

BRITISHROWING

HRSA Monthly Report

January 2021

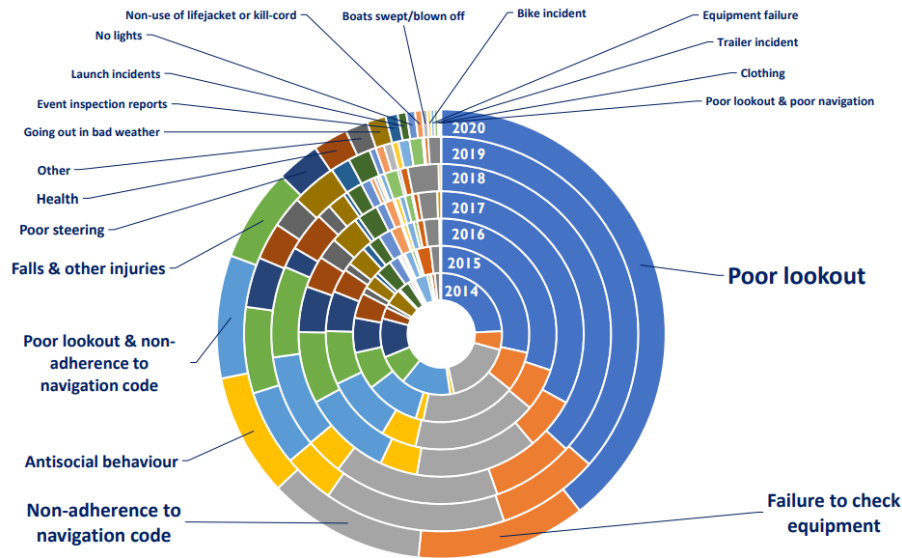
Stephen Worley

TEAMWORK | OPEN TO ALL | COMMITMENT

Analysis of Incident Reported in 2020

The annual analysis for 2020 has been completed and published [here](#). A copy is included with this report.

Comparison with previous years



It is clear from the analysis that:-

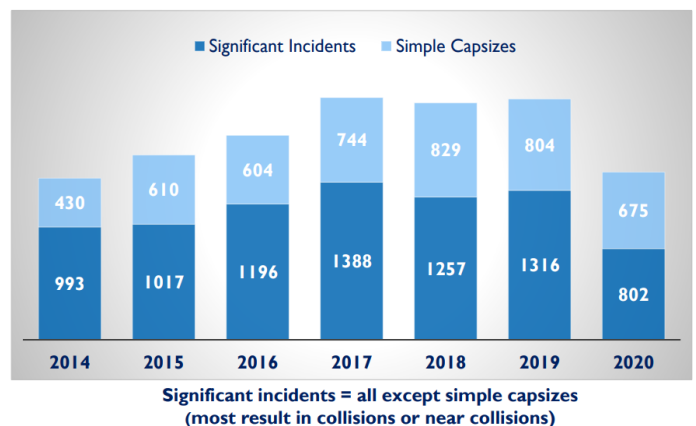
- rowing safety is all about behaviour, it is about what we do
- we'll be safer if we:-
 - keep a good lookout
 - check our boats before we go afloat
 - stay on the correct side or part of the waterway

The number of Reported Incidents in 2020 remains encouragingly high considering the reduced levels of activity. I would like to thank everyone who reported an incident.

There were relatively more simple capsizes this year, this is probably due to there being relatively more single sculling than crew rowing. It is likely that many sweep rowers found themselves in 1xs for the first time in years.

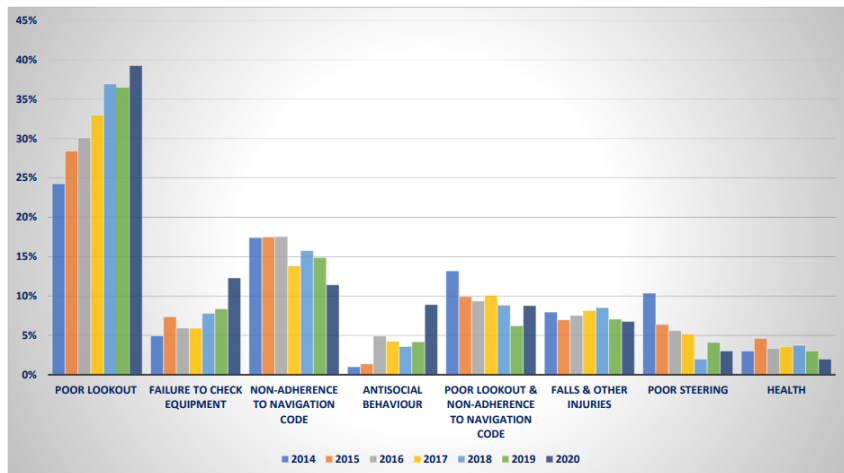
The analysis also confirms that behaviour still has the greatest influence over rowing safety. Last year 95% of incidents could have been avoided by safer behaviour.

