clubs shall provide adequate instruction in watermanship and rowing technique, and adequate supervision by coaches and experienced rowers, to ensure that no-one boating from the club house/centre puts themselves at risk when on the water. This applies particularly to single scullers and to juniors. Inexperienced coxswains should only be allowed out in boats with an experienced oarsman rowing in the crew and in charge of it.

1.9 Clubs should treat the coaching of coxswains and their education in watermanship and good safety procedures as being more important, from a safety aspect, than coaching oarsman and scullers.

1.10 Clubs should take active steps to encourage members to become fully conversant with life-saving and resuscitation procedure (CPR), by attending training courses and other appropriate means. In particular it is highly desirable that the Club Safety Officer and all regular Club Coaches should be so trained.

1.11 All cases of accident or mishap must be reported to SRA immediately.

2. Safe Rowing Equipment

Rowing equipment should be maintained in good order to avoid user being put in danger on the water. Particularly attention should be paid to the following points:

- 2.1 So far as practicable, boats and equipment should be stored in well-lit premises in such a way that damage to boats and to people is avoided on removal and return.
- 2.2 When a boat is placed on the water, the crew or sculler should check that it is in safe condition and that the fittings are in good order:
 - a) check for leaks
 - b) check that boat decks are free of holes so that maximum buoyancy will be maintained if the boat sinks or capsizes.
 - c) check that corks or bulkhead seals are in position before leaving the store (especially important with boats built of non-buoyant material such as aluminum or plastic: such boats may need supplementary buoyancy):
 - d) check that riggers are securely attached and that moving parts (swivels, sliding seats, stretchers) are in working order:
 - e) Coxwains and steersmen must always check that rudderlines, steering gear, rudders and fins are in working order.
 - f) Check that oars and sculls are in good condition, particularly that the button is firm and the shaft of the blade free from damage.
- 2.3 Every boat must at all times carry firmly attached to its bows a white ball of not less than 4cm diameter, made of rubber or material of similar consistency.
- 2.4 Where boats are fitted with shoes, these should be of the 'quick release' type. Make sure that 'quick release' mechanism work properly and give an immediate release when strain is put upon them. Make sure that laces are properly in position and check that heel restraints are fitted and effective. If a "velcro" grip has become worn, do not use leather lacing to hold down quick release shoes - doing so will make them a trap for the rower if the boat capsizes. Fit a new "velcro" grip at once. Novice should not go out in boats with fitted shoes.
- 2.5 If rough water is likely during an outing. It is recommended that a bailer and /or a sponge is carried in the boat.
- 2.6 At the end of every outing, remove the corks or bulkhead seats and store them with the boat.
- 2.7 In order to ensure that equipment remains safe, a clear procedure should be set up in every club/rowing centre whereby damage to equipment or failure in a boat is notified as soon as possible to a responsible club official, and the defect repaired before the equipment required again. It is recommended that damaged equipment should be clearly marked so that anyone intending to use the equipment is made aware of the damage.
- 2.8 Any damage to equipment belonging to SRA must be notified to SRA immediately.
- 2.9 Clubs and National Coaches are recommended to organise monthly boat maintenance sessions when the active members and national athletes will clean and check all the boats they use. Clean equipment is far more likely to be safe equipment and rowers who are made personally responsible for the condition of the boats they use are far more likely to notice and deal with wear and tear to equipment before it becomes potentially dangerous.

3. Oarsmen and Scullers

- 3.1 All oarsmen and scullers shall satisfy the Club Safety Officer or SRA Safety Officer that they are in good health and can swim a minimum of 50 metres in light clothing.
- 3.2 All oarsmen and sculler shall make themselves fully acquainted with SRA Water Safety Code displayed in their club/venue and follow it all times.
- 3.3 No outing shall take place unless a SRA Safety Officer or a Coach is present and that the Safety Officer/Coach is aware of the duration. Ideally a whiteboard should be provided so such information may be recorded when no-one is available.
- 3.4 All active members should learn and practice capsizes and accident drills. It is very desirable that they also learn life-saving and resuscitation procedure(CPR) .
- 3.5 Every time a rower take to the water, he should check that the condition of his boat and equip-ment is safe and follow correct club procedure if damage occurs during the outing.
- 3.6 Active members should be thought the correct way to remove and replace boats on the boat racks, and the correct way to launch, embark and disembark, so that the risk of damage and capsizing is reduced. All active members should continue to use correct procedure every time they have an outing. Boats should be launched and brought back to shore in accordance to the rowing centre practice.
- 3.7 Members starting to learn to row should not go on the water without a coach or more experie-nced oarsmen present.
- 3.8 Although the coxswain of a crew has responsibility by his acts for the safety of that crew, coxes by reason of youth or inexperience are often not in overall charge of the boat. Except where a coxswain is mature and thoroughly experienced, it is essential that an experienced member of the crew is in charge and that member is constantly aware of what is happen-ing outside the boat to ensure that no accident occurs.
- 3.9 Single scullers (apart from beginners who are on the water under supervision) are solely and fully responsible for their own safety, and must follow the appropriate procedure laid down elsewhere.

