



O U R C

## Torpids Event Plan 2012

Last up-dated 17/01/12

### Introduction

Torpids is a rowing event comprising four days racing from Wednesday to Saturday of 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> week in Hilary term (depending on the date of the Women's Head of the River Race), with a qualifying session (Rowing On) held the preceding Friday. This year Torpids will occur from the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2012, with Rowing On held on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2012. We would also ask for a provisional day on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> February to run Rowing On, should conditions be unsuitable on the 17<sup>th</sup>. All racing shall occur within the regulations of the Environment Agency and the University of Oxford.

**Rowing On:** This is a timed race from Longbridges to Christ Church Meadow. The event is run as a processional race, with crews set off at regular intervals in divisions (subject to entry levels), with the first division starting at 1pm. The fastest crews covering the course then qualify for Torpids proper.

**Torpids:** Racing occurs between 12 noon and 5.30pm. The course is upstream within the stretch from Iffley Lock to Folly Bridge. Racing is split into 11 divisions, each of 13 boats, racing at approximately 30 minute intervals. The aim of racing is to catch up with the boat in front and gain a 'bump'. On gaining a bump, crews move out of the way and cease racing. Boats which are bumped or fail to gain a bump must continue racing until the finish line.

This plan details the logistics of both events - Rowing On and Torpids - and the precautions taken to ensure smooth and safe running. Precautions are made based on Risk Assessments which identify all possible hazards and resulting risks, highlight the controls in place to reduce the risks, and identify those responsible for ensuring the controls are in place. These Risk Assessments are attached as *Appendix A* (Rowing On) and *Appendix B* (Torpids) of this Event Plan.

### Race Management

#### *Race Officials*

The races – both Rowing On and Torpids - are run by the OURCs Committee, using the following system:

- i) **Race Secretary** - coordinates racing and is responsible for event and race safety. For this event, the Race Secretary will be Phil McCullough, who can be contacted on [07748700736](tel:07748700736) or [secretary@ourcs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ourcs.org.uk).
- ii) **Race Committee** - help the Race Secretary with coordination of racing and event safety.
- iii) **Race Desk** – location Longbridges Boat House, will oversee the marshals and assists the SU. A Race Committee member, usually the Race Secretary, will be present at Race Desk at all times, and can be contacted by mobile phone ([07935379063](tel:07935379063)) or by two-way radio.
- iv) **Senior Umpire (SU)** - situated in the start area for Rowing On and the area of the bunglines during Torpids, ensures the safe and timely start of the races.
- v) **Marshals** - work with the Race Secretary and the SU to ensure the safe and smooth running of the event. Details of the role of the marshals are given below.
- vi) **Umpires** - act as impartial race observers (NOT for Rowing On).

These officials will be marked out by coloured bibs: yellow high-visibility bibs for the SU and the marshals, red for the umpires.

**The consumption of alcohol by officials is strictly prohibited.**

### ***Race Secretary***

The Race Secretary is the race organiser and has overall responsibility for the safe running of the event, in accordance with the event plan. The event plan does not restrict the Race Secretary from halting racing at any time or from making necessary alterations to ensure the safety of competitors, organisers and members of the public. The Race Secretary, as race organiser, should appoint each and every Senior Umpire and member of Race Committee. Regardless of the process of election that occurs within the University of Oxford structure, the Race Secretary may exclude any individual from being a race official, and is expected to manage the officials, removing them from individual tasks or from the organisation of the race if necessary. The Race Secretary is responsible for coordinating racing and so should direct members of race committee; tasking them as needed and as appropriate. The Race Secretary may delegate responsibilities as is appropriate.

### ***Senior Umpire***

Senior Umpires are appointed by the Race Secretary. The Race Secretary shall be governed by the OURCs rules. This ensures that those appointed have the necessary skill and experience to conduct their duties. Given the nature of the event, there is no formal qualification appropriate to the task, but the existing team of Senior Umpires will make sure sufficient new members are recruited to cover the job, and will ensure that new recruits are fully briefed and trained in the role.

