

# **Victoria Rowing Society**

## **Safety Manual**

**Last Updated May 2021**

**(Preamble context paragraph goes here - waiting on NC)**

All athletes and coaches and safety launch drivers are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Victoria Rowing Society (VRS) Safety Code and the Transport Canada regulations for boating, particularly as they apply to rowing.

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

- All rowing shells must be off the water by posted sunset.
- From December 1-January 31
  - No rowing before 7:00 am
- From February 1-November 30
  - No rowing before posted sunrise or 5:45 am (whichever comes first)

**SIGN OUT LOGS**

- By federal law, all rowers must log in and out each time they launch
- Logs must contain
  - Login the time of launch
  - Type of rowing shell (e.g., 2-, 2x etc.)
  - Name of bow person or coxswain. All rowers listed for GYRS and VCRC
  - Logout the time of return to dock
- *Separate log-books are maintained for UVIC, RCA, VCRC, GYRS rowers*

**ATHLETE PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS**

- All athletes participating in a program longer than 8 weeks in duration will:
  - Attend a session reviewing the VRS Safety Code at the start of their season/program each year;
  - Sign a log (kept by the Club Safety Officer) acknowledging that they have reviewed and will abide by the VRS Safety Code.
  - Confirm on water safety competency.
  - Complete a VRS safety competency quiz
- All athletes will be made aware that they will never be required to row against their better judgement should weather conditions be questionable.
- Athletes assume the responsibility to let their coach know if they are uncomfortable launching.
- All athletes will be educated and respect the rights of other lake users and be aware of and remain courteous to other users at all times.
- Athletes will be educated that for safety reasons, they are responsible for following a coach's instructions, particularly with regard to emergency situations, flow pattern and rowing as a group.

**Water Safety Competencies**

For safety in the event that a boat capsizes or swamps, rowers must have enough water safety skills to allow them to remain calm and afloat in the water while they await rescue, and to swim a short distance to a safety launch if necessary.

All participants in VRS programs will confirm competency in the above skills prior to participating in the VRS programs.

The following are accepted as confirmation of competency:

- 1) a signed waiver affirming competency or
- 2) completion of a SWIM TEST that includes:
  - swimming 10m
  - treading water for 2 minutes
  - submersion in water and returning to the surface
  - donning a PFD while in the water.
- 3) confirmation of bronze medallion swimming certification

Rowers who cannot confirm competency in the minimum water safety skill may row if they are accompanied by a safety launch that remains in close proximity at all times. In groups where there are one or more athletes who cannot confirm competency in the minimum water safety skills, the safety launch to athlete ratio will be reduced to 1:4.

Athletes with a disability are responsible for being aware of specific actions they need to take in order to maintain their safety in the water.

### ***Medical Requirements***

All athletes (including coxswains) and coaches are required to meet the medical requirements of their club in order to participate in on-water activities.

### **CREW SUPERVISION STANDARDS**

Standards for safety launches on water for supervised rows:

- No rowing shell leave the dock until a safety launch is at the dock, ready to go.
  - Defined as a launch that has been started, engine warm.
- At least one safety launch will remain on the water or ready to respond at the dock until all crews are off the water.

Minors (those under 19 years of age) *and* those individuals who do not meet their club's competency standard for rowing unsupervised:

- must be supervised by a program coach
- must be supported by a properly equipped and staffed safety launch
- may not proceed onto the water without such supervision.

Greater Victoria Youth Rowing Society members are all minors and must thus be supervised.

Rowing Canada *Aviron* athletes are assumed to be competent to row unsupervised.

University of Victoria athletes who started rowing for the first time in the current calendar year may not launch unsupervised.

Victoria City Rowing Club

- Juniors must be supervised
- Adults in registered programming must be supervised

- Adults who wish to use VCRC equipment to row unsupervised must pass a competency evaluation administered by any person deemed appropriate by VCRC club manager or lead program coach

### SAFETY LAUNCH/ATHLETE RATIOS

- 1:8 (excluding coxswains) for juniors when 1-2 safety launches are on the water
- 1:12 (excluding coxswains) for juniors when 3 or more safety launches are on the water
- 1:18 (excluding coxswains) for competent adults during supervised rows

### PROXIMITY TO BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN SAFETY LAUNCH AND ATHLETES

The proximity between a safety launch and an athlete that is considered adequate is subject to interpretation and will depend on weather and water conditions.

- At a minimum, safety launches and supervised athletes must stay in visual contact.
- In general, a safety launch should be able to commence responding to an athlete in distress within 1 minute.
- Closer proximity is expected under adverse conditions (**low visibility**, rough water, cold weather) and with less experienced rowers.
- **Low visibility** - any time where you cannot see more than 1000m from your current location
- Athletes are encouraged to be aware of where the nearest safety launch is at all times (regardless of whether it is the launch assigned to supervise them).
- Any safety launch on the water is expected to assist an athlete in distress if they are the launch in the best position to do so.

### COLD WATER REGULATIONS

- Between Nov 15 and March 1 every year VRS will enter into Cold Water Regulations. These dates are a guideline on historical cold-water periods and can be extended or condensed at the discretion of the VRS Safety Committee.
- During cold water periods it is **strongly recommended** that rowers do not go out on the lake without another boat accompanying them (coach boat or athlete).
- Updates to the cold-water regulations will be posted on the bulletin board

### STANDARDS FOR OPERATING A SAFETY LAUNCH

Anyone operating a safety launch on behalf of the VRS or one its member clubs must:

- receive comprehensive instruction in VRS Safety Code before going on the water for the first time;
- attend a session reviewing the VRS Safety Code and VRS Operations at the start of their season/program each year;
- sign a log (kept by the Club Safety Officer) acknowledging that they have reviewed and will abide by the VRS Safety Code
- Head Coaches for each program (as determined by each Club) are required to have current certification in Standard First Aid with CPR-C and AED.
- carry a valid Pleasure Craft Operators License or other equivalent certification;
- wear a PFD, a floater suit is considered a PFD
- wear a kill cord at all times while in the safety launch
- have a working knowledge of the relevant Transport Canada marine regulations
  - *Collision Regulations*
  - *Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations*

- *Small Vessel Regulations* as summarised in the Safe Boating Guide (available on the Transport Canada website);
- be competent to operate a safety launch safely;
- be instructed in how to perform a water rescue;
- be instructed in how to respond to on-water emergencies
- have a working knowledge of Transport Canada marine regulations, as summarised in the Safe Boating Guide;
- check the marine weather report before going out on the water;
- determine whether it is safe for athletes under their supervision to go out on the water;
- respond to athletes in distress and on water emergencies;
- direct supervised athletes while they are on the water;
- check their safety launch before going on the water to ensure it has all the required safety equipment (and that the safety equipment is in working order).

### **SAFETY STANDARDS FOR SAFETY LAUNCHES**

- Safety launches must carry:
  - PFDs of appropriate size and type for each rower being supervised and each person in the safety launch (up to 12)
  - PFDs for those under 16 years of age must be inherently buoyant (i.e., not an inflatable type).
  - Buoyant heaving line not less than 15 m in length
  - sound signalling device
  - watertight flashlight or 3 Canadian-approved flares of Type A, B or C
  - paddle
  - bailer or pump
  - VHF radio or cell phone for communicating in the event of an emergency
  - 9 space blankets for emergencies
- Safety launches must display:
  - The Canadian capacity limits
  - Launches with an engine 10hp or more must display a valid Pleasure Craft license (issued by Transport Canada)
  - Licence and Registration of the craft
- Safety launches out before sunrise, after sunset or in conditions of restricted visibility must display
  - All around white light
  - Sidelights (port red, starboard green). Sidelights may be combined in one lantern carried on the fore and aft centreline of the vessel
- It is assumed that all radios are set to the same channel (69 for daily safety and 72 for umpires at regattas) in order to ensure safety for all VRS users on Elk Lake.
- When safety launches push off the dock, it is good practice to do a “radio check”.
- It is generally accepted that programs do radio checks within their coaching staff to ensure that they have contact with their colleagues.
- If a “radio check” is unanswered by a member of the VRS user group launching, it is appreciated if someone from the other user group confirms that the radio is working and connecting to them.
- All radios that go out should be able to both transmit and receive.
- Less traffic on radios ensures that safety launch drivers do not turn radios off as is the custom when people use radios for more social reasons.

