



FALSE CREEK ROWING CLUB

ROWING & SAFETY HANDBOOK

Rowers Version

Take care while you row with us.

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WELCOME TO THE FALSE CREEK ROWING CLUB

The False Creek Rowing Club (FCRC) is a non-profit, amateur athletic club centrally located in the heart of Vancouver. Established in 2008, nestled in Vanier Park on Canada's most accessible urban waterway.

The False Creek and English Bay are home waters for our club, as well as the Vancouver College Rowing Program, Salish Sea Rowing Club, outrigger canoe clubs, dragon boaters and other non-motorized water sports, along with powered, sailing, marine ferry and commercial vessels. Previously home to the University of British Columbia, St George's School and Thunderbird rowing clubs it has had many years of being a home to rowing in Vancouver. FCRC is also proud to carry on the tradition of exposing people to rowing programs at the junction between English Bay and False Creek.

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook outlines the procedures and safety policies to be followed by our members who are actively rowing on the creek, including those who are coaches, participants in the rowing programs and social members who store boats at FCRC. This handbook supports the standards of Rowing Canada Aviron (RCA) and Transport Canada (TC) Regulations. Each member of FCRC is responsible for knowing and adhering to the TC Regulations, especially those applicable to rowing.

Rowing Canada Aviron Safety Guidelines

<http://rowingcanada.org/coaching-and-umpiring/rowing-safety>

Transport Canada's Operation of a human powered craft:

<https://www.tc.gc.ca/en/services/marine/getting-started-safe-boating/operating-human-powered-craft.html>

Hours of Operation

The compound at the FCRC is open to members at all times. Rowers are to be off the water before civil twilight in the evening. Rowing in the afternoons of fireworks days is not allowed. Weather and environmental conditions may also require us to not be rowing: more on this later. The paddling community also has a number of events on the Creek that need to be respected by members to facilitate a safe environment.

ROWING AT FCRC

Boathouse and Dock Rules

The following rules are for the FCRC storage and launch area:

Keep Premises Clean and Orderly

- FCRC encourages pride in its facility by maintaining an orderly and tidy boathouse and grounds, through daily or weekly means, as deemed appropriate by the Equipment Manager. Work parties and/or regular maintenance tasks will be organized and participation by all athletes is expected.

Storage

- All shells and blades shall be stored neatly in the proper manner in the racks assigned to them by the Equipment Manager.
- Launches shall be stored neatly in their assigned locations so as to minimize damage and inconvenience.

Docks/Wet Launching

- Launching will typically have right of way over landing. Unless a boat is to go back out again and the crew is ready by the dock side, the boat should be removed from the water to meet its new crew.
- Crews should be ready to row with all crew members present and oars and safety equipment on the launch/dock **BEFORE** bringing the shell down. All shells shall dock and launch as quickly as possible. All gear and equipment shall be removed from the docks following a workout.
- As the launch area is shared with boaters and coach boats, aim to keep the shells off the dock so boaters and coach boats can fit in. Do not create conflict.

Wet Launching Instructions (east boat launch)

- Carry down oars and equipment and leave on the paved ramp, close to the beach and away from the dock.
- It is recommended to launch on the east beach and not the paved launch ramp.
- Bring boat down and place in water being aware of the fin and water depth. While someone holds the boat, others can gather oars.
- Use the beach to the east side of our dock first, before using the beach between the two docks and the east launch ramp in periods of high traffic.
- If launching a boat, with pontoons, wide body or low riggers, such as a Maas, launch from a sandy beach to prevent damage to the boat.
- 8+'s should avoid using the beach between the docks.

Appropriate Clothing for Wet Launching

- Though it is not required it is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** that rowers purchase some tall rubber boots that can easily be folded and stored behind riggers or under seat in the hull. Not only do tall rubber boots reduce time fumbling with drying feet off and/or putting on socks, they also help avoid cold related injuries and infections.
- In the summer the fecal count has been known to increase in parts of False Creek: make yourself aware of the counts to protect yourself from related infections.
 - <http://www.vch.ca/public-health/environmental-health-inspections/pools-beaches/beach-water-quality-reports>
- In the winter, prolonged exposure to cold water may cause damage to skin and nerves.

- In winter, booties are not recommended as feet will still get wet during launch and tend not to warm up significantly during the row.

Security

- All athletes and coaches shall be responsible to ensure that boathouse security works. All athletes shall have access to the facility.
- The gate and shed doors must be securely closed once all crews are off the water. Check first to see if other athletes are still out, then secure the gate and shed if not in use. IF IN DOUBT, SECURE.
- While boats are on the water, a pair of stretchers should be left in front of the boathouse. This is to indicate that someone is out there, to stop people parking in front of the gate and to provide a place to put down your boat when you return from rowing.

Equipment Rules

- Authorized Use: No coach or athlete shall use equipment without the proper authorization as determined by the coach, Equipment Manager or President.
- When rowing a shell, the shell must be signed out and in using the log found in the shed. This includes private shells.
- We do not have a reservation system for boats. Please work with other members rowing at that time to find the most effective use of equipment for you.
- During program time spots, all clubs boats must be available.

Handling the Shell

- The coxswain/bow person is in charge on land and water. Two types of commands will be given, A) Preparation B) Execution.
- Take your time when moving the shell. Coxswain/bow person/coach should point out any problems before and during the action (e.g. "watch the rigger" "keep it on shoulders").
- Boats should all be carried bow forward so that they are launched bow first and returned to the storage area bow first. Singles and doubles are stored with bows facing the street, and 4 and 8's are stored with the bows towards the back of the compound.
- With coxed boats, the coxswain/coach walks with the bow, looking forward and around for possible problems. The first two athletes are responsible for the front of the shell. All athletes should be alert to potential problems. The last athlete is responsible for the trailing end.
- Position stretchers properly to balance shell and avoid fin or splashguard damage.

