



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
BOAT CLUB

UWABC

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2026

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SUMMARY

At the University of Western Australia, sport plays a central role in the lives of students and promotes a healthy campus culture. UWABC offers rowing to enhance the experience of students at UWA and the wider community.

UWABC is a diverse club, with members across divisions, including Masters, School, Open, Novice, Social, as well as State and National representatives.

Currently, UWABC provides a fun and supportive environment for rowers to compete, mainly at State level in Rowing WA regattas.

The Club relies on volunteer coaching and use of aging equipment. Consequently, the club is at risk of losing top tier competitive rowers to other clubs in WA unless appropriate coaching and equipment can be provided. Within the Club, members strongly support providing coaching and equipment for all tiers of rowing. Members want to be competitive and recognise the role that pursuing competitiveness across the different divisions has in the culture of the Club to be competitive overall.

The Boat Club's vision is to be recognised as one of the top performing rowing clubs in Western Australia at both a domestic and national level including Uni Sports Nations and to provide an avenue for all rowers to pursue their rowing goals.

To pursue this vision, UWABC requires an increase in operating revenue over the next five years. This increase in revenue is needed to improve access to coaching and to finance equipment purchases and refurbishments.

We will achieve this through:

- increasing operating revenue over the next five years,
- regular participation in Uni Sports Nationals.
- servicing members with coaching and equipment that is fit for purpose, and
- a pursuit of excellence at a committee, coaching and member level.

This can be achieved by focusing on **four tiers**:

1. **Attraction** – More members across the squads
2. **Connection** – Keep members happy and connected with the Club
3. **Stability** – Diversify and strengthen UWABC's financial stability
4. **Competition** – Build competitiveness amongst members

OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

To be a fun, competitive and supportive environment
for individuals to grow from and enjoy rowing.

We will provide an avenue for all rowers to pursue their rowing goals, from social rowing
to national competition, with focus across divisions and grades.

We will offer pathways for members to pursue interests as administrators, coaches, and
officials.

VISION

To be recognised as one of the top performing rowing clubs in Western Australia at both
a domestic and national level including Uni Sports Nationals.

CORE VALUES

UWABC's Six Core Values:

1. Enhance the university experience of students at UWA.
2. A welcoming place for all rowers
3. An enjoyable club that serves its members' needs
4. A diverse and unique rowing experience centered around fun and competition
5. A financially stable club that can provide for its members
6. A connected community with a shared vision and unified culture



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UWA Boat Club's Strategic Plan sits independently from UWA and Rowing WA, however, aligns closely to the strategic plans of both.

The Strategic Plan for UWA can be found here:

https://www.web.uwa.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/3438057/UWAstrategic-Plan-2020-2025_Web.pdf

The Strategic Plan for UWA Sport can be found here: <https://www.sport.uwa.edu.au/about-us/uwa-sport-strategic-plan-2020-2025>

The Strategic Plan for Rowing WA can be found here:

<https://www.rowingwa.asn.au/about/strategic-plan/>

UWA Boat Club's main rower segments are university students and school-aged rowers. Due to the size of the club, UWABC can offer rowers opportunities to pursue the sport at various levels of training commitment and competitive aspiration.

UWA Boat Club differs from other rowing clubs in WA due to its strong connection with UWA, membership size, ability to cater for a diverse membership base, reputation within the rowing community as a social Club and the capacity to cater for future growth.



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SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis provides thoughts on how UWABC's strengths can help maximise opportunities and minimise threats. It also alerts us on how the Club's weaknesses could slow the club's ability to capitalise on the opportunities and or expose it to threats.

The strategic goals and actions outlined in this Strategic Plan address the intersection between these areas.

