

*Ottawa Rowing Club  
Rowing Traffic Patterns*

Right hand shore rule applies past this point

Quebec

Ontario

ONEC

ORC

Interprovincial Bridge

**Keep close to your right hand shore.**  
All rowing shells are to be launched with the bow pointing westward, upstream, i.e. pointing towards the old Interprovincial Bridge leading from the Art Gallery on the Ottawa side of the Museum of Civilization on the Hull, Quebec side. Crews (including scullers) are then to row to, or just beyond the Interprovincial Bridge and then cross the river and head up the Quebec side of the Ottawa River. Crews continue to follow this direction of travel until they choose to turn around and return to or towards the ORC boathouse. On the return trip, crews travel along the Ottawa side of the river. The shells are to be docked with the bow pointing westward, upstream (towards the Interprovincial Bridge).

Indicates areas where boats frequently cross



# OTTAWA ROWING CLUB

## TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND SAFETY RULES SUMMARY

### Traffic Patterns on the Water.

All rowing shells are to be launched with the bow pointing westward, upstream, i.e. pointing towards the old Interprovincial Bridge leading from the Art Gallery on the Ottawa side of the Museum of Civilization on the Hull, Quebec side. Crews (including scullers) are then to row to or just beyond the Interprovincial Bridge and then cross the river and head up the Quebec side of the Ottawa River. Crews continue to follow this direction of travel until they choose to turn around and return to or towards the ORC boathouse. On the return trip, crews travel along the Ottawa side of the river. The shells are to be docked with the bow pointing westward, upstream (towards the Interprovincial Bridge). Traffic patterns are set out on the attached map of Ottawa River.

*ATHLETES AND COACHES MUST RESPECT THESE TRAFFIC RULES. IF THEY DO NOT, THEY RISK BEING SUSPENDED FROM ROWING OR COACHING, AND MAY EVEN BE BANNED FROM THE CLUB, WITH NO COMPENSATION FOR FEES PAID. THEY ALSO RISK LEGAL LIABILITY TO COMPENSATE FOR ANY DAMAGE OR INJURY THEY MAY CAUSE DUE TO THEIR FAILURE TO FOLLOW THE RULES ABOUT TRAFFIC PATTERNS.*

**Responsibility of Individual Oarspersons and Coxswains:** Each member of a crew on the water when their shell violates traffic patterns, whether or not an accident occurs, is responsible for any damage that may result, and is also considered responsible for the violation of the traffic pattern rules. For example, even in a coxed racing shell, or a shell where the bow person is responsible for steering, all members of the crew are equally responsible for the violation and any resulting damage. Each crew member has a responsibility to speak up if the shell is violating traffic pattern rules.

**Responsibility of Coaches:** Coaches are responsible for reinforcing with their crews the need to comply with traffic pattern rules. Coaches who are on the water with their crews nearby are liable to the same extent as their crews for any violation of traffic pattern rules or damage or injury caused by violating the rules.

### Exceptions to Duty to Obey Traffic Patterns

**Emergency/Danger.** In emergency situations, or where it is dangerous to row according to the established traffic patterns – for example, when stormy water conditions or the presence of a fog bank make it dangerous to row on one side of the river – rowers may deviate from these rules. However, they may deviate only to the extent necessary to address the emergency or eliminate the danger. While deviating from the rules, it remains their duty to warn other rowers of their presence. Failing to warn other rowers can result in the same penalties as for violating the traffic pattern rules generally.

**During Supervised Races.** When coach boats are on the water and in a position to warn other rowers, those engaged in races may deviate from the traffic pattern rules. However, to the extent feasible, races should be conducted in a manner that respects the traffic pattern rules. Even if the deviation is permissible, rowers should take care to avoid collisions if they have the ability to do so.

**Crossing the River to Enter a Traffic Lane.** It is the responsibility of rowers crossing the river to get to the correct rowing "lane" to watch out for and avoid rowers who are rowing according to the rules in those lanes.

### Other Safety Rules

**Cold Water:** When cold water rules are in effect, rowers must obey the traffic patterns set by the Head Coach. This will normally include limits on

**Safety Equipment:** Rowers who are not accompanied by a coach boat must carry a lifejacket for each member of the crew and cox. Each boat must also carry a device for signaling, 50 feet of rope, and a bailing kit. This is a legal requirement, not merely a club rule.

**Rowing in low-light conditions:** Rowers rowing in low-light conditions, particularly an issue in the spring and autumn, must have a light or lights giving 360 degree visibility to signal their presence to other boats and rowers. Without lights rowing shells are virtually invisible after dark and if you tend to row without lights you're simply inviting disaster. It is ORC policy that all rowing shells should always have a bow and a stern light before sunrise and after sunset. It is advisable that all crew members have an individual light as well.

**Rowing in foggy conditions:** It is the responsibility of crews and coaches to avoid (to the extent that the fog can be foreseen) rowing in fog that is sufficiently thick to hide them from oncoming crews or that prevents them from maintaining their proper direction on the water. If a crew does become lost in fog, it is its responsibility to signal its presence to other crews by using a whistle or by calling out.

**Other Watercraft.** The Ottawa Rowing Club cannot control the routes used by other watercraft, or by rowers from the other rowing club on the Ottawa River, the Ottawa New Edinburgh Club. However, both clubs have expressed an interest in developing compatible traffic pattern rules. The traffic pattern rules set out on the attached page(s) have been agreed to by both clubs.

**Failure to Avoid Collision.** In some cases, a rower or crew rowing according to the rules may be in a position to avoid a collision with a crew that is violating the rules – for example, the rower in the "right" may see the crew in the "wrong" approaching in time to avoid the collision. It is the duty of the rower in the "right" to take **reasonable** steps (that would not put the rower in the right at additional risk of harm) to avoid the collision, for example, by yelling, blowing a whistle or changing course. Failure to do so will be considered a violation of traffic pattern rules. In such a case, both the rowers in the "right" and the "wrong" may be considered at fault.

**Violation of rules generally.** Violations of any of the rules besides the traffic pattern rules may be treated the same as violations of the traffic pattern rules. However, in general, violations that put other rowers at risk (such as colliding with another shell while violating traffic pattern rules) will generally be considered more serious than violations that put at risk only the individual rower who is at fault (for example, rowing without a lifejacket).

### Penalties

Penalties for violating any of the rules set out above may be dealt with in several ways, including:

- *verbal or written warning;*
- *suspension from rowing for a day, week or longer period, including a season ban, with no refund of fees;*
- *ban from club property;*
- *requirement to perform reasonable duties to help compensate for any damage or injury caused;*
- *requirement to compensate for damage or injury.*

The Head Coach will have the final say on matters related to safety on a day-to-day basis. Sanctions beyond a warning will be reviewed by the Club Safety Committee and ratified by the Executive.