The principal duty of the Senior Umpire is to ensure that each race is safe to start, and then to start that race in a safe fashion under the OURCs racing rules. To this end, the Senior Umpire on duty will conduct river checks as appropriate, using the marshals to report any traffic on the river or any obstruction in the river. The SU will conduct a full river check at least once before each race begins and repeat at their discretion sufficiently to ensure that they are satisfied the river is clear to start the race. The SU will consider the following (below) when starting each race, and will relate it to the nature of bumps racing and the quality and competence of the crews involved, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- The local stream conditions
- The local weather conditions
- Whether the race course is sufficiently clear of racing traffic, non-racing traffic, debris or any other obstruction
- Whether the safety launch/es is/are in a suitable position and ready to respond
- Whether sufficient marshals are in place and in communication with the SU and race desk, to provide full coverage of the stretch

The SU has the full operational responsibility of starting racing, and so will try to start each division in a timely fashion in accordance with the rules of racing, where circumstances and safety allow. Any other party (including but not limited to the Race Secretary, the Environment Agency and the University) which believes that there is a good reason not to start a race, should be encouraged to inform the SU immediately. The SU may halt racing on the grounds of safety and recommend any mitigating action to the Race Secretary which might allow racing to continue.

The first Senior Umpire of the day has responsibility for checking and approving the river as sufficiently safe to open to crews for their warm-up, at a point approximately half an hour before the first division. If at any point in the day the SU considers the river to be unsafe even for warming-up crews, s/he will close the river to student traffic and suspend racing. Before opening the river, the first SU of the day will be satisfied that:

1. Sufficient marshals are in place and providing full coverage of the stretch with working two-way radios.
2. The stream conditions are sufficiently safe.
3. The weather conditions are sufficiently safe.
4. First Aid cover is available at the river.
5. Any non-racing traffic already on the stretch has been spoken to and is aware of the event and circulation pattern.
6. The race secretary and his/her team are ready and happy that the river be opened.

In the same manner, the final SU of the day will close the river at the end of racing, will dismiss the marshals (in stages) once they are satisfied that all racing traffic is clear of the relevant areas, and will reopen the river to non-racing circulation.

As part of the preparations for the regatta, the coordinating SU for the team will liaise with the Environment Agency, the Rowing Sabbatical Officer (in his/her safety role) and the Race Secretary, to determine any special measures to be taken to allow racing under the risk assessment in more challenging conditions such as high stream or wind. These measures may include, but are not limited to:- restrictions on coxing status; use of higher bunglines; restrictions on racing divisions; use of half-divisions; changes in warm-up time between divisions; and provision of extra safety launches. The coordinating SU will consult with the whole SU team as available to bring their collective experience to bear in making such decisions. The coordinating SU will ensure that the decisions are agreed with the race committee (via the RowSab and/or Race Sec) and will communicate them in a timely fashion to the racing clubs. The Rowing Sabbatical Officer will ensure that other interested parties (such as the Proctors and/or Sports Federation) are kept informed of the measures being used, as far as necessary, and that information on the measures is available to all college boat club members, including Senior Members. The coordinating SU will also ensure that the race secretary has a copy of the SU roster and mobile phone numbers.

### ***Marshals***

(This section will outline the marshalling for Torpids. The marshalling for Rowing On is slightly different and these differences are high-lighted at the end of this section.)

**Briefing:** Senior marshals from each college will attend a briefing meeting, held in the week prior to the event, which covers individual marshalling duties and safety procedures, and will be given summary notes of specific duties where appropriate. These senior marshals are then responsible for briefing the marshals sent by their college. The meeting will be open for additional persons to attend if they so wish.

**Over-seeing of marshals:** A member of the Race Committee will always ensure that marshals are in place and aware of their duties. This does not substitute but instead refreshes the briefing that should have been given by their college's senior marshal.