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STRENGTHS

- Strong presence at regattas with large number of entries
- Strong school program and Shenton College coaches
- Inclusive club supporting a wide variety of rowers
- History of the club
- Fun and cohesive club culture, incl. “cafe culture”.
- Large pool of coaches
- Culture that celebrates achievement, not always about the win
- Location next to UWA campus
- Variety of training options
- Connection with UWA

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increase number of learn-to-row and Social rowers
- Big events in Perth, eg. UniSport Nationals, AMRC, VC Cup, Elizabeth Quay regattas
- Connecting with alumni when graduating
- Retain members post university
- Better promotion of all that is available – high performance, Open Men & Women, Masters, School and Social
- Large and strong group of athletes at Shenton College and their parents
- Shenton College Rowing Alumni (i.e. those who left after year 12) as a group who could give back to the schools program similar to the UWABC alumni.
- Connection with the UWA and College Residences to attract new members
- Forrest Hall may provide a source to attract new members and ergo and Learn 2 row participants
- Connection with the university
- Sourcing funds through new members, Future Fund or use of the boat club facilities
- Recruit volunteer coaches from the club’s Masters and Veteran members

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of funds
- Aging equipment
- Insufficient boats for the squads
- Attracting and retaining members, especially high performance
- Not competitive in higher grades
- Lack of skills within members in repairing equipment
- Variety of abilities, big gap between Novice and Open
- Lack of care of equipment and shed
- Water over summer not rowable
- Inconsistent coaching for lower grades
- Sand bank and jetty in old shed unsafe

THREATS

- Poor on water performance can result in less athletes looking to be competitive and discourage new athletes to join
- High performance athletes moving to other clubs
- Shenton College students moving clubs post Year 12
- Departure of long-standing members
- UWA requiring payment for the use of the boat club
- Funds pledged to Future Fund are not honoured
- UWA Open Day numbers have declined
- Safety and cost to fix ramp and jetty
- Increases in cost of living decreasing the number of volunteer coaches and their commitment over time.
- Volunteer (coach, committee) burn-out



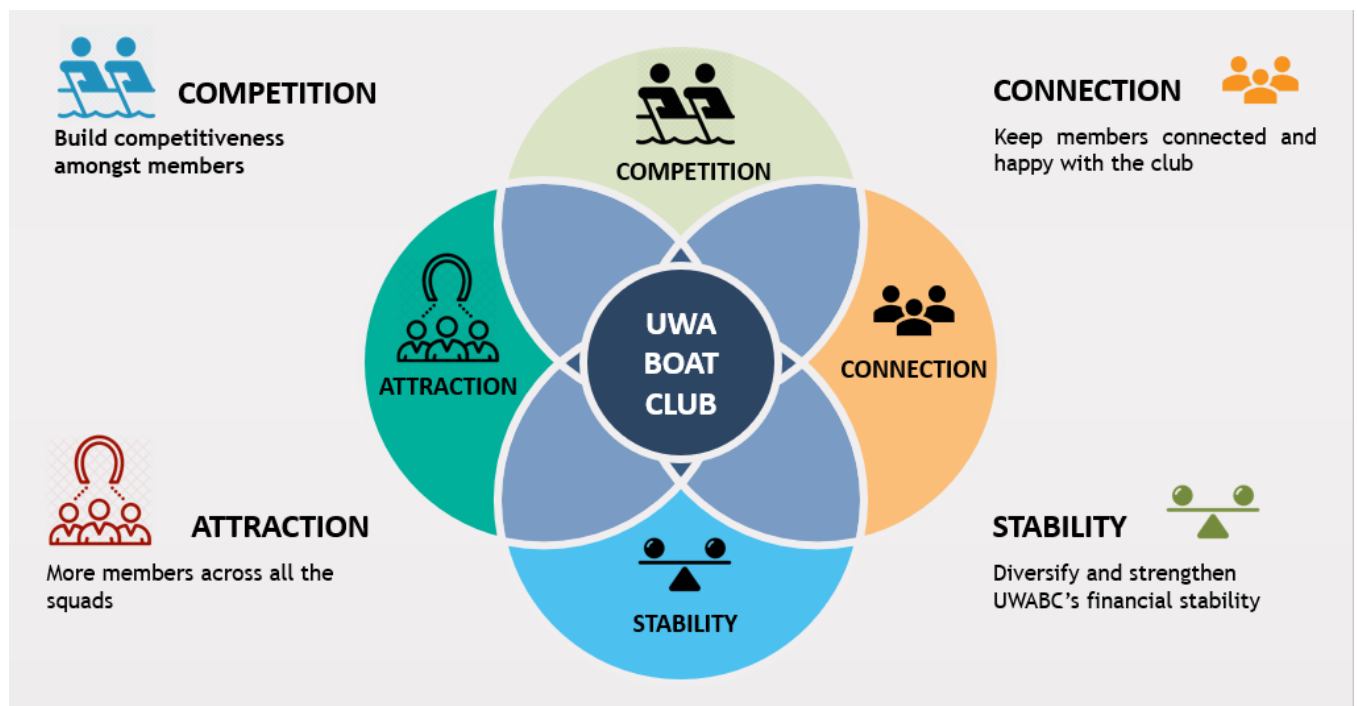
STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIONS

There are six main strategic goals for the Club that are addressed in this Strategic Plan, these are:

1. To upgrade the fleet.
2. To maintain a cohort of qualified, experienced coaches.
3. To be financially self-sustaining.
4. To maintain a strong membership by retaining members and recruiting new members.
5. To become the most successful club in Western Australia
6. To be the best at offering opportunities for all member's personal development as rowers, coaches, administrators, and officials.

We will achieve this through four strategic tiers:

1. Attraction
2. Connection
3. Stability
4. Competition





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ATTRACTION

To be recognised as one of the most successful rowing clubs in Western Australia across all divisions and grades, the Club needs to retain current members and continue to attract new members each year. Increasing the number of members will increase annual turnover, but the Club will also need to be able to service any additional members. An increase in Social and Masters' rowers could be serviced by the equipment and coaching resources currently within the Club. Once annual funds improve to purchase additional equipment and coaching, the Club should also actively aim to increase Open and Novice member numbers.

UWABC can no longer rely on UWA O'Day alone as the primary means of recruiting rowers. Whilst it is still an important avenue, the number of students attending O'Day has decreased, and this is having a direct impact on UWABC's ability to attract new members. To counter this, the Club will need to pursue additional avenues to recruit rowers.

Increasing total membership numbers would occur gradually over the five years. This will ensure the Club continues to operate within its vision of servicing members with coaching and equipment that is fit for purpose. It will also maintain the core value of being a financially stable club that can provide for its members.



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OBJECTIVE

- Retain current members.
- Grow our attraction to UWA Students and students from rowing schools to join the Club , by engaging with school leavers via school rowing coordinators and school coaches, showcasing what is available at UWABC through information nights before students leave high school as well as promotion in school newsletters.
- Develop relationships with non-rowing schools to promote rowing to upper secondary students, soon to be school leavers
- Conduct alumni activities to re-engage with past members and maintain connection with members who have recently graduated from university
- Provide a diverse and supportive environment for members.
- Leverage social media to advertise for new members
- Promote rowing at the UWA Colleges
- Have good quality equipment that meets the needs of members.
- Have good quality coaching available to all members across all squads.

OUTCOME

The club will increase membership numbers across squads, including Social, School, Novice, Open and Masters' rowers. The Club recognises that membership growth must be such that provision of facilities, equipment and the amenity of Club membership is not compromised.

Increasing membership will positively increase revenue. Each additional rower will increase income to the club, with some marginal increase in expenses.

MEASURE OF SUCESS

Retain membership numbers at a minimum of 250 each season.

Increase the number of people following us on social media by 400% (1200 in 2021, 5,000 by 2026).



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CONNECTION

Over the last three years, the average rate of membership retention is 49.3%. Improving membership retention has multiple advantages. Firstly, it reduces the effort needed to attract new members to reach our 350-membership target, secondly, it helps instill the desired culture of the boat club, as greater continuation of members from one year to the next builds connection with the Club, thirdly, it is much easier and cost-effective to increase membership by keeping current members happy and connected than relying on and investing in new member intakes each season.