## ROWING SHELL STANDARDS

All rowing shells on the water must be safe, rowable and maintained in good working order including:

- bow ball;
- heel restraints to allow 'hands-free' release of feet;
- sound hull and riggers.
- VRS recommends that all rowing shells carry a whistle

## SAFETY STANDARD FOR UNSUPERVISED ROWING SHELLS

Rowing shells not attended by a properly equipped safety launch are *required* to:

- Have completed a competency standard for rowing unsupervised
- Carry a personal flotation device (PFD) of appropriate size for each person on board
- Carry a sound signalling device
- Mount lights if out before sunrise or in conditions of restricted visibility:
  - an all-round white light mounted on bow
  - steady red light mounted on stern
  - See **Appendix C** for properly mounted bow light.
- If a bow light fails prior to civil twilight and a rower is rowing unsupervised or not in a pack with lights, that rower must head to the dock for replacement while also notifying their coach of their intentions
- Athletes who row unsupervised by a safety launch are *encouraged* to:
- let someone know that you are on the water and when you expect to be off the water;
- have a plan for contacting someone in the event of an accident (e.g., carry a cell phone, VHF radio, or flares);
- check the weather report before going on the water;
- row with a buddy, particularly in adverse conditions. The buddy will be able to assist you in the event of an accident (calling for assistance, helping you get back in the boat etc);
- know your skill level and tolerance for risk;
- have a plan for what to do in the event of an accident.
- Rowers are encouraged to row in groups, particularly in adverse conditions (low visibility – defined previously, rough water, cold weather, crowded waterways). This is for their safety, the safety of other crews, and to assist safety launches with wake management.

## WEATHER RESTRICTIONS

- All coaches and athletes will be made aware of the potential danger from darkness, fog, high winds (from the SE in particular), ice, cold water, storms or any combination of the above.
- Based on knowledge and experience, coaches are responsible for determining if conditions are unsafe for rowing.
- No athlete will be forced to row against his/her better judgement should conditions be questionable.
- Athletes in a supervised row are required to abide by the directions and decisions of the supervising coach should the coach decide not to launch for a session
- **PERSONAL SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT AND SUPERSEDES THE SAFETY OF EQUIPMENT**

No rowing will occur in the following conditions:

- Fog that reduces visibility to less than 1000m in any direction
  - Will prevent launch for all crews until fog clears

- If fog descends while on the water, row to the nearest shoreline and follow it back to the boathouse
- If fog is too thick, find nearest safe landing beach and extract, leaving oars under shell and walk back to boathouse
- Examples of fog expectations:
  - **Launching** – Able to see from the dock towards Hamsterly beach AND the 1250m conical buoy
  - **On the course** – able to see 1000m
- Thunderstorms
  - Crew(s) will not launch until 30 minutes have passed after the last lightning strike/thunder is heard
  - Crew(s) will row directly back to the boathouse in the safest manner possible in the event of lightning strike or if thunder is heard
  - Crews will not launch at this time as the assumption that all established flow patterns are compromised as crews return on the most direct path.
  - Coaches will review all log books to determine the number of crews out on the water.
  - Crews will notify other crews on the water that may not have seen the lightning and support them back to the dock where necessary
- Extreme Wind Conditions
  - **Informed decisions about the potential risks presented by rowing are key. The chart below will empower users to make informed choices about what combinations of experience, coaching, and weather are acceptable to them. Also consider the Dynamic Risk Assessment Checklist listed in Appendix E.**

Warning Level	Current Conditions and Forecast	Recommendation
1	Calm to light winds.  No weather warnings listed in the near (8+ hour) forecast	Stay aware of changing weather conditions
2	Moderate winds, rough water conditions, no whitecaps.  Forecast conditions deteriorating, wind warning arrival in 6-8hour forecast.	Stay aware of changing weather conditions, novices take additional precautions
3	Whitecaps starting to form on the lake  Forecast shows high sustained winds (20+ kts, 37kph, 10m/s, Gale wind warning arriving within the next 4-6 hours)	Consider changing your workout (IE larger boats, protected area of the lake, on-land workout)
4	Consistent whitecaps on the lake  Gale wind warning (34+ kts, 63kph, 17m/s) arriving within the next 4 hours	Do not go out

**Note: If we are in cold water regulations, add 1 to the warning level**

- Strong wind coming from the boathouse to point 1 leads to unsafe whitecap rollers at point 1 - Haro Strait Wind Warning – **Compass SE winds**

- Strong wind coming from Mill Bay side / point 1 makes docking at the boathouse less safe so wind warnings from that direction need to be taken into consideration - **Compass NW winds**
- The center of the lake is the worst place to be in all poor conditions as the reach in those areas is almost universal
- Strong wind coming from channel makes Hamsterly area unsafe - **Compass S winds**
- Considerations to launch will be based on the weather leading up to that point in time (increasing, decreasing, or consistent wind) as well as the forecast at the discretion of the senior coach **and/or club safety officers** present
- Programmed workouts dictate athlete behaviour. Adjusting workouts to reflect the conditions allows athletes to meet the both the standards and expectations of training in a safe way.
- Other factors such as athlete experience, boat size, number of boats and coach coverage will factor into the decision
  
- It is possible that different clubs come to different conclusions given the factors they are considering
  
- No athlete will be questioned or coerced to row against his/her better judgement should conditions be questionable.
  - Commonly used weather forecasts:
    - Windy
      - <https://www.windy.com/>
    - Environment Canada
    - [https://weather.gc.ca/marine/forecast\\_e.html?mapID=02&siteID=06100](https://weather.gc.ca/marine/forecast_e.html?mapID=02&siteID=06100)Windal ert
    - Windfinder
  - Crews already on the water
    - will find the nearest safe beach when conditions blow up
    - should navigate to nearest shoreline and extract immediately should conditions become completely unrowable
    - should avoid the center of Elk Lake as that is where the conditions are generally the worst.
    - Where applicable, should row towards the wind as the conditions will get better towards that shore line
    - Should try not to stop the boat as that is when swamping increases
- “WHEN IN DOUBT- DON’T GO OUT “

### **DISTRESS/EMERGENCY SIGNALS**

Anybody in a safety launch must immediately respond to any of the below distress/emergency signals by going directly over to the rower (s) in question and offering support:

- Repeatedly wave one arm in a throwing fashion- go on by
- Repeatedly raise and lower one outstretched arm – non emergency help needed
- Repeatedly raise and lower both outstretched arms – Mayday
- Repeatedly blow a whistle – during daylight – Mayday
- Repeatedly blow a whistle and wave a light overhead – Mayday
- Display a flashing red light – Mayday

### **ON WATER EMERGENCY PROCESS FOR ATHLETES**



- Signal for help
- Stay with the shell
- Do not attempt to swim to shore
- Where applicable, follow the instructions of the driver on the safety launch

## NAVIGATION

### 2KM COURSE MARKING BOUYS

- White cylindrical buoys mark every 250m of the standard rowing course between point 1 and point 2.
- The buoys function as a center line of the course and serve to separate rowers travelling in opposite directions
- Red ball buoys every 250 m intersperse the white buoys to mark the 125 distances between the 250 m
- Be aware that the buoys do not form a perfectly straight line and will drift up to 2 m depending on wind conditions and lake levels.
- The line marked by the white cylindrical buoys concludes inside the PT2 island.
- Rowers are expected to stay west of the Island as they approach point 2.

### CANADA FEDERAL NAVIGATION BOUYS

- White conical buoys mark the area where the Transport Canada restrictions on towing and engine size apply.
- These conical buoys are not part of the VRS flow pattern and are maintained by the CRD.

### UNDERWATER HAZARDS

- Not all stump areas and hazards are marked with buoys. Rowers should exercise particular caution when water levels are low, as stumps and obstructions that are not normally a danger may be close enough to the surface to pose a hazard.
- Shorelines have submerged stumps. Low lying shoreline on Elk/Beaver lakes was flooded when the lake was dammed. As a result, there are many areas along the shoreline with submerged stumps and other obstructions.
- Stump Zones that are particularly hazardous to rowers are marked by small red or orange buoys.

