



# Safety Management Plan (SMP) Head of the Yarra

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
The Emergency Plan (“The Plan”) .....	3
Emergency Response.....	4
Disposition of Unmanned Equipment: .....	5
Execution of the Plan.....	5
Dissemination of the Plan .....	5
Emergency Access Points .....	6
Emergency Contact Information .....	6
Contingency Policy.....	8

**Remember that CPR does not usually resuscitate but maintains circulation until defibrillator applied.**

## Introduction

In 2017 we will see the 59th staging of the Head of the Yarra©. This regatta always attracts a large entry, ranging from International standard competitors through to school crews in their first event (over 250 crews). With these large entries, care must be taken to address the risk of injury on the water to regatta participants.

This SMP sets forth procedures to follow in the event of an on-water emergency arising from equipment failure, collision, or unintended water immersion, in order to prevent or minimize related injuries.

On-water emergencies entail the added risk element of immersion. In addition to the obvious risk of accidental drowning, there is the often unappreciated risk of hypothermia.

Accordingly, it is of paramount importance that all Regatta participants – rowers, coaches, and others – in the event of an on-water emergency, yield absolutely to the authority and direction of official Regatta personnel in matters of safety and rescue. Refer to the website for race rules.

## The Emergency Plan (“The Plan”)

The Plan is designed for flexibility and adaptability to particular circumstances of a given mishap. **The ultimate authority for management of any operation rests with the Regatta Referee. All other Regatta officials/personnel will look to the Referee for direction.** The purpose of the Plan is to set out certain basic rules designed to allow for maximum efficiency and control of any emergency operation.

- **Notification of an Incident:**

Upon witnessing or being credibly advised of an on-water mishap, any **regatta personnel shall report directly (via walkie-talkie) to the Regatta Referee the following information:**

- The precise location of the mishap;
- The general nature of the mishap;
- The apparent number of participants involved; and
- Whether the party making the notification is an official on the water in the immediate vicinity of the mishap and is initiating emergency operations.

Upon acknowledgement of the receipt of the notification, the Regatta Referee will designate which regatta officials are to proceed to the site of the mishap and will instruct those officials to turn their communications devices to the designated Emergency Channel. **All other parties will stay off the Emergency Channel.** The Medical/Safety Director will also turn their communications device to the Emergency Channel.

The Referee will immediately notify the officials at the starting line to cease starting crews in the Regatta until further notice.

- **Response to Notification:**

The first of the designated respondents to arrive at the mishap scene will:

- Briefly announce over the Emergency Channel that he/she is at the scene and describe what has occurred;
- Advise whether any of the participants are potentially seriously injured;
- Advise if unmanned equipment constitutes a potential hazard to other crews;
- Advise whether crews approaching the scene of the mishap constitute an immediate hazard; and
- Supply any other relevant information.

The Referee will then:

- Decide whether the racing must be stopped, and, if so, make an announcement to that effect over the general communications channel (refer Contingency Policy);
- Decide whether additional personnel are needed at the scene and mobilize them as above; and
- Stay in communication over the Emergency Channel.

Designated responders to the scene will work with one another to:

- Rescue immersed individuals;
- Announce whether any potentially serious injuries exist and request the Medical Director to secure the assistance of emergency services as required;
- Secure and/or remove unmanned equipment constituting an immediate hazard;
- Halt or divert oncoming crews, according to whether the Regatta Referee has stopped the event; and
- Provide updates over the Emergency Channel as the circumstances permit.

## Emergency Response

The following medical/emergency personnel will be available to competitors on the day of the event.