4. Coxes

- 4.1 Every coxswain shall satisfy the Club Safety Officer/SRA Safety Officer that he is in good health and can swim 50 metres in light clothing.
N.B. This must be regarded as absolute minimum.
- 4.2 No-one is subject to epileptic fits or blackouts should cox the boat. In case of doubt, medical advise must be obtained.
- 4.3 All coxswains should wear a life jacket of approved type at all times when on the water.
- 4.4 Coxswains should always dress suitably for prevailing conditions. Avoid bulky and heavy clothing.

- 4.5 Coxswains often carry voice projection equipment or a radio link with the coach. In racing a coxswain may have to carry deadweight. These items are to be attached to the boat and never to the coxswain. Any link to the coxswain must be fitted with a quick release device.
- 4.6 Coxswains must learn the simple commands for boat control, both on and off the water, so that they use them correctly, clearly and instinctively. They must also know and understand basic commands used by other water users- e.g. port and starboard.
- 4.7 Coxswains must understand and carry out all safety procedure and regulations applicable to the water they use, especially those relating to right of way, power boats, sailing craft, etc.
- Understand and observe local navigation rules of river or water;
 - On unfamiliar water, find out local regulations and practices, and the existence of any particular hazard, before going out on the water;
 - Always recognise and respect the rights and needs of other water users, especially anglers: and show them the consideration and courtesy you expect them to show you;
 - Watch out for swimmers at all times. At best only a head will be visible, and a blow from a blade can kill. If in any doubt, stop your boat.
- 4.8 Coxswains must know and ensure they crew carry out correct procedure for removing and replacing the boats on racks, and for launching, embarking and disembarking; and especially the boats are launched and brought back in to shore in accordance with local practice.
- 4.9 Before every outing, the coxswain must make sure the rudder lines are in good condition and working fully and correctly, and that rudder and fin are in good order.
- 4.10 Maneuvering racing boats is difficult because of their length. Coxswains are strongly recommended to spend their time in play boats and sculling boats to learn basic principles of manoeuvring craft; in particular:
- Learn to make full use of tide or stream when turning a boat;
 - Be aware that when a boat stops or 'easies' it is carried along by stream or tide. Never 'easy' just upstream of an obstacle such as a bridge or mooring. In particular when turning a boat, make sure that it well away from obstacles and preferably downstream of them;
 - On tidal water be constantly aware of the state of the tide, its effect on your craft and the danger of collision with others. Particularly when the tide is changing.
 - Be aware of the effect on the stream from weirs, sluices and water inlets and outlets. Watch out for such hazard and avoid them.
- 4.11 Coxswains must be aware of danger from exceptional weather conditions or from changes in condition during an outing. Some examples are;
- Strong winds particularly where wind and tide/stream are in conflict;
 - On tidal water, possibility of conditions worsening if there is a strong wind and the tide changes during the outing.
 - The need to stay further out from a lee shore in strong wind;
 - The need to make ample allowance for the speed of the current when there is increase water flow.
- The coxswains must recognise that an outing may have to be altered, postponed or even abandoned in the interest of safety because of adverse weather conditions.
- 4.12 All coxswains shall learn capsize and accident drills. It is also very desirable that they learn life-saving and resuscitation procedures.

5. Steersmen

Steersmen have a special responsibility for the safety of their crews. Not only must they observe the procedures for oarsmen but much of Section 4 also applies to them. And because the steersman is concentrating on his own rowing or sculling, and is tiring physically as the outing proceeds, he is more likely to overlook safety procedure than the coxswain who is not using physical effort, and has the added advantage of facing the direction the boat is traveling.

- 5.1 Steersmen should look ahead once in every 10 strokes through-out the outing, irrespective of work of the crew is doing. However sure you are that the water ahead is clear, it is easy to miss seeing a partly submerged obstacle, alone swimmer or cleaning workers on other or other craft making unexpected changes in direction.
- 5.2 Before leaving the shore for an outing check that the steering gear is in good condition and working fully and correctly.
- 5.3 The following paragraphs of Section 4 apply equally to steersmen:
2,6,7,8, and 10

6. Capsize & Accident Drill

By their design, racing boats when sat properly will not capsize. However, the smaller the boat, the more easily it may capsize: and in rough conditions or when the accident occurs, even an eight can capsize. Panic is the greatest danger, and practicing the drill to be followed when the boat capsize is the great help in controlling panic, and in disciplining rowers who find themselves in an emergency into simple procedures which provide them with the maximum protection.

