



Cromarty Community Rowing Club – Risk Assessment

Club Row – General description and information

Cromarty Community Rowing Club are an amateur sports organisation, with objectives set around the provision of opportunity to participate in the sport of Coastal Rowing as described by the Scottish Coastal Rowing Association (SCRA). The full objectives are contained within the constitution, which is publicly accessible at cromartyrowing.com/about-us.html

The constitution further states that membership and access to rowing shall be promoted and made available to all, regardless of age, sex or ability and as such the club welcomes participation in rowing from a broad range of backgrounds.

The club boats are St Ayles Skiffs, as described in detail by SCRA (<https://scottishcoastalrowing.org/documents/>, St Isles Measurement Rules), an open rowing boat of around 5m in length. The boat is propelled by oar power only, seating four rowers and a coxswain, who makes steering inputs via a tiller and rudder. The crew are identified by their seating positions (1-4), being numbered from the Coxswain who sits at the stern of the boat. The boat weighs around 200kg empty and is generally of a plywood construction.

The Club is a member of the Scottish Coastal Rowing Association, and having consulted and made use of their guidance in the design, construction and commissioning of the boats, continues to view SCRA as an authoritative source on best practice in the operation of the boats and the running of the club.

In all situations on or near the water, the ultimate responsibility for the safety of the boat and crew lies with the Coxswain. In the event that the Coxswain is not satisfied with the same, the row shall be cancelled. When considering the safety of the row, the Coxswain shall consider, his or her own competence, the sea conditions, the weather conditions, the competence and fitness of the crew and the condition of the boat. The Coxswain shall make an inspection of the boat prior to putting to sea, regardless of whether the boat is already afloat or is to be launched. The Coxswain's inspection is contained within the club rules, accessible on the website at www.cromartyrowing.com/club-rules.html

There may be situations in which the club issues an instruction to all Coxswains not to row due to a forecast or actual weather event or other reasons. In the absence of such an instruction, the decision to put to sea rests with the Coxswain.

References:

- [1] Cromarty Community Rowing Club Constitution – <http://www.cromartyrowing.com/about-us.html>
- [2] Scottish Coastal Rowing Association Constitution - <https://scottishcoastalrowing.org/documents/> - Constitution
- [3] Scottish Coastal Rowing Association Measurements and Rules - <https://scottishcoastalrowing.org/documents/> - St Ayles Measurement Rules
- [4] Scottish Coastal Rowing Association Safety Briefings and Guidance - <https://scottishcoastalrowing.org/learning/>
- [5] Cromarty Community Rowing Club Rules - <https://www.cromartyrowing.com/club-rules.html>
- [6] International Regulations on preventing collisions at sea 1972 (COLREGS) - <https://www.jag.navy.mil/distrib/instructions/COLREG-1972.pdf>

Risk Assessment Methodology

The risk assessments contained in this document have been carried out in accordance with the method of Qualitative Risk assessment. This approach seeks to standardise the values given to risk in order to provide better comparisons.

A Hazard is a process or substance with the potential to cause harm, a Risk is the likelihood of that hazard to result in an injury.

The “Risk” number is obtained by multiplying numbers seeking to quantify both the likelihood and severity of consequence of any particular risk. In the methodology used in this document the numbers are obtained from the matrix bellow and multiplied together to gain the final Risk number. So that;

Likelihood x Consequence = Risk

Risk numbers for both before and after the implementation of controls are provided for comparison.

Figure 1. Likelihood/consequence matrix

Likelihood		Consequence	
1	Rare - Unheard of	1	Trivial – no lost time
2	Unlikely - Known within the community but no history in the club	2	First Aid on scene –Return to normal that day
3	Possible – Known to have happened at least once within the Club	3	Major Injury – Requiring treatment off site
4	Likely – Known to have happened many times in the Club	4	Single Fatality
5	Frequent – More likely than not to occur	5	Multiple Fatalities

The assessments provided in this document are intended as a generic assessment only, and assumes that the row is are being carried out in normal conditions, with a full crew and as described in the general information provided above. Any significant change from this should be subject to additional assessment, at club level for a planned event, and by the coxswain in all other circumstances.