8+: between riggers 1&2 and 7&8 under riggers 1 and 4

4+/4x/4-: at 1 and 4 seat positions

2-/2x/1x: on the deck of the boat, avoiding putting the boat down on the steering cabling.

- On the dock, keep your toes on the edge while lowering the shell or taking it out (with one hand in and one hand under). This prevents the shell from hitting the dock. Coxswain/coach/stern person stands at the fin pushing the shell away from the edge to avoid hitting the fin. Keep the shell away from the dock's edge at all times and lean away when shoving off or landing to keep riggers above the dock. When getting into or exiting the shell, do not let the riggers take the weight on the dock!
- Landing at the dock: All athletes should be alert and watching their dockside oar as the shell approaches the dock. Lean away when commanded and raise the oar to clear the dock. All landings should be at slow speed; courtesy and cooperation being the rule. Move the shell as far down the dock as possible to permit others to dock or launch.

- When wet launching the boat, walk down to the water, at the water's edge turn to be parallel, walk the boat in the water, raise the boat above heads then in one movement roll the boat to the water side then lower into the water. Avoid rolling the boat directly into the water as riggers need to clear prior to boat being lowered.
- When landing, place a hand on each gunnel while facing the stern, then in one fluid movement, raise the boat to the shoulder then up and over. Split and stern walk out of the water first.

Care and Maintenance of Equipment

- People shall report equipment damage promptly by completing a yellow damage tag and attaching it to the shell. Never row with broken equipment. Damage tags can be found near the log book in the boathouse. Note: Athletes are responsible for assisting Equipment Manager with the repairs. All athletes are responsible for the care of the shells they row, including washing shells inside and out, and oars after each time the shell is taken out on the water.
- Boats must comply with the Rowing Canada Aviron Rules of Racing in terms of safety at all times: this includes ensuring that bow balls exceed the minimum size and are in good condition, heel ties have less than 7 cm of play and all shoes can be released with a single hand motion.
- Oars
 - a. Sweep: carry one in each hand, not in bundles, Scull: two in one hand if preferred
 - b. place on dock/launch, side by side, not piled
 - c. place on the ground, convex side up to protect paint
 - d. do not scrape oars across dock when launching/docking
 - e. Avoid getting any sand on the handles or collars to protect delicate surfaces.
- Cox Boxes
 - a. coxswains and coaches only are authorized to handle Cox boxes
 - b. connections are sensitive so make sure you know what you are doing, never pull the wires
 - c. weekly: lightly clean and oil plugs and connections
 - d. do not leave lying around where clumsy feet can kick or step on. Protect this expensive and necessary equipment at all times
- Daily check all nuts and bolts before and during each row. Never row with a loose foot stretcher or rigger. Each athlete shall keep their place in good condition, doing small repairs after talking with their coach. Major repairs shall be coordinated by the Equipment Manager. Coxswains and athletes should always have a basic rowing tool kit handy. (7/16 or adjustable wrench, multipurpose screwdriver, electrician's tape, pliers).
- All shells must be rinsed and wiped down after each row.
- Weekly: Cleaning and lubricating shall be done by athletes. Thoroughly wash assigned shells and oars. Check for damage or loose parts. Tidy up deck and sweep boathouse. Lubricate bearing based wheels.
- Labeling: All removable parts are to be labelled for their shell location. Pirating is forbidden except in emergencies, after prior permission from the Coach. Pirated parts MUST be returned to the original shell and the broken/lost part reported on the white board and via email.
- Parts Cabinet: The coaches and Equipment Manager will have access to parts in order to control inventory. A well-stocked cabinet represents a large investment. Attention to proper care will reduce pressure on parts replacement costs.
- Storage: Always store equipment (oars, shells, stretchers, tools, gas tanks, etc.) in the designated places. After the row, put away all equipment used (coach boats, engines, life jackets, water hose, stretchers, cleaning supplies etc.)

Clean the gunnels and wheels before and after a row. Wet launching means sand will find its way into the boat and left unattended causes irreversible damage in one row.

- **Shell Cleaning:** Due to wet launching and an open shell bay, it is impossible to keep sand from getting in the boats. Sand gets into the tracks and the wheel and destroys them within a single use. To maintain boats in the best operating condition it is recommended to:
 - Give the tracks and seat wheels a wipe before launching.
 - Wash the boats upon return paying special attention to the rails and seats wheels.
 - Use a clean cloth to roll the wheels
 - It may seem obsessive, but one grain of sand wedged into a wheel will pit the rails and even if removed result in a noticeable 'bump' as the wheel rolls back and forth in gunnel. Treat them like your personal boats.

SAFETY AT FCRC

Safety is the responsibility of rowers, coaches, instructors, and coxswains. Included in this handbook are the safety rules that apply both on and off the water. Each active rowing member will have access to an electronic copy of the FCRC Rowing and Safety Handbook through our website and understand its contents prior to participating in rowing. All athletes and coaches in FCRC rowing programs shall be offered instruction in safety procedures prior to involvement in rowing.

It is the responsibility of all members/athletes to ensure they are aware of all safety procedures, safe boat handling, safe beaching/docking locations, danger spots, obstructions, features specific to False Creek, and understand water emergency procedures prior to involvement in rowing.

Participants, and all members (including rowers, coxswains, coaches) are required to provide confirmation that they can swim and have read the FCRC's Rowing and Safety Handbook.

All athletes and coaches shall respect the rights of other users of False Creek and obey the rowing course rules established by FCRC, the Canadian Coast Guard, and the City of Vancouver (either directly, through the Parks Board or its agencies and departments). Athletes and coaches shall be aware of and remain courteous to other users at all times.

General Safety Considerations

False Creek is home to thousands of boats. In addition, there are vessel docks located along the rowing course with several large charter motor vessels, ferries and barges. Both power and sail vessels enter and exit the area and rowers must be aware that vessel movement may occur at any time. Rowers should listen for engines, warning blasts as vessels leave their berths, and keep track of boat movements.

