

# Executive Committee Meeting REPORTS

15<sup>th</sup> September 2006  
and 11<sup>th</sup> October 2006

<b>Title</b>	Report of Activities of Chris George RWSA for the period 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2006 to 15 <sup>th</sup> September 2006
<b>Author</b>	Chris George
<b>Date prepared</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> September 2006
<b>Action required</b>	To Note and To Decide

To note

## Club Audits

- After an exhaustive period of chasing, mostly schools and universities interspersed with the oddball club all clubs were finally accounted for one way or the other by early August. It has not been helpful that the ARA delayed until 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2006 before issuing their letter of instructions to audit and gave, initially, a month to the end of April and, finally, another month to the end of May before action was allowed to be taken by the RWSA. It takes an inordinate time to do these audits for the clubs that ignore the letters, as the Chairman will verify and he has only seen the tiny rump of 'unusual' clubs who come up with every excuse in the book as to why they have not read the numerous letters from the ARA, emails or website postings. This must not be allowed to happen next year and, to this end, I have negotiated with the National WSA that we continue our on-line audit next year unless the ARA on-line one is up and running. We will not use excel spreadsheets as other regions are to do (many regions have the same number of clubs as we have divisions!). The ARA are agreed that this will be done later this year and linked to the affiliation process. No audit – no affiliation!

The ARA office would like clubs to revert to having the option of doing a paper audit. This, I have fought as, it take us back not one step but two! We have agreed, nationally in the WSC, that it *must* be electronic (in the form of an excel spreadsheet at the very least) and we do not want to go back to paper so we have the support of the national WSC. We also have their support to continue with our on-line system.

- Issued 43 letters (from Martin's Office) on the 26<sup>th</sup> June giving until 3<sup>rd</sup> July to get audits done

## Action

It will be necessary to spend further funds (low hundreds) to revise the existing form with;

- a) the improvements suggested by those that did the on line questionnaire
- b) the additional questions that the national WSC have appended on buoyancy and coaching launches speed exemptions data needed for us at the TRRC to provide the PLA with one central database of clubs and launch Ids. (Note that this will be computerised to appear on a website or be sent to the PLA and TRRC direct so that no labour will be involved in maintaining the list
- c) host fee for another year

## To note

### Tideway

- Dealt with the usual number of complaints of bad steering or positioning of Tideway Clubs
- Received positive comments on the buoys marking the Surrey dividing line between the Fairway and the Inshore zone *and several requests that more buoys be laid*. See RRAIG.
- Discussed with Parr's Priory, and later Stan Collingwood and Bill Mitchell, the format for their private Club event with respect to three-boat races and explained the rules on this not being possible
- Filled in a questionnaire concerning the potential repair for the Kew Gardens area of bank on the Surrey side
- Received the occasional accident and near miss report – many less accident reports this year
- One major accident noted where a double was cut in half by a Motor cruiser

## To note

### RRAIG

- I attended the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> meetings on the 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and 7<sup>th</sup> September.
- Liaised with Bill Mitchell on 'comment collation' following issue of the Draft Code for the Tidal Thames
- Helped with the TRRC logo to be used on the Chart Poster (a.k.a. "Idiots' Guide)
- Carried out the final touches in committee and with Alex Brown on the Chart poster
- Considered the request that more buoys be laid and postponed the laying of any more until the trial is fully over, perhaps, until next year.

- Liaised on the various Notices to Mariners (launches, Kew, and particularly that of the replacement for NTMU6 2002, namely NTM15U 2006) and for the last mentioned achieved some very good changes of wording properly to reflect the need to be in the fairway on some occasions which the original lacked.
- Worked on the final draft of the Rowing Code of Practice
- Looked at places, positioning and content of notices and other indicators on the bank and bridges for implementation of the Code
- Was notified of the change of size of buoy by the Harbour master from a small one circa 300 mm high to one circa 600mm high. The reasons were three-fold; one was that some of the buoys were being dragged underwater at very high tides due to their relatively small volume, some had be hit and cut by vessels screws due to not being seen when partially underwater and because the larger ones have a natural LED light fixing and lights were considered an essential to rowers and motor vessels when navigating at night. The disadvantage of a slightly bigger buoy was considered well outweighed by these advantages.
- Made changes to the Hammersmith Flood chart advice to get inside fairway at this point to avoid the Dove
- Liaised extensively on coaching launch speed exemption procedures, wash tests and agreed with the PLA that the TRRC would maintain an electronic register of all club launches ID numbers that will be on the Thames. (Note: this to be done via the audit for the club and such data from non-TRRC clubs to be sent to us via the national audit by THEM having to enter the data on our system which will automatically present it on a list for download by TRRC officials and the PLA.

#### **To decide**

- **Day Glo vests – a decision needs to be made by Council. We suggest RED for novices and yellow for scullers and coxless.**

#### **Action needed**

Council to vote on proposal.

