



Poplar Rowing Regatta 2026 - Royal Albert Dock

Sunday 17th May 2026

Safety Plan

The following information defines key rules, procedures and guidelines, which must be fully adhered to by all crews and officials. It is a condition of racing that coaches must go through this Safety Plan with every crew – and especially their coxes – before boating.

Summary

Whilst in the Royal Albert Dock (between the bridges), all competitors are under the authority of the regatta and must follow all the instructions given by officers of the regatta – this is particularly relevant in emergency situations. Crews **must not** pass out of the Dock under the bridges at either end of the course.

The regatta is run in full compliance with the British Rowing RowSafe guidance and the Royal Docks Adventure (RDA) Operational Procedures.

During the hours of racing there will be 5 safety boats 3 of which in Lane 0 and 2 in Lane 7. The Safety Boats in Lane 0 will be stationed at 250m close to the start (“Safety Start”), the 1000m mark (“Safety Middle”) and the 1750m mark (“Safety Finish”). The 2 safety boats in Lane 7 will be stationed close to the out Pontoon, (safety pontoon) the second safety boat will be stationed near the start pen (safety pen). There will be a designated boat with a defibrator and first responder. During racing, marshals/ umpires will be located on the bank at 500m, 1000m, 1750m, 2000m (Finish) and close to the 250m (Pen).

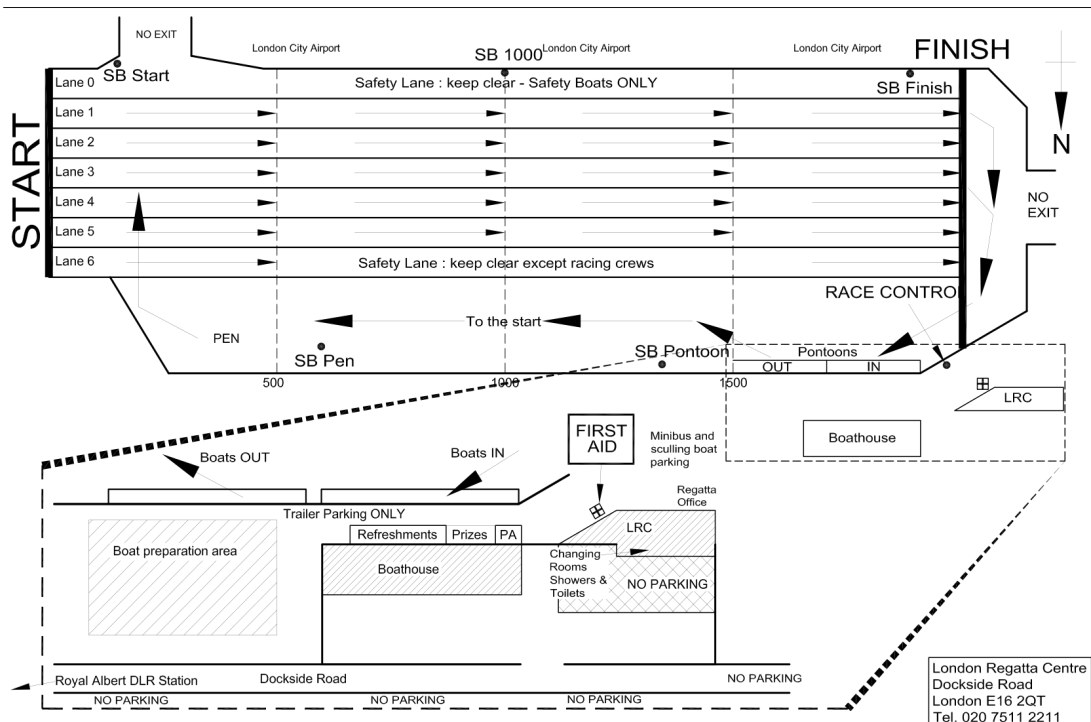
Safety boats will be in position before racing crews can boat. Approval to go afloat and for racing to commence will be given by Race Control once the safety pontoon and safety pen boats are in position. Racing will begin once the remaining safety boats are in position.

Race Control, located in the Finish cabin in front of the London Regatta Centre, will co-ordinate all safety and rescue across the race course.

