# Table of Contents

## Introduction

## History

## Abreast In A Boat Society
- Mission
- Message
- Constitution

## Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boating Structure

## Organization of Crews

## My Commitment to Abreast In a Boat Society

## Communication Guidelines

## Code of Conduct

## Fundraising

## Our Logo

## Our Traditions

## Training Guide
- Introduction
- Medical Concerns
  - Lymphedema
  - Musculoskeletal Injuries
  - Other Health Issues
- Training Principles
- Exercises & Stretches
- Sample Resistance Training Session
- Sample Novice Program
- Sample Intermediate Program
- Training: Paddlers
- Training: Coaches
- Safety Rules

## Team Guidelines

## AIAB Regatta/Festival Participation Guidelines

## Board Position Responsibilities

## Non-Board Position Responsibilities
Dr. Don McKenzie and Diana Jespersen of the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre, The University of British Columbia, prepared the original manual. The most updated version is available on our website www.abreastinaboat.com

**Introduction**

Regular exercise has a beneficial effect on health; in fact, it represents one of the most significant factors that can be modified and controlled. Aside from lowering the risk of breast cancer, regular physical activity reduces overall mortality and the incidence of coronary heart disease, diabetes, stroke, osteoporosis, obesity and disability. It also lessens the impact of chronic problems such as arthritis and cognitive decline. The debate concerning whether to exercise or not is over; the only decisions are which exercises to do and how to get involved!

This manual was written to help the Abreast In A Boat paddlers prepare for dragon boat training and competition. It recognizes the unique characteristics of the team and provides specific instructions on how to prepare for this activity. Dragon boat paddling is a physically demanding activity that combines upper body and trunk exercise with the esthetics of movement on the water in a traditional boat. It is both demanding and exhilarating and, most importantly, fun. As the dragon boat paddling experience emphasizes teamwork, it has proven to be a floating support group. The camaraderie in paddling any team boat is difficult to put into words but certainly is a vital component of the activity and grows with the number of paddlers in the boat and the number of boats on the water. This manual is designed to help paddlers get the most enjoyment, with the least risk of injury, from this activity.

Although this manual is written for the dragon boat paddler, the principles of training and adaptation represent useful information for other activities such as racquet sports, recreational canoeing, kayaking, swimming, skiing and golf. One of the goals of participation in dragon boat paddling is to instill the desire to make exercise a habitual and life-long activity.
**History**

In the fall of 1995, Dr. Don McKenzie, a sports medicine physician and an exercise physiologist, was conducting a research project at the Allan McGavin Sports Medicine Centre at The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, B.C. which looked at the cardiorespiratory fitness levels in two groups of women: one group had been treated for breast cancer; the other group had no history of breast cancer. The breast cancer group had many anecdotal stories about the “don’ts” they had been told after treatment. Most of this advice restricted activities involving the upper body. Though well-intentioned, there was no published research that supported this information. A desire to return these individuals to an unrestricted, active lifestyle was the impetus behind Dr. McKenzie’s idea to form this first, all breast cancer survivors’ dragon boat team.

Dragon boating was chosen as the activity for several reasons: it is a strenuous, repetitive, upper body exercise; it provides an opportunity to work with a large group at one time; it provides a valuable training stimulus which results in a predictable improvement in fitness; it is an esthetically pleasing activity that is fun. Vancouver’s Dragon Boat Festival is one of the largest and, therefore, would visibly provide an excellent opportunity to reach a large number of people.

In February 1996, the first team was formed. The only criterion to join the team was a history of breast cancer. Age, athletic ability, paddling experience - none of this mattered. Paddlers came from all parts of the Vancouver area and from all walks of life. Ages ranged from 31 to 62! The women volunteered for this adventure not knowing what problems, if any, would occur. They were, and are, a very courageous group. A slow, progressive weight training and aerobic exercise program was the starting point. This program was designed by Dr. Don McKenzie to meet the needs of this special group. April was the start of the “on-the-water” training and the beginning of what became a very special floating support group.

As with the exercise program, the paddling training was done in a very slow, progressive manner with lots more rest time than paddling time! The training and coaching were excellent
and were the key elements in avoiding the potential problems of lymphedema and the musculoskeletal injuries associated with unaccustomed exercise. Key players surfaced to contribute enormous volumes of time and expertise: Diana Jespersen, Sue Buchan, Drew Mitchell, Urve Kuusk, and Sherri Niesen provided the critical mass of volunteers to help make this work. As the weeks went by, the paddling increased and so did the camaraderie. Missing practice was something no one wanted to do.

The goal that first year was simply to complete the racecourse at the Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival in June. After that first race, the sense of accomplishment was enormous. There were many hugs and tears all around, not just from the team members, but also from their families, friends and lots of the spectators. It certainly was an emotional moment!

Where did they place in that first race? As Dr. Don said prior to the race, “It doesn’t matter where they finish in this race, they are already winners.”

This was to be the conclusion of the research project. However, the women felt that others should have the opportunity to share in this life-changing experience.

From the simple idea of “let’s put together a dragon boat team of women who have had breast cancer”, there has been tremendous growth. There are now over 160 teams paddling worldwide as a direct result of the initial research project. The Abreast In A Boat Society has been established and we encourage all people who have had a breast cancer diagnosis to be inspired by these teams and to know “there is life beyond breast cancer”.
Abreast In A Boat Society

The Abreast In A Boat Society was formed in British Columbia in the fall of 1997 as a registered, charitable society. There are five categories of membership: paddling members are people currently active on a crew; alumnae members are past crew members; associate members who have had breast cancer; associate members who have not had breast cancer but are interested in supporting the organization; and members of the 1996 crew who all have membership for life.

Mission

To raise awareness about breast cancer and to demonstrate that those who have been diagnosed with breast cancer can lead full and active lives.

Message

Jane Frost, one of the 1996 crew, wrote the following message to our new members:

We want to share the magic of our dragon boat adventure with other people living with breast cancer. We love our paddling together; it has become an analogy for our personal experiences with breast cancer.

Here is what the experience does for us and what we demonstrate to others:

In the boat:  We paddle together
  We support each other
  We learn from each other
  We laugh together
  We relish our moments on the water
  We enjoy the thrill of competition
  We overcome the fear of sinking
  We are proud of our accomplishments
  We break the silence of cancer
  We make true friends
  We encourage others to get in the boat with us
And these are our messages:

*Our dragon boat experience has helped our healing.*
*It has helped us regain control of our lives.*
*It has helped us come to terms with our new existential reality.*
*It has shown our family and friends that we can live our lives the way we choose to live them.*
*It has reminded us to make the most of our lives.*
*It has created a new state of wellness in each of us.*
*It has demanded the best of us; physically and mentally.*
*It has helped us overcome the loneliness of cancer.*
*It has created a safety net in the event of recurrence.*
*It has given us pride in our accomplishments.*
*It has shown positive results about the prevention of lymphedema.*
*It has enabled us to move on with our lives.*
*It has created a new balance in our lives.*
*It has encouraged us to share our experience with others.*

**Abreast In A Boat Constitution**

1. The name of the Society is Abreast In A Boat Society.

2. The purposes of the Society are: to improve the physical and psychological well-being of people who have had breast cancer; to provide support to people whose breast cancer has recurred; to support breast cancer research.

3. The activities and purposes of the Society shall be carried on without purpose of gain for its members and any income, profits or other accretions to the Society shall be used in promoting the purposes of the Society. This provision shall be unalterable.

4. On the winding up or dissolution of the Society, after all debts have been paid or provision for payment has been made, the assets of the Society shall not be distributed among its members or any one of them but shall be paid to a registered charity within the meaning of the Income Tax Act of Canada. This provision shall be unalterable.
Breast Cancer Survivor Dragon Boating Structure

Abreast In A Boat - AIAB is the world’s first breast cancer survivor dragon boat team. In 1997 Abreast In A Boat’s mission was defined—to raise breast cancer awareness and to show that a full and active life is possible after a diagnosis of and treatment for the disease. Abreast In A Boat has several paddling venues and serves the Metro Vancouver area. To learn more go to www.abreastinaboat.com.

Dragon Boat Canada - DBC is the national organization for dragon boating, and all dragon boat teams wishing to compete at the international level need to qualify through their national organizations. All qualifying paddlers need to hold an active individual Dragon Boat Canada membership to qualify for international competition. AIAB has a team membership for group liability insurance purposes, which does not include individual benefits necessary for national and international competition. To learn more go to www.dragonboat.ca.

The International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission - IBCPC is an international organization that supports international breast cancer festivals and raises awareness. Efforts to form such an organization began in 1998. In 2007 in Caloundra, Australia, breast cancer teams agreed on a process to choose the host for the 2010 Festival and to develop a Constitution and By-laws for the organization. In Peterborough, Canada in June 2010, over 70 teams from seven different countries approved the Constitution and By-laws for the IBCPC. The first duly elected Steering Committee took office in November 2010. The IBCPC will link breast cancer dragon boat teams around the world, establish the process for the bid selection of the 2014 international festival and ensure this festival, future festivals, and IDBF competitive events are coordinated with the IBCPC. Abreast In A Boat is a founding member of the IBCPC. To learn more go to: www.ibcpc.com.

The International Dragon Boat Federation - IDBF is an international organization that designs and manages the rules for dragon boat paddling that are recognized world wide. As breast cancer dragon boat paddling spread around the world, contact with the IDBF was established. In Rome in 2002 the IDBF announced that it was prepared to hold races for breast
cancer survivors within its festivals, the first of which was in Poznan, Poland in 2003. Currently, breast cancer teams who wish to race competitively can do so by holding active memberships in Dragon Boat Canada and taking part in the IDBF Club Crew World Championships (breast cancer division) held biannually. To learn more go to: [www.idbf.org](http://www.idbf.org).
Organization of Crews

Sign up for Novices:
Crews are encouraged to offer an introductory paddle at their venue during the summer months. All prospective novices are encouraged to attend the novice sign-up meeting usually held late fall.

Sign up for Returning Members:
Sign up for all returning paddlers will begin in the late fall and close by the end of November. Should a member need to cancel her membership prior to the beginning of the season due to unforeseen circumstances, she may receive a full refund.

Crew Assignment:
The Membership Chair is the only person allowed to approach paddlers to ask them to change crews. Novices get their first choice, if possible, and must not be approached by anyone to change their choice.

- Members must indicate a first and second choice of venue unless there is a valid reason for only selecting one venue.
- All applications will be date-stamped upon receipt.
- Crew assignment will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Members should be notified of their crew assignment by January 31. Every effort will be made to accommodate member choices, but if members feel they cannot support the Board’s decision, their fees will be refunded.
- Members renewing after the deadline will have no choice of venue. Crew assignment will be based upon maintaining balanced crew numbers.

AIAB Requirements For Home Crews:
Overall AIAB paddling membership will determine the number of crews that will operate for the year. A crew will consist of a minimum of 22 committed paddlers (not including paddling coach) plus coach(es), drummer, steersperson and manager. Each paddler on the boat must be a breast cancer survivor.
**AIAB Requirements for Abreast with Hope (Recreational Boat):**
The Abreast with Hope Recreation Boat is for experienced, past paddlers who have physical and/or time constraints and cannot commit to regular training and racing. This boat is not intended for novices learning to paddle. It is also not for paddlers who sign up for the Regular Paddling Season and do not get their first choice. This boat will need 12 to 15 paddlers to be viable, with the understanding that other paddlers will help out each week if needed.