#### **Tideway Events**

- Dealt with a complaint about a three boat race at Barnes and Mortlake Regatta

#### **Non-Tideway Events**

- Maidenhead Regatta, Burway Junior and Veteran Regatta, Stains Amateur, City of Oxford RC Regatta, Molesey Regatta,

## **National Water Safety and Working Group and related matters**

- The WSWG meets for a complete day monthly and on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2006 and on 15<sup>th</sup> August I was unable to attend but corresponded extensively on buoyancy, on-line reporting, auditing, immersion and capsize and the ARA safety strategy
- Worked extensively on the wording and content of the Water Safety Strategy document due to be circulated for approval at the next ARA Council meeting

## **National Water Safety Committee**

- No meeting

## **Regional**

- Liaised with the ARA (Pippa Randolph) on the modus operandi of keeping records of which clubs are in which division and which are still affiliated. Agreed an excel format.
- Liaised with Martin and Stuart Ward as to the way forward to get Regional powers for discipline on matters of navigation and safety

## **Disciplinary Group**

- Attended several meetings and numerous emails of this group to agree the modus operandi of the system. Bill to report details.
- Liaised with Bill on a synopsis of the disciplinary procedure to present to RRAIG

Chris George RWSA

15<sup>th</sup> September 2006

---

<b>Title</b>	Report of Activities of Chris George RWSA 16 <sup>th</sup> September to 10 <sup>th</sup> October for the October meeting
<b>Author</b>	Chris George
<b>Date prepared</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> October 2006
<b>Action required</b>	To Note and To Decide

To note

### Club Audits

- Amazingly I have had an audit for “next” year on the Vorboss on-line system. This must be a first! It is a tribute to the ease of the system. Sadly, I had to say to the club concerned, who were a University that, welcome though it was, it would have to be done in December with the new format questionnaire which includes the buoyancy data requirements. This club also put “n/a” for the Deputy Water Safety Adviser. Council are urged to emphasise to all clubs that the TRRC **require** all clubs to have a deputy CWSA with email and telephone

To note

### Tideway

- Dealt with an usually high number of complaints of bad steering or positioning of Tideway Clubs in which it is clear that there are certain clubs that are in need of attention
- One major accident noted where an eight collided with the Dove Pier and a launch was sunk. This investigation is now to be investigation by the PLA rather than the region.

To note

### Harbour Master

- Met with the Harbour Master Upper, Alex Brown and the Deputy WSA Neil Jackson at the PLA offices for one of my usual liaison “Bumps” meeting to discuss navigation and accidents. Noted a considerable reduction in reported accidents. There were however too many cases of accidents reported to him and not me.

## **Recommendation to decide**

It is suggested that there be severe penalties by the TRRC Disciplinary body for non reporting of any serious accident involving injury or serious damage.

## **To note**

### **RRAIG**

- I attended the launch of the Code at LRC on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2006

### **Tideway Events**

- Carried out extensive work together with Neil Jackson on documentation and eventual approval for Pairs Head.
- It is clear that Events have still to realise the need to get documents in on time as two have now not been
- Am working on other Tideway events such as the Quintin Head

## **Recommendation**

Council to agree to write to all events to specify the time table agreed and to get events to confirm receipt of the letter.

### **Non-Tideway Events**

- Reading Small boats Head, Wallingford Sculls, Weybridge Silver sculls all approved

### **National Water Safety and Working Group and related matters**

- The WSWG met on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October and discussed on-line auditing, the new audit for 2007 and most of the day on how to re-address the format and aim of the WSC.

## National Water Safety Committee and Regional Safety

- Did not attend the meeting
- This Sub-Committee and the WSWG has agreed that the Thames Region are a suitable region to pilot an [on-line incident reporting system](http://safety.thames-rrc.org/information/incident-reporting/onlineincidents.html)

<http://safety.thames-rrc.org/information/incident-reporting/onlineincidents.html>

that I have devised and proposed. Funding was agreed not to be a limitation in at the February ARA Council meeting for safety matters. As a matter of urgency I have instructed – with the Chairman’s approval – the same firm, Thoughtspace, as did the ARA audit in six days to do a preliminary pilot study. The cost is not more than £2,000 for the Phase 1. The ARA were unable to make a decision on the hoof, so as to speak, so I have paid for a deposit electronically to get this work done on behalf of the Thames region and have been reimbursed by the Region. It is anticipated that we will have a system of incident reporting (with particular emphasis on bad navigation) within a week or two that can be done on line in words. Phase 2 is the integration of that verbal system with charts for every section of the river Thames, Dorney, Caversham and any other regional water. Phase 3 is the integration with normal ARA incident reports. All reports are automatically collated, categorized and emails sent to RWSA etc by the software, elimination any data collection by the RWSA. In the absence of an immediate decision by the ARA to fund this essential safety work, the Region has taken on the liability and it is expected that the ARA will take it on, given the tenor of the February resolution. This has taken a considerable time and not a little effort to get off the ground and I have high hopes for the final procedure. Below is a copy of the contract.

