



Bay Challenge Safety Policy 2018 Season

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These notes are the property of the Vancouver Open Water Swim Association (VOWSA) for use in operating the Bay Challenge swim from Sandy Cove to Kitsilano Beach, Vancouver, BC. Should you have any questions regarding any of the contents of this document, please contact vovsa.president@gmail.com or VOWSA.Racedirector@gmail.com.



Important Contact Numbers

Vessel Traffic Communications for English Bay **604-666-6012** or VHF radio **Channel 12**

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Harbour Police, Ambulance, Fire Department		911
Canada Coast Guard Marine Emergency		1- 800-567-5111
Coast Guard Auxiliary	VHF radio Channel 80 A. (Race day only)	_____
Jericho Rescue	VHF radio Channel 80 A. (Race day only)	_____
Kits Beach Tower Phone Numbers:	Downstairs	604-731-7436
	Upstairs	604-738-8535
VOWSA Cellphone Numbers:	Race Director	_____

Marine Traffic

The Bay Challenge course crosses a Ports Canada **ACTIVE** shipping lane.

Note: VOWSA has a permit from the Harbour Master to conduct an event through this body of water. However, if you encounter marine traffic in this lane, you must **IMMEDIATELY** remove your swimmer & move to a safe distance from vessel traffic. After it is safe to continue, please move back to your point of exit & continue your swim. Your time will not be adjusted for any delay due to vessel traffic as safety must take priority over time.

The Harbour Master does **NOT** close shipping lanes during the race. Participants and their support boats are allowed to cross "*...subject to no interference with commercial Marine Traffic.*"

Therefore, the onus is on each safety boat operator not to allow their swimmer to get in the way of commercial Marine Traffic, because **they have the right of way at all times.**

STAY CLEAR!

Participants must stay 50 meters clear of all commercial vessels, navigational buoys, and harbour operations at all times.

! CRITICAL !

FAILURE TO EXIT THE WATER WHEN DIRECTED OR WHEN YOU ENCOUNTER MARINE TRAFFIC WILL RESULT IN A SHUTDOWN OF THE RACE AS WELL AS IMMEDIATE DISQUALIFICATION FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE TEAM AND A LIFETIME BAN FROM ALL VOWSA EVENTS FOR THE ENTIRE TEAM (____)¹



1. Registration

Location: Sandy Cove (West Vancouver) to Kitsilano Beach

Distance: 9 km (Solo and Relay option)

Check in times:

6:30 am – Check-in begins

6:50 am – Check-in closes

Race Start Times:

7:00 am

2. Mandatory Pre-Race Briefing:

Location: Kitsilano Beach (See Appendix II)

Time: 6:00 – 7:30pm, held the evening before race.

- a) All swimmers, including each member of a relay team, must be present as well as at least two members of the boat crew including the safety spotter and boat pilot. Relay teams of 3+ may substitute 2 members of their team for the safety spotter.
- b) Boat pilots will be required to produce a Canadian Boating License, as required by Transport Canada. Check the link below for more information.
https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/debs-obs-paperwork-paperwork_boat_licence-1898.htm
- c) During the briefing the following topics will be reviewed:
 - i. The course including all navigational marks and updated vessel traffic schedule.
 - ii. Monitoring procedures for the safety spotter.
 - iii. Emergency procedures as they apply to incoming vessel traffic and medical situations.
 - iv. Operation of 2-way radios and procedures for contact points at race start and at cut-off points.
- d) Your dry bag will be collected and stored overnight at Kitsilano Beach. If a dry bag is not delivered to VOWSA at this point, VOWSA will not be able to provide a warm change of clothes at the finish line.
- e) You will receive each swimmer's race package, race-specific identification numbers for each boat, and a safety spotter kit.