The 2020 Future Directions Survey of current members indicated the most important aspect of the Club is providing a friendly and inclusive club culture.

Most UWABC members currently stay at the club on average for 1.68 seasons, if we can extend this, then the Club's membership base will expand. Our ability to enter competitive boats in Pennant regattas will also improve through continuation of crew training from one season to the next.

There is also currently a drain of top-tier rowers leaving UWABC in pursuit of better equipment and coaching that aligns with their needs. The risk in this, is the overall competitiveness of the Club and the perception amongst the members of the Club as competitive is negatively impacted.

To improve membership retention, three issues need to be addressed.

1. Currently, Shenton rowers mostly train and compete in isolation to the rest of the Club. To improve connection between Shenton rowers and UWABC the Club can showcase opportunities beyond Year 12 rowing for School rowers by integrating the Shenton and Open rowers at various points during the season. This will be beneficial to both groups.
2. Appropriate and consistent coaching for all levels of rowers within the Club. To improve connection and retention of members. All members, regardless of their ability or racing status, must feel they are receiving good quality coaching and access to equipment that is appropriate to their development.
3. Whilst training squads are important and help members build friendships, connection beyond a single training squad is integral to ensure that a members connection to the Club is not reliant on one friendship group. If the friendship group leaves, the Club risks losing multiple rowers. Connecting rowers to the Club as a whole, through whole of Club training mornings and breakfasts, social events that cater for all (not just involving drinking) and ensure there are means that allow rowers to move through the ranks within the Club during the season.



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OBJECTIVE

- Provide a variety of social events for members thus catering to a diverse club membership.
- Decrease reliance on volunteer coaching with additional funds to allocate towards paid coaching.
- Ensure paid coaches are accessible to all racing members in the Club.
- Introduce 10-year and 20-year Club pins.
- Connect and train as a whole club squad rather than crew squads, including Shenton rowers joining in with open rowers at certain times during the year.
- Have all-club social events such as monthly weekend morning all-in Club member rowing sessions with morning tea.
- Leverage major events to re-engage alumni, for example the 2022 Australian Masters Regatta to re-engage Masters' alumni.
- Promote participation at the 2023 Australian Rowing Championships to members.
- Improve alumni engagement with events such as boat christenings, biannual get-in-a-boat breakfasts, mentorship between alumni and current members, speaker events.
- Increase member volunteer engagement, by implementing benefits and special social occasions for volunteers.
- Adopt Members' Code of Conduct Policy to better define member expectations, including, what are the behaviours and expectations of our members.
- Promote University Games competition as a prestigious event and send male and female teams each year.
- Improve retention of Open A and B rowers and Tier 1 and 2 development rowers.
- Introduce an engagement score aligned with the end of year member survey measuring the percentage of respondents who answer agree or strongly agree to the following questions:
 - Do you feel that the club made you feel welcome when you came to the club this year?
 - How connected do you feel to other club members at the conclusion of the season?
 - Do you feel that there were a sufficient number of social events throughout the year?
 - How would you rate the social events throughout the year?
 - How likely are you to recommend rowing at UWABC to a friend?
 - Do you feel that all members and coaches at UWABC pursue a culture of athletic excellence where everyone can perform their best?
- Committee structure to be aligned with this strategic plan with consideration of the four tiers in the strategic plan.



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OUTCOME

Focusing on building connection of our members with the club will help improve retention and revenue by increasing membership numbers.

Improving connection with the club will also have a positive influence on the club culture and help engage rowers from a variety of different abilities.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Increase member retention from 49.3% to 65% by 2026.
- Increase mean duration of membership from 1.68 seasons to 2.5 seasons.
- By 2026 have 130 3-year pins awarded (currently 92), 65 5-year pins (currently 49) per year.
- Increase engagement score from 66.38% to 85% by 2026.
- Improve score of members to the question “Do you feel valued by the Club” from 60.6% to 85% by 2026.
- Improve Shenton College retention after Year 12 from 2 rowers each year to 10 rowers continuing at UWABC after Year 12.