**Equipment:** All marshals are issued with a high-visibility yellow jacket, a radio, a klaxon and a starting order. Personnel in key positions are also given a megaphone.

**Stations:** Marshals will be stationed along the river at points marked on the Placement of Marshals maps, attached as *Appendix C* (Rowing On) and *Appendix D* (Torpids) of this plan. Additional marshals may be stationed on the day by the Race Committee and/or the SU as needs dictate. These stations ensure that the marshals' line of sight provides full coverage of the race course.

### **General duties:**

All marshals, except the Bike marshal, perform river checks, the process by which the SU can ascertain whether the river is clear of obstructions. In particular this process must be done, and show that the river is clear of obstructions, before a division can be started. When a river check is called the marshals will look for boats, swans and floating debris on their stretch of the river, then, in the order in which they are listed below, report back to the SU. During racing, marshals should radio and if necessary stop the race with the use of their klaxon should the course become unsafe to continue.

In the event of the river becoming unsafe to continue racing for whatever reason, attending marshals will sound the safety klaxons for at least 10 seconds and radio to all the others to do the same. Any marshal on hearing a klaxon should fire their klaxon for 10 seconds and ensure all racing crews around them come to a safe but swift halt. Races should be halted using the klaxons in any event that makes the continuation of racing unsafe, such as the channel becoming blocked by racing or other traffic, and must also be halted should a person end up in the water or a major injury be received. As crews hear the klaxons they will stop racing immediately as instructed in the coxing meetings (see later section). Crews halted by klaxon should remain stationary to allow safe access by first aid personnel and race committee until the race organiser gives permission for them to move.

A secondary role is to report to Race Desk if any significant numbers of pedestrians are present, and to request support if appropriate.

During the race itself, marshals act as observers, ensuring a safe and fair contest. They will also warn members of the public of approaching cyclists, although this role will primarily be taken by the Bike marshal. Marshals should ensure that no person or equipment involved with the event impede the public in their access to the public right-of-way or the private landowners to their property.

### Particular duties:

In addition to the general duties, each marshal has particular duties dependent on their designated position on the river bank, as detailed below (refer to the Placement of Marshals map, attached as *Appendix B* to this plan).

- 1) **Head (of the River) Marshal:** (by the grey footbridge) communicates with other river traffic entering the course from under Folly Bridge, and liaises with the SU about this; instructs crews who have finished racing on where to wait to prevent a build up of crews above the finish line and when to spin; ensures crews returning to their boathouses keep tucked into the City side bank; warns non-event pedestrians and cyclists coming down the towpath that an event is occurring.
- 2) **Finish:** (by the Cox stone) operates the finish clacker over the STERN of the boats to inform crews when they have finished racing; instructs crews to clear the finish line, radios Race Desk when the last racing crew crosses the line; ensures crews returning to their boathouses keep tucked into the City side bank.
- 3) **Boathouse A:** (on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses from St Anne's to Keble) fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to British Rowing and EA regulations; makes sure that crews about to boat do not put their boats on the rafts before the crews of the previous division of the same sex have landed and cleared the rafts; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up.
- 4) **Boathouse B:** (on Boathouse Island, covering boathouses from Exeter to Christ Church) fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to British Rowing and EA regulations; makes sure that crews about to boat do not put their boats on the rafts before the crews of the previous division of the same sex have landed and cleared the rafts; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up.
- 5) **Univ:** (outside Univ Boathouse) fields questions from competitors, radioing Race Desk if unsure; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to British Rowing and EA regulations; makes sure that crews about to boat do not put their boats on the rafts before the crews of the previous division of the same sex have landed and cleared the rafts; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up. Should also be monitoring that any equipment on the raft does not impede racing.
- 6) **Green Bank:** (halfway between Univ and Longbridges Boathouses) monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up; encourages crews warming up above the Gut to be through it with 5 minutes to go; ensures that crews that are paddling back after bumping out or returning to their boathouse stick to the circulation pattern.
- 7) **Longbridges:** (outside Longbridges Boathouse) fields questions from competitors or directs them to Race Desk; performs checks on each boat to ensure that they conform to British Rowing and EA regulations; makes sure that crews about to boat do not put their boats on the rafts before the crews of the previous division of the same sex have landed and cleared the rafts; encourages crews to boat on time to prevent late starting of divisions; keeps a record of which crews have boated for the division; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up.
- 8) **Top Gut:** (at the Gut exit) it shouldn't be the case that crews are going through the Gut in opposite directions, but watches the Gut exit to ensure that crews change circulation pattern safely; keeps a record of which boats have passed downstream to be able to inform the SU of the progress of crews to the start; pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut; guides crews round any pile-ups; encourages crews to clear the racing line once bumped out.
- 9) **Bottom Gut:** (on the bend between the Sea Scouts and Falcon) pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut; guides crews round any pile-ups; encourages crews to clear the racing line once bumped out.
- 10) **Donnington Bridge:** (by Donnington Bridge) might be required to cross Donnington Bridge to pass information to or perform boat checks on crews boating from Falcon or City; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up; pays particular attention during racing as a lot of bumps occur in the Gut; guides crews round any pile-ups; encourages crews to clear the racing line once bumped out.
- 11) **Top Bunglines:** (covering bunglines 1-7) monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up and checks that crews overtake sensibly; assists crews spinning onto their bunglines so as to keep the far bank clear for cruisers; keeps a record of which crews are attached to their bunglines; reports to the SU if the umpires have not shown up, or if there is no pole man for a crew in