**Process for Venue Selection:**
The venues being offered (overall numbers permitting) are Deas, False Creek, Fort Langley, Richmond and Rocky Point.
- After registration deadline, the Membership Committee will meet to review the numbers and assign the members to crews.
- If there is a shortfall of membership, the Organization of Crews Committee will discuss the issue with the Board as well as the coaches.
- The Board will make the final decision on crews and venues.
- All members must support the decision of the Board regarding venue choices.
- Should a venue have to be cancelled, paddlers from that venue will be asked to give another choice of venue. The Recreation Boat will not be included as an option as this is not the purpose of this boat.

**Paddling Season:**
The regular paddling season runs from March to the end of June. However, home crews are permitted to extend their season to include the Nanaimo Regatta (first half of July) as one of the Board-supported regattas. Crews must decide the length of their season (ie to include Nanaimo or not) at their first crew meeting and must submit this information to the Regatta Chair.

Crews may plan to start practices mid to end of March. However, for purposes of tracking commitment, all crew managers, with the exception of the Hope Boat, must take attendance starting the first Saturday in April.
The post-season period starts following the Nanaimo Regatta in early July and may extend until the late fall. Regattas during this period only involve composite crews. Post-season Regattas/Festivals may or may not be funded by AIAB.
My Commitment to Abreast In A Boat Society

As a Member of Abreast In A Boat Society, I commit to the following:

Organization Commitment:

- I recognize that AIAB is one team with multiple crews.
- I understand that I am part of a team. I have responsibilities to my teammates and will contribute to a positive environment.
- I understand that I am part of a team and as part of a team will attend, and participate in discussions at the yearly Annual General Meeting.
- I am an advocate for our mission and message.
- I will undertake to promote the objectives of our organization whenever possible.
- I understand that this is a volunteer-run organization, and I am prepared to participate and to support the organization in any way I can.
- I understand that board and non-board volunteer positions are held by members with busy lives, and other members should not expect these positions to be like full-time jobs.
- I understand that I cannot expend any funds on behalf of the Society without prior approval of the Board of Directors.
- My communication with members of the organization will be respectful, kind, trusting and in a timely fashion.

Crew Obligations:

- I understand that I am part of a crew. I have responsibilities to my crewmates and will contribute to a positive environment.
- I understand that the wearing of life jackets is mandatory and I am aware I should be able to swim 100 meters while wearing a personal flotation device.
- I recognize that fitness is a year long, lifetime commitment. To prepare for the paddling season, I will endeavor to do a minimum of three workouts per week for an hour or more - December to March. During April to June, I will work out a minimum of two times in addition to two practices.
• I will make every effort to attend all practices and be present for the warm-up and stay for the cool down/stretch exercises.

• I understand that if I will miss more than three consecutive practices due to any planned absences, I will not be permitted to register with a committed twice weekly paddling crew, but that I will be encouraged to register with the Hope Crew.

• If I can no longer paddle for whatever reason, I will tell my Coach and Manager and I will inform the Membership Chair by email of any change in my paddling status.

• I will be particularly cognizant of my responsibilities as a member of this organization when traveling with the team and will work actively to promote our message in whatever way I can.

**Medical Considerations:**

• I acknowledge that I am responsible for my own health and that the medical support personnel for my paddling experience are acting in an advisory role only. I have notified my doctor that I am participating on a dragon boat team.

• I will notify my crew Coach and personal physician if I experience an unusual medical problem.

• Should I need further treatment for my breast cancer, I will discuss with my oncologist about continuing to paddle.

• If I am less than six months from treatment, I will discuss my ability to train and paddle with my personal physician.

• I will carry any emergency personal medication on the boat at all times.

• I will notify my coach, manager and crew safety person of any medical condition that requires me to carry medication or other interventions on the boat (e.g. diabetes, asthma, seizure disorders, cardiac issues, etc.)

• I will accept and sign the PAR-Q form and update it annually at the start of the paddling season.
Communication Guidelines

General:

- Changes of address, e-mail, home phone and cell phone should be sent to the Membership Chair and Vice Chair so that changes are made to the database as well as to the membership e-mail distribution list.

Computer Guidelines:

All communication to members via e-mail must be courteous and respectful. Specific issues/problems are best addressed to the individual member by phone or in person.

E-mail Etiquette:

- Identify yourself. State your name because your e-mail address may not be clear enough.
- Use appropriate, professional and respectful language.
- Respond or acknowledge received e-mails in a timely fashion, eg within two business days.
- When changing the topic of the message, start a new e-mail message altogether.
- Be cautious about sending personal information.
- When replying to a message, check carefully where the reply is going.
- When sending an e-mail, reread any prior e-mails on the topic that you are sending out.
- Delete anything that should not be sent.

Constructive Resolution Guidelines:

Differences are understood to be a fact of life and are managed through a conflict resolution process. The steps to resolve a conflict are as follows and in this order:

- Individual to individual
- Contact your crew captain or coach
Code of Conduct

Abreast In A Boat Society (“AIAB” or “the Society”) members share a serious responsibility in protecting, promoting, and upholding the good name of the Society. The readiness of our members to help with community, charitable, educational, and research activities to achieve our mission brings credit to AIAB and is encouraged.

Members must be aware at all times that their words, actions, and attitudes reflect on the image of the Society. This is particularly important when wearing their uniforms. When interacting with others, and especially those who are not part of AIAB, members’ behaviour should reflect the integrity of AIAB’s reputation, as well as its position as a leader in the world community of dragon boat paddling.

AIAB members, when interacting among themselves, must uphold the Society’s commitment to an inclusive, harassment-free environment. Communication between and among members, whether written or oral, must be cordial and respectful at all times.

When acting on behalf of AIAB, members shall not seek any personal gain. Any income, profits, or other accretions to AIAB shall be used to promote the purposes of the Society.

AIAB has created processes to address and manage concerns that a member may have about another member(s). It is the responsibility of each member to be aware of what those processes are and to use them appropriately.

Contravention of the Code of Conduct

In the event there is an allegation of a Contravention of the Code of Conduct, the matter shall be addressed to the board and the following steps will be taken:

- The matter will be documented, including the name of the member and the alleged contravention, the name(s) and contact information of the person(s) making the complaint.
If it is determined by the board that there has been a contravention of the Code of Conduct, the board will communicate with the member(s) who has contravened.

The board, or its designated representative(s), will review the allegation and determine specific remedies, behavioural outcomes and timelines.

If the matter cannot be resolved, which is determined at the sole discretion of the board, consequences will result, which may include expulsion from the Society.

Following completion of this process, documentation will remain on file for a period of two years. The board will refer to these files should a subsequent complaint be made involving the same member. After two years, the documents will be destroyed.

The board considers expulsion to be a serious matter, which will only be enacted when all efforts to resolve the situation satisfactorily have been exhausted.

Should the same member be found in contravention of the Code of Conduct on two or more occasions within any two-year period, the board may decline to accept her membership renewal.

Expulsion of a member in accordance with Section 2.5 of the AIAB By-laws may result if there are:

- repeated breaches of the Code of Conduct;
- behaviour or actions that a member knew or should have reasonably known would cause harm to the reputation of AIAB or an AIAB member;
- behaviour or actions that infringe on the rights of the membership to a harassment-free environment; or
- when all efforts to resolve the contravention have been exhausted to the best ability of the Board.
Fundraising

Two types of fundraising may occur:

- AIAB-wide – the organization may identify a charitable cause that is in accordance with our mission and the members raise funds as a whole for this purpose.
- Crew specific – crews may identify a charitable cause that is in accordance with our mission and the crewmembers raise funds for this purpose but under the banner of Abreast In A Boat.
- The “Process for Fundraising” must be followed for both AIAB wide and crew specific fundraising.

Process for Fundraising:

- All fundraising activities must be for the purpose of promoting our mission and sanctioned by the Board of Directors prior to the activity proceeding.
- The Abreast In A Boat name, logo, and literature cannot be used to raise funds in any way that has not been officially endorsed by the Board.
- Proceeds from a fundraising activity must be clearly designated to ensure that everyone who supports the activity is aware of where the money will be spent.
- All funds raised by Abreast In A Boat members through fundraising activities must be submitted to the AIAB treasurer with a full accounting of these funds.
- The Board will distribute monies raised through fundraising in accordance with the application for the specific activity that has already been endorsed by the Board.

Fund Raising Application Process:

- Application should be completed on-line and submitted to the Vice President a minimum of one month prior to the proposed activity.
- The Vice President will forward to the Board of Directors for approval.
Our Logo

Background
The Abreast In A Boat logo is a registered trademark which is registered with the Canadian Intellectual Property Office under the Registration Number TMA 598,747 for the boat and design; Number TMA 594,145 for ABREAST IN A BOAT. The trademark is registered until January 7, 2019 at which time it can be re-registered. (1)

The ABREAST IN A BOAT trademark is registered in standard characters (upper case), thereby allowing AIAB to use it in any prominence of choice. It was the intent of the founding members for the name to appear in upper and lower case lettering and should appear this way wherever possible.

Policy
The boat, waves and the name Abreast In A Boat® must not be altered in any way. The letters in Abreast In A Boat should be in upper and lower case lettering. The symbol ® should be used in connection with the logo and the name for all media purposes. (1)

For design purposes, the colour of the boat, waves, and lettering may be fuchsia, teal, white and/or black. The tagline, “OUR RACE AGAINST BREAST CANCER” is not a part of the trademark registration but must appear in our promotional material under or near the registered logo and name. The tagline should be in upper case lettering but in a smaller size than the Abreast In A Boat name. The type face should be in Meta print.

Use of Logo
Abreast In A Boat members who wish to use our logo must submit a written request to the Communications Chair with a copy to the Communications Vice Chair. The request must include the name of company (if appropriate), address, contact person and the purpose for the use of the logo. For logos to be put on documents, submit the document. Requests must be made at
least one week before the logo is needed. The Communications Chair will decide how the logo will be distributed.

External organizations/media that want to use our name and/or logo must submit a written request to the Communications Chair (usually via the website). In most cases “OUR RACE AGAINST BREAST CANCER” tagline is not included. The Chair will send a letter to the organization stating that they agree it will be used for the requested purpose only. The Communications Chair will keep a list of these external companies/organizations.

All clothing, hats and accessories must be designed in accordance with the Society’s trademark (refer to “OUR LOGO”), must be approved by the Board, and be made available to all members of the Society.

All flags, banners and display materials must have Board approval and be consistent with our trademark and, where appropriate, include recognition of our sponsors either through use of their logo and/or company/organization name.

Reference:

Our Traditions

Our Song
When Abreast In A Boat traveled to New Zealand in 1998, we needed something to describe ourselves, to tell who we were. Tim King, a cancer survivor himself and a friend of Abreast In A Boat, composed this song for us. We sang it from the stage during the opening ceremonies, and it set the scene. The third verse was added when we welcomed visiting teams to our Vancouver festival in June 1999. This song is sung to the tune of the Eton Boating Song.

Beautiful Paddling Weather

Beautiful paddling weather
We’re out on the water again
We paddle ourselves to exhaustion
In the sun and the wind and the rain
So we all pull together
‘Cause that’s what will keep us afloat
To raise breast cancer awareness
That’s why we’re Abreast In A Boat.

We’ve all seen rough water
With waves that have pounded our bow
We’ve paddled straight up over mountains
Nothing can stop us now
As we all pull together
‘Cause that’s what will keep us afloat
Our spirit will never be conquered
‘Cause we are Abreast In A Boat.

Paddling’s become our new challenge
And life is quite diff-er-ent now
But it’s funny we’d never have met you
If those waves hadn’t pounded our bow
So we’re happy to paddle together
On an ocean or river or lake
Our message of hope is increasing
And we’re proud of the difference we make.