Important - Wear bright colours at all times on the water, carry a whistle, and have a personal floatation device on board for each person in shell or boat. Note that whistles cannot be heard more than 15 metres away, but are an obligation under the law.

City of Vancouver, Transport Canada, VPD Restrictions

Read Transport Canada's Boater Safety Guide: <https://www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/marinesafety/TP-511e.pdf>

- *KNOW THE REGULATIONS* The [Canada Shipping Act, 2001](#) is the law that, along with its regulations, governs pleasure craft. It includes the requirements that govern the conduct of all vessels. The regulations affecting pleasure craft under this law include:
 - [Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations](#);
 - [Small Vessel Regulations](#);
 - [Collision Regulations](#);
 - [Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations](#);
 - and [Vessel Pollution and Dangerous Chemicals Regulations](#).
- *Canada's Criminal Code also applies to boating. Activities like operating a boat while impaired, failing to stop at the scene of an accident and operating an unseaworthy boat are crimes.*
- *REMEMBER: Because boating laws change from time to time, make sure you have the most current information. If the SAFE BOATING GUIDE differs from the regulations, always follow the regulatory text. To learn more about regulations, use the direct links in the CONTACT INFORMATION AND REFERENCES section of this guide.*
- *Regulations set a minimum safety standard. Following them or an even higher standard will help make every trip a safe one. Note: As the owner or operator of a pleasure craft, you may also be required to*

comply with additional regulations and/or laws that are specific to a sector (e.g. the Canada National Marine Conservation Areas Act).

There is a 10km/hr speed limit inside False Creek. The limit must be obeyed by all vessels under power unless they are operating as the safety vessel accompanying a rowing shell practicing for a sanctioned competition.

The speed limit does not apply to human powered vessels, but it does apply to Coaches launches: Coach boats not accompanying rowing shells must not exceed the posted speed limit.

All operators of coach or safety boats must have their Pleasure Craft Operators Card with them.

Transport Canada Coast Guard regulations change from time to time – lack of knowledge of a law is not a legal defense: it is part of your civic duty to have an understanding of the laws that are likely to impact you. However, pressing your point on the water may result in damage and injury to your or another party.

Specifically related to False Creek, all official competitions must be permitted by Transport Canada as per the restrictions on the waterway indicated by Transport Canada. This will likely include notifications to other bodies, and obtaining sanction from Rowing Canada Aviron and permits from the Vancouver Parks Board.

General Waterway traffic

During the summer months it gets very busy. Afternoons and weekends on hot summer days can be un-rowable for smaller sculls. Watch out for dragon boats who can get very numerous nearing their end of June festival. Rowing is not allowed on Celebration of Light fireworks nights (July- August, search online for Vancouver Celebration of Light for dates).

Transport Canada's Vessel Operating Restriction Regulations are designed for open water, and not for busy near shore waterways. Operate as though no one is obligated to give way to you. Regardless of who technically has the "right of way", you will likely lose any encounter and you or your vessel may be damaged or written off.

Using a mirror attached to a hat to assist you in seeing behind you is helpful provided it gives you sufficient field of view to see what is front of your boat, and what will be in front of your boat shortly.

Ferries or water taxis

There are two companies that operate out of False Creek, The False Creek Ferries (blue) and Aquabus (rainbow). The level of training and alertness of the drivers may vary on any given day. For the most part the drivers are quite competent but their courses are erratic, they navigate through anchored boats then pop out unexpectedly, pull out of hidden docks quickly and loiter in the middle of the creek waiting for a pickup.

Watch out for them. They might also be the one to rescue you in an accident.

Buoys...

Are out to get you. Red and green buoys are placed in the Creek and English Bay to guide boaters into the navigation channel. While they define the boundaries of where we can row generally, they are also themselves a hazard to rowers. Though they are plastic and may cause minimal damage to rower and shell when struck they can simply be irritating. They can also break oars and cause you to flip. As the tide can rise up to 15 feet, at low tide there is a lot of extra anchor line for the buoys. As such, buoys may float into the middle of the Creek.

Due to tide changes, buoys can float directly into rowing paths. Pay close attention on your next row.

On your warm-up into Science world, make a mental note of where the buoys are located for the day. Knowing that if the tide is low and current changes, then may move upwards of 40 feet.

Barge being towed to/from the cement factory

The cement factory located on the South side of the creek just east of the Granville Bridge has a barge port that is used to bring in/remove large amounts of rock and sand.

When barges are being towed with a full load, they can take hundreds of feet to stop. As they are also without rudder it is very difficult for them to change course. Stay out of their way.

Fully loaded barges being towed can take hundreds of feet to stop. Do not attempt to row in front of or stop in front of a moving barge.

Weather Considerations – When in doubt – don't go out!

All athletes and coaches shall be aware of the potential danger from darkness, fog, high winds, ice, cold water, storms and any combination of the above. Coaches shall be responsible for determining if conditions are too dangerous to row due to any of the above circumstances. No athlete shall be required to row against his/her better judgment should conditions be questionable.

Wind or waves coming from the West, particularly from West North West, can create white caps past the end of the dock and members may not row with flatwater rowing equipment.

General guidelines of when to go out

Weather permitting, the best time to row is early morning from 5:30-7:30am. There is a micro-climate on False Creek and weather tends to lighten up during this time in winter months. The creek does get busy with a lot of ferries/boats and when wind picks up it can be a bit choppy. It is typically safe for 8+, 4x, 4+ to go out anytime while 2x and 1x should avoid mid to late afternoons in the summer.

Know Weather and Water Conditions

Always check the weather and water conditions before going out on the water. You can check out both on Rowing BC web site even before coming to the boathouse by going to [Environment Canada](http://EnvironmentCanada.ca). Remember that the weather can change much more quickly and more violently on the water.

All athletes and coaches shall be aware of the potential danger from darkness, fog, high winds, ice, cold water, storms and any combination of the above. Athletes shall be responsible for determining if conditions are too dangerous to row due to any of the above circumstances. If a coach determines that it is inappropriate to row at any given moment, their decision applies to all rowers at that time and they enter that decision in the log book. All members are asked to use common sense about going rowing in wind, hot and cold weather conditions.

