



BRITISH CANOEING SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PADDLERS, CLUBS AND VOLUNTEERS



British Canoeing Safety Guidelines for Paddlers, Clubs and Volunteers

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

BRITISH CANOEING SAFETY MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE

The purpose of this guide is to present to you British Canoeing's guidance and support in all areas of safety management. As a National Governing Body British Canoeing has a responsibility for health and safety. This guidance provides coaches, clubs and centres operating and running activities in the name of British Canoeing, with guidelines to support and ensure that the safety of British Canoeing members and members of the public with whom they come into contact receive appropriate attention and consideration in all circumstances.

At the heart of health and safety and indeed safety management in general is 'Risk Assessment'. Mention of the words 'Risk Assessment' conjures up all sorts of images in people's minds, and central to this is dread and fear. Dread at the mere thought of having to undertake the work, fear at the thought of the essence of our sport being eroded by society's desire to remove risk from everything that moves.

As a National Governing Body and as coaches, club officials and centre management we need to achieve an acceptable balance in terms of safety management. It is clear to us all that we have a duty of care to others with whom we come into contact. We can only be sure that we are meeting that duty if we take steps to analyse the risks involved while participating in canoeing events and activities.

That said we do need to keep things in perspective. As paddlers, coaches, club and event managers we are all driven by a desire to take part, compete, or assist others in doing so, and rightly so, given that we do so (in the main) voluntarily we wish to see such opportunities maximised. Spending lots of time on administration is often seen as counter productive and as such never makes it to the top of the Urgent and Important file. Nonetheless ensuring that we address the issue of safe participation is important – risk assessment is fundamental to this. We can keep it in perspective, if we understand the fundamentals of risk assessment and are able to be efficient, comprehensive and concise when carrying out risk assessments.

By way of further support the document provides information on risk assessment and the recording of risk assessments. The information is presented so that the volunteer coming to the task of producing a risk assessment from scratch is able to understand the basic,



essential background and theory, along with template outlines to allow them to produce an effective and living document to support participants and events.

Those of you who already have a clear understanding of risk assessment may not need to dwell for long on the information presented, however, you may wish to view the templates in the final section of the document. These may remove some of the work needed to produce your own risk assessment and perhaps importantly for us all, they may assist in maintaining consistency in their production and ensure that risk assessment is a means to an end – not an end in itself.

The contents of this document are set out as follows:

1. Introduction
2. British Canoeing Health and Safety Policy
3. Outline Health and Safety Policy
4. British Canoeing Events
5. Safety Principles
6. Notification of Accidents
7. Insurance
8. Support References

Not every type of canoeing is a 'risk' activity. No adventure sport can ever be totally safe. Respect and admiration is due to those who, knowing their sport and their abilities, push back the frontiers of feasibility by tackling ever harder grades of water; or choose to explore in wild and lonely places; or undertake solo paddling be it in one of these contexts, or simply to find their own level of self-fulfillment.

We do not agree with those who regard the occasional inevitable loss of life in these circumstances as disastrous for the sport. Nor that those who choose these outlets – knowing what they are at – are acting in an irresponsible manner. Far from it. They are keeping alive, in fact they are furthering, the essential spirit in mankind to advance against the elements.

We are, however, faced with a dilemma. We all want and demand 'freedom'. In reality, however, if the exercise of that 'freedom' causes us harm, a growing number of people then want to apportion blame. Some would seek recompense against those who permitted or set up the activity. The media joins in this process. In consequence, incidents are distorted beyond recognition, and the dividing line between freedom of action, and responsible provision, becomes difficult to define.

Numerous examples of this process can be cited, sometimes leading to increased legislation.

Some forms of canoeing have an inherent risk factor. Regrettably, when a tragedy does occur, the media tends to react out of all proportion to the actual very low incidence of fatalities within the sport. The difficulty for British Canoeing, as the Governing Body, is to tread the border zone of taking reasonable precautions, yet retaining the adventurous nature of those aspects of the sport which carry an element of danger.

Our order of priority in deciding whether action of any kind should be taken, is:

1. That no one should lose their life or be seriously injured, if this could have been avoided through the implementation of simple warnings or safeguards.
2. British Canoeing and its coaches work to ensure that those taking part in canoeing are able to do so protected and kept safe from harm while they are with staff, coaches and / or volunteers. This is particularly true in respect of children and vulnerable adults.
3. That unnecessary adverse publicity should not accrue to the sport, hastening the day when further restrictive legislation may be applied, or giving excuse to those who would even now use any reason to bar our activity.
4. That where reasonably possible, grounds for a claim that would invoke our insurance policy be avoided, in order to ensure the continuance of this benefit as a

final compensation to an injured party, at a reasonable cost to the membership.

Those staging canoeing events are asked therefore, to take such reasonable precautions as are practicable in the light of this policy.

BRITISH CANOEING EVENTS

British Canoeing recognises the following events and activities:

1. British Canoeing events and activities. These are those occasions which are directly organised, or directly administered, or are directly within the control of British Canoeing, or its Committees, which directly necessitate the use of their services or resources. Thus, this definition will include all events and activities organised or administered or which are within the control of the Regions, or Sports, or Recreation Committees, and refers to all competitive events which are ranked, divisionalised, or otherwise classified by British Canoeing or its Committees together with Tours, Rallies and other miscellaneous activities.
2. Courses run by suitably current members of the British Canoeing Coaching Scheme.
3. Other events run by currently affiliated clubs. Such events should be listed in the club's Newsletter or Diary.
4. Events organised by ad-hoc groups of members are not 'British Canoeing Events' unless specific application is made for them to be so recognised, and agreement is received in writing from the Director of Coaching, who will consult with relevant officers or committees of British Canoeing, as necessary, before offering such recognition.
5. The inclusion of events on the British Canoeing Calendar or their notification in British Canoeing Publications does not, in itself, imply British Canoeing recognition or indemnity under British Canoeing's Third Party Liability Insurance Policy.

SAFETY PRINCIPLES

There is a responsibility in law for organisers of activities to see that reasonable precautions are undertaken to ensure the safety of participants.

Where obvious hazards exist, therefore, it is expected that organisers will undertake to identify and take such precautions as seem appropriate and reasonable in the

circumstances to provide for the safety of event organizers, volunteers and participants.

