



UWABC Boat Capsize Guide

The first thing to note is that this document is not intended to be a step by step guide which is applicable to all situations you may face. You can find yourself in the water for a variety of reasons e.g you have capsized, or rough water has forced your crew to bail on the boat. What you do in a capsized situation will depend on how much experience you have rowing, how much knowledge you have of the environment you are in, and the crew's ability.

In **ALL** situations the **well-being of athletes is the number one priority**

If there is **ANY** doubt about a safe return to the shed due to conditions. Pull over to the nearest “beach” to organise a trailer to collect equipment and crew.

Important Reminders

- **Stay Calm** - Just like you have learnt when rowing, staying calm makes the boat move faster. It is important to remember this even in challenging and uncertain situations
- **Communicate** - Communicate with the crew/coach if you are feeling particularly cold or weak
- **Step-up/Follow** - If you feel confident in making a decision (through previous experience with capsizing) step-up and take control of the situation. If you are less experienced be ready to follow instructions. In all cases listen to the coach.
- **Work Together** - It is not helpful to argue or fight over the best approach.
- **Safety** - At all times the safest option for the crew should be taken.

- **Crew Type** - Consideration should be taken as to the type of boat, ability and strength of athletes and availability of coaches as to the best cause of action

Example Scenario

Situation: You are at the narrows trying to return to the shed, the water is rough but a decision is made by the coach and accepted by the crew to continue.

Response: Proceed with caution, keep your distance from the sea wall along Mounts Bay Road as this will likely provide further rough water from another direction. It is important to keep the boat speed up and have full crew rowing for as long as possible. Soon as boat speed drops, boats tend to get stuck in the swell and take in more water. If the crew is finding it hard to balance, a call to drop out some rowers may be necessary (depends on the size and setup of the boat). Rowers who are not rowing should position the boat so the gunnel on the side that the weather is coming from is slightly higher than that of the other, this allows an extra buffer for any larger waves.

Situation Update: The water was worse than first expected and you have now been hit by a wave that has seen some water enter the boat.

Response Continued: Communicate with the cox, coach and crew as to how much water is in the boat (use indicators of: below the heels, at the heels, halfway up the foot plate, at the deck). Depending on how much water is in the boat and how close you are to the shed will indicate the potential response.

Option 1 - Continue as before as you are close (500m) to the shed or the water is getting better.

Option 2 - Row or tow the boat to shore, preferably a beach. Walk the boat back to the shed along the shore, or organise for the trailer to pick it up.

Option 3 - Remove rowers and oars from the boat to allow the boat to sit a bit higher and continue to row towards the shed. Update the crew/coach if there is more water in the boat so appropriate action can be taken.

Option 4 - Tow the boat back to the shed. Follow tow instructions below.

Towing Instructions

1. Speedboat arrives
2. 2 people sit in boat (sweep) or 1 person (scull) with oars
3. Rest of oars are put in speedboat
4. Rope is tied around bow and 2 riggers
5. Boat is towed back by the speedboat

Important for Coaches: High swell can make for extremely difficult and dangerous conditions to retrieve rowers and equipment out of the water. Use extreme caution when approaching a rower in the water with your dingy.

Bailout Locations

The map below shows the location of ladders, stairs and beaches between the shed and narrows bridge.

Ladders (Blue) are to be used to drop people ashore if they have been removed from the boat.

Stairs (Red) are to be used to drop people ashore and as a last resort to remove a boat from the water.

Beach (Yellow) the preferred location to remove a boat from the water. If in South Perth (2 location on the right of the map) a trailer will need to be organised to collect the boats.