Ref:	Operation	Hazard	Persons at risk	Risk level			Control measures	Residual Risk			Best Practice
				L	C	R		L	C	R	
a	Launch and Recovery	Boat overturning or becoming swamped	Rowers, Coxswain	3	5	15	<p>Competence of Coxswain – boat will not be put to sea in very adverse conditions, such as heavy breaking surf, or conditions beyond the capabilities of the crew.</p> <p>Coxswain will select a launch site suitable for the weather and sea conditions, this will usually be the leeward side of the point.</p> <p>Coxswain will position the boat “stern to wave” to minimise the chances of the boat coming “broadside to wave” where a swamping or overturning event can occur.</p> <p>In heavy weather the Coxswain may instruct number four rower to go to the windward side of the boat and hold the stern line, to hold the boat in the “Stern to wave” orientation while rowers are embarking and disembarking.</p>	1	5	5	<p>SCRA – Learning and Seamanship [4]</p> <p>Club Rules [5]</p>

b	Rowing at Sea	Boat sinking	All Crew	2	5	10	<p>Boat inspected prior to putting to sea, sea cock/bung inspected by Coxswain.</p> <p>Sea conditions are monitored through out the row and the boat will be brought to shore in the event of deterioration such that the safety of the boat is compromised.</p> <p>Coxswain shall carry a dry bag containing a red distress flare, charged VHF radio and a bailer.</p> <p>The Cromarty firth is a reasonably busy area with respect to maritime traffic, so it is likely that first assistance would be from a vessel of opportunity, however the RNLI at Invergordon is approximately 7km away. Response time ~ 10 – 20 mins.</p> <p>All adult crew will wear light weight life jackets, of manually inflating type with a buoyancy appropriate for the wear. The manual inflation is to provide a control against being held under an upturned boat by an inflated buoyancy aid.</p> <p>Club life jackets are serviced as per the manufacturer's recommendations by the club.</p>	1	5	5	<p>SCRA – Learning and Seamanship [4]</p> <p>Club Rules [5]</p>
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c	Rowing at sea	Collisions	Boat, Crew, 3 rd Parties	2	4	8	<p>Coxswain familiar with International Convention in preventing collisions at sea, (COLREGS 1972) particularly part B Steering and Sailing.</p> <p>The Coxswain shall be under full control and command of the boat at all times, making use of differential steering and the rudder in order to plot safe course in good time.</p> <p>The VHF radio may be used to hail larger vessels or to request Invergordon Port Authority to de-conflict.</p> <p>When at sea between sunset and sunrise, the vessel shall display a stern light and side lights. Where this is not practicable the Coxswain shall have ready at hand a white torch or lantern such that it may be exhibited in sufficient time to prevent a collision [6].</p>	1	4	4	COLREGS [6], particularly rules 1-8, 21, 25(d)(iii)
d	Rowing at sea	Person overboard	Crew	2	4	8	<p>Coxswain will co-ordinate rescue and issue 'Mayday' on channel 16 VHF.</p> <p>Person to be recovered to boat but recovery technique recommended by SCRA.</p>	1	4	4	SCRA MOB recovery [4]

							<p>All crew will wear manually inflating life jackets.</p> <p>In the event that recovery from the water cannot be effected, the casualty will be kept with the boat until help arrives, or land can be made</p>				
e	Rowing at Sea	Young Rowers	Young Rowers	3	4	15	<p>Young rowers will be under the supervision of an experienced Coxswain at all times. Weather and sea condition limits shall be tighter in recognition of the lower physical strength that younger rowers may have.</p> <p>Young Rowers will wear automatically inflating life jackets to protect them in a person over board situation.</p> <p>All Coxswains shall be PVG check to ensure their suitability to work with children.</p>	1	4	4	SCRA Rules [3], CCRC Constitution [1]