These could include:

- Ensuring that a risk assessment of the event or activity has taken place to establish that any planned activity or event is indeed safe and reasonable.
- That any identified hazard can be controlled, that monitoring activities for the event or activity are in place, and that established cut off procedures are in place.
- Giving factual information to participants concerning the particular nature of any hazards which may exist. This could be by way of ensuring access to and knowledge of the British Canoeing Statement of Participation
- Ensuring that each participant has signed an acknowledgment of risk. See appendices.

These actions do not absolve the organiser from his or her responsibility to undertake reasonable precautions, nor does it remove the participant's right in law to sue for damages should negligence be involved. It does, however, affirm that the attention of the person has been drawn to the hazardous nature of the activity, if such is involved.

- Ensuring safe Codes of Practice that cover all reasonable measures to protect all those taking part in canoeing activities keeping them safe from unhealthy and unwanted advances, and role modeling.

Where 'open water' is involved in a competitive event or rally (other than tours – by groups of paddlers trained and equipped for the venture, or under the leadership of suitably qualified current British Canoeing Coaching Scheme members): the provision of sufficient safety craft for any situation which could develop in the conditions in which the event, held in part or in whole on open water, is to be run.

Where 'white water' or the shooting of weirs, is involved: the wearing of buoyancy aids and crash helmets is mandatory for slalom and wild water racing, and should be strongly advised for other events where an obvious risk is present.

Participation should be limited to those who declare themselves competent to handle the conditions, taking into account the type and amount of safety cover it is practical to provide at sites of particular difficulty.

Suitable safety cover for events involving weirs or rapids of particular difficulty could range from having reliable, competent canoeists strategically placed, to having trained bank-side rescue parties or divers on hand.

OTHER PROBLEMS

Where electrical or mechanical apparatus is used in the running of an event, care should be taken to ensure that it is operated in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.

SPECIALIST COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Each Specialist Committee should keep under review its guidelines regarding the provision of safety precautions which it considers reasonable for its particular discipline.

INSURANCE BENEFITS AND PROCEDURES

Third Party Liability (Perkins Slade) Third party insurance cover is a benefit of British Canoeing membership and applies to; individual British Canoeing members, resident in the UK, affiliated clubs and registered members of affiliated clubs resident in the UK. The limit of indemnity for any one accident is to a maximum of £5,000,000 for a claim arising from loss, injury to, the death of or damage to the property of a third party. The insurance is valid for any canoeing or related activity worldwide. Member to member liability is included, as are members of the coaching service acting in an instructional capacity. This includes paid coaching work but only if this coaching takes place within British Canoeing to members or clubs (see Professional Indemnity).



Irresponsible or careless leadership will not invalidate the third party insurance. The law requires us to take reasonable care for the safety of others. The moral code clearly also implies this duty. In practical terms, if a large claim occurred, the renewal premium could be prohibitive. Therefore there is a duty on all of us to ensure that it remains at modest cost to British Canoeing for the benefit of the member who may become the genuine victim of circumstance. It is important that the policy is not invoked through irresponsibility.

BRITISH CANOEING LIABILITY INSURANCE

Professional Indemnity (Perkins Slade), British Canoeing's Civil Liability policy wording has been amended to automatically include all registered coaches when providing tuition, whether for a fee or not, as an individual. Where any such coach is operating as a business by using a business or company name, separate insurance arrangements must be made.

NOTIFICATION OF ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

On 26 April 1999, the Civil Justice system was amended to reflect a number of changes now known as the Woolf Reforms, the purpose being to resolve disputes more quickly but without necessarily having to resort to litigation. For Personal Injury claims in particular, the consequences for Sport and Recreation are considerable.

If an individual (the claimant) sustains an injury he or she has up to 3 years to issue a claim (formerly a writ) against another individual or club (the defendant) considered to have been negligent in causing the injury. The defendant has only 21 days to acknowledge receipt of the claim and a further 90 days either to accept or deny liability and, in the case of a denial, to produce supporting documentation and evidence.

Failure to observe these time scales could give Insurers an opportunity to limit or even deny indemnity which, of course, could have serious ramifications for the defendant. That being the case, all those involved in Sport are now required to report (to their Insurance Brokers) every incident, particularly those involving a personal injury, which could give rise to a subsequent claim. This will ensure that detailed records are kept, so that in the event of a claim a defence may be more quickly and accurately mounted.

This being the case we would encourage clubs, every member, particularly coaches, to note in detail instances of injury to students. Obviously, there is also a responsibility on every individual member to pass on relevant information regarding any incident.

See appendices for an example incident report form. Forms are also available from the Coaching Office and from the British Canoeing website to allow you to record such incidents.

We would further encourage information of this nature, on the said forms, to be forwarded to the British Canoeing Coaching Office. As well as being able to ensure that the information is appropriately archived it will provide a database of injuries and incidents to support developments in best practice, technique development. Indeed it will ensure that practitioners, not insurance companies dictate safety policies.

All paddlers and coaches have a responsibility towards safety management through the appropriate application of 'risk assessment' practices appropriate to the activity they are taking part in and or leading.



DUTY OF CARE

This document contains a **very general** and **basic** view of negligence. It sets out and hopefully answers the questions that you ought to be asking. The term 'injury' used herein means primarily physical injury and consequential financial losses.

1. WHERE DOES NEGLIGENCE FIT INTO OUR SOCIAL FABRIC?

- 1.1. All of us understand that deliberately causing injury to others is a criminal offence ordinarily resulting in punishment of the perpetrator.
- 1.2. All of us understand that some injuries are accidental, i.e. the circumstances giving rise to them are wholly unforeseeable. No one is responsible. No compensation is payable.
- 1.3. In between those two ends of the spectrum are 'negligent acts', i.e. they are not deliberate, but the injury is foreseeable. The negligent person will not be punished, however, the injured party may seek financial compensation as a result. The compensation is paid by the individual who has caused the loss and could amount to millions of pounds!

2. WHAT DOES IT DO?

- 2.1. The system of rules is designed to determine in any incident or injury whether the negligent act actually caused injury, whether compensation should be paid, and if so, how much.

3. HOW DOES IT AFFECT ME?

- 3.1. Each of us owes a 'Duty of Care' to our 'neighbours' not to cause them injury by our negligent acts and omissions.
- 3.2. In order to satisfy or 'discharge' that duty of care you must behave as a 'reasonable person' would, but taking into account your specific skill, knowledge and experience. For example, a 'reasonable' non-medically qualified 'rescuer' might be forgiven a medical mistake which a reasonable qualified paramedic would be expected not to make.
- 3.3. Your neighbours are those people whom, if you thought about it might be injured by your negligent acts and omissions.