*Please notify the Club Safety Office or the VRS Boathouse Manager if any cylindrical buoys or hazard buoys move or go missing.*

All boaters on Elk Lake, including rowers and safety launch drivers, are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Transport Canada Collision Regulations.

### RIGHT OF WAY FOR ROWERS

Priority of right of way between rowers is as follows:

- Rowers following the 2km flow pattern in 2km training
  - rowing shells entering the point 2 area under pressure must be aware of shells travelling from point 3 (the channel)
  - rowing shells coming from point 3 must be aware and yield to shells coming in towards the island from point 1
  - rowing shells coming from point 3 must be aware and yield to shells stopped at point 2
- Rowers who are overtaking other rowers on the posted flow pattern
- Where possible rowers who do not have the right of way are expected to yield to those who do have the right of way

- Rowers who have the right of way are expected to be judicious and exercise due caution regardless of the right of way privileges
- Rowers must be aware that marine law in principle states that the most maneuverable crew must give right of way to the least maneuverable crew
- Based on these principles, the lake users agree that:
- The flow pattern is established that the fastest crew row the buoy line and slower crews are to move off the buoy line to give right of way to those coming through in the fast lane
- All crews are responsible for being aware of crews that are stopped due to breakage and injury regardless of where they are stopped
- Crews with breakage/injury are responsible for hailing oncoming crews in a timely way

#### **FLOW PATTERN AWARENESS AFFECTS ALL LAKE USERS**

- All athletes and safety launch drivers must be familiar with the VRS flow pattern – **See Appendix A**
- Rowing to the bottom of Beaver Lake by the filter beds is only allowed between Oct 1 and April 30
- The VRS flow pattern is for the safety and convenience of rowers, and is not recognized by other lake users.
- All athletes and safety launch drivers will respect the rights of other lake users and be aware of and remain courteous to other users at all times.
- Rowers are advised to give fishing boats and those fishing from shore a wide berth (30m) to avoid becoming entangled in their lines.
- Rowers are advised that swimmers train on Elk Lake, most commonly between Hamsterly and Eagle Beach.
- Safety launch drivers are encouraged to politely educate other lake users about the dangers of trolling in high traffic areas such as the 2 km course, and to suggest alternative locations that are safer (less busy).
- Incidents with other lake users (including abusive or dangerous behaviour) may be reported to the Club Safety Officer or VRS Boathouse Manager.

#### **DEVIATIONS FROM THE FLOW PATTERN**

- Rowers may deviate from the posted flow pattern if they are supervised by a safety launch driver who can direct them and warn other crews.
- Rowers deviating from the posted flow pattern must yield to those who are following the flow pattern.
- Safety launch drivers and rowers deviating from the posted flow pattern encouraged to signal their intentions to surrounding crews.
- Rowing contrary to the flow pattern should be the exception, not the rule.

#### **POND FLOW PATTERN**

From the docks

- Head north, aiming for the radio tower on Bear Hill.
- On reaching the far (north) shore: turn and row across, aiming for the rock wall on the east shore.

From Hamsterly Beach

- Row down the pond (south) parallel to the highway, aiming for the east side of Eagle Beach.
- Rowers are advised to stay 30m from shore in order to avoid fishermen's lines.

At Eagle Beach:

- Turn and row across to just in front of the fishermen's boat launch

From the Fishermen's boat launch

- Turn and row north, towards the radio tower.

Rowers may shorten this flow pattern by cutting across the pond before reaching the north end (Hamsterly Beach), but must still row across to the highway shore before turning and rowing towards Eagle Beach.

#### **POND CAUTIONS**

- Watch out for swimmers in the pond, particularly in the Hamsterly Beach area and down the east shore by the highway.
- Watch out for fishermen (and their lines!) when rowing down the east shore (particularly at the small "fishermen's beach" about halfway down). Stay about 30m from shore to avoid their lines.
- Rowers should NOT turn and row straight back to the dock from Hamsterly Beach. This will put them on a collision course with boats heading out/north.
- Be aware that boats may be entering this flow pattern from the docks. LOOK AROUND and proceed with CAUTION until clear of the docks.

#### **DOCK AREA FLOW PATTERN**

All crews must exercise extreme caution coming into the docks. Crews must reduce speed while under way around the dock areas to ensure it remains a safe zone to launch and land for everyone.

- Outbound to Point 1: aim for Point 1, steering between the white conical buoys. DO NOT row between the orange buoy and the white conical buoy.
- OUTBOUND to Beaver Lake: rowers wanting to row into the channel/Beaver Lake from the boathouse may cut across the 2km course once they are north of the white conical buoy located at about 1250m (from Point 1). Proceed with caution when crossing the 2km course.
- INBOUND (from Pt 2): row between the orange buoy and the white conical buoy closest to the dock.
- INBOUND (from Pt 1): Rowers travelling from Point 1 who want to come into the dock without going around the Island at Point 2 may cut across the 2 km course once they are south of the 1500m (from Point 1). Proceed with caution when crossing the 2 km course.

#### **REPORTING FLOW PATTERN INCIDENTS**

Please report **incidents** to the club Safety Officer. **Incidents** include:

- collisions or near collisions between rowers
- collisions, near collisions or confrontations between rowers and other lake users
- significant/unsafe deviations from the VRS Flow pattern or violations of the VRS Safety Handbook.

## EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS

### 9-1-1 FOR ALL EMERGENCIES

Emergency contact and medical information for each rower is located with either the boathouse manager, the RCA management, or the Athletics and Recreation Department for UVIC.

Protocol for an emergency involving a UVIC athlete is to call Campus Security to ensure that the department is contacted immediately.

**UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA - 24 HOUR EMERGENCY / SAFEWALK: 250-721-7599**

### BOATHOUSE ADDRESS

VICTORIA ROWING SOCIETY BOATHOUSE

5100 PATRICIA BAY HIGHWAY

PH: 250-658-5331

**LOCATION:** EAGLE BEACH

### SAFE LANDING BEACHES WITH EMERGENCY EXTRACTION ACCESS

- Hamsterly Beach
- Eagle Beach & Boat Launch
- Waterski Beach & Boat Launch
- Beaver Lake Beach

### AVAILABLE EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT

Emergency Landline Phone:

- Located upstairs at the South entrance of the boathouse - **See Appendix D**
- Upstairs outside the UVIC Office

Equipment	Location
AED	Upper lounge, north end, inside glass door, front of the RCA bay
Spine Board	Passage way at back of Bay 2, beside work bay door
Cervical spine collar	Located with spine board
Ice	Upper lounge (ice machine)
Blankets and towels	Upper lounge, shelves, in marked bins
First Aid kits	
UVIC	Under the login book at the front bay, in the women's Dry Room
RCA	Treatment room, RCA Bay
VCRC / GYRS	Under sign out log
	Extra supplies in VCRC office (cabinet)

### Safety Launch Safety Kit Contents

- Flashlight
- Throw line
- Small waterproof first aid kit which includes space blankets, pocket mask, non-latex gloves and whistle

### Safety Launches

- There are five inflatable launches
- Primary responder safety launch is a UVIC inflatable - gas in the gas shed
- Gas shed Keys can be found in the UVIC cabana or in VCRC bay

See appendices for roles and step by step emergency response plans

## REPORTING AND ENFORCEMENT

### Club Safety Officer

Each club will provide the VRS Operations Committee and VRS Boathouse Manager with the name and contact information for their Club Safety Officer. This information will be posted in a visible location in each boat bay.

The Club Safety Officer has primary responsibility for educating club members and safety launch drivers, documenting collisions and violations of the VRS Safety Code involving club members, coaches or programs, and enforcing the VRS Safety policies and procedures (as outlined in the VRS Safety Code and the Operations Handbook).

Specifically, the Club Safety Officer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that member athletes and safety launch drivers receive comprehensive instruction in VRS Safety policies, procedures and best practices, as outlined in the VRS Safety Code;
- Maintaining the log signed by athletes and safety launch drivers to confirm that they have reviewed the VRS Safety Code.
- Documenting collisions and serious infractions of the VRS Safety Code involving members of their club;
- Reporting serious or repeated infractions of the VRS Safety Code to the VRS Operations Committee;
- Addressing concerns about non-compliance and safety infractions by a coach, athlete or program in their club.