Tim King

The Sandy Smith Global Race
Sandy joined Abreast In A Boat in 1997 and was the first person to hold the position of Global Liaison. Sandy became the contact person for other women to start their own breast cancer dragon boat team. It was a role she fell into by accident, one that became her passion and eventually almost a full-time job. Many of the teams around the world including Australia, New Zealand, the United States of America, other parts of Canada and Singapore benefited from her unstinting efforts.

Sandy passed away in February 2005. She was a woman of incredible courage, perseverance, and conviction.

At the first International Breast Cancer Dragon Boat Regatta held in Vancouver, B.C., a new tradition was born. To acknowledge and honour Sandy’s contribution to breast cancer dragon boating worldwide, representative crews from around the world competed in The Sandy Smith Global Race. Since then at all international breast cancer festivals, this race is held in her honour. Sandy’s legacy continues.

The Flower Ceremony
Tossing a pink or fuchsia-coloured flower in the water at the end of a breast cancer race has become a tradition. It is a tradition that partially evolved from a thoughtful gesture by one of the Originals back in 1996, the first year of breast cancer dragon boat racing. As she was getting ready for her crew’s first official race, Brenda Hochachka noticed her floribunda rose bush in full bloom.
The colour was so similar to the fuchsia-coloured T-shirts the team was wearing that she picked 24 roses and brought them to the festival.

**These were the first blooms carried by a breast cancer crew.**

The following year, Abreast In A Boat increased to three crews and participated in the world’s first breast cancer race here in Vancouver. Dorothy Cichecki, a novice paddler, was unable to participate due to treatment for a recurrence but she was certainly on the boat in spirit. Jeanne Stiles, one of her crew mates, arranged for Dorothy’s headband to be tied to the dragon boat and for each crew member to carry a pink carnation as a token of her hopes and prayers for Dorothy’s recovery. In an impromptu move at the end of the race, instead of the pre-arranged paddle salute, the crew of Breast Strokes tossed their carnations into the water.

**This was the first time flowers were tossed after a breast cancer race.**

By 1998, breast cancer dragon boating was expanding across North America, and survivor races were held at both the Vancouver and Toronto festivals. At both venues, paddlers on the participating crews linked boats and tossed flowers into the water after the final breast cancer race.

**These were the first officially organized flower ceremonies.**

Since then, there has been a Flower Ceremony after most breast cancer final races. Sometimes the flowers are pink, sometimes fuchsia. The flowers may be roses, carnations, or any other seasonal flower. They may be tossed from dragon boats or from shore. But what never varies is the reason for the flower ceremony –

**It’s a tradition that gives us a moment to remember and honour those women who have passed away from breast cancer and those who are still fighting the disease.**
Training Guide

Introduction
There are valid medical reasons why some people should not engage in strenuous exercise. Individuals with high blood pressure, heart or respiratory disease and severe arthritis can aggravate these medical problems with intense exercise. Dragon boating is hard work and you must consult your family physician prior to beginning this program. If you have any medical concerns about this program the time to address them is now, prior to commencing the training program.

Medical Concerns
With specific reference to breast cancer, we must recognize a few potential problems.

Lymphedema
Lymphedema is an obvious concern and for this reason compression sleeves are strongly recommended for all paddlers. We suggest that these should be worn at every workout. The first portion of each training session emphasizes flexibility. This is followed by specific resistance exercises to develop strength in the upper arm, back and shoulder areas. These activities prepare you for the paddling activities. There is likely a higher risk of developing lymphedema during this initial phase of increased activity, relative to the paddling phase. WE CANNOT EMPHASIZE ENOUGH, THE NEED TO PROGRESS IN A SLOW, GRADUAL FASHION. Too rapid an increase in any activity is the main factor in the development of musculoskeletal injury or a change in your lymphedema status. By introducing paddling with low intensity but a progressive fashion, we gradually improve the ability of the upper extremity to do more intense exercise. It is the graduated focus of the program that allows adaptation to this activity. We do have an excellent track record in avoiding lymphedema, and there are some very good reasons to believe that a supervised, graded exercise program is an important part of the prevention or treatment of this condition.

In the past we have monitored paddlers throughout the season, with circumferential measurements of both arms, and have found that there is no increase in size in comparison to the non-affected arm. Several paddlers with pre-existing lymphedema have found that there has been no change in size but an improvement in symptoms with this exercise program. Gradually we have come to
believe that the relationship between exercise and the development of lymphedema is likely coincidental. Nevertheless, it is important to be cautious and to prepare properly for the exercise that this program represents.

**Musculoskeletal Injury**
There are risks associated with unaccustomed physical activity. Inadequate strength and flexibility can lead to overuse injuries once the paddling practices commence. Post surgery, there may be a restricted range of motion in the shoulder and lack of use of the chest wall and shoulder muscles can result in a loss of strength. Thus, the physical preparation for training takes on an especially important role for our crews. The rate of progression of training once paddling begins will be monitored by the Coaches to minimize injury. This is a recreational team, but in order to prepare for paddling it is necessary to do a minimum of three workouts per week. The program contains adequate recovery from the paddling sessions to allow for optimal adaptation and a low risk of injury.

There is tremendous variation on how team members adapt to training exercises and paddling. Some of the variability is related to your original state of fitness. Members who exercise regularly throughout the year will be less inclined to develop a physical problem. Other factors include age, medical status, the stage of breast cancer and its treatment, occupation, motivation and how well you follow the program.

**Other Health Issues**
Certain medications can limit your exercise capacity and, once again, your personal physician is in the best position to advise you about any interactions between medication and exercise.

The bottom hand on the paddle can be injured if it strikes the side of the boat. For this reason, we recommend the use of a glove for protection. The hand and arm do get wet and cold during practice. Prompt treatment of any abrasion or other injury to the hand or fingers is necessary to avoid infection. Good hygiene and appropriate skin care are essential.
Training Principles

WHEN CAN I BEGIN?
It is necessary to recover both physically and mentally from the treatment phase of breast cancer. We recommend that you start the Physical Training Program allowing a minimum of three months of recovery after completion of therapy.

The Physical Training Program consists of a dry-land phase and a paddling phase; the purpose of the first phase being the preparation for the second. Ideally, the dry-land training should begin at least six weeks prior to getting on the water. It should be continued, albeit in a modified form, during the paddling season. Check with your specific crew regarding group dry land training options available throughout the year.

There are four objectives of the training program.

1. **Commitment to Exercise:** Involvement with this training program throughout the entire year will encourage the adoption of exercise into your lifestyle. *This is very important to you;* there are measurable benefits to improved levels of fitness and these include an improved immune system and maintenance of body weight.

2. **Flexibility:** To maintain or increase flexibility, stretching exercises are recommended and diagrams of suggested exercises are presented below for you to use in your workouts. Choose at least one stretch for each major body part.

3. **Strength:** It is important to increase upper body strength and endurance in preparation for the paddling phase of training. Weight training is advised and specific exercises are listed below. **Begin with a very light weight at first.**

   **Frequency** = three workouts per week.

4. **Aerobic Fitness:** Cardio respiratory fitness is improved significantly by paddling but it is to your advantage to include aerobic training in your fitness program. Once again, you should choose an activity that uses as much muscle mass as possible. Walking, jogging, cycling, swimming, cross-country skiing, aerobic classes and Stairmaster are examples of suitable activities. Your aerobic program should start with a 10-minute warm up, followed by stretching exercises. You should be continuously active for 30-45 minutes in each
session keeping your intensity in the comfort zone, i.e.: you should be able to carry on a conversation with a training partner. Follow each session with a 5-10 minute cool down and stretch. Remember that your warm up and cool down are in addition to your aerobic activity.

**Frequency = three workouts per week**

**Exercises and Stretches**

It is important to do these exercises safely and correctly. **Proper instruction and supervision are essential.** If you are not familiar with these exercises, ask a fitness consultant at the gym. Try to work out with a teammate; it’s more fun and helps with compliance.

**Exercises**

![Seated Row](image)

Seated Row

![Bench Press](image)

Bench Press

![Lat Pull](image)

Lat Pull

![One arm bent-over rowing](image)

One arm bent-over rowing
Tricep Extension

Bicep Curl

Back Extension

Sit-Up

**Stretches**
Sample RESISTANCE TRAINING Session

Warm-up: light aerobic activities for 10 minutes. This could be a brisk walk or jog, stationary cycling with little resistance or easy Stairmaster activity. Virtually any activity that involves a large muscle mass will work.

Stretching Exercises: another 5 to 7 minutes of stretching will prepare you for:

Resistance Training: Strength training is a very important ingredient in the recipe for success in dragon boat paddling. Do two sets of 10 repetitions for each exercise the first week and thereafter do three sets of 10 repetitions. Do the exercises slowly and in a controlled fashion. Increase the resistance only when you are comfortable with the weight that you are using.

Cool-down: should include 5-10 minutes of stretching exercises to remove some of the tension in those muscles affected by the resistance training.

Sample NOVICE Program - Each workout requires 45-60 minutes

Sunday: Aerobic fitness
- stretching exercises 10 minutes
- 5 minutes easy walking
- 35 minute brisk walk to include some hills
- 5 minutes easy walking

Monday: Resistance exercise
- warm-up on a stationary bicycle, 5 minutes pedaling with very light resistance
- 5 minute stretching exercises
- weight program 3 sets x 10 reps each exercise, sit-ups
- 3 minutes stretches
Tuesday: Aerobic fitness
- stretching exercises 10 minutes
- 5 minutes easy swimming
- 25 minutes continuous swimming, any strokes
- 3 minutes shoulder and upper back stretches

Wednesday:
Off

Thursday: Resistance exercise
- warm-up on a rowing ergometer, 5 minutes very light resistance
- 5 minute stretching exercises
- weight program 3 sets x 10 reps each exercise, sit-ups
- 3 minutes stretches

Friday: Aerobic fitness
- stretching exercises 10 minutes
- 5 minutes easy walking
- 35 minute brisk walk to include some hills
- Easy walk 5 minutes

Saturday: Resistance exercise
- warm-up on a stationary bicycle, 5 minutes pedaling very light resistance
- 5 minute stretching exercises
- weight program 3 sets x 10 reps each exercise, sit-ups
- 3 minutes stretches

NOTE: If you wish, you can do the aerobic and resistance training on the same day. Do the aerobic exercise first. Allow a short recovery and complete the resistance program as prescribed.

Sample INTERMEDIATE Program

Circuit training is useful to provide both a strength and aerobic training stimulus. It is more intensive and should only be used once you are comfortable with the standard resistance and aerobic programs. This is the Kiwi Circuit, used by the team that competed in Wellington in
February 1998. Read the instructions carefully - this is not a fitness contest. Your goal is to improve your own personal level of fitness. The program consists of six workouts per week:

- **Three aerobic sessions**: one paddling practice; two other aerobic activities - walk, jog, cycle, swim; your effort in these sessions should increase your heart rate and make you sweat!