For example:-

- a) When driving a motor car your neighbours would include:-
 - any passengers in your car
 - other road users, drivers and their passengers

- pedestrians, cyclists etc

- owners of property adjoining the road

- b) Anyone for whom you have accepted responsibility (see later for the effect of being a group leader/club's officer).
- 3.4. The Duty of Care requires you to consider the consequences of your acts and omissions and to ensure that those acts and/or omissions do not give rise to a foreseeable risk of injury to any other person. Clearly, one is not expected to guarantee the safety of others, merely to act reasonably.
- 3.5. In short, all of us owe a duty not to injure other people by our negligent acts and omissions and that is an individual duty which each of us owe all of the time to our 'neighbours'.

4. DOES ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP OF A CLUB OR SOCIETY AFFECT MY ORDINARY DUTY OF CARE?

- 4.1. Not usually. You still owe the individual duty of care to your neighbours. However, the people who are your 'neighbours' might alter and/or increase to include other club members and others with whom you may now come into contact as a result of membership of that club.

5. WILL BEING A GROUP LEADER OF A CLUB OR OTHER ACTIVITY ALTER MY ORDINARY DUTY OF CARE?

- 5.1. It may do. As a group leader (or team captain) you have accepted the responsibility of leading others. You owe them a duty to ensure that they are not exposed to a foreseeable risk of injury as far as you reasonably can.
- 5.2. It should be noted that on any outing where a group leader has not been appointed the most experienced and or qualified person there ought reasonably to intervene and at least advise if a foreseeable risk of injury arises.

6. WILL ACCEPTING OFFICE IN A CLUB AFFECT MY DUTY OF CARE?

- 6.1. Yes, it may well do so. If you accept a position you are likely to agree to carry out certain functions which may affect the safety of others both inside and outside the club. You are accepting responsibility and you must fulfil those duties to the best of your ability without negligence. That is, you must not create a foreseeable risk of injury and you

must take reasonable steps to deal with any foreseeable risk of injury which exists or arises. For example: if you agree to be the equipment officer you must make reasonable inspections of the equipment to see that it is reasonably safe.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1. The law of negligence seeks to ensure that as individuals we are responsible for our actions and inactions, and that we consider those who might be injured by those acts and omissions.
- 7.2. The actual standard varies according to an individual's skill and experience, and requires us all to behave reasonably.
- 7.3. It is not possible to lay down golden rules which if followed will preclude the possibility of a successful

civil claim. However, behaving responsibly and considerately is likely to mean that no injury will be occasioned in the first place.

- 7.4. The safety net that we all hope we will never need is third party liability insurance. If a compensation claim is successfully brought then this insurance should pay out. All current members of British Canoeing automatically have such cover. Members of certain clubs may have additional cover where affiliated to NGB's with that facility.

c P.J. Debney, Partner, Cartwright and Lewis, Solicitors 1998

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SECTION 2

GUIDE TO RISK ASSESSMENTS

A GUIDE TO GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

The sports, recreation and activities sector has clear awareness of the need to provide personal challenge through sporting activities, whilst at the same time tempering this against the need for effective safety management. The sector can demonstrate a good track record in this respect through its providers, lead bodies, councils and clubs.

Despite this there has been a number of serious accidents 'off the field', which has demonstrated that more could be done to manage safety on the social side of sporting activity where there is no less a 'duty of care'. This Guidance aims to highlight this issue and offer simple and effective solutions with the aim of reducing risk.

WHAT IS IN IT FOR THE SPORTS INDUSTRY?

Serious accidents can be life changing not only for those suffering injury but for those having to deal with incidents. They often damage the reputation of the sporting organisation and can result in less participation and support where there is perceived lack of control. There are consequential increasing insurance premiums for everyone, which are especially difficult for those organisations struggling to maintain adequate funding. Accidents can mean loss for everyone involved. There are few, if any, accidents that can be considered 'just bad luck', 'unfortunate' or the result of folly and negligence of the individual. The vast majority of accidents can be effectively prevented.

DUTY OF CARE

It is incumbent on all those promoting and offering sporting and adventure training opportunities to look after all persons, whether they are participants, instructors, support staff, volunteers or observers, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, their health safety and welfare.

Sporting activities are often well regulated in this respect but associated and consequential activities, which might include social and fundraising events, prize giving, downtime between sporting events and heats, travel, and tournaments by teams and individuals, are not always considered in respect to common and civil law duty of care.



This duty encompasses all persons who might be associated with activities, whether sport or social related, such as participants, spectators, coaches, instructors, volunteers, contractors, visitors and guests, and also members of the public.

In terms of criminal liability the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Section 2, states that:

"it shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, to protect the health, safety and welfare of all his employees"

It is also an absolute duty under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, for employers to carry out assessments of the risks in workplaces under their control. This guidance recommends that all aspects of sporting activities, including those mentioned above, are effectively managed through the risk assessment process.

RECENT SERIOUS ACCIDENTS – A NEW TREND

In recent years there has been a trend toward serious accidents in activities associated with, but not as a direct consequence of, sporting activities. These serious accidents have resulted in life changing injuries and multi-million pound settlement claims. The distress caused to all those involved including the organisers and sports body, has also been considerable.

In most cases it was felt that more could have been done to prevent these incidents, adding to the stress and anxiety of those involved. Should this trend continue it is possible that the associated sports could suffer, and further compound the calls for more draconian safety

measures which recent reports such as the Lord Young Review have been trying to resist.

These incidents have in common their occurrence during 'downtime' outside of the sporting /adventure training activity. Contributing factors include:

1. Alcohol
2. Bravado and bad behaviour
3. Environmental hazard not appreciated as risks e.g. water courses
4. Circumstances not thought to need control or supervision

They differ in cause but their common opportunities for prevention are three fold:

- Acceptance of the responsibility for risk of injury extends beyond core sporting activities
- Effective control of those involved through supervision by suitably briefed and responsible persons
- The need for simple risk assessment in common with normal safety management practice

If these measures were to be effectively applied then it is more likely that the majority of serious accidents could be prevented.

The Lord Young Review emphasises the need for a return to 'common sense' and highlights that not all accidents can be blamed on someone, and accidents should not always result in someone paying compensation. It is hoped in time that this approach will be clarified by future court decisions.

The potential for contributory negligence must be acknowledged for those suffering injury as a result of accidents where event/activity organisers can demonstrate that they did all that is reasonably practicable to prevent accidents. Such contributory negligence is likely to affect the opportunity for compensation claims, especially if there is evidence of failure by the claimant to follow safety measures and instructions required by supervisory staff.

