

Emergency Plan 2026

The following notes are distributed to marshals, umpires and safety personnel and are available on the event website. They are available for the Clubs racing at Wallingford Long Distance Sculls for distribution to competitors and their coaches.

Race Safety Advisor

The Organising committee has appointed Tim Brock as the Safety Advisor. He is a member of the Organising Committee and has produced this document.

Race committee

A race committee chaired by Adrian Champion will undertake the duties detailed in the British Rowing Rules of Racing. In particular, they will decide whether weather conditions or other factors are too dangerous to permit racing to continue.

Safety Teams

The event committee have selected a professional team to manage and medical and safety emergency that occurs during the event. This consists of an event coordinator, two land medical teams and 3 safety boats on the course.

Additionally there will be marshals and umpires along the bank, or in launches who will be able to assist in an incident until the safety crews arrive for on water incidents.

Suspending/Stopping the Race

The primary duty of every Race Official is to care for the safety of competitors and others. It may be necessary to stop the race should conditions alter significantly through the course of the race or a major event occurs (e.g. multiple collisions). Racing will be abandoned or postponed if the Safety Advisor and/or a Race Umpire decide that conditions are unsafe. The Safety Advisor and/or the Chair of the Race Committee shall immediately inform all Marshals and Umpires using the event radio network.

Marshals, mainly club members with knowledge of the river, will immediately instruct racing boats to stop by shouting "STOP RACING" on megaphones and guiding boats into the most sheltered part of the river adjacent to one of the banks. If conditions are equal on each bank, preference should be given to bringing crews in to the towpath bank where assistance can be given more easily.

Launches are to stay in position so as to give cover over the entire course and drivers are to be vigilant and respond to any request for help from Marshals. All launches are equipped with Safety Boxes which include emergency foil blankets which should be used to ensure crews remain warm.

The Safety Advisor and the Chair of the Race Committee shall decide on terminating the event or re-starting if conditions improve.

Emergency Plans

1. Medical Emergency

All medical emergencies (including decisions regarding individual medical evacuation, calling of emergency services) will be the responsibility of our professional combined water and land safety team. They will keep the Water Safety Advisor and Chair of the Race Committee informed during and after the incident. They will be responsible as soon as they arrive on scene. Prior to them arriving on scene, the Chair of the Race Committee will oversee the situation, liaising with the relevant umpire or marshal.

2. Weather emergency

The weather forecast will be monitored before the event, but in the event of sudden, extreme weather (e.g. lightning), the Chair of the Race Committee will co-ordinate with umpires and marshals to either follow the abandonment plan or, if that is deemed unsafe, identify suitable locations for crews to disembark, e.g. Oxford Brookes, Ferry Lane or within the marshalling area.

3. Non rowing emergency on the course

The Safety Adviser (water) will be responsible for contacting and coordinating the emergency services, and working with the Chair of the Race Committee and marshals and umpires to implement an appropriate plan for any non rowing emergency that occurs on the course, while crews are on the water.