- Two Medical/Safety Directors (available by mobile, refer Contact Information)
- Three Life Saving Victoria Vessels on the Water
- Event Paramedics on Site at Hawthorn Rowing Club.
- **Treatment of Immersion and Injuries:**
  - Simple immersion and/or minor injuries  
Individuals who have been simply immersed and appear to have suffered only minor injuries, if any will be treated as follows:
    - Each and every “wet” individual will be wrapped in one of the hypothermia blankets (“space blankets”) with which every motor launch will be equipped.
    - Each and every “wet” individual will be taken as soon as is practicably possible under the circumstances to a site for rewarming and medical evaluation;
    - The default site for treatment of “wet” individuals and individuals with minor injuries will be Hawthorn Rowing Club and all such individuals will be taken there for rewarming and medical evaluation unless otherwise instructed by the Regatta Referee, or Medical Safety Director; and
    - The Medical Safety Director will communicate with Emergency Medical Units as required.
  - **Treatment of Serious injuries**
    - Individuals who appear to have sustained more than minor injuries will be treated as follows:
      - As soon as a potentially serious injury is perceived, it will be reported over the Emergency Channel to the attention of the Medical/Safety Director;
      - The individual will be transferred to one of the four Life Saving Victoria vessels;
      - The individual will be transferred to one of five Emergency Access Points, as noted, upon instruction from one of the Medical/Safety Directors;
      - The individual will receive minimal first aid in the process of transport, until such time, they can be placed in the care of paramedics for transport to a medical facility;

- The Medical/Safety Director will acknowledge receipt of such reports over the Emergency Channel and issue instructions as appropriate;
  - The Medical/Safety Director will secure the assistance of any emergency services; and
  - The Medical/Safety Director will designate and mobilize Regatta Emergency Personnel to assist the Emergency Services Units as needed and receive seriously injured individuals for stabilization and transport to appropriate advanced care facilities.
- **Disposition of immersed and non-seriously injured individuals**
    - Once delivered to the designated rewarming and treatment location, immersed and non-seriously injured individuals will
      - Be rewarmed and have their vital signs determined by Emergency Medical personnel;
      - Be evaluated for injuries and central nervous system function;
      - Be released when appropriate as determined by the Emergency Medical personnel; and
      - Provide a signature on a designated form to indicate with which organization he/she is affiliated and that he/she has disclosed all symptoms/complaints/injuries of which he/she is aware and has had them evaluated and tended to.

The Regatta is not responsible for keeping track of individuals or equipment for participating schools/clubs. That responsibility lies with the school/club. The Regatta Secretary, Referee, Medical/Safety Director, and/or other Regatta personnel will, however, make all reasonable efforts to notify the organization of the whereabouts of its crew and equipment and to assist, wherever possible, in facilitating the delivery of dry clothing to immersed crew members.

## Disposition of Unmanned Equipment:

The primary purpose of recovery of unmanned equipment by regatta personnel is to eliminate a potential hazard and avoid the risk of secondary injury to regatta participants. The safety and recovery of individuals will always take precedence over preservation of equipment. In the event that crews become separated from their equipment, Regatta personnel will

- Remove the equipment from the course to the most practicable location to avoid a collision hazard;
- Assure the eventual delivery of equipment to a dock location where it can be recovered by the club/school to which it belongs; and
- Make every reasonable effort to notify the club/school where its equipment may be recovered.

## Execution of the Plan

The SMP will be executed under the direction of the Regatta Referee. The execution of the Plan may be modified as necessary based on individual circumstances in the judgment of the individual directing the execution of the plan.

Decisions concerning whether an event must be stopped and/or cancelled and any changes in the Regatta schedule occasioned by an on-water mishap will be made by the Referee and the Regatta Secretary.

## Dissemination of the Plan

A representative from each and every crew entered must attend a safety briefing on Friday 24 November 2017 at Hawthorn Rowing Club, where a copy of the SMP will be made available. A copy will also be available at [www.headoftheyarra.com](http://www.headoftheyarra.com).

Each and every participant or crew will be presumed to have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the Rules as a condition of participation in the Regatta.

Each and every club/school will be provided with a copy of the SMP at Regatta Registration.

A copy of the Plan will be provided to each and every Regatta official at the pre-event briefing and in turn will be reviewed at this briefing; and

Each and every Regatta launch will be equipped with a copy of the SMP.

This plan may be updated and amended as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Regatta Committee.

## Emergency Access Points

In the event of an emergency it may be necessary for emergency vehicles to have close access to the river. Details are provided below of easy access points for emergency services.