Boating/Landing (as directed by Pontoon Marshals)

Launchings and landings will be from the two pontoons near the boathouse. Launching will be from the pontoon nearest the start only, and landing at the pontoon nearest the finish only. Pontoon Marshals will co-ordinate use of the pontoons.

Random checks of safety equipment (e.g. heel restraints, bow balls, hatch covers, etc) as well as coxes’ lifejackets will be carried out by a British Rowing Umpire. It must be emphasised that it is the coaches and master of the vessel’s responsibility – not that of the Regatta – to ensure that they row in equipment that conforms to RowSafe. The passing of a random check, for example on a bow ball, should not be interpreted as tacit approval or acceptance by the Regatta that the boat as a whole is safe.



Timing – Crews are responsible for ensuring they are attached at the start 2 minutes before the start time of their race. Crews should report to the pen marshal close to the 250m mark and enter the start pen 10 minutes prior to their race time. It is important that crews obey the instructions from the Marshals. **Crews are advised to boat at least of 30 minutes and no more than 45 minutes before the start time of their race.**

Launch – from the pontoon nearest the start i.e. furthest from the boathouse, bow balls pointing towards the start.

Landing – All boats will be landed on the pontoon nearest the finish. Pontoon Marshals will assist (where possible) with the removal of boats from the water.

Supporters – For reasons of safety and expediency, supporters are not allowed in the boating area or on the pontoons, but a coach may accompany each crew in this area.

Boat Circulation Plan (below)

Rowing through the bridges at either end of the course is not permitted at any time.

Crews are reminded to stay away from the wall in Lane 0 while the airport is operational.

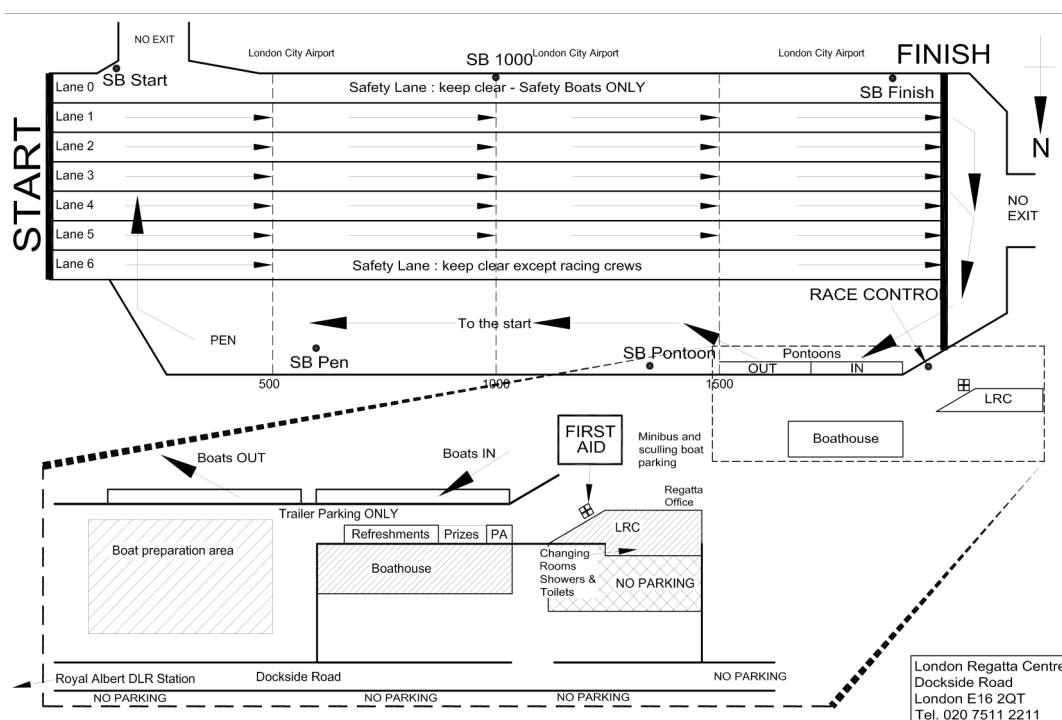
The 2000 meter course will be buoyed, creating a navigation channel, Lane 7, on the north side of the Dock. Any non-regatta traffic and racing crews moving to the start will be directed to use this channel by Marshals at either end of the course. The course will occupy Lanes 1 to 6, allowing adequate safe navigation for safety boats, crews failing to complete a race and crews proceeding to the start.