3. Preparation

- a) Be prepared for cold water swimming. Ocean temperatures may range from 12°C (49°F) in the shipping lane to 18-22°C (64°F - 72°F) at Kitsilano Beach.
 - b) **Wetsuits are mandatory and neoprene swim caps are strongly recommended for cold-water swimming.**
 - c) Due to the inherent risk for hypothermia, our Lifeguard & Medical Advisors have established a **4.5-hour time limit** ()² for completion of the course. **This policy must be strictly adhered to.** Swimmers who have not completed their crossing after this time will abort their swim and report immediately to the medical team at the finish line. Swimmers who do not follow the direction of the lifeguards, medical advisors or race directors, with respect to this policy, will be disqualified. VOWSA also reserves the right to remove any swimmer from the race in VOWSA's sole discretion who appears incompetent, in medical distress, or acting in an unsafe manner.
 - d) The tidal activity in English Bay can significantly increase point to point distance of 9km for this race. The estimated minimum swim distance a participant may realistically face is 10km which equates to an average pace of 2:24 / 100m. In order to make the cut-off times identified in this document swimmers must be able at a **minimum** to swim **3.3km in 60 minutes** (approx. 1:50 / 100m) in a pool or **2.65km in 60 minutes** (approx. 2:15 / 100m) in open water.
 - e) During the race your safety spotter will be monitoring your behavior for signs of distress and hypothermia. VOWSA will require your spotter to measure and monitor your average stroke rate (strokes per minute) during the race and compare them to your normal stroke count. As such, VOWSA requires that all swimmers measure and submit their regular stroke count (as strokes per minute) at least 3 weeks prior to race start.
 - f) Each swimmer must prepare **2** dry bags containing the following items each:
 - i. Dry change of clothes (including warm head gear, mittens, sweater).
 - ii. Blankets and/or sleeping bag.
 - iii. Warm non-alcoholic/caffeine-free drink.
 - iv. water and/or sport drink.
 - v. quick source of food energy (i.e. sport gel or bar).
- One of these dry bags is for your boat, while the second dry bag will be handed to you at Kitsilano Beach for when you reach the finish line.
- g) Swimmers may also prepare a mixture of Vaseline and Anhydrous Lanolin (available at a pharmacy) for application on exposed areas of your body.

IMPORTANT: BRING ONE OF YOUR DRY BAGS TO THE PRE-RACE BRIEFING SO THAT IT CAN BE STORED OVERNIGHT FOR USE AFTER YOUR SWIM.

4. Logistics

- a) Event date and time are coordinated with ocean tides to minimize the potential for swimming against strong currents. However, all swimmers should be prepared for the worst possible swimming conditions (including strong ocean currents, chop, and waves).
- b) The race will be canceled if the conditions are considered “unsafe” by VOWSA or the Vancouver Lifeguard Association; Hazards include, but are not limited to: small craft warning, fog, or thundershowers.
- c) If the race is cancelled, you will be contacted by 5:30am at the phone number given to us at the briefing.

5. Boat Crew

- a) Each swimmer is responsible for arranging his/her own **motorized escort boat and support crew**.
- b) Each escort boat must be large and stable enough to safely extricate an injured swimmer from the water.
- c) Certain vessels are not suitable for adequately providing coverage for a swimmer. VOWSA reserves the right to deny participation if the vessel is considered unsuitable for the task. If you are unsure of the safety or suitability of your vessel, please contact the race director for confirmation prior to the race. Examples of vessels that are **NOT** suitable include but are not limited to: Kayaks, Jetskis, or excessively large sailing vessels that are unable to go slow enough.
- d) Support crew consists of one dedicated adult pilot (19+) driver and one designated adult spotter.
- e) Support crews are responsible for complying with Transport Canada [safety regulations](#) for the operation of marine craft. Equipment compliance will be checked on race day ()³:
 - o All crew must wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD) at all times.
 - o Each boat must have an extra lifejacket or PFD available for the swimmer.
 - o A sound-signaling device (i.e. pressurized air horn).
 - o A watertight flashlight or three flares other than smoke signals.
 - o Navigation lights that meet the requirements set out in the [Collision Regulations](#) if the pleasure craft is operated after sunset, before sunrise, or in periods of restricted visibility (fog, falling snow, etc.).