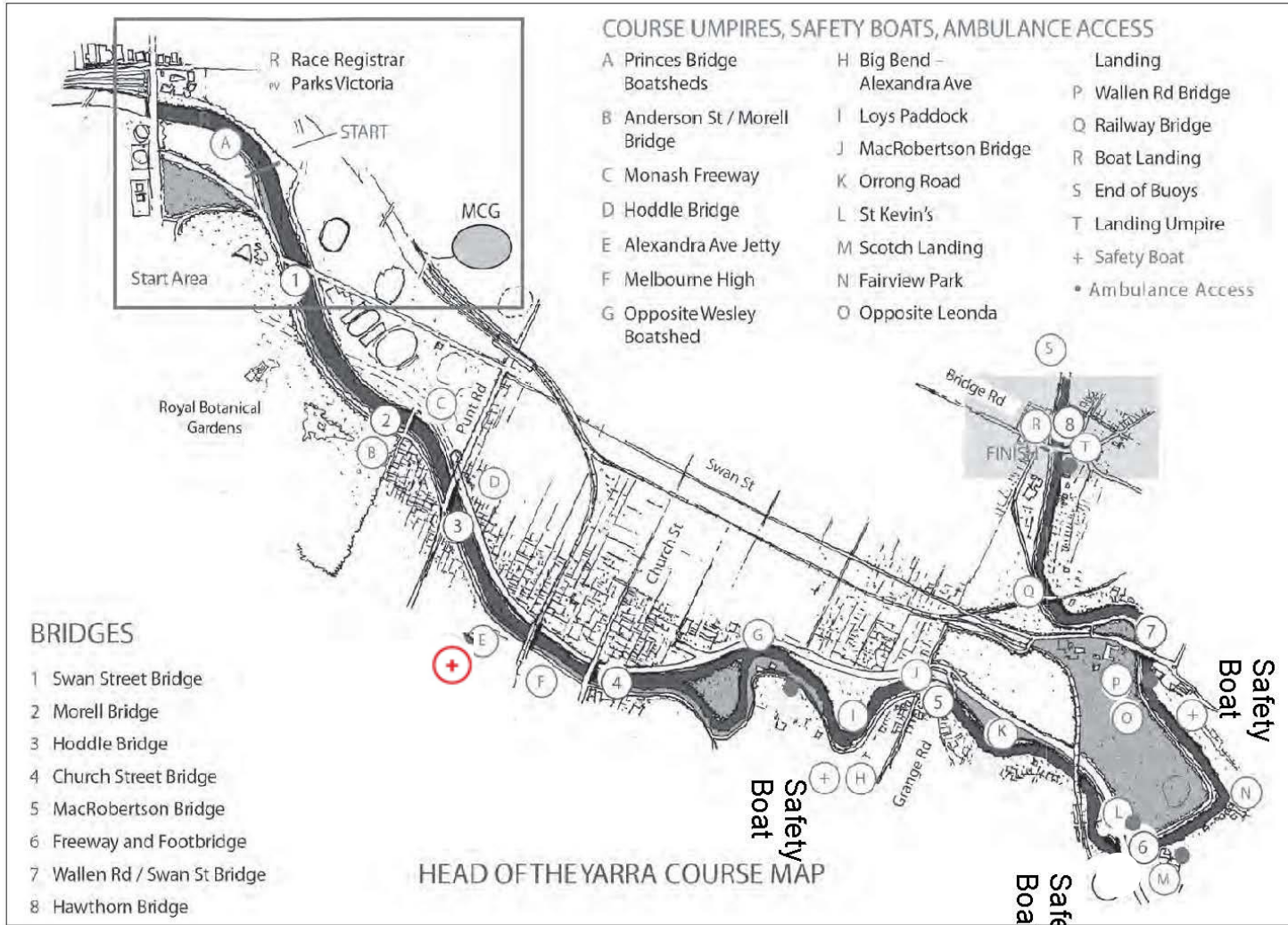
Access Point	Location Name	Location Description	Melway Ref
EAP 1	Powerhouse R C Jetty	Access off Alexandra Parade	2M-D1
EAP 2	St Kevin's Landing	Access off the Boulevard	59-A1
EAP 3	Scotch College	Access through Morrison Street gate	59-C2
EAP 4	Leonda Reception	Access through entrance Wallen Road	45-A11
EAP 5	Hawthorn Rowing Club	Access through Yarra Park, Creswick St	2H-J7

In the event of emergency vehicle access a regatta official will be directed to meet the emergency vehicle at the nearest main road access point. Refer to the map for EAP points clearly marked.