your section; generally assists the SU as required. May also be required to communicate to crews any additional information such as delays.

- 12) **Bottom Bunglines:** (covering bunglines 8-13) communicates with river traffic coming up through Iffley Lock, and liaises with the SU about this; monitors that crews are sticking to the circulation pattern during the warm-up and checks that crews overtake sensibly; assists crews spinning onto their bunglines so as to keep the far bank clear for cruisers; keeps a record of which crews are attached to their bunglines; reports to the SU if the umpires have not shown up, or if there is no pole man for a crew in your section; generally assists the SU as required. May also be required to communicate to crews any additional information such as delays.
- 13) **Bike Marshal:** cycles ahead of each division with the sole aim of providing additional warning to spectators and members of the general public on the towpath if significant numbers of pedestrians and bystanders are present.

### **Marshalling for Rowing On:**

A slightly different marshal line-up is used for Rowing On. Their specific duties are the same as the Torpids marshals, unless stated below

- 1) Head
- 2) Finish: drops the clacker on the BOW of the boat.
- 3) Boathouse A: there are no restrictions on when crews may put their boats on the rafts.
- 4) Boathouse B: there are no restrictions on when crews may put their boats on the rafts.
- 5) Univ: there are no restrictions on when crews may put their boats on the rafts. Ensures that crews on the raft have their blades tucked in to prevent impeding racing crews.
- 6) Green Bank
- 7) Longbridges: there are no restrictions on when crews may put their boats on the rafts.
- 8) Top Gut: rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews paddling from the marshalling area to the start line.
- 9) Bottom Gut: keeps a record of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area; rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews paddling from the marshalling area to the start line.
- 10) Donnington Bridge: keeps a record of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area; rather than monitoring racing, marshals crews in the marshalling area.
- 11) Spinning: (located at the lowest point the SU will allow crews to spin) communicates with river traffic coming up through Iffley Lock, and liaises with the SU about this; stops crews spinning too low; marshals crews in the marshalling area; keeps a record of which crews are correctly marshalled in the marshalling area.
- 12) Bike

### **Changing Marshals**

Marshals should not leave their posts unless their fully-briefed replacement is there waiting to take over. No changeover should occur within 10 minutes of the next racing division. Outgoing marshals are expected to pass on any experience or relevant information from their shift to their replacement. At the end of the day, marshals must stay in place until the SU dismisses them.