Insurance underwriters will cover all reasonable compensation claims under its policies but expects a reasonable level of supervision and management of activities outside of the core sporting activity. This will

enable the strongest possible defence of claims when this is deemed appropriate.

EFFECTIVE CONTROL MEASURES SUPERVISION

All activities associated with sports, recreation and associated activities need a reasonable level of supervisory management and control. Supervisors may be designated instructors, volunteers or support staff.

They must have the strength of character and authority to be able to intervene at appropriate times to control bravado or adverse behaviour which might lead to accidents. They need training or briefing to be able to apply effective management to the activity. They will be aware of the key hazards and risks associated with the event. A person in this role is acting on behalf of the club or organisation and in delegating your authority for this duty you must ensure the individuals know what is expected of them. They must be briefed and have full awareness of the main hazards and risks identified for the activity or event in question. If you fail in this key task the possibility the event will run safely is likely to be more due to good fortune than good planning.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental factors which might contribute to accidents outside of sporting activities are many and varied. They might include topographical features outdoors such as elevated locations, nearby roads and traffic or railways, water courses including rivers, canals, lakes and ponds and underwater hazards including depth, flow/current/tides, mud banks etc. The weather also has a role to play whether travelling to venues or events or hosting events in extremes of heat and cold. The potential effects of altitude might be a further consideration.

Where premises are used hazards might include physical conditions in respect to maintenance and design, lighting levels, extreme changes in level and protection measures, capacity issues and fire precautions, including means of escape considerations, window safety, balconies and glazing issues etc. The list is not exhaustive. Much depends on the social activities planned and the potential hazards and risks evident. Much of it should be common sense.

ALCOHOL CHALLENGES

It is recognised that club, tour and event activities outside of port can often be centred on socialising and relaxing with alcohol. Safety risks are compounded by inhibition

and over-indulgence, and when combined with key risks such as water course, falls from height and other often obvious hazards, they can be a lethal combination.

Designated supervisors must anticipate and recognise this potential and do their utmost to support responsible behaviour and responsible drinking.

The key issue which can result in serious accidents is the combination effect of alcohol, unforeseen environmental factors and the failure to plan or the effect of a change of plan. Impromptu activities which often end up poorly managed and supervised are also a recipe for incidents. It should be acknowledged that the vast majority will not result in any incident causing injury but a few minutes thought by someone with experience will often make the difference in keeping all activities safe.

An assessment is no more than a careful examination of what conditions or practices at the event of activity could cause harm to people. Adequate assessments will enable you to determine if sufficient precautions have been taken or if more can be done to prevent harm. The aim of assessments is to prevent injury or illness.

ACTION PLAN

Once all the hazards and risks have been taken account of it is essential that a clear and simple plan should be developed which forms the basis of protecting everyone involved in the event/activity. This will need to take account of first aid and response to any incident should it be needed. All supervisory staff must be apprised of it and their role and responsibility in case of incidents.

Risk Assessment is the key to ensuring hazards, persons at risk and control measures are identified and implemented.

HOW TO ASSESS THE RISKS IN ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH SPORT

There are *five* basic steps:

Look for the hazards	Ignore the trivia and concentrate on significant hazards e.g. potential for falls from height, water courses, crowd control, barriers, separation of traffic, potential for power failure, electrical hazards, equipment fixed to prevent collapse, alcohol use in combination with above, etc.
Decide who may be harmed and how	Participants, instructors, volunteers, visitors and guests, cleaners, contractors, members of the public.
Evaluate the risks	Consider how likely it is that each hazard could cause harm. Decide whether, after all precautions have been taken, significant risks remain and whether the existing precautions are adequate. For example level of supervision, adequate briefing, etc.
Record findings	The Risk Assessment must be suitable and sufficient. In addition a simple record of most important and key findings will demonstrate efforts to prevent accidents and support the review the assessments.
Review assessment and revise it if necessary	Where there is a change of circumstances, for example change of venue of deteriorating weather conditions or in the light of experience

Note 1: An example of a risk assessment record form is attached

Note 2: The risk assessment must be reviewed each time

SPECIMEN ASSESSMENT OF RISK – EXAMPLE AWARDS PRESENTATION

Hazard	Who might be harmed?	Is the risk adequately controlled	What further action is necessary to control the risk?
<p>Look for hazards that you could reasonably expect to result in significant harm. Use the following examples as a guide.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity of venue, permitted numbers <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment hazards including water courses, topography, falls from height, etc 2. Vehicle access and car park safety, lighting 3. Slipping / tripping / falling hazards (e.g. poorly maintained floors or stairs, poor lighting) 4. Fire precautions, including means of escape 5. Venue set up; use of contractors 6. Potential for activity at height (e.g. mezzanine floor use, show activities/effects) 7. Electricity capacity, protection, and use 8. Use of fireworks / smoke / lasers / lighting and other effects 9. Manual handling 10. Seating arrangements, stands, terraced seating, gangways, etc. 11. Alcohol; availability, opening times, service methods 12. Possibility of unauthorised access 	<p>There is no need to list individuals by name – just think about groups of people undertaking similar roles or who might be affected e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisers, coaches, instructors, stewards and volunteers • Participants • Attendees especially young persons and those with special needs • Venue staff / maintenance personnel • Contractors <p>Pay particular attention to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff with special needs • People with challenging behaviour • Visitors / Guests / Celebrities • Inexperienced or young volunteers and staff 	<p>Have you already taken precautions against the risks from the hazards you listed? For example, have you considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key hazards associated with venue to prevent accidents • Adequate experienced supervision • Clear briefing, information, instruction • Emergency plan properly communicated • Adequate systems or procedures • Do the precautions: • Meet the standard set by a legal requirement? • Comply with a recognised industry standard? • Represent good practice? • Reduce risks as far as is reasonably practicable? <p>If so then the risks are adequately controlled but you may need to indicate the precautions you have in place. You may refer to procedures, manuals, organisation rules etc.</p>	<p>What more could you reasonably do for those risks which you found were not adequately controlled?</p> <p>You will need to give priority to those risks which affect large numbers of people and / or could result in serious harm. Apply the principles below when taking further action, if possible in the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove the risk completely • Try a less risky option e.g. change venue • Prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by barriers) • Organise activities to reduce exposure to the hazard • Restrict alcohol, clarify of 'out of bounds' areas

Perkins Slade Intelligent Insurance

A GUIDE TO RISK MANAGEMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT IN PADDLESPORE

To many the mention of the term risk assessment conjures up feelings of dread and concern that the essence of our sport is being taken away by society's desire to remove risk from everything that we do. Red tape, an extra hurdle to jump just to get out and paddle, or a piece of frightening legislation, whatever your view, and as with any seemingly new development or change, we have to keep things in perspective.