## Emergency Contact Information

Listed below are contact details for major Regatta Personnel.

Position	Name	Contact Number
Regatta Secretary @ Hawthorn	Lachlan Nicholls	0402 837 911
Start Judge @ Judges Box	Niki Calastas	0416 683 233
Race Referee	Ben Ratcliffe	
Race Registrar	Bill Minnis	0419 003 619
Medical/Safety Director	Dr Tim Rutherford	
Ambulance		000
Police		000
Fire		000
Nearest hospital	St Vincents 41 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy	9288 2211
Park Ranger – Operations Officer	TBA	TBA
Parks Victoria Staff	TBA	TBA
Parks Victoria Staff	TBA	TBA
Parks Victoria Staff	TBA	TBA
Personnel Control		
Timing Control	Belinda Goglia	0438 302 271





## Contingency Policy

The Head of the Yarra Organising Committee has several contingency plans and procedures in place. The main contingency plans relate to:

- 1 Moving the start line      This would reduce race distance and may need to happen if river obstructions occur, or if bridges cannot be passed safely.
- 2 Moving the finish line      Similarly, this would reduce race distance and may need to happen if river obstructions occur, or if bridges cannot be passed safely.
- 3 Delaying the start      A high risk event when course umpires take their places and call into the race referee to confirm the course is clear – or they have identified an obstruction.
  - The starter will make announcements to those at the start line.
  - Start line staging marshals will use megaphones to make announcements at the staging.
- 4 Suspending racing after the start due to an accident, obstruction on the course or a logjam at the finish line      This is a particularly difficult scenario with crews on the course.
  - Race referee will instruct course umpires to stop crews on the course from racing.
  - The Starter will cease starting crews.
  - Start line marshals will stop crews coming onto the water.
  - Course umpires will manage crews already on the course.
  - Start line team will manage crews at the start line on the water.
- 5 Re-starting the race after a suspension of racing      Course umpires will instruct crews already on the course to row through the rest of the course to the turn around point (no race time recorded).
  - The Start Team and Start Timing Team will exercise their best discretion in starting remaining crews in the remaining time left to conduct racing on the closed river.
  - Staging will keep waiting crews informed of the revised arrangements.

In all circumstances, continuation of the race will depend of the ability of race officials to implement the relevant contingency plan in the time available. Please note that a high risk factor with the race is that our Event Permit (including river closure) has time limitations. We do not therefore have the luxury of taking as long as we need to make up any lost time. Parks Victoria will be the ultimate arbiter as to how long we can extend racing if required.



## Rowing Victoria Policies

### Extreme Heat

- At a temperature of 34°C, or a Heat Index of 35 no rowers aged 16 years and under may compete
- At a temperature of 38°C or a Heat Index of 35 all rowing competition is to cease.

Thus a window of opportunity exists for mature rowers at temperatures from 34–37°C in conditions such as low relative humidity where the Heat Index is below 35.

Once the air temperature at a regatta reaches 25 degrees, conditions must be evaluated every hour. Two successive readings of a Heat Index of 35 at 15 minute intervals require the referee to suspend racing.

The ultimate responsibility for decisions re extreme heat rests with the referee who may consult with the regatta's Primary Health Care Provider.

If the conditions change during the event it may be necessary to inform crews actually competing that all racing must cease. This will be done by communication with the Lifesaving Victoria craft along the course and with race officials at their various stations. If it becomes necessary to cease competition the race will be declared a non-event initially for junior competitors, and then if required for mature rowers.

Advice from Bureau of Meteorology indicates that in stable weather conditions, an accurate highest temperature forecast can be provided 5-6 days in advance. If such advice indicates the strong possibility of extreme heat conditions, the Head of Yarra Regatta Organising Committee will inform competitors re the possible restrictions applying to the event.