Competing crews going to the start are reminded to give priority to those with earlier race times.

Practice starts and warm ups should only be undertaken on the way to the start. No crew should use Lanes 1 to 6 for these purposes. Any crew doing this could be subject to sanction.



Crews are responsible for reporting to the Pen Marshal positioned close to the 250m mark and entering the start pen in good time prior to their race. Under no circumstances may crews pass under the bridge at the Start.



Weather

Wind - If the wind direction is easterly or westerly, and gusts or base wind speed exceed 17mph, the Dock will be closed, and no rowing will be permitted. This is due to the alignment and walled nature of the Dock, meaning that sinking conditions are likely across the full width of the course at such wind speeds.

In the event of deteriorating conditions while crews are already on the water, the Race Committee and the Safety Adviser will recommend a course of action, which shall then be communicated via Race Control. While exact actions will depend on the circumstances, outline considerations will be based on the following:

Easterly winds - Crews who are already close to the start may be permitted to race since this is the fastest way to clear crews from the further reaches of the Dock. Races may be started early in order to clear the Dock more quickly. Crews should follow all instructions from Umpires and Marshals. Crews who have not yet reached the 1000m mark, or those who have more than 20 minutes before their scheduled race time, should not expect to race and will be advised by Umpires and safety boats to turn into Lane 6 to return to the finish. Particular attention to safety at finish as the wind in this direction will cause water turbulence from water rebounding off the dock wall.

Westerly winds - Crews on the water are not likely to be permitted to race, as this would be directly into the wind. Crews should await instruction from Umpires or Marshalls when to spin and return to the finish area, possibly being accompanied by safety boats depending on conditions. If asked to wait for a safety escort, it is imperative that crews follow such instructions.



Lightning - In case of lightning, a standard “30:30” approach will be adopted, where all on- water activity will be suspended for a minimum of 30 minutes following a visible lightning strike that is accompanied less than 30 seconds later by audible thunder.

Crews will be required to clear the Dock as quickly as possible, and only those already under the instruction of the Pen Marshal may reasonably expect to race. All other crews should turn into Lane 6 when instructed as a race may be in progress. In this situation, crews may use both pontoons in order to clear the Dock swiftly.

What to do in an Emergency

Any Accident - Racing will be suspended by race officials until such time that the casualties have been attended to, and the course is clear, safety boats are back on station and approval is given by Race Control. Race Control or delegated person will make the necessary arrangements with the safety boats, Regatta Medical Team or the Emergency Services and liaise as necessary regarding the incident.

Vehicle access to the site is via the car park on Dockside Road, postcode for access is E16 2QT and what3words **funded.bats.remit**. The emergency exit point from the course itself is via the landing pontoon at **breath.filed.offers**.

On Water Incident - The nearest safety boat will provide an immediate response and rescue if required. During racing, other safety boats will remain on station to ensure the safety of other crews and if necessary, change their position to provide cover for the areas allotted to boats involved in the rescue. Should the medics be required to go afloat, life jackets will be made available, and they will be accompanied by an experienced launch driver.

In the case of equipment failure on the way to the start the crew must make known their predicament to a marshall and await instructions.

Waterside Incident, including Fire - Response to any incident on or close to the London Regatta Centre land (beige bonded surface) will be coordinated by Race Control and Safety Advisor.

The nearest landline telephone for 999 is located in the London Regatta Centre, behind the main reception desk. Ordnance Survey Grid Reference is 418-808, What3Words access point is **roof.tricky.timing** and postcode is E16 2QT.

First Aid

Regatta Medical Team will provide First Aid at the Regatta centre and can be contacted by radio, callsign “Medic”.

The Safety Boats will carry first aid kits as specified in RowSafe.

Incident Reporting

Any incident, collision or near-miss must be reported within 24 hours to British Rowing via their online incident reporting system at <https://incidentreporting.britishrowing.org> Incidents must also be reported to RDA via <https://forms.gle/8ov8LTHrNJ3Bsk5W7>