### VRS Boathouse Manager

- The VRS Boathouse Manager will maintain a log of infractions, collisions and other incidents reported to him/her.
- The VRS Boathouse Manager will follow up with a Club Safety Officer on any reports made to the VRS Boathouse Manager involving that Club's athletes, programs or safety launch drivers.

### VRS Safety Committee and VRS Management Committee

- Serious or repeated infractions of the VRS Safety Code must be reported to the VRS Operations Committee.
- The VRS Operations Committee will make recommendations on penalties or other actions to VRS Management Committee.
- The VRS Management Committee will impose penalties or any other actions that will be taken as a result of serious or repeated infractions.

### VRS Operations Committee

- Will also receive notice of infractions from the boathouse manager and inform their coaches of issues as needed.

### Reporting

- Serious or repeated infractions of the VRS Safety Code or VRS must be reported by athletes or coaches, in writing, to a Club Safety Officer.

- The Club Safety Officer to whom it is reported is responsible for reporting it to the VRS Boathouse Manager and the VRS Operations Committee.

## ROLES

The following Incidents *must* be reported to the Club Safety Officer(s) and the VRS Boathouse Manager:

- collisions between rowers;
- collisions between rowers and other lake users;
- significant, unsafe deviations from the VRS Flow pattern or violations of the VRS Safety Code.

Accidents involving injury or property damage must also be reported to RCA, using the RCA Incident Claim form (available on the RCA website (<http://rowingcanada.org/member-services/insurance> and on the VRS Safety Notice board).

Rowers and coaches are *encouraged* to report the following incidents to a Club Safety Officer or directly to the VRS Boathouse Manager so they can be documented and tracked:

- unsafe behaviour by rowers;
- near misses between rowers, or between rowers and other lake users;
- unsafe behaviour by other lake users, for example, tow boats operating outside the permitted area and times and power boats travelling close to rowing shells at high speed.

*Please report incidents to the VRS Boathouse Manager by email ([clubadmin@vrc.bc.ca](mailto:clubadmin@vrc.bc.ca)) or by submitting a completed RCA Incident Claim form to the VRS Boathouse Manager's office.*

## Enforcement

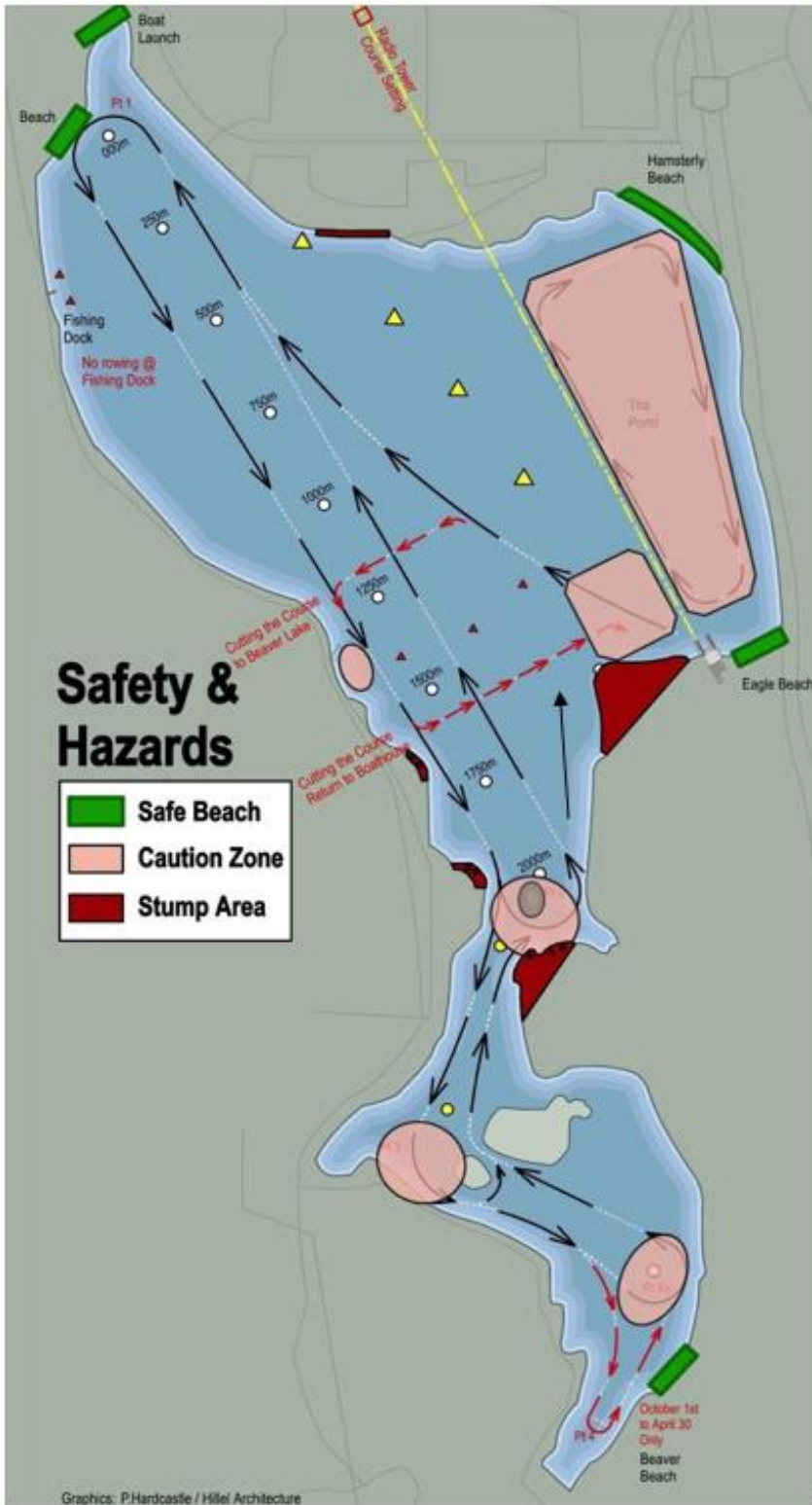
- Police officers patrol Elk/Beaver Lake and enforce the Transport Canada regulations.
- Serious infractions of the VRS Safety Code and VRS Operations are those that have a significant impact on safety or on the reputation of VRS.
- The Club Safety Officer will review the report with the parties involved to ensure accurate reporting, to review lessons learned and to make recommendations for changes to VRS Safety Code.
- Serious or repeated infractions must be reported to VRS Operations Committee, who will make recommendations on penalties or any other actions to the VRS Management Committee.
- All infractions will be forwarded by the respective club safety officer and documented by the VRS Safety Officer for the Safety Committee

## Penalties for Infractions

- Penalties for minor infractions will be applied at the discretion of the Club Safety Officer. Minor infractions are those things that do not have a serious impact on safety or on the reputation of VRS.
- Serious or repeated infractions must be reported to the VRS Operations and VRS Safety Committees. If the VRS Safety Committee determines that a penalty is warranted, they will make a recommendation to the VRS Management Committee. The VRS Management Committee will then consider this recommendation and impose penalties at their discretion.
- Penalties and sanctions may include a letter of warning, temporary suspension, or permanent suspension of all VRS privileges.