- No athlete shall be required to row against his/her better judgment should conditions be questionable.
- Never leave the dock when there are white-capped waves or waves over 1 foot
- Never leave dock if you hear thunder or expect lightning.

- Never leave the dock in foggy conditions if visibility falls below 1,000 meters. You should be able to see the Inukshuk from the dock.
- Never go out if the flag is flying 90 degrees to the Vanier Park pole without relaxing.

Check the Flag!

The launch area around Vanier Park can be windy while the area in east of the Burrard Bridge can be a lot calmer. A good quick check, if the large Canadian flag on Vanier Park (directly across from the boat bay about 100 meters) is 90 degrees to the pole without relax, then it is likely too windy to go out for any sized boat. If the flag is at 45 degrees then it likely possible to go out. The launch may be a little rough but will likely be calmer once past the bridges. Note: Whenever it is rough do not go into the bay.

If the Canadian flag (across from the boat bay) is 90 degrees to the pole, do not go out. If the flag is 45 degrees, then it is possible to go into the creek, everything else is usually ok with good judgment.

There is a web cam pointed to the area of the dock: <http://www.katkam.ca/> that can help you see what's happening before you arrive onsite.

PERSONAL SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT AND SUPERSEDES THE SAFETY OF EQUIPMENT. Should unsafe conditions occur during training, athletes are directed to row for the nearest accessible shoreline/dock and get off the water. The shell(s) shall be removed from the water and placed upside down on the riggers and out of the wind if possible while the athletes await rescue.

Rowing in Hot Weather

- Heat exhaustion and dehydration are the primary dangers.
- Maintain a high fluid level - bring 50% more water than you think you need. A wet hat will keep the body cooler.
- Wear sunglasses to reflect the glare and plenty of sunscreen.

Rowing in Cold Weather

- To protect against the cold, rowers and coxswains should wear layers of clothes, removing and adding as the need arises. Neoprene base layers are recommended.
- Pogies are specialized rowing mittens that cover the oar handle and the hands but still enable the rowers to grip the handle with their bare hands. They are available from [RowWest](#).
- Sunglasses will protect your eyes from glare, spray, and cold wind.

Rowing in Wet Weather

- A single layer of water repellant fabric will stop most of the rain and waves.
- Wet weather and wind on a cold day is of the greatest concern because heat loss will increase.
- Wool and technical fabric wicks water away from the body and retains more body heat than cotton.

Rowing before Sunrise

FCRC offers the ability for early morning rows. This makes rowing accessible to many as they can row prior to work. Rowing in the dark is permissible for rowers with experience on the Creek and or accompanied by a coach boat. Though the sun is up early during the summer, much of the year sunrise isn't till after 7am meaning that a 5:30am row will have most time spent in darkness.

Ferries begin operating around 6:30am in the fall/winter and at times have a difficult time seeing rowers, and rowers will have a difficult time seeing them.

The specific requirements are:

- Bow/Cox: must have familiarity rowing in the creek.
- Must have Red/Green/White lights on in the boat.
- Flashing bike lights are discouraged as the light bounces off the water and makes it difficult to pinpoint shell location. They are also not designed for being immersed in water and will fail quickly as a result.

Keep quiet where possible and avoid stopping and creating noise in front of the house boats just past Granville Bridge. There are thousands of people living just off the creek in Vancouver, let's keep them supporting early morning rows in the community.

Rowing without a coach

When rowing without a coach, coast guard regulations apply. It is encouraged to pair up with a partner boat where possible. **At a minimum, each boat requires an approved personal flotation device for each person and whistle.** Lights may be required depending on time of day.

Rower's Safety Responsibilities

Before leaving the dock each rower should make a personal "Risk assessment". Examples of these questions include:

- Am I healthy and not overtired for a row today?
- Am I dressed properly for the weather and for safety?
- Do I have my lifejacket or PFD on me or in the shell?
- Do I have my whistle?
- Is the shell in good order?
 - Hatches closed
 - oarlocks tightened
 - Bow ball in good condition
 - The heels of any shoes cannot be lifted more than 7 cm?
 - The shoes can be undone with one hand?
- Is there a coach boat in attendance?
- Will there be someone around to summon help if necessary?
- Are there obvious hazards on the water? (i.e.: tourist boats, other vessels, logs and debris in the water)
- Is my rowing technique up to the current water conditions?
- Am I clear about safe havens along the rowing venue?

If the answer is NO to any of these questions, fix what can be corrected or consider not rowing that day.

While rowing, follow a routine to minimize risks of an "accident". Examples include:

- Warm up on the water.

- Look around for other on water non-motorized users, sail or motor vessel traffic.
- Keep an eye on the location of the coach boat.
- Check behind you every 3-5 strokes.
- If possible, row with a buddy or do not leave the pack.
- Re-check the water and wind conditions – are you still able to row well if these have changed?
- Know where other rowers are on the waterway.

Rowers Personal Equipment

- Each athlete must wear bright colours at all times on the water
- Each boat must have an athlete who has a whistle
- Each athlete must have a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) on board unless being attended by a coach boat carrying the requisite number of PFD's during the entire rowing session.

Rowing Clothing

- Appropriate clothing is mandatory for safety and visibility. All athletes and coxswains shall wear bright clothing to ensure visibility of the shell, particularly during low-light conditions.
- It is recommended that each athlete bring a complete change of dry clothing to each workout during the winter months. This is a requirement for novice rowers. Note: This is a good precaution in the event of a mishap and it is wise practice for athletes to change into dry clothing after every workout for obvious health reasons.
- During the winter months it is recommended that athletes wear multiple layers of clothing to reduce heat loss. Polypropylene or washable wool are highly recommended for underwear as an insulating layer. Exposure to chilling cold when fatigued can lead to cold, influenza, etc.
- It is recommended that each athlete have a wool or polypropylene hat in the shell while on the water during the winter months (November through February) and a sun hat in the shell during the summer months (May through September).