Transport Canada Safety Regulations:

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/media/documents/marinesafety/TP-511e.pdf>

Government of Canada Collision Regulations:

http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/C.R.C.,_c._1416/index.html

- f) 2 boat identification numbers will be provided at the pre-race briefing. Please attach these numbers in a location on your vessel visible to VOWSA & Jericho Rescue at all times.
- g) Boat pilots will require a Canadian Boating License, as required by Transport Canada. Boat rental businesses will also require to see this license.

6. Starting Procedures

- a) Upon arriving at Sandy Cove all escort boats **MUST** check in via VHF with the race director on shore to be advised of the final vessel traffic report, and ensure that VHF radios are turned on & operating on the correct channel.
- b) Escort boats are not to beach at Sandy Cove unless authorised by the race director.
- c) Escort boats will be inspected for equipment detailed by Transport Canada safety guidelines. Failure to produce any of the required equipment for inspection will result in disqualification (see 5. Boat Crew for equipment details). Please have this equipment ready for inspection.
- d) 10 min. prior to race start, all escort boats must position themselves South of the Jericho Rescue boat with the start marker buoy located approximately 400 meters South-West of Sandy Cove.
- e) The swimmer and escort boat **MUST** identify each other within 50m radius of south of the start buoy; no swimmer may leave this zone (See Appendix I) without their escort. Any swimmer found leaving this zone without their escort boat will be immediately disqualified. ()⁴
- f) Crew and swimmer should work out a system to identify each other at the marker (Jericho Rescue boat) *e.g. Coloured wrist band, bright towel on boat, colorful tape on wrist, extra odd coloured swim cap, balloon attached to wetsuit, etc.*

7. Escort Procedures

- a) Escort boats must remain with swimmers **at all times** during the event.
- b) All swimmers must swim within the marked swim corridor (Appendix III). Upon passing the mid-ingress zone channel mark, boats are required to report to the marshal boat via VHF radio.
- c) Boats should be positioned within 5-10 meters lateral to (*beside*) the swimmer.
- d) There is to be **no drafting** behind any escort boat. Swimmers caught drafting will be disqualified.
- e) Relay exchanges will occur at the side of the escort boat. The next swimmer will enter the water before the previous swimmer exits.
- f) Escort boats are **not** permitted into the swimming area at Kitsilano Beach; failure to heed this will result in large fines by the coast guard and disqualification of all team members by VOWSA. This area is clearly delineated by a line of white marker buoys that are positioned 200 meters off of Kitsilano Beach (see Appendix III).
- g) At the completion of the event, escort boats can anchor themselves outside the Kitsilano Beach swimming area. Otherwise, mooring is left to the discretion of the marine craft operator.
 - i. There is temporary 3-hour mooring available at the False Creek government dock located on the north side of Granville Island.
 - ii. Under no circumstance are boats to dock or drop crew off at the Kitsilano Yacht club.
- h) Support crews must have a **cellular phone and marine radio** to facilitate contact with the Vancouver Lifeguard Association (VLA), VOWSA Race Director and Jericho Rescue crafts. Your cell phone number will be recorded during the pre-race briefing.
- i) A VOWSA vessel will meet with the escort boat to collect the VHF radio and safety spotter package. If a swimmer is pulled prior to reaching Kitsilano beach it is the responsibility of the swimmer to return the radio and spotter package to the beach and get evaluated by medical staff.