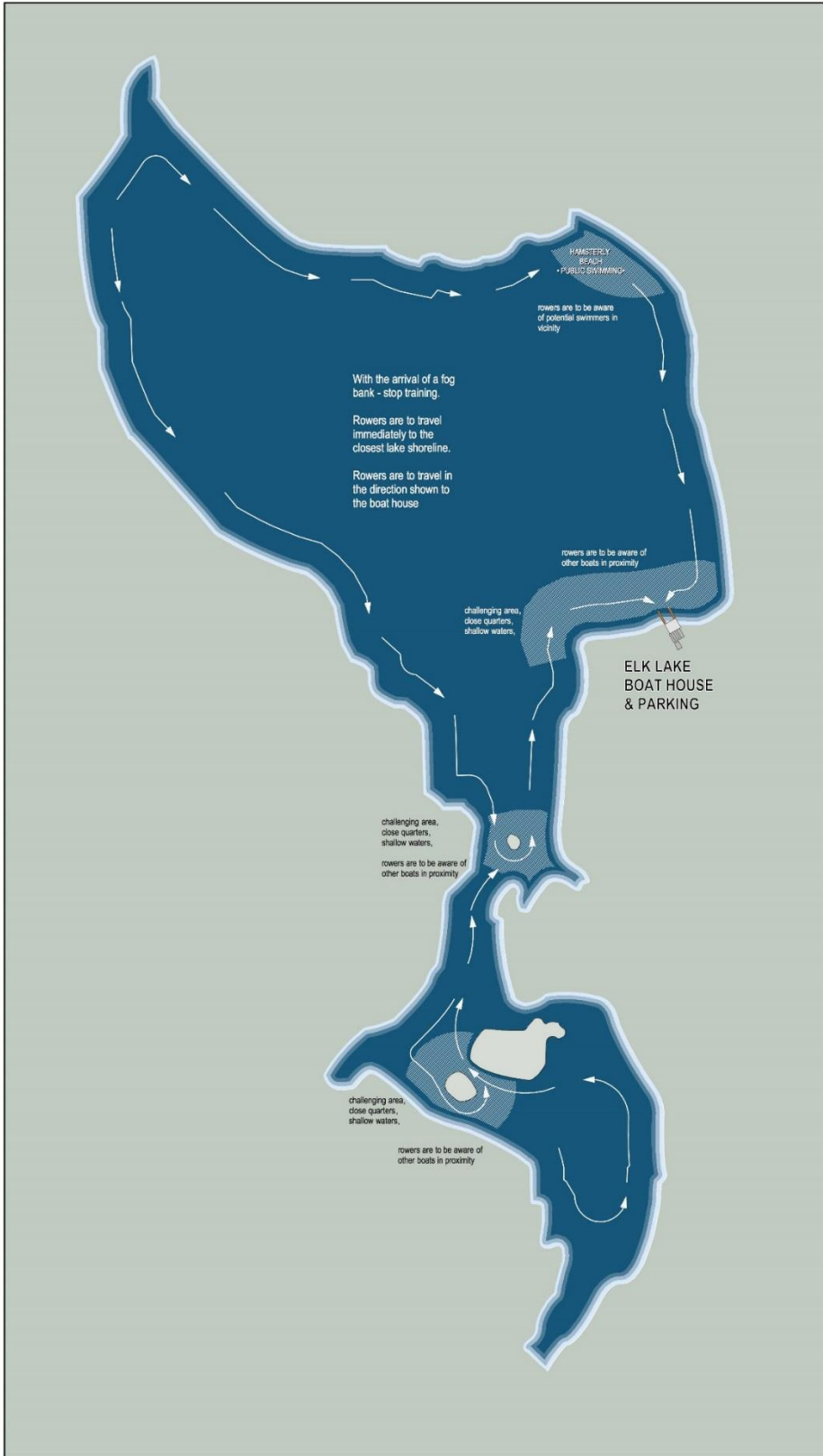
- Suspensions may be applied to individuals, groups or programs. The scope of any suspension for safety infractions will be decided by the VRS Management Committee, taking into account recommendations by the VRS Safety Committee.
- Any athlete or coach who has been suspended (temporarily or permanently) has the right of appealing to the VRS Management Committee.
- Safety infractions will be handled by the member Clubs subject to the following conditions:
- First infractions may result in an immediate suspension of up to 10 days plus a subsequent probationary period of 3 months at the discretion of the club head coaches and/or operations committee.
- Suspended parties must complete an open book exam on VRS safety policies and procedures before resuming any rowing activities or use of VRS facilities. Failure to successfully fulfill this requirement will result in an indefinite extension of the suspension period until the test is successfully completed to the satisfaction of the club head coaches and/or Operations Committee.
- Any subsequent infraction during the probationary period following any suspension will result in an immediate suspension of up to 3 months at the discretion of the club head coaches or club safety officer.
- Subsequent conditions for reinstatement will be determined solely by the club head coaches or club safety officer.
- Suspensions may be applied to individuals, groups or programs. The scope of any suspension for safety infractions will be decided by the club head coaches and/or club safety officer(s).
- Persistent or continuing infractions may result in permanent suspension of VRS privileges.
- Any athlete or coach who has been expelled or suspended has the privilege of appealing through appropriate channels for their situation. Appeal process not described here for brevity. Please check with your club safety officer for your appeal process.