Coxswain/Bow Person's Safety Responsibilities

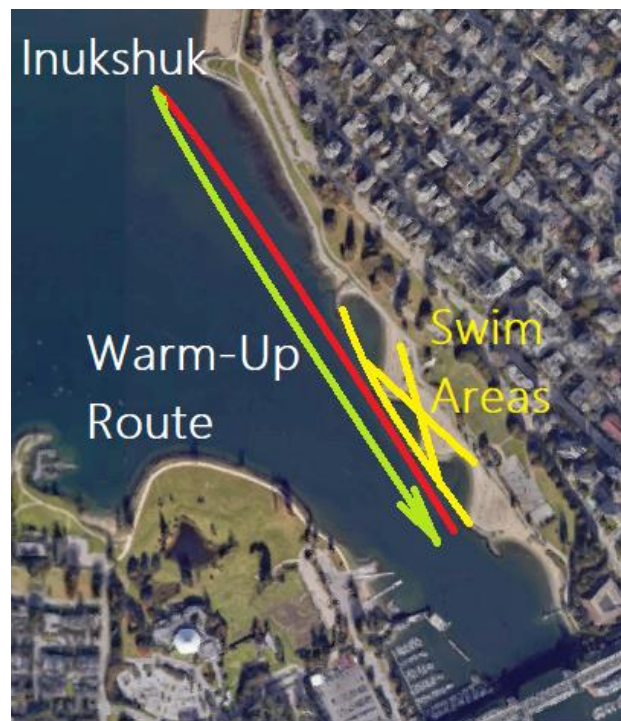
- From a Transport Canada perspective, the coxswain or in their absence, the bow person is the boat's Captain and is responsible for the actions of that boat.
- Leads their crew on and off the water as well as steers the shell. Cox's play an essential role in maintaining a calm and purposeful manner when working out on the water and in case of emergencies.
- Maintains the safety of the rowers by appropriate launching, steering and landing practices.
- Ensures safety by providing leadership in the general care of the equipment in use.
- Communicates with the coach and transmits the coaches' messages to the crew.
- Coxswains are in charge of an emergency and rescue situation - deferring to the coach when the coach boat arrives on the scene.
- Bow persons perform similar roles in coxless shells.

Coxswains or Bow person's Signals

Emergency Signal (International Distress Signal): Wave both hands over your head. Use only for serious trouble. Use sound device (whistle) to signal for help.

Non-Emergency: Launch help required - wave one arm over your head. Go on by - wave one arm in a throwing fashion.

Rowing Flow Pattern



Group Practice Warm Up Pattern:

- Do not launch before the coach boat is started and ready to go.
- After launching and crossing to the north side of the False Creek join in the warm up loop while waiting for the rest of the boats to launch.

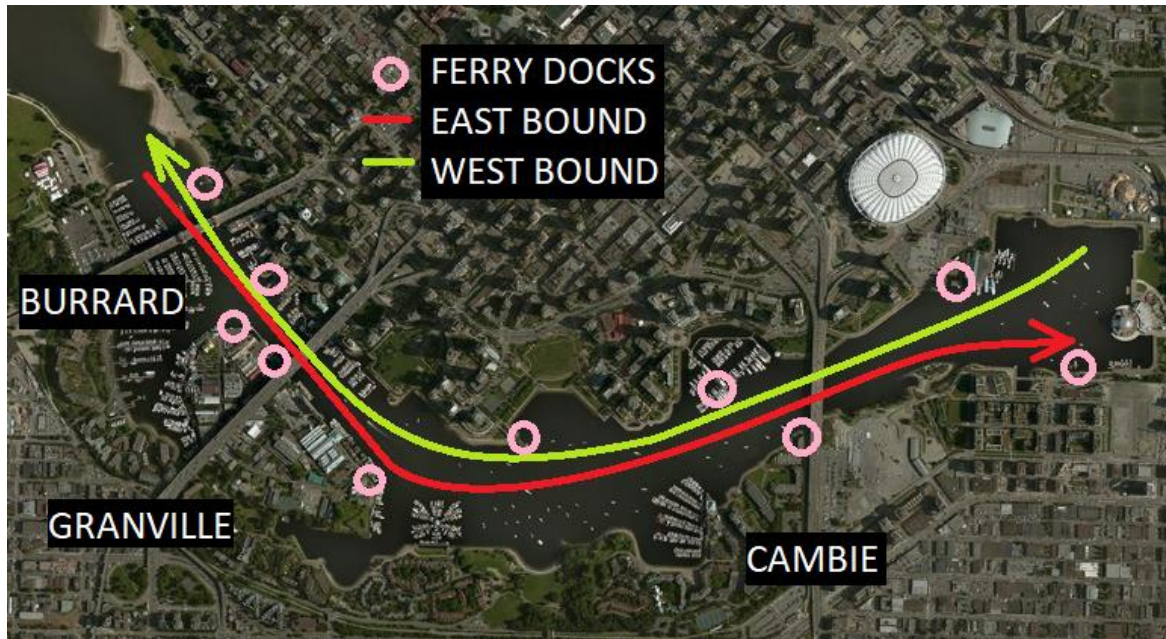
- Beware of oncoming traffic, and boats transiting between False Creek and English Bay.
- In front of our docks the direction of traffic is random. Motorized boats will stay on the northside going west and on the south side going east. Human powered boats will be moving randomly: kayaks, stand up paddleboards, outrigger canoes, regular canoes, and dragon boats. I have seen swimmers out there too. Be careful.