- **Three strength sessions**: one Kiwi Circuit (see below); two regular weight training

**Instructions**

1. Warm-up: cycle or walk; do stretching **BEFORE & AFTER** 7-10 minutes
2. Do the circuits all the way through with little or no rest between exercise stations?
3. Use a resistance appropriate for your size and strength. There is lots of room for change; start with a light weight and increase it next time if necessary.
4. Repeat the circuit two to three times. Begin slowly and increase speed as you are able.
5. The goal is to complete the entire circuit (10 stations) three times without stopping. Record your time and try to improve each session.
6. Do the circuit once per week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Resistance</th>
<th>Reps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Squat thrusts</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pull downs (lat pull)</td>
<td>20-80 lbs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Horizontal Press (Bench Press)</td>
<td>30-90 lbs</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Running on spot - high knee lift (90°)</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Seated Row</td>
<td>30-90 lbs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sit-ups: horizontal surface</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>One arm bent over rowing: Right then Left</td>
<td>5-25 lbs</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Stairs</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Push-ups: against the wall, preferably a corner</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“Finale”: arm curl, out in front, back, overhead, &amp; reverse (use bar or free weight)</td>
<td>5-40 lbs (Total Wt)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**How Do I know that my program is working?**

In general, there are subjective and objective means to determine whether the fitness program is having the desired effect. The most important one is that you feel stronger and have more energy. You may notice that your muscles are feeling a little firmer and perhaps they will look a little larger. This program is not designed to make you bigger, just stronger. Objectively, you should notice an increase in the weight that you are using for each exercise. As the numbers of repetitions do not change, this increase in resistance may be dramatic at first but usually the rate of increase will slow down after six to eight weeks.

Aerobic improvements will also result in more energy. The objective changes are an improvement in either the time it takes to perform a specific task, or an increase in work done or distance traveled in the same time. There are easy ways to test your own aerobic fitness - the simplest is to record the time it takes you to complete 2.5 kilometers (six laps of a track). Here are some markers of aerobic fitness:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age (years)</th>
<th>Average mm:ss</th>
<th>Excellent mm:ss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 - 39</td>
<td>13:00 - 14:00</td>
<td>&lt; 12:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 - 49</td>
<td>14:30 - 15:30</td>
<td>&lt; 13:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 59</td>
<td>16:00 - 17:00</td>
<td>&lt; 15:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69</td>
<td>19:00 - 20:00</td>
<td>&lt; 18:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 +</td>
<td>23:30 - 25:00</td>
<td>&lt; 22:30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the competitive world, very fit recreational-level female athletes complete a 5 km run in the 20-minute range. The important issue is one of slow but steady improvement in general fitness.
Training: Paddlers

Timing will always be our most important goal. This is a team effort. Remember:

Don’t Paddle Hard - Paddle Together.

Now the fun begins and you get to apply the new level of fitness you have attained in the dry-land phase of training. The training program will be planned by your coach and, once again, involves progressive amounts of paddling with slow increases in volume and intensity.

The on-the-water training session is divided into phases....

Warm-up 1: Prior to getting in the boat a minimum of 10-15 minutes of warm-up with your crew is essential, so arrive on time! This can include some light aerobic activities as well as stretching exercises.

Warm-up 2: On-the-water, the first 10 minutes should be dedicated to very light paddling followed by two to three minutes of stretches that are conducted from within the dragon boat.

Specific practice skills: A plan is in place for each practice that is prepared by the coaches. Early in the season, most of the time is devoted to skill acquisition through instruction and practice. As we move toward race day, more emphasis will be placed on fitness and race preparation, but the focus will always return to proper technique and timing. Progression to more intense activity must be closely monitored and this is the responsibility of the coach. There are large individual differences in the capacity to do strenuous exercise. There will be specific times, while paddling, when you feel tired and must rest. Try to paddle with less intensity and concentrate on proper technique and timing rather than physical effort. If the fatigue continues, then it is reasonable to pull your paddle in and rest. Get back into the rhythm once you feel up to it.

Cool down: Easy paddling at the end of a paddling session will help return the body towards a resting state. Stretching once you are out of the boat is also advised.

How do you know if you have done too much?

1. Pain during or after paddling.
2. Swelling anywhere.
3. Unaccustomed stiffness that persists to the next day.
4. Generalized fatigue that persists to the next practice.
Treatment options include rest; ice massage; stretching exercises to maintain range of motion; perhaps physiotherapy, massage therapy and medication. Ninety percent of the injuries are due to overuse; prevention is preferred to treatment.

**Training: Coaches**

This particular athletic population requires special care in the application of training principles. For the most part, you are dealing with very motivated individuals, some of whom have led sedentary lives, often for many years. If you ask any group of 50-year olds to begin a program of unaccustomed exercise, some will experience side effects. The age range in our boats spans six decades (30’s – 80’s) and clearly the response to training will vary considerably. It is impossible to physically challenge everyone in the boat to the same degree; everyone receives a slightly different training stimulus. The fitter paddlers can simply pull harder while the less fit focus on timing and technique rather than muscle power. The motivation to participate is very strong and can exceed the physical capacity of the athlete. For this reason - GO SLOW - has new meaning. Encourage rest during paddling for those individuals who experience fatigue or discomfort. Obey the cardinal rule of medicine – **DO NO HARM**.

The initial paddling sessions should focus entirely on technique, timing and lots of recovery, with lots of feedback on the technical aspects of the stroke. We paddle two times per week and try to have at least two days recovery between sessions. When we start on the water, the first workout consists of 14 - 15 minutes of paddling in a 75 - 90 minute session! Each session involves marginally more paddling: one to three minutes more than the last practice. For the first four weeks we work on volume and disregard intensity. A sample workout, towards the end of this initial four-week period, might look like:

- **Warm-up on shore:** 10 -15 minutes, light aerobics and stretching.
- **Warm-up on the water:** Paddle three minutes easy, stop and stretch in boat.
- **Training:** Paddle two minutes. Emphasize stroke technique. Rest two to four minutes. Repeat three times. Effort is approximately 60-70 %. 
- **Recovery:** Rest four to five minutes, depending on weather. Repeat stretches.
- **Training:** Paddle two to three minutes. Emphasize technique and timing Rest two to four minutes. Repeat three times.
Training: Seat drills: front half paddle/ back half rest; alternate during paddling. Odd seat numbers paddle/ evens rest; alternate during paddle. Total paddling for drills = four to six minutes.

Cool down: Very easy paddling to the dock, 2-4 minutes.

Total paddling time = 21 - 28 minutes including warm-up and cool down (five to seven minutes). This effort will result in generalized and local muscle fatigue in most paddlers. That is acceptable as long as it resolves in the four to six hours after practice. As skill and fitness improves, the paddling time is slowly increased to approximately 45 minutes. In the four to five weeks leading to a regatta, intensity can be increased and starts and interval sessions gradually added. Racing should be done at an 80% effort with the goal of even pacing.

Safety Rules

- Each paddler must participate in a water safety orientation to be held at the first boat meeting or practice.
- Each paddler must be water safe, i.e. comfortable in the water.
- Each crewmember must wear an approved personal flotation device and clothing appropriate to weather conditions.
- Each paddler must be aware that her seatmate is her “buddy” and confirm her safety in the event of an accident on the water.
- Each coach and steersperson will be responsible for safe loading and unloading of boats and for appropriate assessment of weather/boating conditions.
- Each crew must have a minimum of 16 paddlers before the boat can be taken out for a practice.
- Each crew must have two members that are familiar with CPR.
- Each coach must have a cell phone and an Emergency Response Card for each crewmember on the boat during every practice.
- Each crewmember must know the emergency phone number of the Coast Guard (911 – from your cell phone.
- The cell phone and other required onboard safety information will be carried in a waterproof bag.
**Team Guidelines**

*Crew Composition and Participation Guidelines*

**General Requirements**

- A crew is defined as the captain, manager, drummer(s), steersperson(s), coach(es) and paddlers for each AIAB boat. The crew may elect a first mate to assist the captain.
- Each crew name must begin with “Abreast…”.
- Each crew member is responsible for the safety, enjoyment and well-being of her crewmates.
- From among its members, each crew will choose a captain and a manager. Wherever possible, these positions should be filled by members who have not yet had that experience. This will emphasize that each new season is a fresh start and will maximize the number of members who experience an organizational role.
- Each crew designates a Drummer(s), two Steerspersons, a warm-up/cool-down person and a safety person. Crew may also designate those responsible for bailing the boat and/or bringing the boat around/taking it back, prior to and at the end of practices.
- Each crew member follows the directions of the coach(es), drummer and steersperson.
- Each crew is expected to appoint a representative for the Communications, Sponsorship, Social Functions, Regatta/Festival, Merchandising, Outreach Events and Safety Committees of AIAB. Each of these committees will appoint a coordinator that reports to the appropriate Board member.
- Each crew member is expected to volunteer for special outreach events organized by the Society or designated as Society-supported outreach events.
- Each crew is expected to do a minimum of two outreach events per calendar year within their communities to spread our AIAB message.
- Each crew will be asked to have a minimum of five participants volunteer for the various AIAB activities (i.e. sponsor paddle, novice paddle). The Outreach Events representative from each crew will be responsible for coordinating the volunteers from her crew.
- Each crew is encouraged to foster the development of coaches and steerspersons from within its members.
- Crews must have the approval of the Board before expending any funds on behalf of the
Society.

- Each member is expected to wear an AIAB crew shirt at all practices.
- Each member is to wear the current year’s sleeved crew shirt, and black bottoms at all regattas, AIAB official community functions (e.g. Wellness Show, sponsor functions), and outreach activity. This is our commitment to our sponsors.
- Each crew is responsible for ensuring its members are informed of the Society’s mission and goals and can articulate that mission.
- Each member is expected to attend the Annual General Meeting.

**Regatta/Festival**

- Each crew will make every effort to ensure all eligible paddlers are able to participate in the Breast Cancer Challenge race.
- Each member is expected to wear the appropriately designated clothing (current year’s crew shirt with sleeves, and black bottoms) in all races.
- In the spirit of sportsmanship, each crew is expected to attend the closing ceremonies at all regattas and festivals.
- All crew members must be members in good standing at the time of a Regatta/Festival in order to participate.
- In the event a non-member is required to participate in a Regatta/Festival, i.e. certified steersperson, approval by the Regatta Chair and President, or at least one other Board member is required before the start of the Regatta/Festival, if possible.

**Abreast In A Boat - Racing**

In all races, we must abide by the rules of the regatta.

- When racing in sanctioned DBC or IDBF (Cancer Survivor Class) sporting events (e.g. Nationals, Club Crew Worlds Championships), all paddlers must be breast cancer survivors, including steers and drummers. This rule also applies to all IBCPC events.
- When racing in community dragon boat festivals (e.g. Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival, Nanaimo Dragon Boat Festival), for the Breast Cancer Race, all paddlers must be breast cancer survivors, except for the steers who may be a non-survivor, as approved or appointed by the Race Director.
For racing in a Breast Cancer Challenge Race (IDBF and DBC rule, February 2013), AIAB has set up the following guidelines:

1. All paddlers and the drummer must be breast cancer survivors.
2. The steersperson must be accredited. A breast cancer survivor steersperson is preferred, but if none is available the team puts forth a request for a spare breast cancer survivor steersperson from the onsite spares pool. If none is available, then approval may be given for a non-survivor accredited steersperson by the race organizer.
3. No substitution of paddlers from any non-breast cancer teams or supporters is allowed.
4. A crew may seat 18, 20 or 22 members, depending on the style of boat, for the Breast Cancer Challenge race.
5. If a team does not have a minimum of 18 paddlers to enter the Challenge Race, it may put forth a request to the race organizer for spares from other breast cancer teams. Eligible paddlers must be on a team roster and have signed the liability waiver forms. If no spares are available to fill a team to 18 paddlers, that team will not be permitted to race.

AIAB’s policy regarding our own steersperson(s) in general races:

1. Must be an accredited steersperson.
2. An AIAB breast cancer survivor steersperson is preferred. If none is available and a breast cancer survivor steersperson cannot be found, an accredited steersperson (who may be a non-survivor male or female) may be used.