In order to for you to respond properly to our contingency plans, you merely need to listen to instructions provided by Regatta Officials and Umpires. These are people who will be providing you with instructions via megaphones.

### Fluid Replacement and Nutrition

The issue of fluid replacement in an event such as the Head of the Yarra is complicated by a number of factors not the least of which is the nature of the race which will usually require competitors to row on average for at least 30 minutes during which time it is not practical to ingest fluid.

Factors which influence fluid requirements include

- Genetic – some people perspire more than others
- Body size – larger athletes tend to perspire more
- Fitness – the fitter athlete usually perspire earlier in exercise.
- Environment – fluid loss through perspiration is greater in hot, humid conditions
- Exercise intensity – fluid loss is greater as exercise intensity increases

Athletes can gain some insight into their individual fluid balance situation by accurate weighing before and after an exercise session. A loss of 1.0K equates to 1 litre loss. Research has shown that a loss of 2% of body mass will have significant effects. This would equate to a fluid deficit of 1.4 Litres in a 70K athlete. Research at AIS indicated that fluid loss in hot weather (greater than 32°C) could be as high as 2 litres per hour in a male rower.

The effects of relative dehydration are

- Increased body temperature
- Increase in heart rate
- Reduced mental function – impaired decision making and poor concentration

Water is the basis of rehydration but water alone is not the most effective agent. It is widely recognised that fluids containing electrolytes (principally sodium) and 4–8% carbohydrate are the most effective in restoring correct fluid balance. There have been instances where reliance on water alone proved injurious to health in causing reduced serum sodium ---hyponatraemia. High carbohydrate products can be counter –productive by interfering with normal absorption processes. Alcoholic drinks are totally inappropriate for restoring fluid balance.

Strategies in preparing for an event such as Head of Yarra include

- Carbohydrate intake such as cereal , fruit, pasta 2–3 hours prior to race
- Fluid intake of 300–400 mls in the hour prior to event.
- Commence fluid replacement as soon as possible after completing race

<http://www.sportsdietitians.com.au/content/171/Rowing/>

<http://www.ausport.gov.au/ais/nutrition/factsheets/hydration2/fluid - who needs it>

[http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pdhpe/options/medicine/4035/3-3/op3\\_3\\_3.htm](http://hsc.csu.edu.au/pdhpe/options/medicine/4035/3-3/op3_3_3.htm)

[http://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/hp\\_sports-science\\_nutrition.shtm](http://www.rowingaustralia.com.au/hp_sports-science_nutrition.shtm)

## Regatta Cancellation Guidelines, Rowing Victoria

Updated November 2010

Following representations from member associations, the board of Rowing Victoria (RV) has issued the following guidelines for regatta cancellation (prior to race day) to assist clubs and schools:

- In the absence of extraordinary situations, regattas will proceed. We participate in an outdoor sport which requires us to be tolerant of, and allow for, most factors. RV has existing safety precautions and policies which operate on regatta days. These include the option of cancellation of regattas on the day.
- If extraordinary situations arise to warrant the cancellation of a regatta prior to race day, the decision will be advertised on the RV website by noon, two days prior to the regatta. For example, for a Saturday regatta, the notice will be posted by noon Thursday. RV will also email club representatives where an email has been registered with them. It will not be necessary to contact the RV office for clarification.
- As most costs in running regattas are incurred by organising committees prior to an event such as course hire, course establishment, trophies, programs etc., no refunds of entry fees can be made in the event of cancellation either before or during a regatta.
- Refund where regatta is cancelled due to lack of entries. In this case notification will be available.

- **Safety Management at Swan St bridgeworks (300 m after the start)**

Ongoing bridgeworks at the Swan St bridge pose additional risks to rowers when using the river for familiarisation and warm up rows before the regatta and also during the 2017 Head of the Yarra regatta itself. Hawthorn Rowing Club has considered these risks and revised its safety procedures accordingly. All competitors will be advised of the revised safety procedures by the following means:

- In the regatta's newsletter
- On the regatta's website
- In the pre-race briefing on the evening before the regatta

### **Swan St bridgeworks**

Swan St bridge is located 300 m upstream of the start line and is the first bridge to be passed by competitors in the Head of the Yarra regatta. Widening of the bridge is in progress and major engineering works are underway. Only two spans of the bridge will be open on the day of the regatta. The width of each span has been reduced to 12 m but both arches are navigable by rowing eights. There is also a works jetty about 100 m downstream of the start line judges box that reduces the width of the river about 40% in that location.

