



MKRC Water Safety Code

Safety Advisor

MKRC shall appoint a Safety Advisor whose duty it will be to understand the notes and the requirements of the ARA Code of Practice for Water Safety and advise on their prominent display at all times, their observation and their implementation.

Telephone Numbers

There shall be prominently displayed in the Milton Keynes Clubhouse a list of vital telephone numbers relating to safety in general.

First Aid

Safety and First Aid equipment shall be readily available in the Clubhouse to include:
First Aid Box

- Thermal/exposure blankets
- Life buoys and rescue lines/throw-bags
- Lifejackets

Insurance

MKRC shall ensure that they carry and maintain adequate comprehensive insurance to cover personal injury to members on and off the water and personal injury and damage to property or third parties. There should be included in these policies adequate cover for the Safety Adviser.

Visual Aids

Visual aids on water safety, life saving and resuscitation procedures as may be provided by the ARA or by other organisations with the approval of the ARA, are to be displayed prominently in the clubhouse.

Navigation

MKRC who provide rowing or sculling facilities shall draw up and display a plan of the local waterway, drawing attention to the applicable navigation rules and any local interpretation required to accommodate particular hazards. Instructions shall be included on any variation in normal procedures necessary to combat tidal, stream, wind or other climatic conditions, which may arise locally.

Accident Log

An Accident Log is to be maintained and be available for inspection at all times, giving time, place and nature of accident, injuries/damages sustained and names and addresses of witnesses. All cases of accident involving

injury shall be notified in writing to the Regional Council and copied to ARA Headquarters using the standard pro-formas available.

Enforcement

Observance of these requirements is obligatory and the Safety Adviser will monitor their observance and advise on breaches to MKRC committee.

Equipment Maintenance

For the safety of all concerned, rowing equipment should be maintained in good order. Particular attention is to be paid to the following:

- 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. Where the construction or nature of the boat is such that the bow is properly protected or its shape does not present a hazard then this requirement need not apply.
- Heel restraints, and "quick-release" mechanisms must be in proper and effective working order in all boats equipped with fitted shoes.
- For evening outings, rowing after sunset, boats shall be fitted with lights as required by the "Rules for Mariners" published by the Department of Transport.
- Check oars and sculls to ensure that "buttons" are secure and properly set.
- Buoyancy compartments, bow and stern canvasses, etc., must be checked to ensure that they will function as intended.

Safety for the Individual

All active rowers and scullers shall:

- Satisfy their Medical Officer that they are in good health and be able to demonstrate that they can swim a minimum distance of 100 metres in light clothing and shoes.
- Comply with the ARA Code of Practice for water safety. Single scullers (apart from beginners on the water under supervision) are responsible for their own safety and actions and must observe the requirements of the ARA Code of Practice for water safety.
- Acquaint themselves fully with and obey rules of navigation both local and statutory.
- Logged every water training session in the Water Outings Log book to ensure the safety of all scullers and crews.
- Log every capsize incident and any accident that occurs, whether in water or land training, in the Accident Report Book.
- Maintain their rowing equipment in good order and check that it is in a safe condition before use.
- Ensure that beginners to the sport are not allowed to use equipment without adequate and prior instruction and are not allowed to boat unsupervised.
- Be constantly aware of the rights of others to the free use of the water and extend to them at all times the courtesy they would similarly wish to receive.
- It is recommended that active members should learn and practice capsize and accident drills. Every opportunity should be taken to learn simple first aid, life saving and resuscitation techniques.

Responsibilities of Steersperson and Coxswain

Steering a boat, in training or in a race is a highly responsible role, very often entrusted to young and inexperienced coxswains or rowers with little or no experience of steering. This role must be taken very seriously as all persons steering a boat are responsible for the crew in their charge.

Steersperson

The steersman is responsible for the actions of the boat being steered. Commands have to be given and discipline exerted. The following represents the knowledge that the steersperson must develop. A Steersperson must be able to:

- Learn and use simple commands for boat control both on and off the water. Use them correctly, clearly and instinctively. Understand the basic commands and signals of other river users.
- Understand and carry out all safety procedures and regulations applicable to the water they use, especially those relating to right of way, powerboats, sailing craft, etc.
- Understand and observe local navigation rules of the river or water.
- On unfamiliar water, become acquainted with local regulations and practices and of the existence, nature and location of particular hazards before going afloat.
- Be conversant with safety and rescue procedures in the case of an accident.
- Recognise and respect the rights and needs of other water users, especially anglers.
- Watch out for swimmers at all times.
- Watch out for unexpected floating objects.
- Know and have practised capsize and man overboard drills.

Coxswains

Coxswains should comply with all of the above as well as the following:

- Every coxswain shall be able to swim and to demonstrate that ability when called upon by the Safety Adviser.
 - All coxswains shall wear a lifejacket (conforming to 853595 standard) or buoyancy aid of approved design, when on the water both in training and in competition. Where coxswains are located in the bows of boats, care must be taken in the choice of lifejacket to ensure that the coxswain is not restricted when exiting from the boat.
 - All coxswains shall be able to satisfy their Safety Adviser that they are in good health with adequate vision and sound hearing. No one who is subject to epileptic fits or blackouts shall steer a boat. In cases of doubt, medical advice should be obtained.
 - Suitable dress must be worn for the prevailing conditions. Particular care should be taken to ensure warmth around the head, neck and lower back, wrists and ankles and the clothing should be water and windproof. Water resistant outer gloves are recommended, but bulky and heavy clothing and "Wellington" type boots are to be avoided.
 - Be aware of the dangers and symptoms of hypothermia.
 - Voice projection and radio communication equipment, when carried in the boat must be securely fixed to the boat, not the coxswain. Similarly, in competition, dead weights when required must not be attached to the coxswain.
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