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STABILITY

The glue that will allow the Club to increase membership numbers and improve connection, hinges on the Club's ability to increase its annual operating income as well as improving certainty of expected funds each year. Without increasing the Club's annual revenue, the Club cannot adequately service an increase in membership, nor can it expect to improve membership retention and members connection with the Club if the equipment available and the coaching provided is not adequate to meet our members' needs.

Ultimately, without additional funds, the Club will fall short of achieving its vision of being recognised as one of the top performing rowing clubs in Western Australia and providing an avenue for all rowers to pursue their rowing goals, from social rowing to national competition.

Membership fees are a significant financial burden to the Club's mostly student membership base. The cost of membership at UWABC is lower than other Club's in WA that are of a similar size to UWABC. The Club remains committed in ensuring value for money for its members whilst ensuring it has the funds to sufficiently provide coaching and equipment.

The 2020 Future Directions Survey of current members indicated that the second and third most important aspects of the Club is access to good coaching and having a variety of boats and decent equipment to train with.

The club's current financial position is not sufficient to support an Equipment Purchase and Refurbishment Plan that will provide the club with a sufficient fleet or coaching to be truly competitive, particularly if membership numbers increase.

Coaching and equipment are large expenses for a rowing club, however, investing in these areas directly impacts the Club's ability to increase membership, retain members and be competitive.

Equipment is underutilised outside of traditional training times. The club could make better use of our facilities and equipment which are fallow daily between 9 am and 3 pm, through promoting programs such as adult Learn 2 Row, social rowing, or ergo classes.

The Club has made significant progress in recent years in pursuing additional funds through fundraising as part of the Future Fund. The goal of this fundraising is to provide the Club with a level of certainty of additional funds each year which can be used to fund the Club's coaching and equipment purchases and refurbishments.

This strategic tier is titled **Stability**, as it is more than just increasing Club funds, it is also about ensuring that year on year, the Club has operating income that it can reliably expect to receive. This means, the Club must diversify where it is currently generating income and cannot rely on membership fees alone to increase funds as this can vary greatly from year to year. Without this reliability in funds, the ability to develop and implement an Equipment Purchase and Refurbishment Plan and a Coaching Plan is compromised.



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OBJECTIVE

- Grow revenue
- Grow Future Fund year on year to \$1 Million by 2024.
- Develop an annual gift-giving plan beyond the 2019 – 2024 Future Foundation drive.
- Improve additional revenue streams through use of the UWABC facilities.
- Improve additional revenue streams through selling merchandise featuring the UWABC brand.
- Agree on a mutually beneficial arrangement with the University for UWABC's use of the old boat shed outside of rowing hours.
- Allocate a 10% of membership fees towards an Equipment Maintenance and Purchase
- Introduce additional membership tiers, for example; single-scul membership and an hourly rate for social boat hire.

OUTCOME

Improving revenue across different areas will help to provide financial stability for the club.

Increasing fund raising through the Future Foundation provides a self-perpetuating source of income that will be a significant step in funding the Club's coaching and equipment plan. In raising \$1 Million by 2024, the Club can expect at least \$50,000 each year in interest that can either be drawn from the Fund for use by the Club or reinvested back into the Future Fund.

MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Build Future Fund to \$1 Million by 2024.
- Increase additional revenue streams to \$25,000 through other activities at the club, including ergo classes, learn to row, corporate rowing.
- Develop and present a proposal to the University that considers a mutually beneficial arrangement for use of the old Boat Shed outside of rowing hours. Increase revenue through use of the boat facilities by \$20,000.
- Develop an Equipment Purchase and Refurbishment Plan that has the replacement and refurbishment of boats budgeted in so that UWA Boat Club athletes race and train in equipment that is fit for purpose.
- 2 x part time paid coaches and 1 x part time boat shed coordinator to ensure the Club can attract and retain rowers and increase competitiveness.