There are navigation buoys in the river both upstream and downstream of both Swan St bridge and the works jetty.

The photo below looking upstream shows the northern arch of the bridge (left) the centre arch (right). Note the steel piles around the bridge piers reducing the width of the arches. At this stage, it is not known which arches will be open on the day of the regatta, but there will be two arches open and both will be navigable by rowing eights.



The photo below shows the works jetty area some 400 m downstream of the bridge and some 100 m before the start line.



#### **Safety of rowing crews at Swan St bridge PRIOR to the 2017 Head of the Yarra regatta**

Interstate and overseas crews or crews that do not usually row on the Yarra River and are intending to compete in the 2017 Head of the Yarra must keep in mind that the river is not closed until the regatta is in progress.

Crews using the river for familiarisation and/or training in the days before the regatta must take special care when approaching and passing through the Swan St bridge and also in the works jetty area (400 m downstream of the bridge). Coxes will also need to exercise due care to avoid the navigation buoys on both the upstream and downstream site of the bridge and works jetty area.

When passing through Swan St bridge, crews must pass through the correct arch as follows:

- Crews rowing upstream (away from the city) must use only the southernmost arch (furthest from the Melbourne Park Tennis Centre).
- Crews rowing downstream (towards from the city) must use only the northernmost arch (closest to the Melbourne Park Tennis Centre).

Note, the 'no go' arches have white signs displaying a red cross (see photo above).

#### **Safety of rowing crews DURING the 2017 Head of the Yarra regatta**

On the day of the regatta, the river will remain open until 9 am and will be closed to all river traffic for the duration of the regatta. The river will reopen again at approximately 4 pm. This means that crews rowing through Swan St bridge before or after the regatta must use the correct arch as described in the above section.

Due to the reduced width of the river in the works jetty area, increased congestion is expected on the river near the start line as crews are aligned for the start by officials. It is important that all crews launch their boats earlier than normal to allow for any delays due to the expected

congestion near the start line. All crews should be on the water 30 minutes before their designated start time.

After launching their boats, crews will immediately proceed upstream towards the start line and will be marshalled by the officials to form lines with successive numbered crews aligned four abreast across the river. Each line will be called in turn to move upstream towards the start. Care needs to be exercised to avoid the navigation buoys located both downstream and upstream of the works jetty area. Depending on the conditions on the day, it may not be possible to maintain a line of four boats when passing the works jetty. If so, the officials will instruct the crews to break from their line as they pass the works jetty and then reform in lines of four immediately upstream of the works jetty. Crews must listen carefully and comply with all instructions from the start-aligning officials.

After the start (because the river is closed), either arch at Swan St bridge can be used by any crew. It is possible for two boats to pass each other when passing through the arches of the bridge provided the two boats use different arches. However, if two crews are approaching the same arch, then overtaking by the following crew must be delayed until the Swan St bridge is passed.

This scenario is the anticipated by the final sentence in the regatta's overtaking rule is as follows:

***Overtaking Rule.*** *A boat is deemed to be overtaking when it has its bow ball within half a length of the stern of the boat in front. When this occurs the slower boat must not block or obstruct the faster crew. The faster boat must be prudent and delay the act of passing if a pass cannot be accomplished without incident.*

To ensure the safety of all crews, an umpire will be stationed on the landing immediately downstream of the bridge on the north bank. A faster boat attempting to overtake a slower boat leading to the same arch of the Swan St bridge must yield to the boat in front until Swan St bridge is passed. The penalty for disobeying an umpire's instructions in this area will be a minimum of 20 seconds.

As an additional safety initiative, a safety boat will be stationed at the Swan St bridge until the last crew safely passes the bridge.