

Safety Report for NRC Executive March 2016

Club Audits

The computer system behind the 2015-16 Club Audits was changed from previous years. I'm still awaiting the results in a usable format; when I get it, I'll brief you all on the findings.

Safety Plans

Club and Event Safety Plans should be based on Risk Assessments; they should also be split into Barriers (to prevent an incident) and Controls (to minimise the consequences of an incident).

Incident

A recent incident in the region has highlighted the need to update risk assessments to take changing conditions into account. For example, Storm Desmond in December has changed some of our rivers, permanently changing the flow pattern on the Tyne at Hexham and depositing a large tree a mile upstream of Newburn Bridge. Please check that your Club Risk Assessments are up-to-date.

Collisions

Collisions are the main cause of injuries and boat damage; nationwide, two people per week are injured sufficiently to need to take several days away from training and each year quarter of a million pound is spent repairing the resulting damage to boats. Collisions are avoidable if crews follow the rules of the river and keep a good lookout. All crews should look around approximately every five strokes to ensure that there is nothing in their way. Also, if a crew is approaching you, call a warning; don't just sit quietly waiting to be hit.

Events (Regattas and Heads)

All events should use the new Risk Assessment format for 2016; I will help any organisers who are struggling to understand it.

Heel Restraints

The Rules of Racing have been updated from April 1st; heel restraints must now allow the heel to lift no more than 7cms (about the length of a cocktail stick). Please check your boats now; events are not obliged to give you time to make adjustments if you fail Control Commission checks at a regatta.

Boat Maintenance

Clubs and crews are responsible for the maintenance of their boats. Bow balls, heel restraints, hatch covers etc. should be checked before each outing, whether training or racing. Umpires at events simply ensure that boats comply with the Rules of Racing; they are not responsible for a crew's boat maintenance.

Feedback

If you have any comments on how safety issues are presented by British Rowing, please let me know. We are trying to get several messages on safety to all members of BR; are we doing it well? How could we improve what we do?

If you want further information on any of the above, please contact me.

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