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COMPETITION

The last tier of the Club's five-year strategic goals and actions is competition. Competition sits at the end as without new members, strong connection of members to the club and financial stability, the Club cannot expect to be competitive.

Being competitive is about instilling a culture of competitiveness through the Club, across all divisions and grades.

Competitiveness breeds competitiveness, a club with rowers that perform well at all levels will encourage other rowers to be competitive. It's like the psychological advantage achieved in leading a rowing race from the start.

On the other side of this, losing rowers to other clubs is detrimental to the competitive psyche of the members that remain as it sends a message that the Club is not able to provide the support necessary to achieve the level of success desired.

To foster competitiveness amongst the Club's members, the Club must be able to train coaches and invest in coaching and equipment that allows for top tier rowers to be developed internally and perform at state and national levels. The improvement in coaching also provides the ongoing support and development of all rowers within the Club, by focusing on improving competitiveness across all grades and divisions.

The club must provide an environment for coaching that ensures coaches are recognised for the work they do, the results they achieve and feel valued by the club.

Coaches employed by the Club must also focus on improving competitiveness through providing coaching that aligns with all tiers of this Strategic Plan. All coaches should be accountable and feel valued by the club and its members. All members should be able to access appropriate coaching that develops their ability as a rower and improves the competitiveness of all rowers within the Club.



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OBJECTIVE

- Provide suitable and adequate coaching for all levels of rowing abilities within the squads, from development Tier 1 and 2 rowers to Novice and Masters' rowers.
- Develop an Equipment Purchase and Refurbishment Plan to improve the quality and number of the Club's fleet for competition and training purposes.
- Build a competitive culture amongst club members regardless of the grade or division class they are rowing.
- Upskill members on boat care, cleanliness, and safety.
- Develop a 5-year plan for investing in paid coaching.
- Develop coaching structure plan and ensure adequate pathways for coaching development and provision of mentorship and support
- Measure the success of the coaching with KPI's in line with the Club's Strategic Plan.
- Hire 2 x part time coaches and 1 x part time boat shed coordinator, one coach focusing on high performance and one coach on club development.
- Ensure a ratio of 1 coaches for 10 athletes.

OUTCOME

Provide opportunities for all UWABC members to access good quality coaching to help members reach their personal rowing goals.

Improve member retention by providing pathways of development pathways for rowers across the different grades and divisions.

Improve member retention, particularly of higher end rowers who may not have felt the Club could assist them in their State and National rowing ambitions.

Instill a culture that supports performance and competition of all members.



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MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Win State Championship races.
- Win UWA Sports Champion Club.
- Send full male and female squads to University Games at least every 2 years.
- Win 2 races at University Games over the 5 years.
- Win RWA Champion Club.
- Have five state representative rowers at the Club.
- Have two Australian representative rowers at the Club.
- Have 2 x paid part time coaches at the Club.
- Shenton: have 2 graduating year 12s enter the pathway program per year.
- Shenton: win the all-schools trophy
- Upskill coaches through assisting them in completing the coaching accreditation scheme through Rowing Australia
- Qualify one person per year into the Rowing WA Officials group
- Increase average duration of coaching from 2 years to 3 years



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PLAN AND EVALUATION

To implement the Strategic Plan, a Five-Year Budget Forecast and an Equipment Purchase and Refurbishment Plan and a Coaching Plan need to be developed that will sit alongside this Strategic Plan.

To measure success of the connection tier, parameters to measure engagement to be used as questions in the end of year member survey need to be developed that will sit alongside this Strategic Plan.

A coaching strategy should be developed that defines the structure and plan should be developed

The Strategic Plan should be reviewed yearly with an evaluation on how the club is tracking against the measure of success for each tier. Yearly interim targets against each of the measures of success are to be developed and provided to the Committee to implement and report against.

Given the dynamic nature of the Club's environment, additional Objectives may be added to the plan from time to time, or objectives may be changed subject to ratification by the Club and the Board. The point is that the Strategic Plan must be a dynamic document, able to be adjusted within the five year period to match the circumstances.