- Risk assessments are now an every day occurrence both in the workplace and in the outdoors.
- Their purpose is to identify potential hazards, calculate the risk and try to omit or reduce that risk to an acceptable level.
- Risk assessment doesn't have to be complicated, time consuming and onerous.
- Risk assessments are second nature for experienced coaches and instructors.
- Any perceived cultural change requiring that risk assessments take place is false – the only change is the fact that we are now required to produce written risk assessments.

There are a number of levels of risk assessment:

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT

(see page 12)

Generic risk assessment is important because it formalises our thinking and gives consistency to the way an organisation works or an event or activity might take place. The disadvantage of a generic risk assessment, written for everyone, is that it can become static and forgotten in practice. It may be read as prescribed by your supervisor but may not be used when you are working during a session.

Such risk assessments are useful, for the inexperienced, in managing the unexpected or can help ensure consistency when the same trip or event is run regularly or by different people. They offer basic core principles, which can then be applied and adapted. They can

encourage a more proactive approach to preparation, through training and equipment that might be carried.

SITE / ACTIVITY SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

As either a club or centre, activities organised and run by the club or centre, whether voluntarily or commercially, should be risk assessed to ensure that those participating in the activities can do so safely, and in order that the club or centre meet the duty of care they carry to make this so. Undertaking this task may therefore require the club or centre to risk assess particular activities, specific sites used by or 'managed' by the club or centre, or indeed particular in river features or structures used by the club or centre for activities.

DYNAMIC RISK MANAGEMENT (SAFE PERSON CONCEPT)

The ongoing assessments we make throughout the day or throughout a session, are referred to as 'the Dynamic Management of Risk'. This is an alternative to generic risk assessment. Dynamic risk assessment is a continuous process of identifying hazards. The risk is assessed and action taken to eliminate or reduce risk. In this way we are continually monitoring and reviewing the rapidly changing circumstances within paddlesport.

Leaders take clients, students or friends into POTENTIALLY hazardous environments and situations. This is because they are prepared to accept reasonable levels of risk in order to provide an adventurous and interesting experience. Leaders must, however, seek to minimise the risk.



From an outdoor activity point of view dynamic risk management and assessment should always be complementary to any established generic risk assessment. Arguably as paddlers, in the context of paddler, coach or leader, our individual experience and developed understanding and awareness of the environment in which we paddle provides us with the judgment skills to make 'dynamic' on-the-move decisions relating to both our own and the safety of others.

That said, however, and given that dynamic risk assessments cannot always be written down, a clearer understanding of the conscious and subconscious analysis of risk that goes on in such circumstances is important.

Further details of dynamic risk assessment and its 'safe person' concepts are available on page 23.

WHICH TYPE OF RISK ASSESSMENT?

Again, without raising concern, it is possible that you may, depending on the purpose behind your risk assessment, need to consider one approach, two out of the three or a combination of all three types.

You may be simply undertaking a risk assessment for yourself. Equally you may undertake a risk assessment as a person in charge of others, club officer, employer or employee.

To help you we will look in detail at each approach and identify when they might be best used.

Where we have gone into detail please appreciate that this is to help gain a complete and thorough understanding of risk assessment. The key points to bear in mind, with examples, are provided, as are actual risk assessment models for a variety of typical situations.

WHO SHOULD UNDERTAKE GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENTS?

Normally this would be an appropriate club official or centre employee appointed by virtue of their overall experience to make risk assessment judgments. A practitioner can bring a background of experience, training and qualifications to the role. It could be that the particular club or centre seeks external assistance to

undertake such work. Whatever route you choose it is important to remember, particularly from the point of view of the volunteer, that risk assessments are based on core principles established on reasonable knowledge and reasonable action.

HOW SHOULD I RECORD GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENTS?

While there are numerous ways of recording generic risk assessments it is important that written risk assessments are clear and concise, and that they are 'living' documents. Normal practice follows the five steps method promoted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). If you require further information and guidelines to help you understand generic risk assessments and how to write them please refer to page 21– 24 of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

The following are available from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE):

HSG65: Successful Health and Safety Management

HSG165: Young People at Work: A Guide for Employers

HSG183: Five Steps to Risk Assessment: Case Studies

INDG163: Five Steps to Risk Assessment

INDG213: Five Steps to Information, Instruction and Training: Meeting Risk Assessment Requirements

INDG218: A Guide to Risk Assessment Requirements: Common Provisions in Health and Safety Law

INDG275: Managing Health and Safety: Five Steps to Success

L21: Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 — Approved Code of Practice

HSE priced and free publications are available by mail order from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2WA Tel: 01787 881165 Fax: 01787 313995.

HSE priced publications are also available from branches of the Stationery Office (formerly HMSO) and good booksellers.

The HSE have a specific web page dedicated to risk assessment which is located at: www.hse.gov.uk/risk/

The HSE home page is www.hse.gov.uk and their enquiry service is available at HSE Info Line – tel: 0845 345 0055.

GUIDANCE NOTES ON GENERIC AND SITE / ACTIVITY SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

These guidance notes are intended as a resource for the person who is responsible for facilitating the production of a written risk assessment. It should be remembered that the HSE consider that the competent person in charge is more important than a written risk assessment because it is they who are in the best position to assess the risks at that time, as it is they who are in the actual environment. As such they are able to act 'dynamically', to assess the risk and immediately implement a 'controlling' action. Also, they have the ability to constantly review the risk assessment as the conditions alter - which clearly they do in paddlesport activity. It is clearly vital that those deemed to be competent to take charge of activities have appropriate qualifications, experience and training.

It is important that the written risk assessment does not become 'self important', indeed it is vital that coach

education of risk assessment is centred around the coach making good risk assessments on the basis of the conditions before them, rather than being limited or constrained by a written format. Therefore, a written risk assessment is a guide to 'reasonable steps' to be taken in identifying, assessing, controlling and monitoring risk from hazards; it not intended to supersede decision-making by the coach on-site – only to help inform.

The following rationale is based on the 'Health and Safety Executive (HSE) 'Five Steps to Risk Assessment' document 1997. This document should be read in conjunction with this rationale.