AIAB’s policy regarding our own drummers in general races:

1. Must be a breast cancer survivor.
2. Under extenuating circumstances and after all other resources have been exhausted in trying to find another breast cancer survivor drummer from our organization, a non-survivor drummer may be used.

***Steersperson***

- Is responsible for the safety of the boat from the time the boat starts to load until the boat is unloaded at the completion of the practice/race.
• Is the first to get into the boat – always checks that the steering arm is secure in its bracket, that the water has been bailed, that everyone is seated, and that the boat is balanced, before leaving the dock.

• Remains standing while steering, scanning 360 degrees of the water, checking for traffic. As the eyes and ears of the boat, the crew’s safety is of paramount concern.

• Knows the rules of the road i.e. keep right, give right, big is right, no one is right (Maritime Law).

• Works with the crew using a loud voice and a set of clear and consistent commands, so everyone understands the commands and follows them quickly.

• Is aware of changing weather patterns and is prepared to return to the dock if the water gets rough.

• Works together with the drummer, echoing calls; ensures paddlers at the back of the boat feel included with those at the front, and encourages everyone.

• Attends all Steering Clinics/workshops endorsed by Abreast In A Boat, and practices skills learned as often as possible in order to handle the unexpected.

• Has passed a steering accreditation test prior to the Festival.

• Will familiarize themselves with the racing course and rules of each racing venue they attend.

**Drummer**

• Possesses good communication and leadership skills.

• Is willing to assume a position of responsibility and take control.

• Is able to cooperate with others, specifically the coach, the steersperson, and paddlers.

• Is able to stay calm under pressure, look confident, and be in control.

• Has an understanding of the stroke technique.

• Has the ability to motivate the paddlers, especially in a race.

• Has a voice that can be heard throughout the boat (although this can be dealt with).

• Is able to multi-task since during a race, she must call, keep the paddlers focused, develop strategy depending on the race, be aware of the status of the paddlers, and be aware of the situation on the racecourse.
Captain

- Is aware of the importance of communication between manager, coach and crew and works to draw crew members together to form a closely-knit group within the concept of one team/multiple crews.
- Welcomes and encourages newcomers and novices to ensure they feel part of the crew (keeping in mind they may still be quite fragile); ensures that they actively participate in both practices and socialization.
- Makes sure that non-paddling members (Alumnae, Associate and wait-listed paddlers) are informed of, and included in, all social activities.
- Has crew select or appoint members to specific duties i.e. safety, warm-up, communications, sponsorship, merchandise, travel, social, events, fundraising and telephone calls to those not having email.
- Ensures crewmembers honour their responsibilities to the fitness program and attendance, as well as to any extra volunteer duties.
- Meets with the coach prior to first practice; knows the coach’s wishes and acts in a supportive role when paddling. Reminds paddlers that the coach is a volunteer.
- Ensures members notify the manager if having to miss a practice and checks attendance if the manager is not present.
- Prior to practices, advises the coach re absent paddlers (for the seating plan).
- Attends meetings designated by the Board, including a start up meeting with all coaches, captains, managers and representatives of the Board.
- Attends seasonal Captains’ Meetings.
- Is acutely aware of the crewmembers' health and emotional concerns, any frustrations or dissatisfaction, and keeps in touch with any paddler who misses a number of practices.
- Fosters a healthy, caring attitude within the group so that members support each other.
- Ensures that there is a good degree of satisfaction among the crew after a practice and that each member goes home happy.
- Keeps THE KEY to the shed/club where lifejackets/paddles/steering oars are kept at all times - also gives a duplicate to one other member or the coach in case the captain is absent.
- Ensures adherence to particular practice times, coordinating with the coach and
steersperson/drummer - on and off the water/dock.

- Calls meetings as necessary.
- Encourages members to volunteer for positions within the Society e.g. committees, the Board and at functions as needed.
- Is computer literate, has easy access to e-mail and checks her mail often, especially during the period leading up to regattas or festivals.
- Follows directions of the dock master of the day, if False Creek crew, respecting the privacy and peace of the floating home community on Granville Island, ensuring the crew acts accordingly.
- Prepares an internal report for the crew at season’s end.

**Note:** This position starts with the first crew meeting and ends in January of the following year.
A Captain of an international boat should be knowledgeable and able to communicate effectively the history, mandate and message of the Society and, where possible, should have at least two years’ paddling experience.

**Coach**

Coaches must be fully committed to the Abreast In A Boat objectives:

- To compete and have FUN.
- To improve the physical and psychological well-being of people who have had breast cancer.
- To realize we are one team with many crews.
- To emphasize putting the best race forward with respect to her crew.

**Coaches must:**

- Understand each athlete is an individual and has a unique set of physical limitations under which she can perform at her best.
- Be able to assess each paddler’s skill level and work within that parameter.
- Develop a training schedule to take individual paddlers, at different fitness levels, and meld them into a racing crew.
- Help each paddler realize the benefit of exercise year-round.
- Provide coverage when absent.
• Ensure that each boat has a minimum of one qualified steersperson.
• Ensure that there is a minimum of 16 paddlers for each practice to ensure safety for all crewmembers.
• Follow the rules of boating e.g. if out at dusk, running lights are required.
• Adhere to the AIAB safety rules.

Other coaching considerations:
• Is willing to commit time, energy and emotion.
• Possesses leadership and good communication skills.
• Is sensitive, supportive, positive and encouraging.
• Is able to multi-task and to motivate.
• Is technically competent and knows the purpose of the various drills.
• Encourages cooperation and assists any of our crews who need paddlers during festivals.
• Shows respect for governing sports rules, officials, other Coaches and all members of AIAB.

Other important points:
• Be able to work closely with the Manager and Captain.
• Be aware of any ongoing health issues of their crew members and if unsure about risks, seek advice of the Medical Advisor.
• Attend all Coaching Clinics, courses, etc. endorsed by AIAB.
• Mentor new/potential AIAB members as Coaches.
• Attend all AIAB Coaches meetings.
• Have an emergency response contact list.

Manager
• Must be computer literate/proficient.
• Maintains communication with coach, captain and all paddlers to ensure practice times, locations and details of special events are known and ensures this information is passed on to those who do not have e-mail.
• Maintains a Crew Roster with each member’s name, address, phone # and email and advises the Membership Chair and Vice Chair of any change.
• Obtains the necessary waiver forms and ensures crew members complete them.
• Attends crew practices and keeps a record of attendance. Informs coach(es) if unable to attend practice. It is mandatory to have a cell phone at the practice and one on the boat. The marine emergency number is 911.
• Makes sure paddlers are comfortable and feel free to ask questions.
• Must be available (with the captain) to support anyone with a special need.
• Responds to all emails and calls from coach/captain/crew.

**In preparation for Regattas/Festivals:**
• Makes early contact with AIAB Regatta/Festival Chair, and notifies her of crew’s intention to participate in Regatta, and obtains Event Information Package from Regatta/Festival Chair.
• Once the team has been registered, Crew Information Form, Crew Roster, and Waiver Form must be forwarded to Regatta Chair within 48 hours of the event. If changes are made after that time, Regatta must be given a copy of the waiver on the day of the event.
• Attends all AIAB Captain/Regatta Chair/Managers’ meetings before the start of the season.
• At the regattas, attends Managers' meeting as required by event organizers - briefs coach, captain and crew.
• Reads, understands and briefs crew on Rules and Regulations of the event.
• Obtains and distributes the Racers’ Passes and Parking Passes where required.
• Assists in arranging accommodation for out-of-town events as requested.
• Informs crew of details of welcoming party (if scheduled).
• For travel crews, manages any commitment fees as directed by the Board.
• Ensures that equipment (tent, banners, flags, numbers, etc.), as needed, is reserved and arranges for delivery to the site and return to storage.
• Obtains contact phone number for all crew members at event and keeps in contact as necessary.
• Directs any questions or concerns about a Regatta event to the Regatta Chair.
During Regattas/Festivals:

- Informs crew of tent location and reviews site map.
- Ensures all crew members have their race passes/bracelets.
- Obtains and reviews the race grid with coaches, captain and crew.
- Determines from course marshal the location of marshalling areas and required time when the crew must be present. ENSURE crew moves to this area ON TIME.
- Keeps captain and coach up to date on progression of races so crew has appropriate time for warm-up, visualization and movement to marshalling area.
- Obtains race results periodically, as posted, and informs crew.
- For multi-day events, is responsible for obtaining the race grid for the next day and informing the crew of the first race time in the morning.
- Reminds all crew members that, in the spirit of good sportsmanship, everyone is encouraged to support/attend the Closing and Awards Ceremony.

After Regattas/Festivals:

- Ensures all personal effects are picked up and tent site is clean.
- Picks up any medals or ribbons for crew members who have to leave early.
- Sends a message of thanks to the Race Director and any other person of the host organizers who has been helpful to the crew (optional but respectful).
- Ensures that the crew Communication Rep submits a report on the crew’s experience (with photos) to the Communications Chair for posting on the Website and Facebook.

Safety Person

At the beginning of the season:

- Reviews all safety procedures with the entire crew and appoints a substitute safety person.
- Arranges for an Emergency Response card for each paddler.
- Organizes personal flotation devices for every crewmember.
- Confirms existence of crew member with current first aid training and in possession of a small emergency kit.
- Establishes whether anyone on the crew is a non-swimmer.
• Ensures that at least one crew member, preferably two, are familiar with CPR and first aid.

At each practice:
• Counts the numbers on board and announces to the crew the number before the coach gives her first “paddles up” command.
• Ensures each paddler knows the name of her seat-buddy and if her buddy is a non-swimmer.
• Checks to see that everyone has a whistle on her PFD and that everyone is wearing a PFD before leaving shore.
• When necessary, reminds crew that clothing should be appropriate to weather/water conditions – including light footwear, waterproof top and pants, hat when conditions require it, and paddling gloves to protect hands from injury or infections.

Every boat should have the following on board:
• three bailers
• one extra paddle
• one extra life jacket
• one cell phone
• one dry bag containing an emergency kit, an air horn, and three foil blankets
• one throw bag (with rope unwound and carefully stuffed so it does not tangle)

COMMANDS
• **BRACE THE BOAT** is a stabilizer. Lean out slightly over the side and press your paddle blade flat on the water. Continue to do so until the steersperson or drummer gives a different command.

• **HOLD THE BOAT** stops the boat. Place your paddle deeply and vertically into the water as close to the boat as is possible. Hold it firmly until the steersperson or drummer gives another command.

• **KEEP PADDLING** when the waters get rough. Do not pull in your paddle even if the waves are huge and you are totally soaked. The boat will be more stable if everyone continues to paddle.
RESCUE

In the rare event that a steersperson or drummer falls overboard, what should we do?

- The drummer or steersperson left on board should immediately shout, “HOLD THE BOAT.”
- Everyone should STAY SEATED.
- Everyone should REMAIN CALM.
- A pointer will keep her eyes on the overboard person and point at her.
- Someone at the back should be able to take over the steersperson’s job if the steersperson is in the water. A coach or stroke should take over for the drummer should the drummer be in the water.
- The safety rule is “REACH. THROW. GO.” So reach with voice, arm or a paddle. If she is further away toss her the throw bag (hold onto the other end). DO NOT GO into the water to rescue her unless this is absolutely necessary. (If the person is unconscious, one or two good swimmers should be prepared to go in and rescue her.)
- Encourage the overboard person to swim towards the center of the boat. If a dock or the shore is nearby, then tow her to safety.