- 6.1 All rowers should take part in organised and controlled capsize practices: when they have done this several times, they will know just what to expect when their boat capsize accidentally. Even the most experienced oarsmen who has been lucky enough never to have fallen in may have lose his self-control if his boat should capsize.
- 6.2 The capsize drill should be carried out in a suitable venue using single scull. It should not be carried out unless SRA Safety Instructor is present.
 - a) Get into bat and scull into deep water.
 - b) Push one scull out parallel to boat at finish
 - c) Roll into space left by scull. Put head under water.
 - d) Release feet,keeping knees straight
 - e) Surface alongside boat and hold on to boat
 - f) Turn boat right way up by pushing down on nearside rigger and pulling on far side rigger. Watch top scull as boat turn over.
 - g) Check sculls are not jammed.
 - h) Place the sculls across position on the boat deck.
 - i) Swim to bow of boat maintaining contact with boat.
 - j) Grip bows of boat in both hands above chest and in front of chin (as in life saving: two handed head carry)
 - k) Tow boat to landing point or shore.Land and empty boat of water. Get back into boat.
- 6.3 If the boat begin to fill with water, row it to the bank or into shallow water, take out the blades and empty it out.

- 6.4 If the boat fill with water so that it begin to sink before you can get to the shore, get out of it carefully into the water, hold on to the boat and tow it to the shore. The weight of the crew in a waterlogged boat will probably cause it serious damage, whereas with the crew out of it, the boat will continue to float at water level and provide the crew with buoyancy whilst they tow it to safety.
- 6.5 If you capsize, the only situation in which you should let go of you boat and swim to shore is if the stream or tide are carrying it onto hazard, such as mooring or a weirs, too fast for you to row to the shore and you are certain that you can swim to safety. If you are likely unable to swim to the shore, your chances of survival are better if you continue holding onto the boat.
- 6.6 If his boat capsizes, the coxswain must resist panic and free himself immediately from all loose equipment (rudder lines, microphone cable, clogs etc) get out of the boat and hold onto a boat once he is free.
- 6.7 When a boat capsizes, a coxswain and /or senior member of the crew should take control of the situation and ensure that all crew carry out capsize drill correctly.
- 6.8 If the rower has lost consciousness, support him in the water until a rescue team arrives, or help him to the bank as soon as possible if no rescue craft is at hand. If necessary resuscitation should be applied immediately. An ambulance should be summoned as quick as possible.
- 6.9 The water you row is rarely free from pollution. If your boat capsize, try to keep your mouth closed and avoid swallowing water, If you do swallow water, obtain medical advise without delay, even you do not feel unwell.

7. Coaches

- 7.1 A coaches not only concerned to teach his crews how to row better or faster, he is also responsible for their safety. Coaches using launches must also be aware at all times of other water user. He must ensure that neither their coaching launches nor their crews place anyone else using the water in difficulty or danger. He should always be alert to give help to other users who may be in danger .
- 7.2 A coach shall ensure that every rowers he coaches follows the appropriate safety procedures at all times. He should be aware of the SRA Safety Code (Section 1.5).Section 4.11 apply equally to coaches.
- 7.3 The coaches shall ascertain the training traffic rules and competitions traffic rules for rowers. He should inform the rowers, at regatta, any special traffic rules to be observed, and ensure his crews fully understand them.
- 7.4 Every coach should learn life-saving and First-aid.
- 7.5 Coaches using launches, even where there are not themselves driving, are responsible for ensuring the Section 8 of this Safety Code is fully observed.
- 7.6 Coaches should not allowed someone they coaching to row alone.

8. Coaching Launches and Safety Boats

It is essential that operators are competent as they have to control their own launch, pay attention to the crew they are coaching and be aware of other water users all at the same time.

- 8.1 All Safety launches shall carry the following safety equipment:
- a) bailer, a pump and spare valve for inflatable.
 - b) klaxon horn or warning device with the range of at least 200m.
 - c) Grab lines at least 30 metres with a large knot tied in one end to assist throwing.
 - d) Life Buoys
 - e) Basic first aid kit
 - f) knife
 - g) paddle
 - h) Life jackets for all crews on board.

9. Safety at Regatta

- 9.1 All regatta shall appoint a qualified SRA Safety Officer as Safety Officer of the day. Where duty shall be to ensure that the SRA Water Safety Code is fully implemented.
- 9.2 No regatta shall take place without the approval of SRA and permission from PUB.
- 9.3 All regatta shall appoint a First Aid Officer to ensure that adequate first aid facilities are available and medical facilities (e.g. Ambulance, Medic and Doctor) are available.
- 9.4 Training and competition traffic rules to be displayed at Venue or at Departure Pontoon.
- 9.5 Umpires launches shall carry full safety equipment
- 9.6 All Officials shall be informed of safety and accident procedures.

10 Training

SRA shall at all times conducting Water Safety Training for its members.

11 Traffic Rules & Buoys

At all times to be maintain by SRA. The Traffic Charts to be drawn and placed at SRA boathouse. All rowers need to understand the Rules carefully.

This Water Safety Code has been drawn up in order to promote safe practices in rowing. Singapore Rowing Association accepts no responsibility for any accidents which arise in spite of adherence to this code of practice. For further information please contact:

The Safety Officer
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