RISK is defined as the 'chance', great or small, that someone will be harmed by a hazard.

HAZARD is defined as anything that can cause harm.

*Risk assessment is concerned with the identification of **significant hazards** which exist, and the **reasonable precautions (CONTROLS)** that are subsequently put in place, in an effort to minimise risk to participants, clients, staff and the public.*

GENERIC PADDLESPORT HAZARDS AND RISKS

Within paddlesport / outdoor activity there are generic risks associated with the actual type of paddlesport being undertaken e.g. sea kayaking, whitewater kayaking, etc. Also, there are site specific risks associated with the actual activity location being used.

Generic risks can be identified as follows:

Generic risk		
Drowning	Hypothermia – hyperthermia	Overtaken by darkness

Activity	Sea, lakes	Surf	Whitewater	River, sea, lake, canal, pool
Generic risk	Getting lost	Collision	Head/spinal injury	Entrapment

Diagram 1: generic risks for the type of paddlesport activity undertaken

SITE / ACTIVITY SPECIFIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Site specific risks are really quite unique to a specific location – given the overall range of other factors which may possibly prevail on that location. The following list is only a guide to stimulate thought on this area.

Sea / Lakes	Local winds, rip-currents, effect of tide, water quality, launching/landing areas, difficult access: cliffs, dense vegetation. Local creatures: crocodiles, weaver fish. Obstacles: groynes, outflow pipes, dams, sandbanks, ships. Other water users: jet skis.
Surf	Local winds, rip-currents, effect of tide. Types of break: beach, bar, reef or other. Launching/landing areas. Other water users. Obstacles: groynes, piers. Water quality: sewage outfall pipes. Local creatures: jelly fish.
White Water	Weirs, bridges, stanchions, piers. Geology type: limestone (foot entrapments). Features: angular or rounded boulders (broaching potential). Boulders, undercuts, siphons, etc. Flood characteristics of river/catchment area. Depth of water, constrictions, specific rapids. Other water users: other boaters in the Ardeche. Local creatures: hippopotamus. Launching/landing points, gorges, dense vegetation. Water quality: old mine workings leaking into the river.
River, Sea, Lake, Canal	Water quality. Pollution: trashed cars, bacteria, litter, effluent, etc. Other water users. Launching/landing areas: restrictions in canalised sections. Water obstacles. Local weather conditions. Tides and currents.
Pool	Water quality. Condition of pool. Exit/entry points, depth areas within pool. Emergency doors in the event of a fire or for paramedic access. Polo: consider the nature of the physical contact element between participants, particularly soft tissue injuries.

Diagram 2: site specific risks – some factors which may present a significant risk

WHAT CONSTITUTES A PADDLESPORT RISK?

It is important to be realistic about risk assessment in paddlesport activity; therefore it is sensible to identify only the significant hazard(s) which are present in the actual activity, and the chances of these being harmful (i.e. a risk.) Diagram 2 highlights some possible site specific risks. This list is by no means exhaustive, it's purpose is to stimulate thought. As is the case with Diagram 1, only the significant risks have been identified, likewise when undertaking a site specific risk assessment; look only for hazards which you could reasonably expect to result in significant harm under the conditions and circumstances of your workplace (i.e. activity site.)

EXPECTATIONS OF ACTIVITY

It should be expected by those taking part in any paddlesport activity that such things as blisters, fatigue, bumps and bruises, for example, are 'normal' occurrences and do not constitute a risk within the context of risk assessment. This point should be highlighted during the pre-activity briefing, so that clients are aware of this. Consequently, these factors would not form part of a written risk assessment.

The example Risk Assessment Record shown on page 20, shows what might be included in the relevant section.

Note: In the section titled 'What further action is necessary to control the risk?' the key to the management of risk is that the British Canoeing Coach checks that the buoyancy aids are fastened, for example. This also highlights the point that the competent person in charge is essential to risk assessment and the implementation of any control measures.

TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE VARIABLES

While the HSE 5 Steps to Risk Assessment model is a very useful model and provides a good basis for us to work from the nature of our sport, and the various events and circumstances we may have to risk assess, suggests that it would be useful to consider a few other factors. In addition to following the 5 steps guide as discussed earlier you will note that it may also be appropriate to 'proportionalise' the risk(s) by identifying or categorising particular risk(s) in terms of Probability over Severity, and also allows for a 'control variance'.

Establishing the high, medium or low risk potential of a particular hazard can assist in establishing a reasonable level of control for that risk.

An example of this might be where a risk assessment for a sprint race was being prepared. As with any other risk assessment involving on-water activities, drowning would have to be reflected within the overall assessment. However, buoyancy aids are not normally used during sprint races and so the wearing of a BA would not always be appropriate as a control measure. Powerboat cover, if available, could offer an alternative and acceptable variation to the standard practice of wearing a BA.

Another situation that could be covered in this way might be where certain recognised water levels or flow rates affect access to certain waterways. For example, if controlling authorities have set levels and rates to fit an average inexperienced 'user profile', recognition of the skills of paddlers and coaches to operate safely in conditions above the average user profile may facilitate easier access to water at certain times.

DO I NEED A RISK ASSESSMENT FOR EVERY TIME I GO OUT OR TAKE PEOPLE OUT?

A risk assessment should be undertaken and kept for each activity operated in each specific site, but there should be no need to produce a new one for each time you visit each site or take part in the same activity at the same venue. While that is not to say that there will not be variables to consider on each separate occasion, this should be precisely where the leader uses a combination of approaches to monitor and maintain safety, e.g. an established generic risk assessment identifying the significant hazards which exist and allowing the pre-planning of reasonable controls, supported by an ongoing 'dynamic' appraisal of the group, environment and weather.

This would include the risks generic to the type of paddlesport undertaken in relation to the site specific risks to be encountered. Thus adequate control measures I further control action if necessary, can be identified to reduce the risk to acceptable levels.