SWAMPED BUT UPRIGHT (this is rare but has occurred)

- If you are still in the boat, do NOT stand up.
- If you are in the water, swim back to the boat when it is safe to do so then hold on to the gunnel.
- Check to see if your seat buddy or trio is okay.
- Balance the sides – roughly half on each side.
- Encourage members to get close to one another.
- Count. Ensure everyone is accounted for.

REMAIN CALM

- Phone 911 from cell phone.
- Use the air horn – three blasts, three seconds each.
- Use your whistle to attract attention.
- Do NOT attempt to swim ashore.
OVERTURNED

- If you are in the water and the swamped but upright facing boat is about to turn over, swim out of its way.
- Don’t worry about your paddle. Let it go.
- Stay clear of the steering oar.
- Swim back to the overturned boat as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Make sure everyone is accounted for and that no one is under the boat.
- One or two small people can get on top of the boat – with air under it, it will float – use a whistle not your voices to attract attention because whistles can be heard farther away.
- Wait for rescue. Huddle up or go into HELP position.
  (HELP – Heat Escape Lessening Position. A tight circle with smallest person in the centre.)

Note: It is unwise to begin or continue a practice if a storm of high winds or lightning is occurring or predicted. It is every paddler’s right to refuse to go in the boat if they feel it is unsafe to do so.

Warm-Up / Cool Down

- The warm-up prepares the paddler both physically and mentally for dragon boat paddling. The cool-down is equally as important because it assists their body to recover and prevent injury and post exercise soreness.
- A warm-up leader motivates and gets her crew “mentally up” for each practice or race. She can do this by encouraging the crew to participate in cheering each other on during the warm-up. All positive vocalizations are therefore encouraged! Clapping is also encouraged. The warm-up leader asks the paddlers how they are feeling and asks them to reply with a resounding cheer, e.g. “we’re great,” “we’re strong” and “we’re ready to paddle!”
- Physically, it is important to warm and lubricate the joints and muscles before paddling. Allow approximately 10-15 minutes for the warm-up.
- Starting with movement, e.g. marching on the spot, walking, step-touching, or
grapevine, alternately move the arms in varying directions. Rotate the shoulders, press, shrug, circle - any movement to get the blood flowing!

- Encourage lots of breathing, getting oxygen to all the extremities. Continue with varying movements of the arms while doing leg lifts, leg curls, etc.

- When doing any routine, e.g. leg lifts with overhead press, do in sets of eight, and countdown “4, 3, 2, 1” when changing from one movement to another. It is easier for the crew to follow a change or end of a routine.

- Remember…this should be FUN! Don’t forget to have FUN music with a strong beat!

- It is very important to STRETCH following movement. Shoulders, arms, wrists, back and chest should all be stretched. This can be done while stretching the lower limbs – quadriceps, hamstrings, calves. Hold each stretch for 10-15 seconds.

- After the warm-up, it is best to start the practice or race before bodies cool down. If at a regatta there are delays to starting, keep the crew limber by encouraging movement on the spot.

- After each practice and post races, rather than the crew disbanding and each paddler going her “own way”, the cool-down leader gathers the crew to go through gentle movement, stretching and breathing exercises. Allow approximately 10-15 minutes for the cool down.

- An effective cool down starts with slower, gentle large movements. This can be done during the last five minutes on the water such as “easy paddle” to the dock. On land, easy walking on the spot, shoulder rolls, arms swinging, etc.

- Stretch all major muscle groups in legs, lower and upper back, chest and arms. Hold each stretch for 15-30 seconds.

- Incorporate deep breathing with the stretches.

- The practice or race debriefing can be incorporated into the cool down, or done once the crew has stretched and rehydrated.
Abreast In A Boat Regatta/Festival Participation Guidelines

Regatta/Festival Purpose
AIAB seeks to raise awareness about breast cancer through dragon boating. Accordingly, the Society will encourage and support participation of Abreast In A Boat at dragon boat regattas and paddling festivals where our message can be most effectively delivered, and where we can encourage others to realize this objective for themselves.

Regatta/Festival Guidelines
Every paddling member of Abreast In A Boat (AIAB) is entitled and expected to participate fully in the AIAB regular paddling season. Your coaches will notify you of the start date of your practices at your first crew meeting. Practice boat costs and some regatta/festival entry fees will be paid by the Society (Board-funded regattas). Participation in regattas/festivals outside of the regular season (post-season) will be voluntary and will be in accordance with the Regatta/Festival Guidelines.

All crews (a minimum of 22 paddlers, not including paddling coach, plus a steersperson, drummer and a manager are mandatory) representing AIAB at any regatta (international, national, provincial/state or local) must inform the Board of Directors of their intent by completing the Regatta/Festival Application Form on the website (Regatta/Festival section). The manager or designate must also complete and submit a report on the regatta/festival upon their return from the event.

Regatta/Festival Committee
The Regatta/Festival Committee may consist of the AIAB Regatta/Festival Chair, a representative from each crew and the past Chair in an advisory capacity. The Committee reports to the Board via the Regatta/Festival Chair. The Committee will apply the Regatta/Festival Guidelines as determined by the Society and make recommendations for local, provincial/state, national and international regatta/festivals to the Board of Directors for approval. The Regatta/Festival Chair communicates with the Coaching Liaison as needed.
**Regatta/Festival Venue Definitions**

Regatta/Festival venues are divided into five categories as defined below:

**Local:** Lower Mainland (Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley regions).

**Provincial/State:** British Columbia (anywhere outside Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley regions); Alberta, Washington and Oregon.

**National:** Rest of Canada (outside of British Columbia and Alberta); Rest of USA (outside Washington and Oregon).

**International:** All other travel outside of Canada and USA.

**Competitive Crew Venues:** For two racing classes only - Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) held in the even years on a two year cycle and World’s held on a two year cycle in the odd years.

**Regatta/Festival Definitions**

**Board Supported Regatta:** The AIAB Board recognizes and agrees that a crew (a minimum of 22 paddlers, not including paddling coach, plus a steersperson, drummer and manager) may attend a dragon boat festival/regatta under the name of AIAB. The Society will cover all or part of the registration fees for these events.

**Regular Season:** Start and end dates for this period will be determined by the Board at the January board meeting of each new paddling year. The Nanaimo Regatta will be considered part of the regular paddling season, as recommended by the Strategic Planning Task Force, 2014.

**Post-Season:** Events will be approved by the Board at then March board meeting of each paddling year. Note: All post-season participation will be via composite crews.

**Guidelines for Selecting Regatta/Festival Venues During the Regular Paddling Season**

In keeping with the mission statement of AIAB the following are criteria to be considered in the selection process.

a) A paddling regatta/festival where there is presently no breast cancer dragon boat team and preferably in a major population center. The festival must be well-attended by the local community, with sufficient local and/or national media resources that can
promote our message.

b) A paddling regatta/festival where a breast cancer team has recently been formed in the past one to two years and/or where awareness of breast cancer and the benefits of exercise are not well-publicized or widely supported in the community.

c) A venue where a breast cancer team exists and where breast cancer is a focus or beneficiary of the regatta/festival.

d) Celebrations of Life with a well publicized breast cancer regatta/festival or special Challenge Race, including those under the auspices of the International Breast Cancer Paddlers Commission (IBCPC).

e) Other regattas/festivals as submitted to the Board of Directors.

**Paddlers’ Responsibilities**

Each AIAB member who submits her name for a regatta/festival crew must meet the following criteria:

- Is an active participant on a full AIAB crew during the **current** paddling year (not applicable to a non-paddling manager position).
- Is prepared to take media training and be an active participant in delivering our message, including meeting with sponsors, medical personnel, support groups and the media.
- Attends all practices or discusses with coach(es) if unable to attend a practice due to extenuating circumstances.
- Understands that attendance at practice is directly related to the opportunity to paddle at a regatta. This will be at the coach’s discretion.
- Understand that if more than three consecutive practices are to be missed due to any planned absences, registration with a committed, twice-weekly paddling crew will not be permitted, but paddler will be encouraged to register with the Abreast with Hope (Recreational Crew).
- Agrees that any personal travel combined with an AIAB event will take place **following** the regatta/festival, and not before, to minimize risk of illness or injury prior to the event.
- Maintains a good level of fitness and continues the weekly workouts, as outlined in the
team manual, and as agreed to in the Crew Commitment document (not applicable to the manager position).

- Will be asked to provide commitment fee when signing up for a traveling crew. The Board, on a venue-by-venue basis, will determine if a commitment fee is required and the amount of the commitment fee. The Board will return the accumulated commitment fees to the crew members via the manager within one month of departure.
- Be in good standing with the Society.

**Guidelines for Composition of Boats for Board Supported Regattas/Festivals**

Every effort will be made to offer regatta/festival opportunities to as many members as possible and to include a variety of venues. The type of venues offered may vary from year to year. Outside of the regular paddling season, preference will be given to composite crews, using the approved selection criteria. A composite crew must have a minimum of 22 paddlers, not including paddling coach, plus a steersperson, drummer and manager. New ‘mentor coaches, matched with experienced coaches, are encouraged to coach composite crews.

It is important that all members of AIAB have an opportunity to represent AIAB at the various regattas/festivals.

- During the paddling season, mid-March to mid-July, existing home crews may attend local regattas/festivals without going through a draw process. If their numbers are depleted, the existing crew may pick up paddlers from other AIAB crews on an ad hoc basis, as arranged by the coaches of the affected crews.
- An alumna member may paddle with an AIAB crew for a regatta during the regular paddling season if her level of fitness is considered appropriate for paddling by the coach, there are no other active paddling AIAB members available who wish to participate, and if the absence of the participation of the alumna member creates a situation where there are inadequate numbers for a paddling crew to participate in a regatta. There will be no further cost to the alumna member in AIAB membership fees.
- The goal of AIAB will be to form composite crews for participation at regattas/festivals outside of the regular AIAB paddling season (i.e., post-season).
- Requests from home crews to stay together beyond the regular paddling season will be
given strong consideration for the Participatory events that occur every three to four years under the auspices of IBCPC. The goal will be to include all members wishing to participate in the event.

- When only one crew attends a regatta/festival, that crew will be registered as “Abreast In A Boat”. When two or more crews attend the same venue, each AIAB crew may be registered under their home crew name, e.g., Abreast Deas Divas.

**Post Season Selection Criteria**

a) **Selection of Manager and Coach(es)**

The Board, through the Regatta/Festival Chair, will appoint the crew manager, selecting from a list of volunteers for the position. The Board will also appoint the coach(es), based on a recommendation from the Coaching Liaison who will ask for volunteers for the position. Mentor coaches will be given priority to coach post-season composite crews. They will be matched with an experienced coach. A manager or coach who is a member of AIAB (paddler, Alumna or Associate) is eligible for any subsidy provided to a traveling crew.

b) **Selection of Drummer and Steersperson**

At least one member will be selected as Drummer and one as a certified steersperson. If more people than are needed apply for one of these positions, names will be drawn following the same criteria as set out below for paddlers. Anyone who is not selected as a steersperson or drummer may put her name in the appropriate hat for the paddling draw.

c) **Selection of Paddlers**

The maximum number of paddlers that can be trained as a full crew will be selected for each regatta/festival. The coach and Regatta/Festival Chair will determine what this number is for the specific event. A minimum of 22 paddlers is required for EVERY regatta/festival.

Attendance during the regular paddling season will factor into the selection of paddlers as determined by the coach and Regatta/Festival Chair. If a member has a poor attendance record, they may be put on a waitlist instead of being selected as per the
Local Venues
All post season regattas will be via composite crew formation. A crew will consist of a minimum of 22 paddlers, not including paddling coach, plus a steersperson, drummer and manager. The Regatta/Festival Chair will send out information and sign-up.