Memorandum of understanding to form the contract between Thoughtspace and the Thames Regional Rowing Council which may at a later stage (it is hoped) be transferred to the Amateur Rowing Association

Please send to the TRRC an invoice / receipt on clearing for a deposit of £500 for estimated Phase 1 works as described below

Estimated cost being £1200 - £1500 and reverting to TRRC if more ( Note maximum liability agreed to be £2000)

Phase 2 (interactive maps) will be priced later on provision of sample mapping source electronic files and may have to be traced with extra costs

This could double or treble the cost to 4 to 6k but we will know when we have looked at the first stage and the sample maps and be able to firm up

Description of the works

The purpose of this project is to establish a pilot incident reporting system that can be done easily on line with the use of drop down boxes and autofill to make the process as easy as possible.

The idea is to produce a one catch-all facility to report all incidents and to have the data collected and collated automatically by the computer software and sent to all the relevant authorities or, if not sent, an email sent informing them of where they can find the data.

Ideally, each of the 5 or so categories of incident report will be collated.

For the time being we are mainly interested in reporting of navigation and bad behaviour etc incidents and on this I have concentrated as we need to try to get this up and running soon (October 6th **was** our target but with such late

notice to you and with you probably busy that will have to be in your hands but as of today you stated you would be able to get someone started on Monday next subject to contract and deposit).

The phasing of this is likely to be in two or three stages unless I am wrong

Phase 1) the setting up of the system verbally [literally the written word] (ie no maps or charts) to report only bad navigation etc with emails, reporting printing and data collation to the Region

Phase 2) the provision of a facility to mark on charts and plans the position of boats for every part of the river Thames both Tidal and EA together with all other water on which Thames regional boats row &#8209; e.g. Dorney, Reading and Caversham etc

Phase 3) the incorporation of all ARA and PLA reporting systems both recordable and reportable into the ARA system with a back up facility to print out hard copy

I envisage the system to work as follows

- Go to the ARA TRRC and All Club sites to find an url for incident reporting
- This takes you to YOUR website (or your software on the ARA website)
- Click on the opening button to go through the various decision trees laid out in the attached Word file "incident reporting 061002 .doc"
- At all stages you can save the report and come back to it
- or navigate up and down it
- at all stages you can go backwards and forwards
- There are plenty of text boxes for other comments
- there is a map of the system on the side so people can go straight to what they want
- only certain parts are 'essential' data that must be filled to be able to proceed (to be agreed)
- the whole is printable by the users at front or back end
- The print out is condensed {and in phase 2 includes diagrams)
- [and in phase 2] Diagrams and charts are simple and as small as possible in term of bytes of size but as large as possible in terms of vision and marking
- [and in phase 2] They need to be scalable where practicable ie you can zoom in to a bit of river say 200 m long and get some detail

For this I expect we will have to involve copyright and the OS people or the PLA chart people or alternatively knuckle down to make schematic diagrams of the whole of the Thames based on maps and charts such as not to breach copyright (may be simpler!) and we will provide these.

The full sum will be payable within 14 days on satisfactory functioning of the system

A sum will be set aside at your judgement to cater for glitches found in the first 6 months - say £100 to 200? And this will be returned if not used or used as deposit for any further work

Concurrently with the next years audit but under separate contract you will set up the launch ID record system which I will describe later but can very very simply be appended to the club audit

Dr CJD George for the TRRC

## **Recommendation**

**Council to agree to confirm the decision of the Chairman and RWSA to fund, hopefully temporarily pending the ARA decision, this urgent essential safety work to enable reporting on and off the Tideway.**

## **Regional Water Safety Development Adviser**

### **To decide**

Chris George proposes that Council approve the proposal to bring to the AGM the institution of a new officer of the Council namely a Development adviser to be fulfilled by Chris himself. This role is following his decision not to submit himself for election as RWSA due to the adverse comments he has received on websites and other means of communication. The function of the office will be to carry out those researches that he deems necessary to DEVELOP safety in the region and in particular the on line incident pilot study that he has initiated, Other areas of interest are coxes and steersmen interactive training, data collection and dissemination and mapping of the whole of the Thames with on line hazards and circulation patterns. The work would be funded by a combination of his own firm, the ARA, the Region and possibly other sources such as the PLA and HRR. He would be answerable to the Council for funding expenditure and would be on Council. He would work closely with whomsoever was elected RWSA but have no executive powers over any regional boat unless so delegated by the Council or the RWSA who will be in complete command of RW Safety.

If Council approves of the proposal Chris requires the AGM to appoint him so there is no argument on his authority to do this work. I am prepared to put lots of hours in should the AGM approve of the idea.

Chris George RWSA

11<sup>th</sup> October 2006