All Incidents



The pattern of causes remains remarkably consistent over the years but there have been increases in the relative proportion of incidents caused by “poor lookout”, “failure to check equipment” and “anti-social behaviour”. There have been corresponding reductions in the proportion of other causes.

Trends in common causes of Significant Incidents



In 2020, there was one fatality, following a collapse during indoor rowing training, and 13 incidents resulting in serious injuries. Serious injuries are those that result in a week or more off rowing and include concussion and broken bones.

The locations where they occurred is shown opposite.

The reporting of incidents provides everyone with the opportunity to share what they have learned. This helps others prevent a similar incident happening to their members. By reporting incidents clubs are making a significant contribution to rowing safety.

The reports also help us to understand the prevalence of each type of incident and this guides the content of our advice to clubs. By reporting incidents, you are helping all rowers to stay safe.

It is pleasing to note that so many people are keen to contribute in this way. The analysis includes this list of the 12 clubs that reported the most incidents.

Where they occurred	Number
Pontoon/Boating area	4
Land training	4
Handling boats on land	3
On water	1
Launch handling on land	1
Total	13

Top 12 Clubs reporting Incidents in 2020

Position	Club	Incidents reported
1	Marlow RC	54
2	Putney Town RC	41
3	Lea RC	34
4	Latymer Upper School BC	32
4=	Leicester RC	32
4=	Worcester University RC	32
7	Warrington RC	31
8	Maidenhead RC	30
9	Durham ARC	29
10	Avon County RC	28
10=	Gloucester RC	28
12	Lincoln Rowing Centre	26

Safety Good Practice Awards, in the form of Certificates signed by Mark Davies, the Chair of British Rowing, and me, have been sent to each of these clubs. Copies have been sent to their Regional Chairs and their Regional Rowing Safety Advisers.



SAFETY GOOD PRACTICE AWARD 2020

Marlow Rowing Club

For their contribution to safety evidenced by their extensive use of the British Rowing Incident Reporting System

Mark Davies
Mark Davies
Chairman British Rowing

Stephen Worley
Stephen Worley
Honorary Rowing Safety Adviser

Where do I report incidents?

Someone wrote to ask how to find the Incident Reporting system. The response was that it is [here](#) and there is a link in the top centre of the British Rowing website home page.



Emergency Response Incident

There was an incident reported last month in which there was a massive response from the emergency services. The mother of one of the rowers involved had written to ask for an investigation. The club subsequently investigated and made several improvements to its procedures. These include:-

There are a number of changes and improvements that the club intends to make; these are listed below:-

- Extra manpower will be offered to the coaches for junior outings.
- There will be an upgrade of emergency kits kept on launches to include a bivvy bag with improved thermal protection.
- When weather and conditions allow further safety and capsizing drills will take place.
- An additional register with junior emergency contact details will be established.
- All boats will be required to carry at least one mobile phone for use in an emergency.
- Coaches on launches will carry mobile phones.
- Contact numbers for the coaches will be issued for use in emergencies.

In addition, the club intends to ask its safety officers to attend a quarterly committee meeting. At that time procedures and recommendation of any improvements will be discussed and action taken if required.

Rower Development Guide

The Rower Development Guide is being reviewed and various items were provided that could be used within it or referenced from it. These include the:-

- [Emergency Stop Drill - YouTube](#)
- RowSafe 2020 (rather than RowSafe 2017)
- Safety Basics and the Hypothermia training, [here](#).
- Safety Quizzes and
- List of the Safety Alerts that are most relevant

Club Guide on Governance

The safety section of the Club Guide on Governance has been drafted. This refers to the British Rowing Regulations, the Criminal law requirements and Civil Law liability to identify issues that clubs should manage. It has additional sections on:-

- RowSafe
- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment
- Incident Reporting
- Annual Safety Audit
- Safety in Club Premises
- Insurance and
- Sources of further advice

Support for another Rowing NGB

Support continues to be provided. The first of the NGB's Safety Bulletins has been issued and the advice previously provided on its frequency and the level of detail of the content has been followed.

The NGB has decided to lead its clubs through the process of generating a "Safety Statement" at each Club. A Safety Statement is a legal requirement in that country and the NGB requires all its clubs to have one.

According to the bulletin, the three steps to follow when developing a Safety Statement are:-

1. Identify hazards, assess the risks, detail the control measures.
2. Compile the safety statement, include specific aspects of your club activities. It should contain a health and safety policy, signed by the committee. It should detail the facilities, equipment and arrangements managed by the club to promote safety, health and welfare in the club.
3. Attach the risk assessments to finalise the document.

The first step is to identify the hazards. In 2015, I wrote an article for Rowing & Regatta on Hazard Identification, this can be found on the British Rowing website [here](#). This link has been provided to my colleague in that NGB and he has been invited to use this material.