### **Circulation Pattern**

To ensure the safety of river traffic and the smooth running of Rowing On and Torpids, strict circulation patterns are enforced. These are illustrated on the Circulation Pattern maps, attached as *Appendix C (Rowing On)* and *Appendix D (Torpids)* to this plan.

In the following explanatory notes, left and right refers to the course of the boat as seen by the coxswain, i.e. port (strokeside) and starboard (bowside) respectively.

### **Crews**

**Circulation pattern:** For both Rowing On and Torpids, the basic circulation pattern between divisions is a figure of eight. Above the Gut all crews observe reverse circulation thus keeping to the left of the river. Below the Gut, the normal pattern is followed and crews keep to the right. Encounters between crews are avoided by all crews keeping tight to the banks and leaving a clear, central passage for cruisers and other river traffic. For the avoidance of confusion, cruisers pass each other in accordance with normal regulations.

**Boating:** All crews boating from Boathouse Island must boat downstream and keep close to the left bank. Crews on the County Side must boat upstream towards the Head. Any crew stationed at Falcon or City of Oxford Rowing Club should boat as normal, unless the river is completely clear, in which case crews may boat downstream. Similarly, if crews are late boating at Longbridges, they may boat downstream, as long as the river is clear and permission has been gained from a marshal.

**Warming up:** In Rowing On, no water warm-up is permitted. In Torpids, of the 13 crews in each division, the top 6 will warm up above the Gut and the bottom 6 below the Gut. Boat number 7 may choose its warm-up stretch. The change from left to right hand circulation happens at the top entrance to the Gut as crews move down toward the start, under direction of the Longbridges and Top Gut marshals. The Bungline marshals assist crews with spinning onto their bunglines; either reverse or normal spin is allowed with the aim of leaving the far bank clear if cruisers are passing.

**Overtaking:** Crews may overtake other crews warming up, but coxes must be certain to check for oncoming river traffic, especially cruisers, both above and below the Gut.

**Spinning:** In Torpids crews may spin wherever they like provided they do not cause obstruction to oncoming river traffic. Below the Gut, again because of the narrowness of the river, coxes are advised to spin at Haystacks and in the bay outside Falcon. Crews then spin when next to their bung lines.

**During the race:** No vessels other than the racing boats and the following safety launch will be on the course when a race is in progress. Crews may take whichever route up the river they choose. In Torpids, in the event of a 'bump', the crew gaining the bump moves out of the racing line as quickly as possible and stops. Crews who have been 'bumped' or have not gained a 'bump' race as far as the finish post, opposite Christ Church Meadow.

**After racing:** Once past the finish line, crews wind down and move upstream, clear of the finish, where they wait for instructions on spinning from the Head marshal. In Torpids, crews who 'bump out' follow the following safety launch up the river, observing the circulation pattern. Crews that 'bump out' beyond their boathouse join the warm-up circulation pattern and land at their raft when they pass it on the correct side of the river. Crews 'bumping out' before their boathouse may go straight in provided it is clear to do so and under instructions from the marshals, with the exception of the top half of Boathouse Island, St. Anne's to Keble, who must re-join the circulation pattern.

Crews for the next division may boat when the last racing crew passes their raft, as announced by the marshals and/or the public address system.

### ***Other River Traffic***

Races are never started until the river is completely clear of river traffic and other obstructions. During Torpids, there is little other river traffic, but occasionally other craft may appear on the river. As they reach either Iffley Lock (going upstream) or Osney Lock (going downstream) they are given verbal notice from the EA. Marshals are briefed to speak to other river users who appear on the Isis and keep the SU notified of their appearance on the course.

Craft proceeding along the course take the centre of the river and pass one another port side to port side. Marshals are briefed to monitor crews during the warm-up and make sure they stay clear of cruisers, and also to be ready to provide the SU with information as to the position of cruisers on the course. The Circulation Pattern (see *Appendix D*) shows the positions of three points, labelled A, B and C. These may be used as places for craft to moor temporarily if it is the case that waiting for them to clear the course will delay the next race excessively.