Inside the Creek Rowing Pattern:

- Do not stop under any bridge: these are the most congested and narrowest parts of the course. And stay away from the centre of the channel under the Burrard Street and Granville Bridges and keep moving.
- Do not race through the area from the Burrard Street Bridge to the Granville Street Bridge: this is the busiest area of the Creek. You need to have awareness of ferries, particularly the Aquabus shuttling from their dock to the Hornby dock on the North side and the Granville Island Ferries coming out of their dock on the west side of the Island going to the Aquatic Centre. The exception to this is during the regatta when permits have been obtained.
- As with any rowing, keep the starboard side close to shore throughout the creek. As the creek curves, shells will need to adjust several times. A good tip for steering is to get lined up with where you want to go, then find a point on the shore behind the boat to align the stern to. In general, it is recommended to shoulder check every 3 - 5 strokes on alternate sides.
- In the East Basin between the Cambie Bridge and Science World, do not row straight in and straight out on the same line – please review the maps.. Returning westward on the south side, or anywhere in the Creek, will put you in conflict with a large amount of traffic.
- In Alder Bay, on the South East side of Granville Island, there is a very protected area of water that is great for performing drills in flat water. Watch out for the paddlers operating from the Granville Island Community Centre. Maintain a counter-clockwise traffic flow (as viewed from above).
- If finishing your row, do not stop at or under the Granville or Burrard Bridge: simply continue on past Burrard Bridge, stop on the north side of the creek opposite the Vanier Park launch, turn 90 degrees and row across.
- In general, it is recommended to perform a warm-up from our dock to, then past, the Granville Street Bridge at the side of the course then remove any extra clothing there.

Avoid cutting across the creek. Due to the arch in the creek, it is very easy to cut across the creek. Unfortunately, doing so can bring you head-on into the opposite boat path. As there are other clubs rowing and other boat traffic, this can create a dangerous situation.

Use caution between Granville and Burrard Bridges. The area is highly active and typically a little choppy for smaller boats.



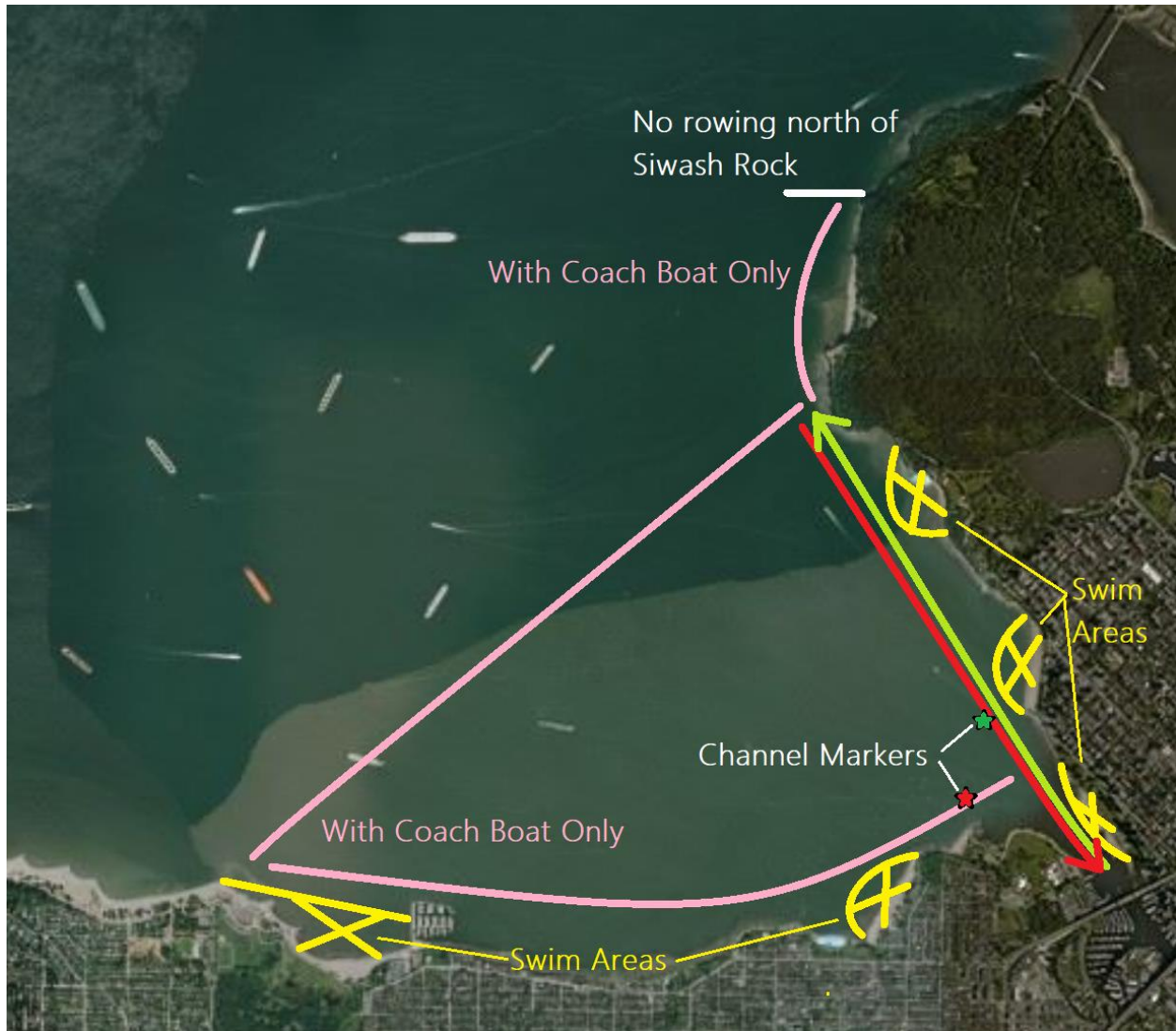
Rowing into English Bay

Rowing out into the bay can be very beautiful, quiet and straight. From spring to fall, there may be rollers which make it difficult for smaller craft (2x, 2-, 1x). It can still be a beautiful row, though may not be the time to focus on technique.

Going into the bay should only be attempted with no, or low wind, or, if slightly windy, then only in quads or eights with a coach boat. Winds coming out of the West will drive up significant chop on English Bay and rowing on English Bay should then be avoided.