### Appendix A – Regular Flow Pattern Map





## Appendix B – Fog Evacuation Map

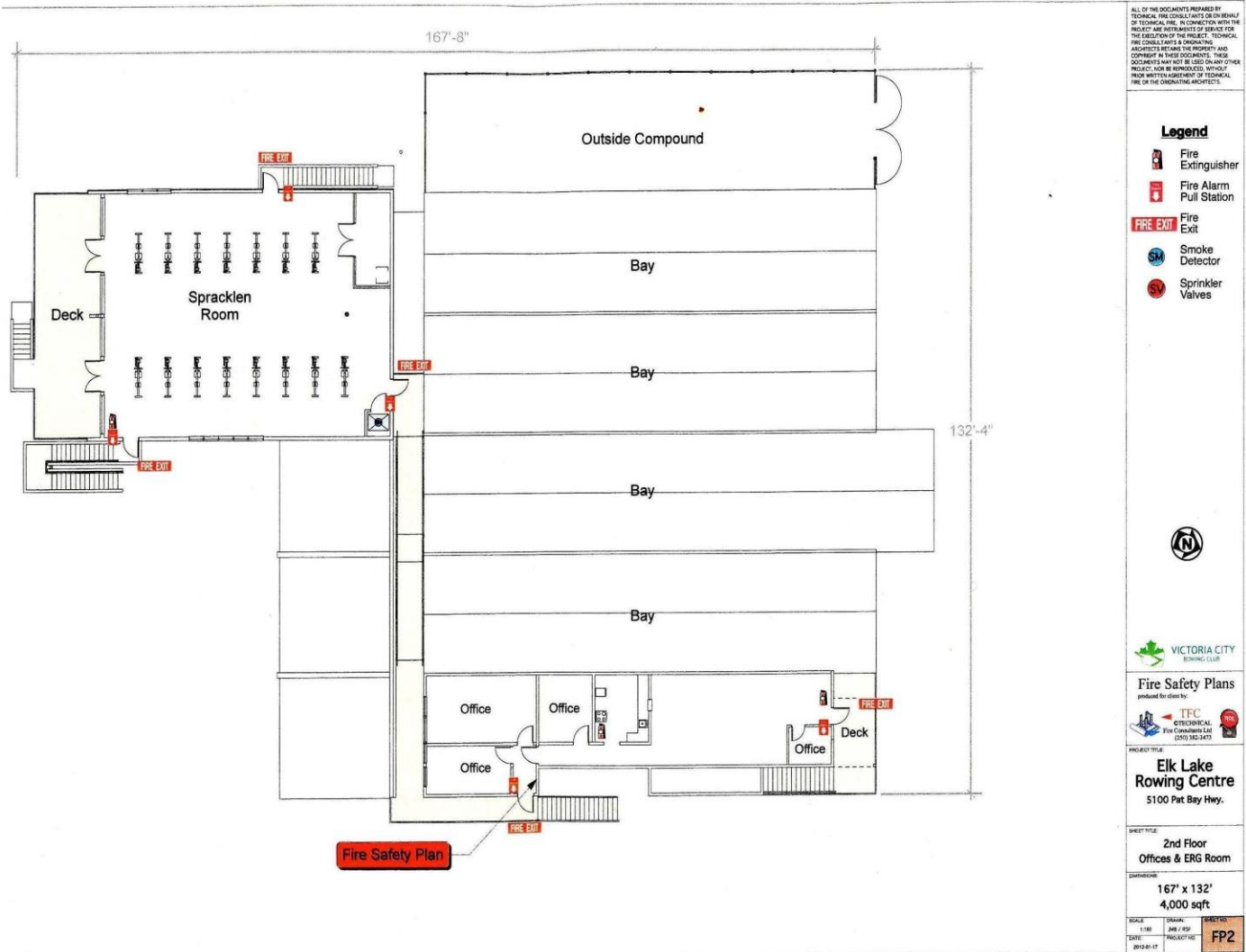


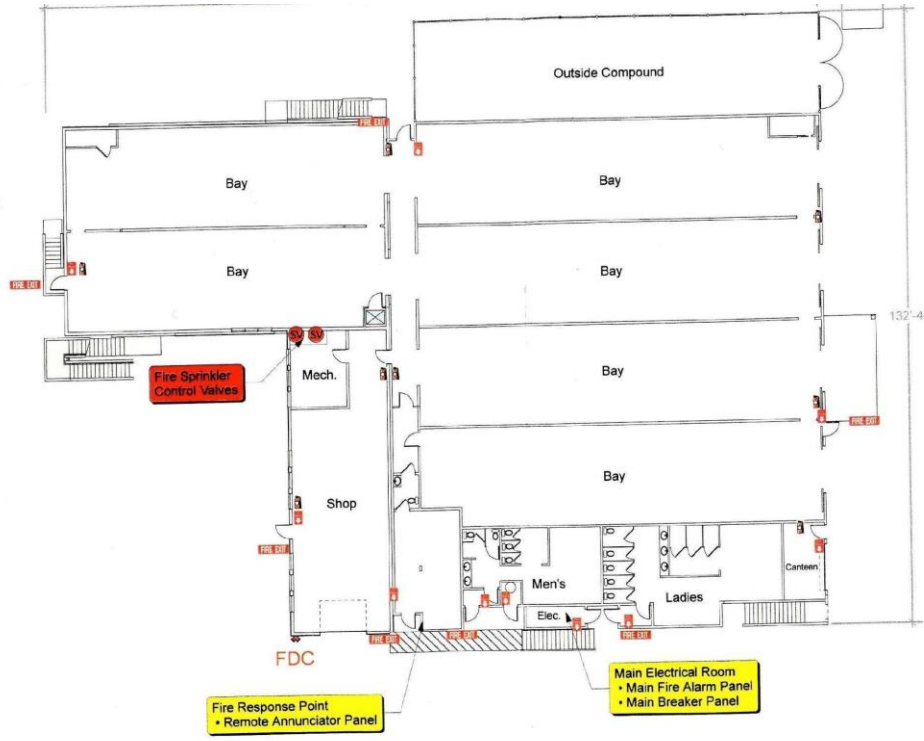
## Appendix C – Bow Light Mounting Demonstration

Picture to be inserted showing a properly mounted bow light – not dangling from the bowball



# Appendix D – VRS Boathouse Floorplan





PROJECT: FOR RE-PRODUCTION PURPOSES ONLY. THIS IS NOT THE ORIGINAL DRAWING. PLEASE REFER TO THE ORIGINAL DRAWING FOR THE DIMENSIVE ACCURACY.

**Legend**

- Fire Extinguisher
- Fire Alarm Pull Station
- Fire Exit
- Smoke Detector
- Sprinkler Valves

**VICTORIA CITY**  
 Fire Safety Plans  
 produced for contract #

**ETC ELECTRICAL**  
 1000 Commercial St.  
 (250) 383-3419

**Elk Lake Rowing Centre**  
 \$100 Per Bay Hwy.

PROJECT TITLE: Main Floor Boat Bays & Support

DESCRIPTION: 167' x 132' 17,000 sqft

DATE: 1/18/2018

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

PROJECT NO: **FP1**

## Appendix E – Dynamic Risk Assessment

This appendix is taken from a coastal rowing context. It is designed to give a coach or athlete an overview of potential things to consider before going out on the water. Most of the Hazards and controls listed can be applied to rowing on Elk Lake.

HAZARDS		CONTROLS	
Water state <input type="checkbox"/>		Rowing boat <input type="checkbox"/>	
1	Swell / waves <input type="checkbox"/>	1	Suitability/ condition of boat <input type="checkbox"/>
2	Water quality <input type="checkbox"/>	2	Suitable clothing <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Wind direction <input type="checkbox"/>	3	PFD / Life jackets <input type="checkbox"/>
4	Wind strength <input type="checkbox"/>	4	Tow line <input type="checkbox"/>
5	Depth of water <input type="checkbox"/>	5	Grab bag (>1km) <input type="checkbox"/>
6	Tidal current <input type="checkbox"/>	6	Radio & Phone (>400m) <input type="checkbox"/>
7	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	7	Extra floatation (>1km) <input type="checkbox"/>
Wave break <input type="checkbox"/>		8	Fluids & snacks (>400m) <input type="checkbox"/>
8	Wave type (spilling/dumping) <input type="checkbox"/>	9	Personal Locator Device / GPS <input type="checkbox"/>
9	Wave break height <input type="checkbox"/>	Safety <input type="checkbox"/>	
10	Waves frequency <input type="checkbox"/>	10	Lifeguard on duty (beach) <input type="checkbox"/>
11	Shape of beach <input type="checkbox"/>	11	Coach trained & first aid kit <input type="checkbox"/>
12	Risk of bow piercing beach (up ending) <input type="checkbox"/>	12	Specific safety / First aid cover <input type="checkbox"/>
13	Rip current <input type="checkbox"/>	13	Float plan shared (>400m) <input type="checkbox"/>
14	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	14	Safety boat & throw line <input type="checkbox"/>
Beach state <input type="checkbox"/>		15	Communication (radio, phone) <input type="checkbox"/>
15	Beach condition <input type="checkbox"/>	16	Access to emergency services <input type="checkbox"/>
16	Slope of beach <input type="checkbox"/>	17	Shelters along route (>400m) <input type="checkbox"/>
17	Headlands, groynes etc.. <input type="checkbox"/>	Rower capability <input type="checkbox"/>	
18	Seaweed / Debris <input type="checkbox"/>	18	Rowing skill level <input type="checkbox"/>
19	Rocks, pebbles, sand <input type="checkbox"/>	19	Experience in surf /beach <input type="checkbox"/>
20	Other <input type="checkbox"/>	20	Experience in harbour water <input type="checkbox"/>
Weather conditions <input type="checkbox"/>		21	Experience offshore (>1km) <input type="checkbox"/>
21	Wind speed <input type="checkbox"/>	22	Support for specific needs <input type="checkbox"/>
22	Visibility/ Available light <input type="checkbox"/>	23	All completed swim test <input type="checkbox"/>
23	Sun exposure heat /cold <input type="checkbox"/>	24	Beach familiarization <input type="checkbox"/>
Other risk factors <input type="checkbox"/>		Other factors <input type="checkbox"/>	
24	Marine traffic /other water users <input type="checkbox"/>	25	Safety briefing <input type="checkbox"/>
25	Number of rowing boats <input type="checkbox"/>	26	Crew captain appointed <input type="checkbox"/>
26	Length of planned session <input type="checkbox"/>	27	Equipment safety check <input type="checkbox"/>
27	Distance of from shore / nearest shelter <input type="checkbox"/>	28	Membership/entry form <input type="checkbox"/>
28	Age, health and fitness of rowers <input type="checkbox"/>	29	Signing out complete <input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix F – Medical Emergency

### MEDICAL EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN - ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

#### CHARGE PERSON

- The first responder with first aid on-site (based on level of certification/training)
- Keeps a timeline of the incident and does not leave till issue resolved
- Checks for dangers to self and others
- Puts on gloves in preparation for assessing the ABC's
- Assesses ABC's of the individual(s) and decides if advanced medical help is required
- Makes sure the participant is not moved until certain that no serious injury has occurred (as deemed by a medical professional), or immobilizes the individual in case of severe injury/condition
- Directs the Call Person to call Emergency Medical Services (EMS), if required
- Performs any first aid that is required based on level of training
- Waits with the injured person until EMS arrives and the injured person is transported to a hospital
- Fills in injury and incident report forms