## **Communications**

24 two-way radios are used for communication between Race Desk, the SU, the EA launch, the Iffley Lock keeper, the 2 safety boats, the marshals and the First Aid personnel.

Call signs are assigned according to position and are explained at the relevant marshalling meeting, and on the day at Race Desk.

In addition to radio communication, OURCs has the use of mobile phones held by: Race Desk (Secretary's Mobile 07748700736), the SU and First Aid. The Iffley Lock keeper also has a land line (01865 777277). An emergency (999 calls only) telephone is located in the back of Longbridges Boathouse. Mobile phones can also be used for emergency calls. The phone number of Christ Church Lodge (01865 276150) will be kept at Race

Desk to secure emergency access to Christ Church Meadow. The number of the EA person on duty on each day of racing will be obtained by the Race Secretary.

A public address system based at Race Desk can address all competitors and spectators from Christ Church Meadow to Longbridges Boathouse.

## **Safety**

### **Competitor Safety**

#### ***Event Management***

#### **Race Secretary**

The race secretary, seeking appropriate advice, is the race organiser and reserves the right to halt racing at any point. The race secretary should liaise with the first aid cover and communicate to the SU immediately, should first aid, for whatever reason, be unable to provide adequate cover to continue racing

Marshals are thoroughly briefed on their duties (as described above) prior to the event at a meeting for senior marshals from each participating boat club (organised by the OURCs Secretary), and also on the day, by members of the Race Committee. The SU is responsible for ensuring that racing starts only when conditions are safe, subject to satisfactory reports from the marshals and Race Desk. If any incident occurs that could potentially jeopardise the safety of crews, marshals sound klaxons, bringing all racing to an immediate halt.

All participating crews shall observe the OURCs rules, which encompass the safety advice of British Rowing and EA regulations. Clubs that have not submitted a safety audit may not race. Crews infringing these rules or acting in an unsafe manner may be subject to fines, penalty bumps, or disqualification from the event.

Coxes of all crews must attend a briefing meeting (organised by the OURCs Captain of Coxes) covering the event and safety management issues covered in this document. If any cox does not attend, they will not be permitted to compete unless given express permission by the OURCs Captain of Coxes. The meeting will be split into two parts: the first (approximately 15 minutes) for all coxes, covering essential safety information; and a second section, for coxes new to Bumps racing, or for those wanting a refresher, to cover all aspects of coxing in the event. In addition, at least one Senior Committee member from each College Boat Club must attend the first section of the meeting, ideally the Captain, to ensure that information is circulated throughout the club.

In addition, a Torpids briefing will be part of the Captains' Meeting preceding Rowing On. This briefing will go over all the important safety aspects, rules of racing, marshalling, umpiring, as well as information on appeals made to, and penalties imposed by the Race Committee. A question and answer section will be included, where the OURCs Secretary, Sabbatical Officer and Race Committee can advise on any issues raised.

#### ***Stream Conditions***

In the event that the river is running faster or higher than usual, the SU liaises with the Iffley Lock keeper and the EA (who attend all 4 days of the event) to decide how to proceed. The SU must consider the proximity between racing crews and the weirs at Iffley Lock, (or Hinksey if appropriate), as well as the competence of the crews to deal with the conditions. OURCs has developed a contingency plan to allow some racing to continue (included in the attached Risk Assessments). Options include moving the bunglines further away from the lock, cancelling racing for less experienced crews, requiring crews to race with experienced/senior coxes, running part divisions and cancelling the entire day's racing.

#### ***Precipitation & Cold***

Rain will not typically halt racing, but the SU must consider if it threatens to swamp racing crews or pose a significant risk of hypothermia. Snow and cold conditions pose a further threat that might jeopardise the safety of competitors and so halting racing. Hail is particularly dangerous given the injury that can be done to equipment and persons. The SU must decide whether it is possible for competitors to complete the race, including warm-up and warm-down, in a safe fashion, considering the facilities available to them. The heightened risk involved with any participant entering the water must also be considered.