If starting from the Vanier Park launch, launch and cross over to the North side and row out into the bay.

- Watch out for a small plastic white 10km/h buoy marker at the mouth of the creek. Striking one may not cause damage but may still provide a swim test for you.
- Avoid entering all swim areas.
- The channel markers are 3 metres high and made of solid metal: they will break hulls and oars if hit.
- Row towards the tip of Stanley Park.
- Rowing away from the edge of Stanley Park or around the point should only be done when accompanied by a safety boat and when there are no vessels causing wake on English Bay.
- Traffic may approach you at any time, particularly returning rowers from our club or others in the area.
- Stay out of the swim areas. Triathletes in black wetsuits may be out at any time of the year.
- When you get to the mouth, watch out for another white plastic 10 km/hr buoy. Row past it and in past the Vanier Park docs. Either stop and turn into the dock, turn and cross to the North side and go back out again or continue on to Granville Island and Science world for an extra long row.



Tankers in the Bay

The tankers in bay are waiting for a spot to dock at the international port. Besides using common sense around large boats, shells must stay a minimum of 300 feet away from the tankers at all times. The tankers have not cleared customs and are therefore treated as international vessels with a separate set of rules and regulations.

Anchored Boats

There are many anchored boats in the creek, watch out for anchor lines sticking out and the late night mooring tourist who may have inadvertently parked in the middle of the channel. In general, the summer months attract more boats, with a peak during the fireworks. During the fireworks the area around Science World is typically packed full of boats.



This is where boats ought to be anchored. In many cases, this is wishful thinking, so pay attention to both sides. Please report any vessel illegally dumping materials in the Creek to the authorities or the FCRC Board and take pictures if you are able.

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Emergency Communications

Marine Communications

Coaches must carry a cell phone for emergency communication.

For any emergency requiring external assistance TELEPHONE 911, and state the following: Which agency required (Police, Ambulance, Fire, Coast Guard). If you just require the Marine Police and it is an emergency, call 604-665-9346.

1. Your name and location: FALSE CREEK ROWING CLUB, FALSE CREEK, BURRARD CIVIC MARINA, Vanier Park
2. A concise description of the event
3. Any need for water rescue

Any incidents involving outside agencies or authorities, non-FCRC vessels or property, injury or harm sustained by athletes or substantial damage to shells must be documented in an Incident Form and the Safety Officer notified. This Incident Form is found in a red binder above the shell sign out shelf.

Cell Phones

*16 on some cell phones will directly call the Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Service Centers. (*16 service is provided by Telus, but not by Fido or Virgin)

Note: cell phones are not a reliable substitute for a marine radio and not the best means of issuing a distress call. Cell phones can lose reception or get wet and damaged. Calling from your cell phone does not alert other vessels close to you that you are in distress. Unlike VHF transmissions, some wireless phone signals cannot be followed back to your location by rescuers. The Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons provide training regarding the use of VHF radios. <http://www.cps-ecp.ca/>

Non-Emergency Contact Numbers

Contact Vancouver Police Department Marine Division: 604-717-3744

Nearest Hospitals:

St. Paul's Hospital

1081 Burrard Street

604-682-2344 (main switchboard only)

Vancouver Hospital

855 West 12th Avenue

604-875-4111 (main switchboard only)

Other Non-Emergency Numbers:

Harbour Patrol: 604-665-9086

Ambulance: 604-872-5151

Fire Department: 604-665-6000

Police: 604-717-3321

Boating Safety: 604-666-0146

Weather (taped message): 604-664-9032

APPENDIX A – ROWER AND COACHES WATER EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

The objective of a Water Emergency Action Plan:

1. To save life
2. To prevent injury
3. To minimize damage to equipment

Emergency scenario examples:

Rower Overboard!

1. Emergency action by the rower overboard:

- If an event occurs which begins to lead to a rower(s) out of the boat, relax and try to balance the boat first. Hold onto the oars.
- If you sense that in a few seconds you will fall into water, use the few moments to mentally take control - you know what to do, so do it!
- Avoid jumping into cold water - try to slide into the water
- If possible, take a deep breath before hitting the water
- Be prepared for the shock of cold water
- Try to keep your face out of the water - keep your back to the waves
- Try to keep water away from nose and throat
- Don't be frightened if you feel disoriented or gasping for air, it will pass
- As soon as possible get your bearings - Where is your shell? Is it overturned? Where are other shells? Where is the coach boat?
- Hang onto your shell immediately and do not leave it
- Blow your whistle as hard and as long as you can
- Yell for help if you can
- Your priority now is to get as much of your body as you can out of the water. Pull yourself onto your overturned shell (at least get your torso on top of shell)
- If the shell is not overturned, hold on to anything on the shell with your torso out of the water as much as possible.
- Do not try to get back into the shell unless you are certain of very quick success
- If you cannot get yourself onto the shell have your life jacket on or your PFD activated and assume a fetal position to conserve body heat.
- Do not leave your shell and do not try to swim to shore without using it as a floatation device.
- Paddle your boat to shore with your hands while you are lying on the hull while waiting for rescue.
- Check for each member of your crew, if one or more are not visible, call out to them

2. Emergency action by other shells or coach boats in the vicinity:

- Each coxswain, bow person and rower must always keep an ear open for whistle sounds or cries for help
- Respond immediately!
- In coxed shells, coxswain takes charge of the rescue, the bow person takes charge in coxless shells
- "Hold water"
- Whistle, yell, wave both arms to hail coach boat
- Show direction of "help needed" by waving one arm
- Approach rower in water from the lee side (downwind side), or the direction which oncoming traffic will approach the person in the water if possible (to protect them from being run over)
- Ask rower in water: "Are you OK? Any injuries?"
- Instruct rower to stay with the shell and lift torso onto shell

- Assure rower that help is coming
 - Stay with rower(s)
 - When coach boat arrives, report how long the rower has been in the water and pass on any information about the rower's condition
3. Emergency action by the coach/safety person in the coach boat
- Wear your life jacket or pfd
 - Approach the site into the wind to prevent the launch from being pushed into the accident and to ensure maximum control. If possible, approach so that you are between the person in the water and any oncoming traffic.
 - The crew in the coach boat should never stand up in a small open unstable boat.
 - Turn the motor off as soon as you are in position to bring the athlete on board. Do not leave motor in neutral, idling
 - Take charge of the situation: "We are here!" Reassure rower in the water.
 - Enquire: Are you OK? Any injuries?
 - Get further information from coxswain or rowers of nearby shells
 - Lower rescue ladder from the transom for rescue, or over the bow in a boat with a broad bow. Pulling someone in over the side of the boat may cause the safety boat to flip making things worse.
 - Depending on weather and water conditions, a rower may stay warmer by getting back into their rowing shell and actively rowing compared to being exposed to wind in wet clothing.