EXAMPLE OF RISK ASSESSMENT RECORD

OPERATOR:	
ADDRESS:	TEL:
DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	ASSESSMENT REVIEW DATE:
SIGNED:	DATE:

ACTIVITY: <i>Flat water kayaking, intro session (May–Aug)</i>		LOCATION/SITE:	
HAZARD	WHO MIGHT BE HARMED?	IS THE RISK ADEQUATELY CONTROLLED?	WHAT FURTHER ACTION IS NECESSARY TO CONTROL THE RISK?
<i>Drowning (generic risk)</i>	<i>Staff Clients</i>	<i>Buoyancy aids to be worn at all times on the water. BAs comply with CEA standards. BAs undergo flotation monitoring to standards laid out in British Canoeing guidelines. Kayaks are also monitored to the same British Canoeing standard. Staff are British Canoeing qualified.</i>	<i>All clients given pre-session briefing – action in the event of a capsize.</i>
<i>Hypothermia (generic risk)</i>	<i>Staff Clients</i>	<i>All staff/clients to wear warm clothing as appropriate. Wetsuit long-johns can be issued at the discretion of the instructor in charge of the session. All staff/clients are issued with a waterproof kayak bag. A head covering I always used.</i>	<i>Staff Judgment Calls to be upheld. Established 'cut offs' for sessions i.e. wind onshore force 2 max (Beaufort scale). Green Bay is a 'sheltered' site (in British Canoeing terms of reference).</i>

PADDLESPORT OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS: WRITING, DEVELOPING AND REVISING THE RISK ASSESSMENT

All staff / key club officials, coaches and leaders should have involvement in the writing of the risk assessment OR clear induction in the form of at least familiarisation training, when they join the operator of the paddlesport activity i.e. company or centre.

All staff / key club officials, coaches and leaders should have an established avenue within the company or centre for informing the operator of the risk assessment because, through their own work practice, significant hazards and risks may become apparent, which would have implications for risk assessment.

A responsible club or operator will have an ethos of valuing and listening to staff comments and suggestions, in order that they may constantly improve their service to their clients. The feedback approach is considered vital in this process. Staff / coaches and leaders may feedback in a variety of ways; this could include staff meetings (which are held on a regular basis), the Accident Book, Near Miss Book and an Annual Review of the Risk Assessment, which is held at the end of season or a period of defined time. This creates a clear mechanism whereby the risk assessment can be updated and improved through practice, for the following year or season.

It is the responsibility of ALL involved to constantly monitor safety (no matter what their position in the organisation) and to report it to the chain of management. Equally, it is for the management to respond appropriately and responsibly. All parties are accountable for safety and 'ignorance' is not considered to be a defence in a court of law.



ACCIDENT BOOK AND NEAR MISS BOOK

It is recommended that separate ACCIDENT and NEAR MISS BOOKS are kept as part of an inclusive system for monitoring incidents and accidents – rather than a joint 'do it all book'. The reason for this is that:

1. Actual accidents and identified near misses or perceived near misses can be logged separately. This allows data analysis to be easier and more focused.
2. It enables near misses to be considered on their own merits for 'significant hazard' potential appearing out of everyday working practice.
3. The accident book may well tend to highlight those hazards that have already been identified, e.g. 'slipping and falling on the wooden jetty, when it's wet'.
4. These should already be hazards I risks which have been minimised to a reasonable level, through effective monitoring of incidents and accidents, within the organisation. If 'slipping on the jetty' keeps happening, then the control methods clearly need to be amended through the review process, because they may not be adequate.
5. If staff I management notice that records in the Near Miss Book show that powerboats frequently come too close to open canoe sessions on Lake X, then this hazard can come onto the agenda for discussion and assessment. It may well be the case that a new 'control' needs adding to the Risk Assessment for Open Canoe Groups on Lake X.

Creating an environment where the near miss book procedure can work is important. Experience shows that near miss books work best where they are none formal, non-judgmental and perhaps anonymous.

In a club environment the club committee should devolve the control and management of the accident book and near miss book to an appointed safety officer, however, a culture for reporting all incidents and near misses should be encouraged within the whole club membership.

LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR SPECIFIC PADDLESPORT ACTIVITY/SITE OPERATING PLANS

It would logically follow that all risk assessments are taken into account when activity-specific local operating procedures are written, so that these operating procedures reflect the best practice, not only of British Canoeing recommended operating guidelines, but also of any activity-generic and site-specific hazards, and connected risks, and the procedures which control and minimise such risks.

RIDDOR '95 – THE REPORTING OF INJURIES, DISEASES AND DANGEROUS OCCURRENCES REGULATIONS 1995

The Reporting of Accidents and Ill Health at Work is a legal requirement, as defined by the HSE. Specifically identified 'Accidents' and 'Near Miss Incidents' must therefore be reported to the HSE on a RIDDOR form.

Downloadable forms available through HSE.gov.uk

A SAFE ETHOS

Bits of paper (in a risk assessment and safety procedures context) only record how it is intended that safety is organised and risk is controlled. Safety and risk management are only as good as the people on site and the judgment calls they make. Human judgment and appropriate responses are central to safety.



DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT IN PADDLESport: THE 'SAFE PERSON' CONCEPT

In paddlesport we work and play in an inherently dangerous place. People go there for adventure and it's not always possible or desirable to take all the dangers away from the environment. The alternative is to direct our efforts into making the person (participant, coach, client or student) safe.

This approach is called the 'safe person' concept. It must be clearly understood that all leaders of whatever level, have the authority, as well as the duty, to take immediate action in the interest of safety. This is a fundamental part of the safe person concept.

The safety of an individual paddling white water, or of a group, is reliant to a large degree on the self-discipline, knowledge and skills of the individual person(s). A safe person has a number of important qualities some of which are show in the illustration below.

The safe person concept therefore relies on a number of personal attributes, together with the right support from paddling colleagues or other coaches, allowing for flexibility of response in order to react to unforeseen or changing circumstances. In the end decisions will be made based on underpinning knowledge, skills and experience applied in the precise circumstances faced at the time.