### ***Poor Visibility***

In the instance of poor visibility the SU will make the decision as to whether racing may start or continue. The SU will, as a matter of course, state which divisions should boat with two bright white lights on their boat at bow and stern. Marshals will check this as part of the boat checks.

### ***High Winds***

High winds make navigation difficult for crews and may also threaten swamping, although the Isis stretch of the Thames is rarely affected by any significant disturbance of the surface of the water. The SU must consider if enforcing only experienced/senior coxes is appropriate, or other mitigating action.

### ***Lightning***

All marshals and race officials will be responsible for watching out for lightning and if it is seen it will be reported to Race Desk. Race Desk will then approximate the distance of the storm by using the “30 – 30” rule (comparing the time difference between lightning and thunder). If the storm is felt to be within approximately 10km (30 seconds between lightning and thunder) then crews will be taken off the water as soon as possible and advised to seek proper shelter in the boathouses.

Once all crews have returned to their boathouses, a river check will be co-ordinated by Race Desk. Once all crews are off the water the marshals will be advised to seek shelter. Launches will return to the nearest raft and the drivers should seek shelter in the nearest boathouse. The public address system will be used to warn spectators and other competitors.

Following the suspension of racing, racing will only resume 30 minutes after the last lightning. This will be announced over the public address system.

### **Medical Emergency**

#### ***First Aid***

First Aid cover is a minimum of two First Aid at Work (or equivalent) qualified personnel with equipment appropriate to the event, who are based at a location Longbridges Boat House. The First Aid personnel are responsible for ensuring that sufficient and appropriate equipment is available to them and no racing shall proceed should they suggest that it is unsafe to continue. One safety boat is supplied for their use. In the case of a serious incident, access to Christ Church Meadow and Longbridges for emergency vehicles is arranged in advance: a key to the slip road from Donnington Bridge is held at Race Desk, and access to Christ Church Meadow will be arranged for emergency services. The Race Committee are to be briefed before the event by the Race Secretary on procedure during an emergency and plans will be kept at Race Desk for guidance during an incident.

#### ***Safety Boats***

Each boat is driven at all times by qualified personnel (RYA level 2, or equivalent). During Rowing On and Torpids, a minimum of two launches are used by OURCs. The boats have distinct roles:

Race Following Launch: stationed at Longbridges, which follows the races to the Christ Church Cut and is ready to aid participants. Between divisions this launch helps to marshal crews in the start area.

First Aid Launch: stationed at a location Longbridges Boat House, for the use of the First Aid team.

Spare Launch: It is possible that OURCs will obtain a third launch, particularly if the racing is conducted under a flag, to act as back-up.

### **Spectator and Bystander Safety**

OURCs does not invite spectators to watch the event, nor take any responsibility for the safety of the public beyond ensuring that our event does not negatively impact their health or safety. All members of the public have a right to use the towpath as a public right-of-way and OURCs will not impede this in any way. Marshals will report to the SU if they believe that the safety of members of the public is threatened by the event in any way. First Aid personnel will not be prevented from attending to members of the public.

### **Incident De-Brief**

Following any safety incident the SU and Race Secretary should briefly discuss the causes for the incident and whether any action is appropriate. The SU and Race Secretary are expected to communicate regularly about concerns or any relevant information.

### **Race Start – Cannon Use**

The races will be started by means of a cannon which is fired twice to give warning of the start (at five and one minutes to go) and to signal the start of the race. The cannon is fired by the senior umpire giving a visual signal to a competent person who is in charge of the cannons. The senior umpire retains complete control of the starting sequence and may delay or abort it at any time in accordance with the race rules. The cannons are held under the control of a competent person and their operation is supervised by a firearms licence holder. The transport, storage, maintenance and usage of the cannons is done under the direction of the firearms licence holder and they retain responsibility for ensuring that all regulations are adhered to.