Rower who is shivering but who is rational, and not injured otherwise should be helped into the coach boat, wrapped up in blankets and taken immediately to the dock. If still OK, have rower go into a shower (with someone accompanying him/her), ensure clothes removed and person gets in warm shower. The rower should be observed for couple of hours and should avoid activity until fully recovered. There is a shower in the Burrard Civic Marina and at the False Creek Community Centre and Creekside Community and Recreation Centre.

Rower showing disorientation, problems with breathing, falling into unconsciousness, etc. should be lifted into the coach boat with utmost care and kept in the horizontal position as much as possible. Once in the coach boat, the rower should be kept as still as possible. Cover the rower with a blanket and speed to the nearest dock. If possible, call ahead for help and urgent transport to a hospital.

Safety Boat

It may be necessary to use the transom area for the recovery.

- Conscious – not injured

Recover the casualty from the transom or use the portable rescue steps aboard the safety boat. Ask the rower to leverage themselves up on the engine and back of the boat to hoist themselves into the boat or climb up the rescue stairs set over the side of the boat. The coach may be required to counter balance the weight by moving to the bow of the boat.

- Conscious – injured

Recover the casualty facing away from the boat, lift under the arms or by clothing; ensuring that no further injury is caused. First, lift the victim to assess, and then help maneuver the person around and into the boat. Ensure that the person is placed in a comfortable position, low in the boat to avoid any further injuries.

- Unconscious

Place the casualty facing away from the boat, lift under the arms or by clothing; ensuring that no further injury is caused. First, lift the victim to the top of the gunnel and assess, and then help maneuver the person around and into the boat. Ensure that the person is placed in a comfortable position, low in the boat to avoid any further injuries.

If there are two people in the safety boat, it may be necessary for one of the two to move to the far side of the boat to rebalance the list (heel) of the vessel and ensure that the boat does not take on water on the side where the casualty is being recovered. This is specific to the boat and training will ensure that crews understand the dynamics of the vessel

More than one rower overboard!

The principles outlined above can be applied to the situation. Be aware of the space limitations of the coach boat. Immediately call for extra coach boats.

Collision between shells or a floating or stationary object with rower overboard:

- In coxed shells, coxswain in charge (or bow person in coxless shell)
- Immediately whistle, yell, or signal with both arms waving for coach boat
- Immediately throw lifejacket to rower(s) in water
- If need be, detach one oar and push it to rower
- Under no circumstances leave the shell or have any rower swim from the shell
- While waiting for coach boat, keep watching and assisting rowers in water
- Assess the situation: is anyone in the shell(s) injured?
- Does the injured require immediate first aid?
- If so, order all to balance shell, rower behind injured rower to administer aid
- Assess the shell: is there damage to the shell(s)?
- Is the shell taking on water?
- Can the shell be rowed back to the dock or to a safe haven?
- If so, wait till coach boat (or other vessels assisting) arrives to rescue rower in water

Shell is swamped but floating and rowers are still in the shell:

- Coxswain (or bow person in a coxless shell) in charge
- Immediately signal for help
- Start bailing immediately
- Untie shoes
- Put on lifejackets or PFD's
- Put on whatever extra clothing is available, including hats
- Cox and bow person constantly account for all rowers and each other

Note: If the shell fills with water to the gunnels, it will still float; however, if gunnels are below water level, the shell may break up. If shell is breaking up, one at a time the rowers should slip into the water, keep hold of the shell for flotation. (DO NOT JUMP into the water). Remove the oars and place them parallel to the hull. Move to the ends of the shell and attempt to roll the shell over. Rowers must buddy up and hang onto each other with torso's over the hull while waiting for rescue.

Sudden sickness while rowing:

- If rower becomes sick, return shell to dock immediately.
- In warm weather conditions, consider heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Symptoms include headache, nausea, pallor, rapid pulse - skin may be warm, flushed, without sweat - pulse may become rapid,

pounding. There may be behaviour changes and even unconsciousness. Even while moving back to the dock, douse the rower with cool water, shade from the sun, fan the face, and loosen clothing. Call ahead for immediate paramedical/medical attention.

Post rescue

- Coach in charge
- Inspect rescued or injured person
- Stop bleeding
- Ensure clear airway
- Provide warmth - or in case of suspected heat exhaustion or heat stroke, cool person down
- In all situations, use common sense and err on the side of caution: send for paramedical help
- Do not transport injured or sick persons in your personal vehicle
- Record information about the person and the event for the club records: submit it to the Safety Officer or the President for safekeeping
- Determine if any further follow up is needed to help improve safety culture

Recovering the Rowing Shell

- Remove the oars from the oarlocks and place in coach boat
- Using one rigger pull the shell towards the side of the coach boat so the shell is parallel to the coach boat
- Holding onto rigger, put the coach boat in drive and idle slowly towards the dock
- Should a shell fill with water or submerge and safe harbour is not possible, the following procedure is to be followed: The shell should be rolled upside-down to increase buoyancy by trapping as much air as possible. If wind is a factor, roll shell with the wind. Oars should remain in the oarlocks to increase buoyancy.