



Marine Notice No. 42 of 2022

Notice to all Masters, Owners and Users of Pleasure and Recreational Craft, Boating Clubs and Training Providers.

Important safety advice for those involved in Rowing

In response to Marine Casualty Investigation Board recommendations, the Department of Transport wishes to draw attention to the safety advice and recommendations in Chapter 8 of the Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft in relation to Rowing Boats and the general advice contained in the Code of Practice for those using recreational craft in Irish waters.

Particular attention is drawn to the following advice:

Training

Persons involved in rowing activities should undertake appropriate training. Information on approved courses may be obtained from course providers including Rowing Ireland and the Irish Coastal Rowing Federation.

Safety advice and recommendations

Sections 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4 of the Code of Practice provide a list of important safety recommendations and checks that should be followed. These include the following:

- Keep all rowing equipment in good order and inspect the equipment regularly.
- Prior to a crew embarking, boats should be checked to confirm they are safe, free of leaks and that all moving parts are functioning.
- Coaching launches should be on the water at all times when rowing craft are in use.
- Unescorted outings are not encouraged and, if undertaken, a designated person ashore should know the departure times, destinations and return times.
- All persons should be capable of swimming 100m while wearing light clothing.
- All boat coxswains should wear an approved personal flotation device/lifejacket at all times.

Part A (Chapter 1) of the Code of Practice outlines the legislative requirements that apply to all recreational craft or specific types or sizes of craft. Owners and operators must comply with the requirements appropriate to their craft.

Navigation, hazards and weather

Coaches, coxswains and crew should at all times be aware of local navigation rules, including any possible hazards or potential dangers arising from tidal stream or wind that may prevail locally.

Boats should not be used at night unless they comply with the requirements of the International Collision Regulations regarding navigation lights.

Boats should not be operated in weather or tide conditions that may compromise their low freeboard and stability.

It is important to risk assess local conditions, currents, etc. prior to putting craft into the water. Boats should not be operated in waters that are beyond the capabilities of the crew or the boats concerned.

Be aware of the dangers of hypothermia when wet or exposed to the elements.

Personal flotation devices/lifejackets and other safety equipment

All persons on board any craft of less than 7 metres in length must wear a personal flotation device or a lifejacket.

Where an exemption to this requirement is being applied in the case of rowers in boats designed and specifically used for rowing in boat races and which are capable of being entered into regattas or other events recognised by Rowing Ireland or in the case of rowers in boats of a design and type that are used in the Olympic games or other international rowing regattas, it is most important that a coach and/or safety boat is in attendance at all times and that other safety precautions are followed.

Operators of safety boats should be suitably qualified and boats should be suitably identified by markings or warning flags to alert other craft in the area that there are rowing boats on the water.

Coach/safety boats should at a minimum carry the following items of equipment:

- Suitable bailer
- Suitable inflatable pump – if an inflatable is used as a rescue boat
- A throw bag with at least 10m of buoyant line
- A sound signalling device – air or aerosol power klaxon
- Thermal exposure blankets
- Lifebuoys or additional personal flotation devices/lifejackets to assist persons in the water – one for each crew member on the rowing boat
- Suitable First Aid Kit
- Anchor and line
- Knife
- Engine Kill Cord to be used by the engine operator
- Paddle
- Suitable handholds fixed to the side of the boat – to assist persons being rescued.

Dependable means of communication

It is important to consider and establish effective means of communication, other than by solely using mobile phone technology, for the specific location of the activities to be undertaken.

A link to Chapter 8 of the Code of Practice is [here](#).

As outlined in [Marine Notice No.32 of 2022](#), the Code of Practice is a free document. Hard copies can be obtained on request, in both English and Irish, from the Maritime Safety Policy Division of the Department at email MarineLeisureSafety@transport.gov.ie. The Code and individual Chapters of the Code are available to view or download from www.gov.ie/transport. A list of updates to the 2017 Edition of the Code is also available to view or download from www.gov.ie.

All recreational craft users are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Code of Practice and to heed the safety advice and recommendations.

Please spread the word regarding the Code of Practice and its availability.

Note: Marine Notices are issued purely for maritime safety and navigation reasons and should not be construed as conferring rights or granting permissions.

Irish Maritime Administration,
Department of Transport
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60, Ireland.

24/06/2022

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, MSO@transport.gov.ie
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division,
MaritimeSafetyPolicyDivision@transport.gov.ie
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
Dept. of Transport, Maritime Safety Policy Division, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60, Ireland.
email: MarineNotices@transport.gov.ie or visit us at: <https://www.gov.ie/transport>