8. Cut-off points

- a) There are 3 safety cut-off points marked on the map in Appendix I. If a swimmer fails to achieve any of these, they will have to abort their race. Note: time cut-offs will be extended for all race participants instructed to evacuate due to incoming vessel traffic, and the amount added will be relayed to vessels upon re-entry of swimmers to the water.
- i. First cut-off: **1-hour 30-minute limit** (from the time the race starts):
 - o Cut-off point: Crossing the imaginary line extending from the north tip of Stanley Park (see Appendix I – Course Maps) through the mid-ingress zone yellow marker buoy (see Appendix III – Channel and Other Marine Markers).
 - o The distance to this mark is approx. 3km
 - o To achieve the final 4.5-hour limit you should reach this mark in under 1h15min. However, an additional buffer is added to account for the tidal inflow conditions aiding swimmers past this mark. Extensions to this limit will be allowed in extenuating circumstances such as equipment failure, or localized weather conditions provided that the circumstance is reported prior to the cut-off to the marshal boat. Any extension is in the sole discretion and judgement of VOWSA and is non-negotiable.
 - ii. Second cut-off: **2-hour limit** (from the time the race starts):
 - o Cut-off point: The swimmer must have cleared the ingress path for deep water vessels illustrated on the map in Appendix I.
 - o If the swimmer has failed to pass the marker buoy, their boat crew will be instructed to pull their swimmer and transport them to the race finish to be reviewed by VOWSA medical staff.
 - o No extension will be granted to this limit, as it is set by harbour authorities as a permit condition to authorize the Bay Challenge.
 - iii. Third cut-off: **4.5-hour limit** (from the time the race starts):
 - o Cut-off point: The swimmer must have progressed to the **inside** of the white boat-exclusion markers at Kits Beach.
 - o Any swimmers remaining outside of these white markers must exit the water at this point and return immediately to the race finish to be reviewed by VOWSA medical staff.

IMPORTANT: Failure to evacuate the water when instructed to do so at any of these cut-off points with result in lifetime ban from ALL VOWSA activities (____)⁵

9. Communications Procedures

- a) Support crews must have a **cellular phone and marine (VHF) radio** to facilitate contact with the Vancouver Lifeguard Association (VLA), Jericho rescue craft and VOWSA. Your cell phone number will be recorded at the pre-race briefing.
- b) Unless you have a Radio Operators Certificate – Marine (ROC) you are **not** permitted to broadcast on the VHF on any other communications channel beyond the one specified at the briefing. Non-emergency communications to the contact numbers provided should be done by cellphone.
- c) In the event of a ship collision / sinking the procedure for calling for **emergency** help using VHF is
 - i. Select Channel 16.
 - ii. Repeat MAYDAY three times. (MAYDAY – MAYDAY – MAYDAY)
 - iii. Give vessel name _____ and call sign _____.
 - iv. Give position.
 - v. Describe emergency.
 - vi. If no answer, repeat and then try another channel.
- d) Race information will be broadcast over the VHF channel specified in the prerace briefing, and will include information on approaching commercial vessels that VOWSA is aware of, current time updates for the purpose of cut-offs, and directions to boats to pull out swimmers.
- e) Direction to pull out swimmers will reference ZONE 1, 2 or ALL (See Appendix I). If your swimmer is within the designated pullout zone they must be removed from the water. Disobeying this order **will result in disqualification and possible criminal prosecution by marine authorities.**
- f) In the event of an incoming vessel that requires swimmers to be removed from the water, the support crew is required to confirm by VHF or if unavailable cellphone (text or call) with VOWSA that they have successfully removed their swimmers from the water.

10. Emergency Procedures

Under what circumstances will swimmers be directed to abort their swim?

- a) Jericho Rescue, the medical team, or race officials can direct any swimmer to abort at any time.
- b) There is a **4.5-hour time limit** for completion of the course – swimmers who have not completed their crossing after this time will abort their swim and report immediately to the medical team at the finish line.
- c) When Jericho Rescue, Canada Coast Guard, any police officer, Port Metro Vancouver harbour patrol, or race officials considers race conditions to be unsafe.
- d) When the crew considers their swimmer to be at risk for injury.
- e) When swimmers become too exhausted, cold, or injured to continue swimming.
- f) When a swimmer does not wish to continue swimming.
- g) Any swimmer who is experiencing symptoms ranging from mild to moderate hypothermia or hyperthermia.

