

Aberdeen Head of the River events

Risk Assessment by Committee of the Dee (CofD)

In this document – ‘rower’ encompasses scullers and coxes; ‘he’ encompasses ‘she’ as appropriate.

Hazard	Likelihood	Control Measure
Slipping or falling into water whilst launching boats	unlikely	Ensure that steps are free of ice. Try to keep steps clear of boots and other obstructions which could cause tripping
Umpire or other official slipping into water whilst performing their allocated duty	unlikely	Any official who is at risk of immersion must be provided with a lifejacket and must wear it.
Damage to boats or injury to persons in boat handling area (grass play-park)	possible	Area to be kept as tidy as possible. Regatta control overlooks this area and will ask any club to move dangerously-situated equipment
Capsizing of a boat	possible	Primary responsibility rests with the rowers – they must know to stay with the boat and perform a head count to ensure that the entire crew is accounted for. Secondary responsibility will be for the nearest umpire to call for help on the radio and effect any rescue possible using launch, throw line etc. Safety of capsized rowers takes precedence over fair racing for other competitors. Minimum of one launch on water during racing (two desirable).
Sudden illness in a competitor, official or spectator.	unlikely	Any umpire can call regatta control for help or advice. In the case of serious acute illness, dialling 999 is also appropriate.
Adverse weather or water conditions threatening cancellation of the entire event (eg river frozen or in spate)	possible	Regatta committee will monitor situation in the days leading up to the event and post daily updates on CofD website. Aim to give crews as much notice as possible.
Adverse wind or water conditions causing problems in marshalling area above Victoria Bridge	likely	Ensure that number of land-based marshals reflects the conditions. Provide more marshals if difficult wind or stream. Consider cancelling events featuring younger or less-experienced competitors.
Insufficient water depth to allow racing to normal finish line	possible	Finish team will always contain an umpire experienced in the local conditions – he will make a decision about the depth of water and will shorten the course if required.
Adverse weather conditions with high wind-chill factor	possible	Primary prevention relies upon rowers wearing appropriate clothing for the conditions. Organising committee will assess weather conditions on the day and advise rowers of hazard.

In summary, safety depends on:

- Good communication, using radios (with mobile phones as a backup).
- Assessment of weather and water conditions by officials with local experience.
- Willingness to be flexible (eg shorten event, cancel junior events).
- Adequate number of officials.
- Common sense.
- Good communication (so important that we named it twice)