

WALTON SMALL BOATS HEAD 2022

Radio Communications Protocol

Section A - General

1) Introduction

This document is designed to provide both an overview as well as detailed guidance on the structure, management and use of the communications network used as part of the command & control mechanism for the Walton Small Boats Head race.

Its audience is limited to race officials. It is not aimed at competitors.

This and all supporting documents and operational practices are reviewed formally after each annual event. In addition, on-going changes and improvements are made as and when required as a result of learning from other similar events, revised information from governing bodies and any changes in recognised “best practice”.

2) Objectives

The objectives of this document are to:

- 1) Describe the physical deployment of the communications network to race officials.
- 2) Provide guidance on the efficient use of the radio network in order to facilitate:
 - accurate and timely information flow to / from race control / officials
 - efficient incident management
 - the safe conduct of the race

3) Network overview & description

A “radio net” is established for the duration of the event, including boating and recovery. It is a single channel system with up to 42 users on the net; each allocated a unique call sign. Each user has a list of all the other users on the net.

The net covers marshals, umpires, race officials, safety launches, and the ambulances.

In addition, as a back-up, a list of personal mobile phone numbers is produced and made available to key individuals involved in the running of the race.

Section B – Specific guidelines & instructions

1) Introduction

Radios will be allocated to the people on the contacts list. (Approx 30 in total)

All radios are to be collected from Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House at the end of the officials briefing meeting. The timing team will collect their radios at the end of their meeting.

All radios will have been checked by the *Direct Telecoms* team before handing out.

All radios to be returned to Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House.

Spare batteries will be at Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House and can be distributed by the Direct Telecom engineer.

The briefing at the Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House will cover the following:

- Check all users are confident in how to operate the radio
- All to leave with radios Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House switched on and on the agreed channel.
- Before leaving - ensure all are able to receive with volume turned up.
- Spare batteries should be taken by key officials
- All users to be aware of the back up channel and when / how to select it
- All users to be briefed to keep radio usage to the essential minimum
- Radios may be used prior to call over as required.

2) Call over

Pre race radio check will be in the form of a call over by the Radio Control at Radio Control to each radio user in turn, in the order on the contacts list.

All users must be aware of the call sign allocated to them (see list).

The call sign will be the user's first name and surname if appropriate, with the exception of personnel in key roles, whose call sign will reflect their role.

Call over is scheduled to begin 30 min before race start. All radio users are scheduled to be in position by this time.

Due to the proximity of race start time it is essential that the call over is executed without unnecessary diversion.

Any non responding users will be asked again at the end of the initial run through. If the second attempt does not produce a response, the Radio Control will request a nearby official to physically contact the non-responder and check that the radio is switched on. Either the non responder (if feasible) or the official will radio the Radio Control to let them know whether the radio is functioning. Radio Control will decide and action any hand over of radios if needed, or the despatch of a spare if necessary.

The call over will be in the form:

Radio Control	All stations, this is the Radio Control. Radio check , Over
Call sign 1	Marshal 1, OUT
Call sign 2	Marshal 2, OUT
Call sign 3	Marshal 3, OUT

Etc until all stations on the net, in the order shown on the contacts list, have responded. In the event that a station does not respond, the subsequent station should allow a suitable time gap – approx 15 seconds – before restarting the check.

When the end of the list is reached, the Radio Control will address any missing stations individually, and determine appropriate action (e.g. assistance from nearby marshal or deployment of spare radios) to be taken to contact any that remain.

3) Incident management

Any incident requiring the assistance of either the Safety Launches or a medical team must be brought to the attention of the Radio Control at Radio Control who will co-ordinate the resources to support the incident.

Any incident requiring support from other officials which would mean an official moving outside their pre- designated role or area of the river must be brought to the attention of the Radio Control who will co-ordinate resources to support the incident.

If the race has to be cancelled for any reason, users should refer to the specific bad weather / race abandonment procedure. The radio network will be a facilitator for this process.

The biggest barrier to efficient incident management is poor radio discipline. Stop and think before pressing the button.