How should crews monitor swimmers during the event?

- a) All swimmers and their crews must familiarize themselves with the signs, symptoms, and treatment for hypothermia (**refer to the safety spotter package handouts “Hypothermia” & “Hyperthermia” and ensure that your crew has their copy on hand on race day**).
- b) The safety spotter is responsible for recording swimmer stroke rate every 30 minutes for the first 3 hours of the race and then every fifteen minutes for the last 1.5 hours. A decrease in the frequency or consistency of a swimmer’s stroke rate may indicate developing hypothermia. If the swimmers stroke rate drops below 25% of their average, you must report this immediately to the VOWSA marshal boat and interview the swimmer as explained in the spotter package.
- c) Ask swimmers the following questions:
 - o Where are you? - What is your name? - What is the date?
- d) Hypothermia - Monitor the swimmer for:
 - o Uncontrolled shivering, Clumsiness or Muscle stiffness, Irrational or confused speech
- e) Hyperthermia - Signs and symptoms of hyperthermia may include any of the following:
 - o Muscle cramps, progressing to fatigue, weakness, feeling faint when standing, **disorientation and confusion, loss of consciousness and seizures.**
- f) The highlighted hyperthermic conditions above (disorientation ... seizures) must be treated as a medical emergency.
 - o A swimmer presenting symptoms of hyperthermia should be taken out of their wet suit and cooled if possible. If they are conscious they can be given a cool drink, water or a sports drink.

IMPORTANT: ALL SWIMMERS MUST ABORT THEIR SWIM IF THEY EXHIBIT ANY OF THE ABOVE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHERMIA OR HYPERTHEMIA OR EXHAUSTION.

()⁶



What should you do in the event of an emergency or if your swimmer decides to abort the swim?

- a) Immediately contact Jericho Rescue or VOWSA by cellphone or radio (see page 2 for contact details). If you are unable to contact either of them by phone or radio, you should wave your arms sideways ("jumping-jack" style) to attract their attention and/or alert nearby crews who can relay the message for you.
- b) If the swimmer is unable to remove himself/herself from the water, **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO EXTRICATE THE SWIMMER ON YOUR OWN. WAIT FOR THE LIFEGUARDS** (exception: you have the lifeguard training to do so without jeopardizing your safety and the safety of the swimmer).
- c) Immediately following the abort decision of a swimmer's race, contact VOWSA by radio or cell and arrange to have your swimmer transported from outside of the white boat-exclusion markers at Kitsilano Beach to shore to be inspected by the medical team. All swimmers must meet with the medical team and must follow the direction of the medical team prior to departing the event.
- d) In the event that the swimmer has to be extracted by Jericho Rescue, they will be transported to Kits Beach for a medical examination. However, the support crew must still contact VOWSA.

11. At the Completion of your Swim

- a) All swimmers must meet with the medical team and must follow the direction of the medical team at the completion of their event. This is done to ensure that each athlete is safely monitored during the re-warming period. No swimmer shall leave the triage area at any time without the approval of the medical team.
- b) Stay warm and replenish your body with food and drinks donated by our sponsors.

Congratulations on conquering English Bay!



12. Waiver

I understand the purpose of this waiver is to preclude me and others from bringing any claim or legal action arising out of my participation in the 2018 VOWSA Bay Challenge. In consideration of the acceptance of my entry in any 2018 Vancouver Open Water Swim Association Bay Challenge event, I, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, hereby unconditionally release and forever discharge the Vancouver Open Water Swim Association, the members thereof, all sponsors, race directors, lifeguards, volunteers and producers of these events, and their respective heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns, from all liabilities, actions, claims, demands, damages, costs and expenses, which I may now or in the future have against them, or any of them, in any way arising out of or in any way connected with my participation in, or the operation of, any 2018 Vancouver Open Water Swim Association Bay Challenge event and any practice or training session associated therewith (collectively, the "Swim Events") or other functions or events, including but not limited to any claims that are based on any alleged negligence or other action or inaction of any of the above mentioned parties.

