

South African Rowing Officials Committee Guideline for Regatta Safety Officer Duties

Extracts from SAROC Handbook for Rowing Officials

Safety and fairness in competition are the fundamental role of Rowing Officials at regattas. This chapter examines issues relating to safety, which is the practice of minimizing (and, as far as possible, eliminating) factors that can cause injury to people or damage to equipment.

In order to maintain safety standards on the water at regattas, it is necessary for Officials to understand fully the potential dangers and difficulties faced by competitors, coaches, and themselves in terms of equipment, training and the environment. Furthermore, it is essential that Officials are fully conversant with all the protocols required to minimise these dangers.

2.4 Safety at Regattas

TRAFFIC RULES OF ROWING VENUES IN SOUTH AFRICA

All Officials should familiarize themselves with the traffic rules of each venue in South Africa. Knowledge of the traffic rules is imperative to ensure that the rules can be enforced to guard the safety of the crews.

INCIDENT RECORDS

All Officials should note any risk to the safety of the crews in the Incident Books to enable the Safety Commission to pro-actively address any potential risks to the safety crews.

ENFORCEMENT OF SAFETY RULES.

An official may not, under any circumstances, allow a crew on the water if the safety requirements as determined in the Rules of Racing are not complied with i.e. a boat may NEVER leave the jetty without a bow ball or securely fastened heel straps or compliance to the buoyancy requirements..

UNTOWARD WEATHER CONDITIONS.

The officials on the water must alert the President of the Jury/Regatta Control of untoward weather conditions and the safety of conditions for rowing. Cognizance should be taken of the skills level of the crews. An Umpire may not allow a race to start if, in his/her opinion the weather conditions place crews as risk.

The Duties of the Regatta Safety Officer are not onerous and are mainly to help ensure the safety standards are met and it must be pointed out they are not the sole responsibility of the Safety Officer but all Officials are tasked with helping ensure safety.

Note: as the Regatta Safety Officer it is important you attend any Officials briefing and have a thorough knowledge of the Regatta Course and Land Arrangements and know the local regatta rules (Preferably liaise with the organising committee prior to the regatta). Liaise with Regatta Control at the start and end of the regatta to ensure all Safety Issues are recorded and followed up.

If possible inspect the course prior to the regatta starting to check for any obstacles, floating or fixed, that could damage boats, check launching and landing facilities for potential risks and the land arrangements that there is clear access for boats, people and emergency vehicles & that the relevant signage is in place..

Specific Tasks or Duties

- If you don't know the venue go on an inspection visit at least 2 weeks before the regatta is due to take place and inspect the water and land facilities preferably with someone from the organizing committee, paying specific attention to:
 1. Any potential hazards on the water and controls in place to ensure a wake free, safe course.
 2. Satisfactory traffic rules with safe warm up zones
 3. Safe and secure launching & landing facilities
 4. Adequate and clean ablutions
 5. Proper storage for Boats, Equipment and Trailers
 6. Adequate area for Athletes
 7. Secure and safe Parking and viewing for Spectators
 8. Review security arrangements and any flammable stores are properly managed
- Ensure that "Appropriate Land and Water based safety" are in place before the regatta commences.
- Ensure all boats used to assist in the regatta are manned by competent Pilots and have correct safety equipment on board
- Consult with Land based paramedics to determine the positioning of the ambulance.
- Ensure that the Lightning detector is operational at Regatta Control.
- Give his/her contact number to the paramedics and regatta control and request that he/she be contacted in the event of an emergency and become a part of the decision making process.
- Assist in making decisions regarding all safety issues at a regatta, paying particular attention to the weather i.e. lightning and launching and landing areas for boats
- Determine when the paramedics can leave the regatta. The paramedics will require the Safety officer to sign them off. Officials will thus assume responsibility for allowing the paramedics to leave the regatta.
- Monitor that the paramedics keep a detailed "patient report sheet" which must include; Name of patient, Club / School, Condition and treatment. Remember though that patient confidentiality must be kept at all times
- Ensure that the paramedics are requested and encouraged to provide a "medical note" should they deem a rower unfit to continue rowing.
- Check the Venue and report all concerns to regatta control.
- Ensure that appropriate ballast is used by coxes, as defined in the RowSA Rules of Racing.
- Ensure that any motor boats used in the regatta comply with the SAMSA regulations.
- Ensure that the organizing committee has drawn up and had approved the disaster medical plan
- Ensure that any additions/changes to the regatta draw/crews allows sufficient warm up time for rowers such as not to cause potential injury problems to themselves or others
- Ensure that the regatta is put on hold until any potential hazard / collision obstacle is properly removed from the course or other rowing areas.

After the regatta write report specifying any incidents that had occurred and recommendations for future regattas.