Working with Coastal Rowing WA Inc (COROW)

The conversation continues and considerable progress is being made.

Plans for on-water, practical safety training (capsize drills, etc.) have been reviewed and further advice provided. This is much appreciated.

Canoeists and Circulation Plans

Last month I described the response to a suggestion that rowers and canoeists should row in opposite directions on each side of a waterway. There was some further correspondence suggesting that this could work and that collisions between rowing boats and canoes were rare.

The response was that my colleague at British Canoeing wrote that:-

There are some local navigation protocols that have been developed between rowing clubs, canoe clubs and the local navigation authority, where the configuration of the river means it is sensible to do so.

Each does depend on the specific issues and configuration of the river.

I have to say I've not heard of a system that puts rowers and paddlers on opposite sides of the river. If paddlers see an oncoming rower, they would probably head for the other side anyway or head for the bank.

You also need to have a system that is understood by paddlers who are not members of a club or local. There are now a lot of these following this summer and they need to have simple rules to follow that everyone understands.

I took this to mean that even if there were to be a local agreement between clubs about two way traffic on one side of the waterway, then the resulting action on the water would, at best, be confusing to other water users (paddlers who were not members of a club). People develop habits wherever they go afloat and tend to take these habits with them. I worry that what could be a pragmatic approach in one area could cause significant problems in another.

We have enough problems with motorboat drivers and providing a bad example for them would make our lives even more difficult. Some motorboat drivers think that they should drive on the left (as on the road) and some simply drive down the middle (even when they are not constrained by their draught) and expect everyone else to get out of the way.

I do not like the principle of different types of boat travelling in opposite directions on the same side of the waterway. This is contrary to navigation bylaws, the Collision Regulations and the Tideway Code. In my view it will cause even more problems, particularly in areas where the view ahead is obstructed by bends, bridges, overhanging trees, moored and anchored boats, other craft underway, etc.

We do not have many incidents with canoes but the analysis of reported incidents shows that there were:-

- 9 incidents (including 4 collisions) in 2020
- 17 incidents (including 14 collisions) in 2019
- 8 incidents (including 7 collisions) in 2018

In my view we have to continue to encourage rowers to keep a good lookout, particularly ahead.

The analysis of reported incidents shows that rowers collide with all sorts of other things although it is mostly other rowing boats.

Adults accompanying Junior Coaches

There was a request for advice from a club, referred to me by the LSO, on what would be deemed an acceptable distance between an under 18 coach on a bank and the adult supervising them to keep everyone safe. The answer was:-

I will refer to the person under 18 as a child as that is what they are, in law at least. The purposes of the adult supervisor are to:-

- *keep the child safe (e.g. rescue them if they fall in)*
- *protect the child from other people or things in the vicinity*
- *help them if they are injured (e.g. help them if they slip and fall or fall off their bike)*
- *take over care for the crew being coached, if necessary, to prevent harm*
- *ensure that the behaviour of the child is appropriate and*
- *ensure that the conversations between the child and the crew are appropriate*

In addition, if the adult supervisor is a coach then they could be expected to mentor the child to help them with their coaching.

This helps us to determine the appropriate distance. The adult should be:-

- *at least 2 metres from the child unless they are from the same household or bubble (Covid)*
- *be in a position where the adult can see the child and the crew, and the child can see the adult*
- *be in a position where the adult can hear the child and the crew, and the child and crew can hear the adult*

The adult should be able to hear the conversation between the child and the crew. The distance will depend on the conditions. Background noise from the wind or passing motorboats may make this difficult and the adult may have to adjust the distance accordingly.

The person making the original request replied to say thanks for such an interesting and comprehensive answer.

RowSafe 2021

Each year we update RowSafe and we aim to issue the new version in April. If you have identified anything that should be added, changed, or deleted, or if you have any suggestions, then please write to safety@britishrowing.org.

Towing and Trailer Loading Workshop/Course

One Region is planning to develop a course on towing and trailer loading. I have arranged for them to have support from a colleague who is an expert in this field.

Anchors

There was a request for information about anchors following a launch anchor failing to hold the launch in position in a strongly flowing river.

The response was that anchoring is covered in the RYA Level 2 Powerboat syllabus so launch drivers should know how to do it. The factors that influence anchor performance are its size and the length and construction (weight) of the anchor rode. The anchor rode should be sufficiently long so that the pull on the anchor is horizontal, when it is on the bed of the river, etc. Chain is often used at the anchor end of the rode to achieve this. Sometimes an "angel" is used. This is simply a weight fixed to the anchor rode to keep it on the bottom. This is bound to be a compromise because there is a limit to the weight that a launch can carry. Anchors and their associated tackle tend to be heavy.

The problems may have been caused by not having a long enough anchor rode (cable).

Anchoring in the Tideway is difficult due to the strength of the stream and variation in depth. It may also not be good holding ground; anchors tend to slip through pebbles and small stones.