I am aware of the hazards inherent in open water swimming, including the potential for hypothermia, cardiovascular problems, drowning and permanent disability and that in entering any Swim Event I am doing so at my own risk. To the best of my knowledge, my physical condition and fitness are adequate for me to compete in the Swim Event(s) for which I have submitted an entry, and I am unaware of any reason, physical or otherwise, why I should not participate. I agree to comply with all rules, regulations and event instructions of the Swim Events, and I consent to receive any and all medical treatment which organizers of the Swim Events consider advisable in the event of illness or injuries suffered by me during any Swim Event.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the terms of this release and waiver and agree to the provisions of the 2018 Bay Challenge Safety policy.

Participant (Swimmer):

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

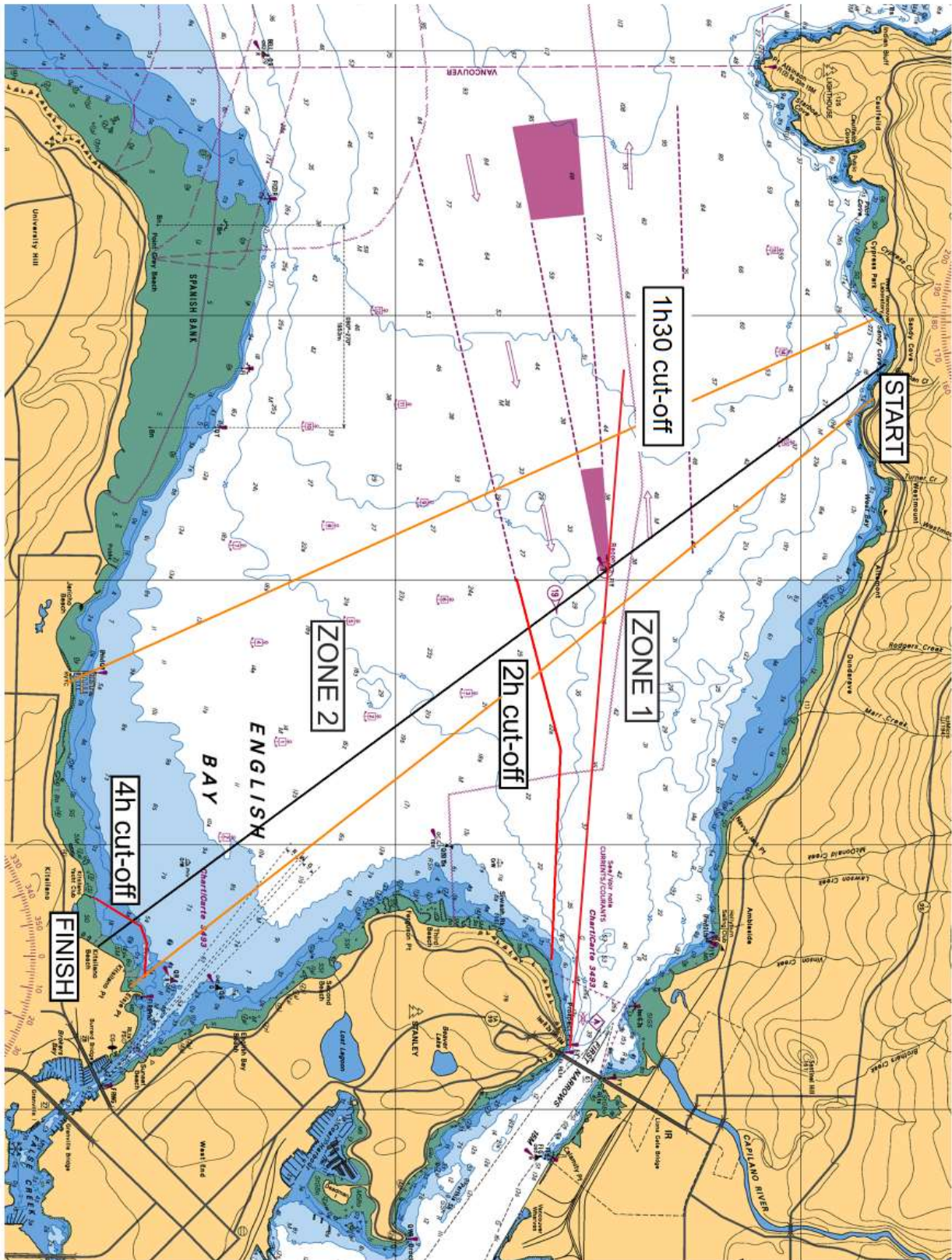
Signature _____ Date: _____

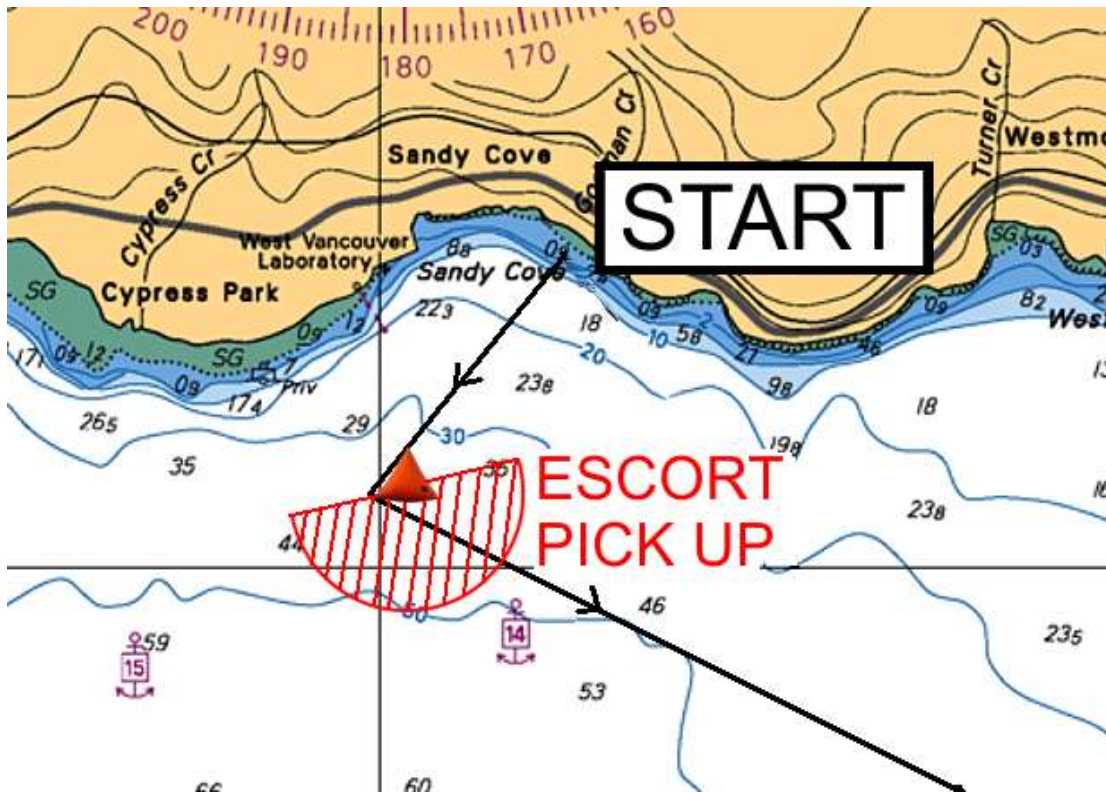
Witness:

