

Bairnsdale Rowing Club Boat Usage Policy and Procedures

Approval Date:		Review Date:	
President:		Signature:	
Vice President:		Signature:	

Rationale

This policy and procedures is provided for the purpose of ensuring the safety of Bairnsdale Rowing Club (BRC) members, visitors and the general public. It is also provided to limit damage to BRC boats and facilitate longevity of boats. This policy and procedures applies to all members of BRC and visitors to the club when using BRC equipment. The procedures associated with this policy also apply to users of privately owned boats kept at the club. If you have any questions regarding the Boat Usage policy and procedures, please contact the BRC Club Captain.

1. General

- a. Members may only use equipment which they are experienced enough to use as decreed by the BRC Boat Usage Policy, and where approval has been granted by their Captain or Coach.
- b. Visitors may use BRC boats and other equipment under supervision for a maximum of three sessions, before being required to join as a member or sign up for a Learn to Row program.
- c. It is strongly advised that single scullers train on the water with other crews, or be under supervision. Single sculling at times when not under supervision and no other club crews are on water is discouraged, but if members choose to do so, they do so at their own risk.
- d. Rowers of coxed boats will carry a coxswain unless exemption has been granted by their Captain or Coach.
- e. All coxswains are required to become accredited via the Good Coxswain Course. Coxswains not yet accredited may only cox with the approval of their Captain or Coach.
- f. All rowers in a boat will listen and adhere to instructions given by the coxswain or steer-person.
- g. All new members will be taught how to lift and handle the club's boats safely.
- h. Rowers and coxswains will be taught how to launch and land a boat safely as well as the necessary commands and corresponding actions.
- i. All new members will be taught how to get in and out of a boat correctly and are shown how to use the oar before going onto the water.
- j. On return to the rowing shed, rowers will clean the inside and outside of the boat and all oars used before storing them.

2. Coxless boats

- a. Coxless boats are primarily for the use of experienced crews.
- b. Coxless boats will only be used when steered by a competent steersperson and/or at the discretion of one of the Captains or Coach.
- c. Coxless boats will not be used when the river is running fast and/or when there is debris in the water (usually due to high rainfall).

3. Light and Visibility

- a. BRC does not encourage use of boats between dusk and dawn. Rowers must seek the permission of their Captain or Coach if they wish to use a boat between dusk and dawn.
- b. Should a crew be likely to be on the water between dusk and dawn or at other times of poor visibility, It is the responsibility of the crew (including the coxswain) to provide appropriate lighting in accordance with Marine Safety Victoria Guidelines.

4. Rowing in adverse conditions

- a. In the interests of protecting the boat fleet from potential damage and protecting crews from accidental injury, crews will not row in adverse conditions.
- b. Rowers will not go on the water in rough weather, during a thunderstorm, when the river is flooded, when the current is flowing fast or when there is debris in the water (usually due to high rainfall). If you are in doubt ask a qualified coach or the Club Safety Officer. If in doubt, don't go out.
- c. The Club Safety Officer, qualified coaches and committee members have the authority to suspend rowing activities if they think the conditions are too dangerous.

5. Boat Incident / Damage/ Repairs

- a. In the event of an incident or near miss occurring the BRC Incident Report Form must be completed by the crew and submitted to the BRC Safety Officer.

The BRC Safety Officer will provide a report on incidents and near misses at each Committee meeting. Incident/near miss reports will be submitted to Rowing Victoria on their form as determined by the Committee.

In the event of any damage to BRC boats or other equipment being discovered, one of the Captains, the Coach or the Equipment and Facilities Manager must be notified, and the issue should be recorded on the maintenance board at the front of the rowing shed. If damage is such that you feel the boat is unsafe it is to be labeled as needing repair using large writing on a note fixed to it and tape wrapped around it if available. Any boat or oars marked as under repair are not to be used under any circumstances as repairs are made for the safety of all who use the fleet.

- b. Each person of the crew will bring any equipment failure or safety issues to the attention of the coxswain or steer-person immediately.

6. Boat Trailers

- a. Club boat trailers that are used on public roads will conform to current road safety standards.

- b. Members will be taught how to tie boats onto trailers safely.
- c. Loaded club boat trailers will only be towed by persons approved by the President, Club Captain or Equipment and Facilities Manager.
- d. Whenever practicable, when a loaded club trailer is to be towed a long distance, at least two licensed drivers will be in the tow car.

7. Privately owned boats

- a. Insurance for privately owned boats, whether they are stored in the boatshed or not, is the responsibility of the owner.

8. Use of launch / motor boat

- a. All users of the motorboats will possess a valid Victorian Motor Boat Licence.
- b. Motorboats are to be used for coaching purposes only.
- c. Driver and passengers will wear lifejackets at all times when afloat.
- d. Motorboats will have at least the minimum safety equipment on board as required by Marine Safety Victoria.

Procedure for taking a boat out

Before and after every outing:

- a. Sign out in log sheet found at the front of the shed, sign back in on same log sheet.
- b. Ensure any equipment to be used is not marked in any way indicating in need of, or under repair.
- c. Check equipment eg. riggers are secure, seat wheels function smoothly, foot stretchers are secure, heel release mechanisms are effective, slides are aligned, wing nuts are secure, hatch covers are tightly closed.
- d. Check rudder-lines, steering mechanism, rudder and fin. Check the boat has a firmly attached bow ball (white rubber ball of at least 4cm diameter).

Waterway Navigation

- a. Marine law applies to rowers and coaching boats.
- b. Always boat off and return to the landing stage in an upstream direction
- c. Always look out regularly for other river users and water craft. They may NOT know normal navigation rules.
- d. Learn and be familiar with international conventions of PORT and STARBOARD.
- e. Always keep to the bank closest to your bowside –as your crew approaches bends in the river always be particularly alert to any crews that may be coming from the opposite direction.
- f. Only turn your boat when visibility is good in both directions.
- g. Do not stop your boat where it is obscured from view by other boats, and ensure when you do stop your boat that you are as close to the bank as safety permits.
- h. At bridges, the crews travelling downstream have right of way.
- i. Do not panic if a crew is coming toward you but call out in a clear voice, identifying the crew as best you can (eg, by type of boat). Call out to boats that seem to be unaware of your presence and getting too close : 'LOOK AHEAD!'