#### CALL PERSON

- Dials 911 for emergency as directed by the Charge Person
- Provides dispatch with all necessary information (e.g. facility location, nature of injury, what, if any, first aid has been provided)
- Maintains a clear route from top of driveway to the boathouse
- Waits at the driveway entrance to direct all the Emergency/Rescue vehicles that arrive.
- Ensures boat launch and access lane beside boathouse are clear for all Emergency vehicles including on water search and rescue vehicles where applicable
- UVic representative calls Campus Security and notifies Director of Sport (in the event of UVic incident)

#### CONTROL PERSON

- Controls the crowd including concerned rower's parents and teammates
- Recruits appropriate help at the scene if needed
- Helps the Charge Person as asked

## Appendix G – Fog Evacuation

### FOG EMERGENCY EVACUATION

- If fog descends while rowers are on the water, restricting visibility, row to the nearest shoreline and follow it back to the boathouse. Use extreme caution to avoid colliding with other boaters (including rowers), buoys or rowing through stump areas.
- In the event of an emergency, storm, or fog, all safety launches on the lake will establish radio contact with each-other and collaborate on next steps
- Risk tolerance has been determined as 1000m by the VRS and needs to be adhered to by everyone- “When in doubt, don’t go out”.
- All user groups need to follow the same decision
- The senior coach present will assume command in the event of an emergency
- Coaches and athletes should decide and communicate via **VHF Radio**, plans for course to other parties on the lake, including a roll call of coach locations
- Unattended athletes shall adhere to coaches' discretion on the safest course of action for an emergency evacuation of the lake
- Athletes will yield control to the nearest coach, understanding that coaches have additional information from communicating with other coaches
- Coaches will communicate to each other when athletes are picked up by other groups
- The closest safety boat is **your** safety boat
- The map in **Appendix B** gives a model of possible evacuation routes back to the dock under high fog conditions
- Take extra precaution with speed and course to match the conditions of the fog, using the shoreline as a guide
- Make a note of the number and location of marker buoys on the north side of the lake on a clear day

### Safety Launch Locations

- It is established that all safety launches launched under the VRS umbrella look out for the safety of all user groups
- In the event of an emergency, it is important that all safety launches take on the responsibility of directing all crews within their vicinity, regardless of membership
- Staging safety launches at key points is critical so that there is a radio and support in key places
  - Top of the channel to monitor traffic coming out of Beaver and traffic coming into point 2
  - Point 1 to direct traffic to Hamsterly and then shoreline and in
- Flow pattern direction will be at the discretion of the closest coach so long as they are in constant visual contact with the athletes

### Rower Supervision

- All program coaches need to be comfortable releasing control to other programs/taking control of athletes of other programs to establish safety

- While some athletes/coaches have higher risk tolerance than others, there are enough voices that are not heard in crews that may or may not be comfortable with marginal decisions and leaving a unified final decision may lead to a missed session but can save lives

#### **SIGNOUT - Spracklen Room**

- One designated individual with appropriate lists coordinates Spracklen Room as official marshalling area
- The designated monitor in the Marshalling Area compiles a comprehensive list of all athletes that enter the area and note the time that these athletes sign out to leave.
- **No athlete leaves without being specifically signed out of the marshalling area or directly with their coach**

## **Appendix H – Fire Emergency**

#### **FIRE EMERGENCY**

- Activate the nearest fire alarm (see Appendix D)
- Clear the building and gather all members in marshalling station by the "concession" building
- Beach all hulls already on the water at Eagle Beach



## Appendix I – Wind Storm Emergency

### WIND STORM EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES -Dial 911

Sudden windstorms blow up on Elk Lake. Managing these events effectively can lead to a safe outcome for all.

#### CREWS ALREADY ON WATER

- Where possible, extract to the nearest safe beach and marshal to the nearest CRD building at that location
- dial 911 and notify them of the following
  - All team members with you
  - Location of extraction
  - Status of athletes
  - Need for on water Safety/Rescue Support
- If close to the boathouse, remember that Eagle Beach may be safer to extract than actual docks!
- Where necessary and safe, extract hulls and leave them upside down and on riggers

#### BOATHOUSE CENTRAL COMMAND--CHARGE PERSON

- Senior coach on staff coordinates delegation of specific roles to manage both on water and off water safety protocols
- Charge person will coordinate all activities between Fire/Safety/Rescue

#### SAFETY LAUNCHES

- All able-bodied individuals will help to launch or commandeer inflatable safety launches as they will not founder under large waves due to inherent flotation.
- All operators of safety launches will take extra precautions with flotation devices, kill switches and all-weather gear.

#### LOG BOOKS

- All senior coaches of each club Identify crews signed out in logbook and determine if any crews are not signed out

#### MARSHALLING AREA- Spracklen Room

- One coach with appropriate lists staffs Spracklen Room as official marshalling area
- Staff members know how to turn on the heat in the Spracklen Room in case of prolonged incident
- No athlete leaves without specifically being monitored by a first responder for hypothermia or shock
- No athlete leaves without being specifically signed out of the marshalling area after cleared by a first responder

#### LOCKER ROOM SUPERVISION

- One person shall be put in charge of each locker room (men's and women's)
- Charge person should be informed and manage hypothermia protocols with core temperature being brought up by inhaling steam
- Hot water tank only works for a particular period of time so kitchen steam room should be established immediately upon first recovery
- Pots of boiling water and a screen on the kitchen entrance will quickly fill the room with steam

## Appendix J – Collision Causing Injury

### ON WATER INCIDENT- COLLISION/INJURY – DIAL 911

- Ask another safety launch driver to notify emergency services if necessary (i.e., medical emergency, including moderate to severe hypothermia)

- Let other safety launch drivers know there has been an accident and transfer charge of any other crews immediately
- Once other crews are safe and secure, approach the incident.

### **APPROACHING A CREW**

- Any accident shall be approached from leeward (into the wind)
  - to prevent the launch from being pushed into the rowing shell
  - to allow for maximum control during support effort
- Where needed align rowing shell to minimize swamping (bow or stern aimed into wind)

### **ASSESS THE SITUATION**

- Quickly assess the conditions of the people involved and the severity of the circumstances.
- Where appropriate, inflate personal floatation device
- Conduct a head count and check every athlete continually until all athletes are rescued
- Establish verbal contact with those in the water.
- Speak calmly and reassure them and tell them what is going to happen so they know what is going on.
- Where possible, ensure all athletes have put on layers available to them in the boat
- Distribute PFDs and have athletes put them on.

### **EXTRACTION FROM WATER**

- Attend first to the person in most distress. This may mean pulling a fitter athlete into the safety launch first so they can assist.
- Rescue people from the water in pairs (i.e., one member of the pair immediately after the other).
- Once all athletes have been rescued, remove an oar from the rowing shell (if possible) to let other safety launches know that all athletes have been rescued and to proceed to secure the equipment.

### **TRANSPORT TO EMS EXTRACTION POINT**

- Do not leave the scene until all the athletes have been rescued (i.e., are in a boat that can safely transport them to shore).
- If the capacity of the safety launch must be exceeded in order to get people out of the water, the launch must wait for another launch and transfer the extra people into it.
- Conduct another head count before leaving the scene.
- In extreme conditions, those rescued must be taken directly to shore or to the nearest safe spot.
- Notify EMS to arrive at that location as it is quicker by vehicle.
- Provide athletes with emergency blankets, extra clothing or garbage bags to reduce heat loss while they are being transported to extraction point.

## **Appendix K – Hypothermia**

### **COLD WATER AND HYPOTHERMIA**

Loss of heat occurs more rapidly in cold water than in cold air. Immersion in cold water can lead to cold shock, cold incapacitation and mild to severe hypothermia.

#### **The '1-10-1 Rule'**

- 1-10-1 is a simple way to remember the first three phases of cold-water immersion and the approximate time each phase takes.

#### **1 COLD SHOCK**

- Cold Shock occurs when a body impacts cold water.
- First effect is an initial deep and sudden gasp, followed by hyperventilation.
- Cold Shock will pass in about 1 minute.

- Concentrate on avoiding panic and getting control of your breathing.
- Hang onto the oar or boat for flotation.