Provincial/State
If there are more people who wish to travel to a particular provincial/state venue than there are positions on the crew, participants will be drawn from the following ‘hats’ in descending order of priority:

Hat 1: Novices who have never previously participated in a regatta/festival outside of the existing paddling season.

Hat 2: Experienced paddlers who have never previously participated in a regatta/festival outside of the existing paddling season.

Hat 3: Everyone else.

National and International
If there are more people who wish to travel to these venues than there are positions on the crew, participants will be drawn from the following ‘hats’ in descending order of priority:

Hat 1: Experienced paddlers who have never previously traveled in this category of venue.

Hat 2: Experienced paddlers who have previously traveled to one or more of this category of venue but not in the last two paddling years.

Hat 3: All other experienced paddlers, including members of Abreast with Hope, on approval of coaches.

Hat 4: At this point, if the crew is still not complete, then it will be open to novices. A novice is a member who has not yet completed one full paddling season by the cut-off date for registration. Remaining names will go on a wait list, in the order in which they are drawn, and will be added to the crew if there are cancellations by paddlers whose names were already drawn for the designated venue.
Alumni and/or non-AIAB breast cancer survivor paddlers

In the event that an AIAB crew cannot be filled with existing active paddlers the following will be considered in **descending** order of priority:

- AIAB alumni who have maintained a level of fitness appropriate for dragon boating and who have been active paddlers with any dragon boat team within the past two years.
- Breast cancer survivor paddlers from existing survivor crews in British Columbia.
- Paddlers may be picked up at the regatta/festival spares pool as organized through the regatta/festival registrar.
- The coach will have the discretion to determine if any of these options are appropriate for the specific crew.

**d) Special Selection**

When appropriate, the Board can appoint up to three people to fulfill specific roles at a travel venue, e.g. someone who speaks the local language or has been the AIAB liaison with a local breast cancer group or medical organization, etc. If possible, the appointed people should be AIAB members willing to paddle on the traveling crew. This will reduce the number of remaining paddlers to be selected for the venue.

**Funding for Regattas/Festivals**

The Society will provide full funding for practice boat costs and may provide some or all of the festival entry fees (Board supported events).

All members must be prepared to pay 100% of all travel costs. Priority for travel subsidy will be considered for those members who have not previously received financial subsidy within three years from the date of their last subsidy.

The Society will not be responsible for any costs incurred as a result of the cancellation of a trip. Members are advised to obtain travel insurance, including cancellation and out-of-province medical coverage.
**Board Position Responsibilities**

AIAB acknowledges that board positions are held by members with busy lives, who are working on behalf of the Society on their own time. AIAB does not expect these positions to be like full-time jobs.

**President**

- Chairs and facilitates all Board meetings.
- Circulates a monthly report to all Board members.
- Encourages the achievement of the Society’s Mission Statement in Board policies and decisions with the assistance of the Vice President and the Past President.
- Oversees the activities of the Board of Directors and Administrative Assistant.
- Develops Agendas for Board meetings and AGM with input from the Board of Directors.
- Chairs the AGM and other internal meetings that arise during the year.
- Is a member of the Organization of Crews Committee.
- Communicates with the Medical Advisor.
- Represents the Society (with others) with outside organizations (e.g., Rio Tinto Alcan Dragon Boat Festival, False Creek Racing Canoe Club, Old Mill Boathouse, and other local host paddling clubs, Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, media contacts, visiting teams, local teams at the travel destinations, etc.)
- Undertakes speaking engagements.
- Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  - Contacts
  - Members / Board of Directors
  - Members / Policies and Documents

**Note:** This is a two-year commitment, one as President and one as Past President.
**Past President**

- Is a member of the Organization of Crews Committee and the Board Development Committee.
- Attends Board meetings and circulates a monthly report to all Board members.
- Chairs the Nominating Committee.
- Oversees the Coach Liaison, Keeper of the Equipment, and Outreach Committee.
- Liaises with and receives reports from the Coach Liaison.
- Mentors the President.
- Works with Coaches and Treasurer to ensure that the venue contracts are paid.
- Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  - Resources / Links
  - Resources / Articles

**Vice President**

- Assists the President when called upon and encourages the achievement of the Society’s Mission Statement in Board policies and decisions.
- Attends Board meetings, circulates a monthly report to all Board members and takes on the role of the President if the President is unable to attend the meetings.
- Attends Captains/Managers meetings.
- Is a member of the Organization of Crews Committee.
- Serves on subcommittees within her role as a member of the Board as requested.
- Oversees Safety Committee, Events Coordinator and Social Coordinator.
- Receives fundraising applications and forwards to the Board of Directors for consideration.
- Consults with Sponsorship Chair and Vice Chair re fundraising activities
- Arranges for boat maintenance and towing.
- Works closely with President to ensure a smooth transition to the following year’s Board.
- Ensures all website content is accurate and current.
Skills Needed:

- Demonstrated at the crew and/or organizational level the ability to represent AIAB as a leader, excellent communicator, and as the public face of our society.

**Note:** This is a three-year commitment: one year as Vice President, one year as President, and one year as Past President.

Secretary

- Prepares agendas for Board meetings together with the President.
- Prior to Board meetings, requests Chair Reports to be circulated to all Board Members in a timely fashion.
- Takes minutes at meetings. After transcribing minutes, circulates to Board Members for errors, omissions, and corrections prior to their approval at the following Board Meeting.
- Creates “Action List” at Board Meetings to ensure appropriate task follow-up, and circulates to the Board.
- Within one week of approval, sends minutes of Board meeting to the Web Editor for uploading to the website.
- Maintains the Minute Book and correspondence file.
- Sends notice of the AGM to membership once date is confirmed, and sends reminders one month and two weeks prior; assists with document preparation for the AGM.
- Reminds all Board Members to maintain their job descriptions and guidelines to ensure they are up-to-date.
- Books meeting rooms as necessary.
- Sends thank you, sympathy, and get-well cards, as requested, on behalf of the Board.
- Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  - Member / Minutes and Reports

Skills needed:

- Well-organized with attention to detail, works well with others.

**Note:** This is a two-year commitment.
**Treasurer**

- Works with the Executive Assistant/Bookkeeper to ensure that financial affairs of the Society are accurately recorded and in good order.
- Works with the Finance Committee to ensure that funds are allocated and spent according to the articles of our Constitution.
- Attends Board meetings and circulates a monthly report to all Board members.
- Ensures all deposits and payables are entered into suitable accounting software program on a timely basis.
- Records all corporate and individual donations that require a tax receipt and issue the receipt and thank you letter in a timely manner.
- Liaises with Scotiabank as to investing surplus cash funds.
- Prepares an annual budget based on previous year’s expenses as well as input from Board Chairs.
- Presents the Year End Statements and a Financial Report to the AGM. Year end is September 30.
- Updates the signing officers with Scotiabank after the yearly AGM.
- Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  - Member / Treasurer Reports

*Note:* This is a two-year position.

**Communications Chair**

**Internal:**

- Attends Board meetings and circulates a report to all Board members prior to Board meetings.
- Oversees the updating and reprinting of the Team Manual.
- Consults with outside Web Master and AIAB Web Administrator on any major change to the website. Major changes to the website are to be approved by the Board.
- Receives and approves all text and photos for the website and submits to the Web Administrator in a timely manner.
- Keeps in regular contact with the communication reps on each crew, including any travel
boats, to keep our message consistent and enlists their help with material for the website.

- Ensures that the website content is accurate, consistent, and timely and is managed following Board policy.
- Works with the Sponsorship Chair to ensure that appropriate recognition is given to our sponsors in all printed materials etc.
- Oversees Website Administrator, Web Editor/Web Tech, Information Booth Coordinator, Graphics Coordinator, Facebook Coordinator, Electronic Archivist, and Communications Committee.
- Works with Membership Chair to advertise and promote annual Novice Paddle.

**External:**

- Responds to all requests for speakers from various groups, media inquiries and requests for information from website contacts.
- Supplies new printed materials, as needed by the Society, including media packages, backgrounders, fact sheets, brochures, postcards, fliers, posters etc., with the assistance of our graphic designer.
- Oversees the Information Booth and coordinates production of materials distributed through the Information Booth.
- Ensures that the content on all printed material is accurate and is consistent with the Society’s mission/message.
- Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  - Home Page
  - Who Are We

**Communications Vice Chair**

- Assists the Chair in carrying out her duties.
- Attends Board meetings and acts as Communications Chair in absence of Chair.
- Provides a written report to the Chair on request.

**Skills Needed:**

- Good interpersonal and organizational skills.
- Ability to delegate.
- Computer literate, in particular with Word documents and digital photo management.
Sponsorship Chair

- Attends Board meetings and as many other AIAB events as practicable (e.g. Novice Meetings, fundraisers, outreach). Writes and sends monthly Sponsorship Report to Board Members.
- Works closely with the other AIAB Chairs to develop and leverage resources and opportunities.
- Liaises with sponsors and donors and ensures their support is appropriately acknowledged on social media, in printed material, at events, during interviews, and through other means.
- Arranges for/encourages members to send thank you notes to sponsors at various times throughout the year (by the end of November at the latest), and writes/arranges for thank you notes to donors soon after donations/services are received.
- Seeks, develops and negotiates new sources of sponsorship and donors, including in-kind.
- Writes sponsorship, grant and other funding applications and documents.
- Ensures sponsors are kept informed of AIAB events and news.
- Contributes to the AIAB website and other communication tools and products.
- Makes presentations and speeches; attends sponsor events such as the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation’s grants award night.
- Corresponds with Scotiabank representatives and regatta organizers re: the Scotiabank Breast Cancer Challenge Race.
- Coordinates the design, ordering and distribution of crew shirts.
- Mentors Vice Chair in her duties and prepares her for the role of Sponsorship Chair next year.
- Other tasks assigned by the AIAB Board

Skills Needed

- Leadership
- Strategic thinking
- Excellent oral communication and good written communication skills
- Well-organized
- Pays attention to detail
• Good knowledge of the mission, vision and values of AIAB
• Good knowledge of the AIAB organization and awareness of its history
• Strong people skills
• Team player

**Sponsorship Vice Chair**

• Assists the Chair in carrying out her duties.
• Attends Board meetings and acts as Sponsorship Chair in absence of Chair.
• Liaises with the Sponsorship representatives on the AIAB crews.
• Seeks out and helps develop new sources of sponsorship and donor funds for review by the Chair.
• Helps write sponsorship, grant and other funding applications and documents.
• Ensures sponsors are kept informed of AIAB events and news.
• Contributes to the AIAB website.
• Consults with Vice President re fundraising activities.
• Other tasks as assigned by the Chair or the AIAB Board.

**Skills Needed**

• Leadership
• Strategic thinking
• Excellent oral communication and good written communication skills
• Well organized
• Pays attention to detail
• Good knowledge of the mission, vision and values of AIAB
• Good knowledge of the AIAB organization and awareness of its history
• Strong people skills
• Team player

**Membership Chair**

• Initiates/monitors activities involving membership and potential members of AIAB.
• Ensures membership information is updated by the Administrative Assistant (Keeper of the List).
• Resolves issues connected to membership such as numbers per crew and balancing of crew numbers.
• Is the only person who can approach a member to change to another crew.
• Attends Captains/Managers scheduled meetings.
• Oversees Keeper of the Lists and Novice Liaison.
• Supervises setup and registration for the AGM.
• Gathers names and potential members.
• Organizes the Novice Meeting, Novice paddle, and membership renewal.
• Selects the person who maintains the membership database.
• Works with Coach Liaison coordinating coaches for each venue.
• In consultation with Coaches, research and arrange new/alternative paddling sites as directed by the Board.
• Provides information about our Angels to Communications for posting to the website.