4) General use of the radio

Radios should be used in the following circumstances:

- By any official who needs to bring attention to a developing situation to the Radio Control or to other officials. This would typically mean that a situation is arising which the official feels additional support is required or which will affect other officials.
- By the Radio Control to determine whether everything is in place to enable the race to be started, and then to ensure all are aware that the race is about to begin.
- By any official who needs assistance in managing the safe progress of any crew /object/boat etc.
- By any official to report that a previously reported situation is under control. □ By any official to respond to a request that has been made of them.

Radios should not be used in the following circumstances:

- When an official has a minor incident to manage which is under his/her control and which does not affect other officials or the safe conduct of the race.
- To discuss minor matters which have no material effect on the race.

5) Voice procedure / terminology

In order to ensure the use of the network is as efficient as possible, voice procedure conventions have been developed. The primary aim of any agreed voice procedure is to ensure **clarity & understanding with the minimum of words**. Therefore there are a number of standard terms & abbreviations that are used to convey messages. The following list covers the main terms used, but is not exhaustive.

Basic voice procedure terms & examples:

OVER	Said at the end of a message where the sender expects a reply .	Hello Dave, this is Mike, can you confirm that the ambulance is at your location OVER
OUT	Said at the end of a message where the sender does not require a reply or acknowledgement .	Hello Mike this is Dave, I can confirm the ambulance is now at my location OUT
UNDERSTOOD	Said in response to a message to confirm it has been received and understood .	Hello Mike this is Dave, I am now in position at Cowey Sale as requested OVER Mike-UNDERSTOOD-OUT
ALL STATIONS	The introduction to a message from one user to all other users on the net. Often used with the term INFORMATION below.	Hello ALL STATIONS this is Mike – please advice me if any boats appear to be shipping water - OUT
INFORMATION	The introduction to a message that will not require any action as a result.	Hello ALL STATIONS - this is Mike – INFORMATION - the race has now started – OUT

MINIMISE	Said by the net controller, i.e. the Radio Control to an individual, a sub group or all stations to remind them to minimise radio traffic, especially if dealing with an incident.	Hello Richard this is Mike – MINIMISE – OUT Hello ALL STATIONS this is Mike, if you are not dealing with the incident at Walton Bridge – MINIMISE – OUT
PRIORITY	Said by a user to interrupt a radio conversation already in progress. All users should then NOT use the radio until the PRIORITY message has been concluded.	Hello Mike this is Dave – PRIORITY – OVER Mike – go ahead PRIORITY - OVER

Appendix 1

RADIO PROCEDURES

RADIO CONTROL will be based in Walton Rowing Clubs Boat House.

Umpires, Safety Boats and Course Marshalls will be on the **OPEN** channel which will be with **the rotary channel selector on CHANNEL 1 on the Handheld Radio Sets**

All Messages should be kept clear and to the point; if anything other than a short message is required those involved should use mobile phones to communicate and discuss the issue.

Safety Boats will maintain a listening watch on the **OPEN Channel 1** on their handheld radios. The request for a Safety Boat to attend an incident should be made via **RADIO CONTROL** who will then instruct and co-ordinate appropriate action.

Any incident regarding safety should be reported to **RADIO CONTROL** immediately!

[IF RADIO INTERFERENCE IS HEARD ON THE OPEN CHANNEL 1 THEN RADIO CONTROL WILL INSTRUCT ALL RADIO USERS TO CHANGE TO THE BACKUP OPEN CHANNEL 2]

Spare radio batteries will be held at the Radio Control in the Walton Rowing Clubs Boathouse.

To use the Hand Held Radios, press the talk button **AND WAIT FOR 1 SECOND BEFORE SPEAKING**, this will ensure that the start of your transmission is not cut off/clipped and the receiving person hears your entire message.

NOTE:-

CHANNEL 5 is for use by the team that are marshalling the crews at the start.

CHANNEL 6 is for the team that are responsible for the car and trailer parking at Cowey Sale near Walton Bridge and in the parking near Walton RC and the Felix road/Dudley road recreation field.

CHANNEL 3 is for the Results timing teams use only!!!

Edited 02-12-2022