## 10 COLD INCAPACITATION

- Within next 10 minutes effective loss of use of fingers, arms and legs.
  - Swim failure will occur within these minutes.
- Concentrate on self-rescue initially
  - Signal for help
  - Get back into the shell or onto the shell
  - Buddy up across the boat, and don and inflate a PFD.
- Minimise heat loss
  - Put on extra clothes (particularly mitts and hat)
  - Minimize movement (do not swim or tread water),
  - Draw your legs up close to your chest
  - Wrap your arms around them in a tuck position (to protect groin and armpit much as possible).

## 1 HYPOTHERMIA

Even in ice water, it could take approximately 1 hour before becoming unconscious due to hypothermia.

- On Elk Lake most rescues should be completed well within one hour
- It is important to follow the steps above to minimise heat loss and/or drowning while you await rescue.
- It is critically important to have a way of signalling for help and to be able to perform a self-rescue (get back into the rowing shell).
- Keep in mind that the leaner the individual, the more rapid the loss of body heat and the greater the risk of suffering a fatal drop in core body temperature.

## COLD WATER TREATMENT

### *Mild Hypothermia*

Core body temperature of 35-32°C. Symptoms include mental and physical impairment (find and gross motor skills).

- If there is no way to get to a medical facility within 30 minutes, a mildly hypothermic person should be rewarmed as follows.
  - Shivering is a very effective process especially when well insulated.
  - Shivering should be fuelled by calorie replacement with fluids containing sugars.
  - The sugar content is actually more important than the heat in warm liquids.
  - Make sure that the person is capable of ingesting liquids without aspirating.
  - Alcohol and tobacco use should not be permitted because they constrict blood flow.
- External heat can be applied to high heat transfer areas such as the underarms and sides of the chest. Active heating of the skin is beneficial as it increases comfort, preserves energy stores and reduces cardiovascular stress.
- Light exercise such as walking produces heats should only be attempted after a mildly hypothermic person is dry, has had calorie replacement and has been stable for at least 30 minutes.
- A warm shower or bath may be tolerated by an individual that is alert and mobile.

Note: these procedures could be fatal to a moderate to severe hypothermic individual and thus should be avoided at all costs in that situation.

### ***Moderate to Severe Hypothermia***

Core body temperature drops below 32°C. Symptoms include: cessation of shivering, loss of consciousness, reduced or absent vital signs.

- This is a serious medical emergency requiring proper handling and treatment and in severe cases, immediate transport to a medical facility.
- There are some specific things you can do to help stabilize the individual prior to the arrival of paramedics.
- Great care must be taken in handling a moderate or severely hypothermic person.
- Extraction from the water must be as gentle as possible to avoid precipitating ventricular fibrillation.
- Arms, hands, feet and legs should not be rubbed or manipulated.
- The person should be placed in a horizontal position and wet clothing should be gently removed and the body insulated as best as possible using dry blankets, clothing or other protective materials.
- If vital signs are present, the person should be rewarmed as previously described but not allowed to sit or stand until rewarmed.
- Under no circumstances should the person be placed in a warm shower or bath, no oral fluids or food should be given and no attempts should be made to rewarm with exercise, including walking.
- In any hypothermic individual, core body temperature continues to decrease after rescue.
- It is called 'afterdrop' and may last many hours in a moderate to severely hypothermic person when no shivering is present and metabolic heat production may be only 50 percent of normal.
- Even gradual warming of the heart will help avoid cardiac arrest and ventricular fibrillation.
- If in cardiac arrest analyze ONLY once and shock ONLY ONCE with AED
- Refer to Appendix F

Cold Water Boot Camp is supported by Transport Canada Office of Boating Safety, National Search and Rescue Secretariat, Canadian Safe Boating Council, Lifesaving Society, Helly Hansen and Dr. Giesbrecht. Coaches and athletes are strongly encouraged to view the instructional video clips on <http://www.coldwaterbootcamp.com/pages/downloads.html>.

<b>HYPOTHERMIA TREATMENT PLAN</b>			
	<b>MILD HYPOTHERMIA</b>	<b>MODERATE HYPOTHERMIA</b>	<b>SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA</b>
<b>TREATMENT PLAN</b>	Remove patient from environment	Remove patient from environment	Remove patient from environment
	Remove cold or wet clothes	Remove cold or wet clothes	Remove cold or wet clothes
	Actively rewarm – use hot packs, heaters, blankets	Actively rewarm –use hot packs, heaters, blankets	Passively rewarm – <i>do not use hot packs or heaters, only blankets</i>
	SAMPLE, check for underlying medical conditions	Ensure gentle handling Consider hypoglycemia as a cause for decreased LOC, treat with oral glucose as per diabetic treatment plan	Ensure gentle handling Consider hypoglycemia as a cause for decreased LOC, treat with oral glucose as per diabetic treatment plan
			If in Cardiac Arrest due to hypothermia, analyze <b>ONLY</b> once and shock <b>ONLY ONCE</b> if indicated
	Vitals q5 Reassess, record, report	SAMPLE, check for underlying medical conditions Vitals q5 Reassess, record, report	SAMPLE, check for underlying medical conditions Vitals q5 Reassess, record, report

## Appendix L – Crew Swamping

### UNSUPERVISED CREW SWAMPING

- One person will assume command and check every athlete continually until rescued.
- Remain calm.
- All athletes put on inflatable personal floatation devices and inflate
- Signal to a safety launch: whistle, display flashing red light, wave light overhead and/or wave both arms overhead.
- In cold weather or water, put on any available clothing (e.g. gloves, toque, extra layers).
- Align the rowing shell to minimize further swamping (with bow or stern angled into the wind and oncoming waves).
- Where possible keep the boat balanced and upright, remain in your seat, and assume fetal position at top of slide to minimize heat loss while awaiting rescue.

### UNSUPERVISED CREW SWAMPING - ATHLETES IN WATER

- STAY WITH THE SHELL AND DO NOT ATTEMPT TO SWIM TO SHORE!
- One person will assume command and check every athlete continually until rescued.
- Remain calm.
- Put on your PFD (if you are carrying one) but do not inflate it until you are in or on the hull.
- Where possible get back into the rowing shell.
- If the rowing shell is fully submerged (but right side up), try to turn the hull upside down by standing on the riggers on one side (leeward side) and rolling the hull with the wind. The hull will be more buoyant when it is upside down.
- If not able to get back into the rowing shell, get your body as much on top of the rowing shell as possible.
- Once your body is in or on the hull, inflate the PFD.
- If you are not able to get into or onto the hull after 2-3 attempts, inflate your PFD.
- Signal to a safety launch: whistle, display flashing red light, wave light overhead and/or wave both arms overhead.
- In cold weather or water, put on any available clothing (e.g. gloves, toque, extra layers).
- Buddy up in pairs across the boat, evenly distributed on each side. The coxswain should buddy up with the closest pair (stroke pair in a stern coxed boat, bow pair in a bow coxed boat). Huddle towards the middle or the high point of the shell.
- Each buddy is responsible for holding onto their partner and talking to them. The buddy system gives added life support to each athlete and facilitates reciprocal communication and positive support. This buddy relationship should continue until each buddy is actually rescued and in the safety launch. This will prevent a premature feeling a relief resulting from rescue contact and prevent letting go before the rescuers take a firm hold.

\* It is recommended that an athlete inflate the PFD only after they are on top of the hull (or after they have attempted to get on top of the hull). It can be very difficult to get back into a rowing shell or on top of the hull once a PFD is inflated.

\*\* Best practice is to make 2-3 attempts to get into or onto the hull. If you are not successful after 2-3 attempts, inflate your PFD. Hang onto an oar for extra flotation. Trying to get back into or onto a boat can be physically exhausting, particularly in cold or rough water. In addition, physical exertion will speed the onset of hypothermia.

**PRIORITY: EXTRACTING THE COXIE**

Coxswains are particularly vulnerable as they are often wearing many layers of clothes that will become heavy when they are wet and they may be already cold. Their small body size also increases their vulnerability to hypothermia.

- The rower in bow seat must assist in getting the coxswain out of the bow.
- The coxswain's PFD must not be inflated (if they are wearing one) until they are out of the boat.
- The bow person will first assist the coxswain in getting on top of the hull before doing so themselves.