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

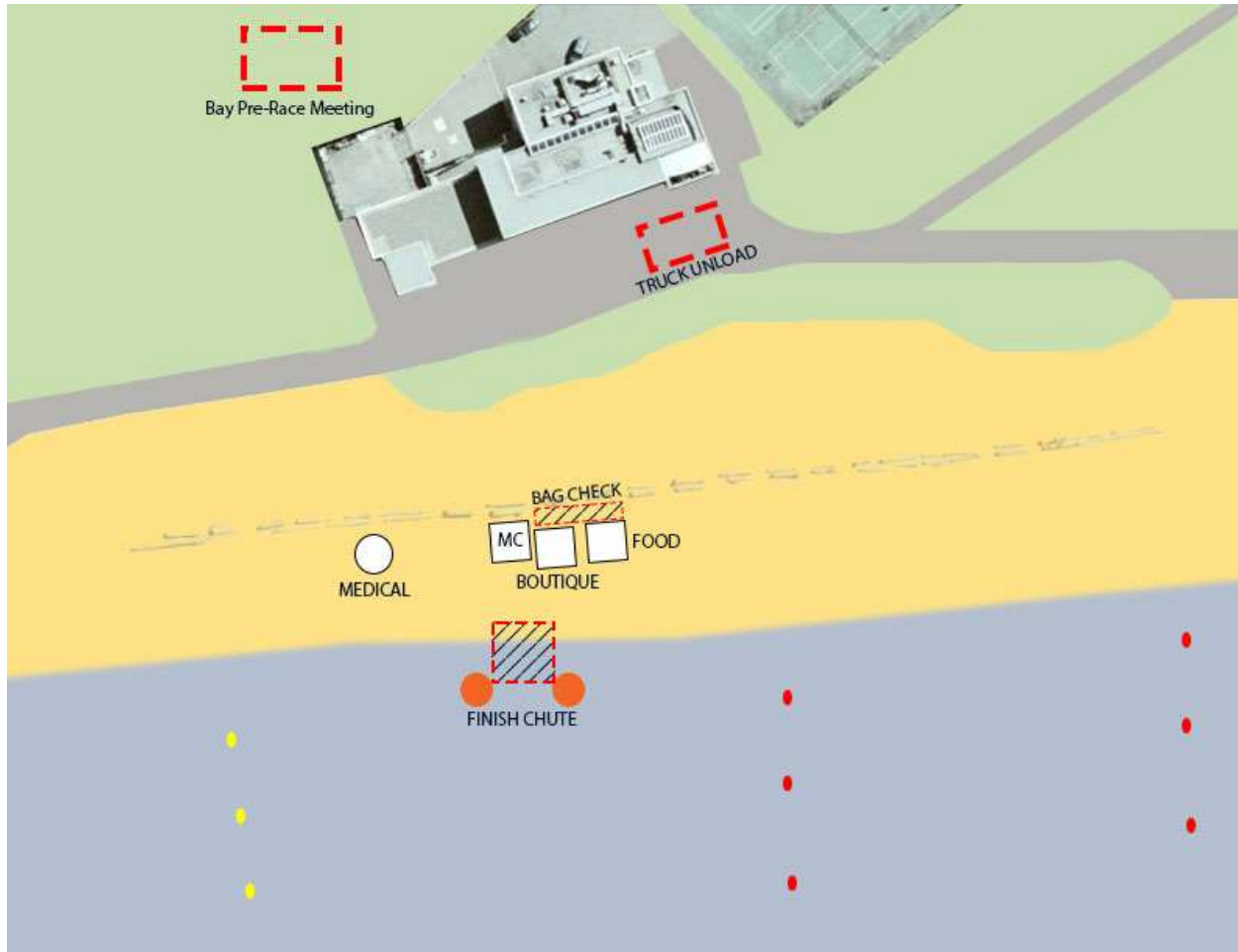
Signature _____ Date: _____

Appendix I – Course Maps





Appendix II – Pre Race Meeting Location



Appendix III – Channel and Other Marine Markers



Figure 1: Channel ingress zone marker, marks 1h30 hour cut-off point



Figure 2: Kitsilano Beach Power Boat Exclusion Marks