**Membership Vice Chair**

• Assists the Chair in carrying out all her duties.
• Attends Board meetings and acts as Membership Chair in absence of Chair.
• In charge of signed documents for PFDs.
• Obtains PFDs from members who have not signed up for the following year.

**Skills Needed:**

• Have good organizational skills, excellent computer skills in Word and Excel and an ability to delegate.
• Able to communicate clearly with members and novices one-on-one and/or in a group in a fair concise manner.

**Regatta/Festival Chair**

• Attends Board meetings and circulates a monthly report to all Board members.
• Maintains updates and applies the AIAB Regatta/Festival Guidelines.
• Recommends to the Board which Regatta/Festival venues the Board should support (i.e., pay registration fee) and/or consider for subsidy for the current paddling and post seasons.
• Liaises with the Coach Liaison to obtain coaches and practice slots for traveling crews while being aware of possible overlaps in venue practice times.

• Keeps the Board and membership up to date on the national and international dragon boat scene. Advises the membership of travel opportunities, the selection process, and a rough estimate of travel costs.

• Establishes the membership of all traveling crews following the selection criteria of the Regatta/Festival Guidelines and communicates results to the membership.

• Advises the Treasurer to collect any commitment fees for travel crews or other designated crews.

• Attends meetings of the established travel crew and acts as manager until a crew manager is selected.

• Ensures that managers and captains are aware of their responsibilities and supplies them with appropriate guidelines and event documentation.

• Monitors the activity of the travel crew or other designated crew and updates the Board and membership.

• Ensures that all website content is accurate and current for the following sections:
  – Members / Regattas & Festivals
  – Paddling Calendar

**Regatta/Festival Vice Chair**

• Attends all Board meetings and acts as Regatta/Festival Chair in the absence of the Chair.

• Assists the Chair in carrying out all her duties.

• Researches regatta/festival venues that fit the mandate of the Society.

• Updates the regatta-related items on the AIAB website via the Web Administrator, in particular the Paddling Calendar.

**Skills Needed:**

• Computer and internet literate, able to use Doodle for building sign-up lists.

• A good understanding of the two main governing bodies for dragon boat racing - Dragon Boat Canada (DBC) and International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF).
Non-Board Position Responsibilities

AIAB acknowledges that non-board volunteer positions are held by members with busy lives, who are working on behalf of the Society on their own time. AIAB does not expect these positions to be like full-time jobs.

Coach Liaison

- Reports to the Past President.
- Develops and maintains a thorough knowledge and understanding of Abreast In A Boat while striving to build a stronger and more effective organization for coaches.
- Develops and maintains open communication with the coaches to ensure each crew is having a positive experience and fulfilling the AIAB mandate.
- Must have coached at least one full season and have excellent communication skills.
- Arranges for coaches for each crew in consultation with the board.
- Liaises/meets with the other coaches.
- Assists in recruiting coaches for composite crews.
- Establishes a mentor program for the development of coaches from our paddling ranks.
- Researches and attends appropriate Coaching Clinics.
- Works within a budget as set by the Board.
- Revises the Coaching section of the Training Manual as needed.
- Revises the Coaching guidelines as needed.
- Has the ability to respect and recognize different coaching methodologies.
- Has the ability to understand the unique AIAB coaching needs.
- Member of the Organization of Crews Committee.
- Is the Board liaison to the Coaching Consultant.
- Is a breast cancer survivor (preferably).

Events Coordinator

- Reports to the Vice President.
- Organizes the Fitness Forum at the beginning of the paddling season.
• Prepares an estimated operating budget (expenses and revenues) for the event for submission to the Board for approval.
• Following the event, sends receipts for reimbursement to the Treasurer and an actual accounting of expenses and revenues to the Vice President.
• Arranges for Team Captains for the Scotiabank 5 km Run participants and volunteers, the CIBC Run for the Cure, Vancouver Sun Fun Run, and any other run or walk opportunity in which members might be interested.
• Works with crew Event reps to help get participants for runs, walks, and other events that arise and need support.
• Designates a person to send pictures/write-ups to the Communication Chair about the events.
• Arranges for distribution of promotional material at events through the Communications Chair.

Social Coordinator

• Reports to the Membership Chair.
• Attends Board meetings as requested/required.
• Arranges a Committee of representatives from each crew to facilitate events occurring during the season.
• Prepares an estimated operating budget (expenses and revenues) for each event for submission to the Board for approval.
• Following the event, sends receipts for reimbursement to the Treasurer and an actual accounting of expenses and revenues to the Membership Chair.
• Plans and coordinates all aspects of each event including but not limited to – location, catering, furniture requirements, sound system, on-site toilets, as well as dates and times.
• Assists with or organizes functions such as the AGM, novice meeting, Spring Social, Women’s Festival, Fall Social and any family paddle picnics.
• Works with Social Committee reps from each crew to arrange the Flower Ceremony held at Women’s and/or Rio Tinto Alcan.
• Abides by all regulations of the Liquor Control and Licensing Branch when organizing events.
• Obtains Special Occasion Licence and “Serving it Right” Licence as required.

**Merchandise Coordinator**

• Reports to the Vice President.
• Arranges for the purchase, distribution and sale of all AIAB merchandise, including jewelry acquired for resale.
• Works with the Treasurer to ascertain a suitable markup for the products to cover costs and other expenses.
• Meets with the crew merchandise reps at the beginning of the season, to ascertain which products will be carried.
• Presents a budget to the Board for approval by August 31.
• Maintains an inventory system with the assistance of the Treasurer to track all merchandise and sales.
• Reports to the Board through the Vice-President, summarizing inventory on hand and sales to date on a monthly basis.
• Attends Board meetings if requested/required.
• Organizes specific sales events as requested by the Board i.e., Fitness Forum, Spring Social, Women’s Regatta, Alcan Rio Tinto.
• Trains an assistant capable of assuming the Merchandise Coordinator’s responsibilities for the following year.
• Regularly monitors the Merchandise section on the website.

**Novice Liaison**

• Reports to the Membership Chair.
• Is the contact person for AIAB.
• Is aware of the history of AIAB and the current Board policies.
• Is available to answer and welcome, in a warm and timely fashion, all requests from prospective paddlers re joining AIAB.
• Keeps an accurate and up-to-date contact list of prospective paddlers waiting to be notified of appropriate information about the yearly novice orientation meeting.
Abreast In A Boat Team Manual

- Keeps a holdover list of prospective paddlers who are unable to paddle in the current season but hope to be involved in the next season.
- Informs all prospective paddlers about the novice orientation meeting and any other pertinent information.
- Reports regularly to the Membership Chair.

**Information Booth Coordinator**

- Reports to the Communications Chair.
- Ensures that all AIAB promotional material is current and in good supply.
- Obtains current print material from the BC Cancer Agency and ensures that it is in good supply.
- Ensures that equipment is kept in good working order.
- Books the Information Booth at appropriate events at the request of the Chair, Board and/or membership, and coordinates application and payment, as needed, with the Communications Chair.
- Arranges for the Information Booth to be well-manned at events.
- Keeps a record of persons showing interest in joining AIAB.
- Provides a written report, on request, to the Communications Chair re activities.

**Graphics Coordinator**

- Reports to the Communications Chair.
- Revises all printed material, including the Team Manual, brochures, certificates and Mayor’s Proclamation.
- Arranges for printing for all graphic material.
- Obtains quotes for all graphic material upon request.

**Facebook Coordinator**

- Reports to the Communications Chair.
- Posts articles as submitted by Crew Communication Reps.
• Posts photos provided by Crew Communications Reps, when advised by email that they have been uploaded and available on the Shared Google Drive.
• Uses discretion when posting material to Abreast In A Boat Facebook page.
• Seeks approval from Communications Chair or President if uncertain whether the request or material to post is appropriate.

**Electronic Archiving Coordinator**

• Reports to the Communications Chair.
• Maintains a cloud storage account for teams to upload their photos, backs up the account to a hard disk, and securely stores the hard disk.
• Electronically archives newspaper articles as forwarded by the Communications Chair, or crew communication representatives.
• Electronically archives photos of events by crew and date as submitted by crew communication representatives.

**Web Administrator**

• Reports to the Communications Chair.
• Manages all website content, changes and additions received by the Communications Chair.
• Receives and approves all photos by editing, renaming and uploading onto the website and onto Google Drive as required.
• Updates all new features and plugins for the website, redesigns and updates website pages. (Liaises with external Web Master if required).
• Rotates front page banner and quotes.
• Updates the Board email addresses annually on server to ensure that emails from contact page are directed to the new Board.
• Sets up, monitors and manages the AIAB Google Analytics account and provides monthly reports to the Communications Chair on website activity.
• Designs and updates the “special interest” section and provides links to stories.
• Uploads AIAB Board minutes, Team Manual and other AIAB Board documents as required.

• Annually updates the AIAB calendar with meetings, events and upcoming regattas, and “members only” password.

• Communicates with external Web Master for any overall website updates or modifications as required. Liaises with external Web Master on all technical aspects of the website.

• WordPress and photo editing experience is highly encouraged for this role.

**Communications Committee**

• Reports to the Communications Chair.

• Consists of the Communications Chair and Vice Chair, one Communications representative from each crew, Web Administrator, Facebook Coordinator and members who are recruited from inside or outside of our membership for their website or writing skills, when applicable.

• Reports the specific crew’s regatta experiences with photos to be compiled into an Event article for the website.

• Ensures crew photos are upload to the Shared Google Drive.

• Forwards information on crew involvement in community activities to the Communications Chair.

• Assists with the dissemination of AIAB information to local media at the request of the Communications Chair.

• Forwards all opportunities/requests for media coverage to the Communications Chair.

• Meets on an ad hoc basis.

**Regatta/Festival Committee**

• Reports to the Regatta/Festival Chair.

• Consists of the Regatta/Festival Chair, Vice Chair and one representative from each crew.

• Communicates information to their crews and reports any issues from individual crews to the Chair.
• Gathers suggestions for new events from their respective crews and forwards to Board for consideration for the paddling calendar.
• Assists the Chair with any activities related to regatta participation.
• Meets on an ad hoc basis.

**Sponsorship Committee**

• Reports to the Sponsorship Chair.
• Consists of one representative from each crew.
• Encourages members to attend/participate in events with sponsors.
• Distributes items from sponsors to their crews, e.g. EasyPark passes.
• Responds to all communications from the Sponsorship Chair/Vice Chair.
• Forwards potential sponsors name and contact info.
• Visits with sponsors’ reps at AIAB and other events.

**Safety Committee**

• Reports to the Vice President.
• Consists of one representative from each crew.
• Addresses water safety issues.
• Reviews existing water safety rules and recommend revisions and/or additions to the Board.
• Designs and delivers, in collaboration with the Coach and Captain from each boat, the water safety orientation for all paddlers.
• Documents safety-related incidents and recommends action to the Board.

**Board Development and Nominating Committee**

• Reports to the President.
• Consists of the Past Presidents, the Vice President and captains from each crew.

**Objectives**

• To review and amend Board Member competencies
• To liaise with the Board of Directors
• To advise on possible candidates for the Board
- To present a slate for the Board at the AGM
- To ensure annual self-evaluation
- To plan ongoing governance educational opportunities

In Closing....

To all those who need and use this manual, we hope that both exercise and dragon boat paddling become positive experiences in your pursuit of “life beyond a breast cancer diagnosis.”