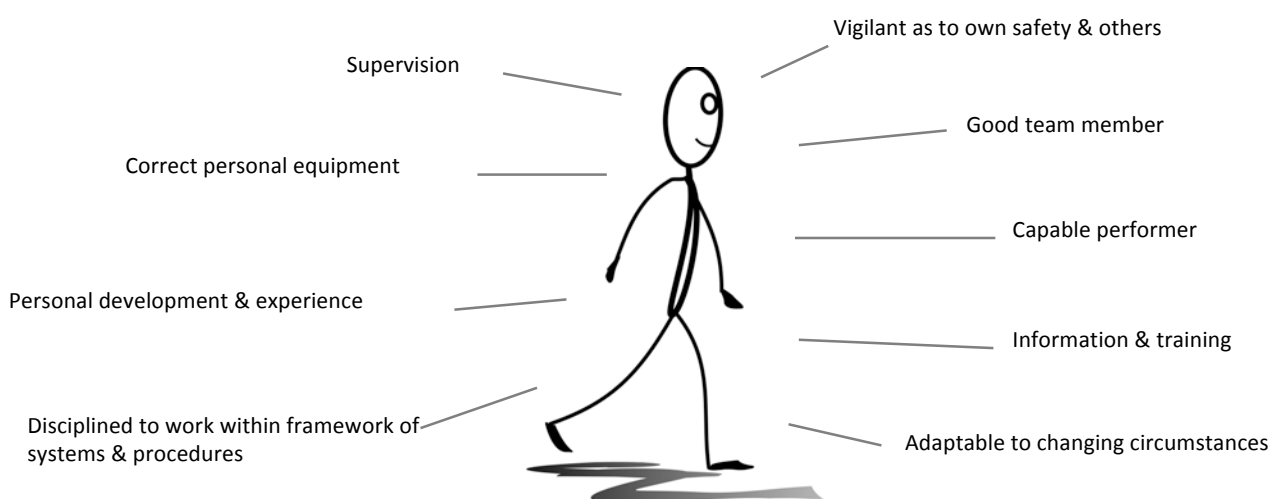
We all have a responsibility for our own safety and the safety of other paddling colleagues. Those of us that are coaches have a 'professional' responsibility.

THE DYNAMIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Dynamic management process is the continuous assessment and control of risks in a rapidly changing environment. Each paddler should take on a degree of responsibility for their own, and the rest of the party's well being. However, the overall responsibility for this lies with the leader. The leader must ensure that safe practices are followed and that, so far as is reasonably practicable, risks are eliminated or reduced to the minimum. It should not be forgotten that leaders are also responsible for their own safety.

PRE-PLANNING

Is vital to ensure that the 'safe person' is in the best possible position to tackle incidents and to assist with and undertake dynamic assessments. Leadership styles, group control, position of maximum usefulness, etc. would form part of this pre-planning requirement, as would river selection, group size, ability, equipment, etc. the list is almost endless.



Qualities of a 'safe person'

It is also important at this stage of pre-planning to consider the resources we have available. Have we taken the necessary rescue equipment, and have we trained and practiced in realistic scenarios (the value of formal river rescue training here cannot be understated)?

The dynamic assessment is the final link in a risk assessment process, it takes place within circumstances that are unforeseeable and / or are changing constantly (i.e. our white water river). It is this final assessment which we rely upon to allow us to carry on our paddling activities safely, and to make carefully considered judgments. The dynamic approach is a continuous thought process.

As the day progresses, you will need to gather information, evaluate situations and then apply your judgment to decide the most appropriate course of action. Hazards must be identified continuously and the risk to all concerned considered. The benefits of proceeding with a task must be weighed carefully against the risks.

REASONABLY PRACTICABLE



Think before you act rather than act before you think

The consequences of a wrong decision in the initial stages of an incident may be irreversible. Start making your decisions before the group arrives; think about the weather, water levels, level of paddler, game plan and the kit needed. What information is available? Has someone already done a generic risk assessment? Is there anyone from whom you could obtain some local knowledge?

Although there are always time constraints on decision-making in emergencies, this should not be used as a reason for accepting the unacceptable.

If after implementing all available control measures, the potential cost of proceeding with a task still outweighs

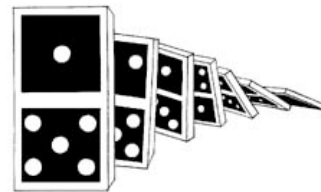
the benefits, DO NOT PROCEED, but consider viable alternatives or introduce additional controls such as:

- Use of additional personal protective equipment
- Use of specialist knowledge
- Bank or boat support

Paddlers, and in particular leaders, need to manage safety by constantly monitoring the situation and reviewing the effectiveness of existing control measures.

HOW TO PLAY DOMINOES

Much work has been done about what causes accidents and it has been shown that injuries invariably result from a complicated sequence of factors, the last being the injury itself. This is often referred to as the domino theory. The model below shows a series of factors or minor incidents leading up to an injury itself or indeed a major incident. These factors can be in any order.



This means that an accident can be prevented if you take action at any one of the stages of the sequence.

If you are alert and using the dynamic approach to risk assessment, the odds are stacked in your favour. If you manage each of the factors in its own right and in relation to the other factors for the day, you should be able to break the domino effect.

DECISION-MAKING

Stress can adversely affect the quality of the decision-making. Do we always recognise the signs of deterioration in the process?

LEARNING FROM THE EVENT

Once we have dealt with the situation you should not become complacent, when does your responsibility for your companions, students or clients officially and morally finish? As the urgency of the situation diminishes you should start to record the information and perhaps pass it onto other leaders. If a review is to take place or feedback given, it should be completed as soon as possible after the activity and the situation is over. This could be formal (e.g. a staff meeting) or informal (e.g. comparing experiences over a mug of tea in the café).

NOTIFYING INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

On 26 April 1999, the Civil Justice system was amended to reflect a number of changes now known as the Woolf Reforms, the purpose being to resolve disputes more quickly but without necessarily having to resort to litigation. For Personal Injury claims in particular, the consequences for Sport and Recreation are considerable.

If an individual (the claimant) sustains an injury he or she has up to 3 years to issue a claim (formerly a writ) against another individual or club (the defendant) considered to have been negligent in causing the injury. The defendant has only 21 days to acknowledge receipt of the claim and a further 90 days either to accept or deny liability and, in the case of a denial, to produce supporting documentation and evidence.

As a result of this it is important that details of any known incident or injuries that occur to students / participants, while undergoing coaching or taking part in canoeing or kayaking activities, are recorded. Indeed those involved in any sport are required to report (to their insurance brokers) every known incident, particularly those involving a personal injury and which may later give rise to a claim.

While it is recognised that centres and clubs may already hold information relating to incidents and accidents in their accident and or near miss books, this form is provided for the use of all individual coaches wishing to

report incidents, particularly those operating under British Canoeing's third party liability scheme. Covered or not through a centre or club, we would encourage you to ensure relevant information is recorded via this route. Sharing this information with British Canoeing will ensure that the information is passed through to British Canoeing's insurance brokers and perhaps, more importantly, the information will allow us to build a database of injuries and incidents, that will enable us to further develop future good practice guidelines to help protect those taking part in paddlesports.

Individuals reporting incidents in this way need have no fear or concern about action being taken against them. The details of incidents reported will only be used for the purpose stated and will be held confidentially. The purpose of the form is to ensure that reporting requirements are met and that in the unlikely event that a claim is made against you insurers can act speedily to cover the claim.

Please help us support you in this matter. The non-reporting of this type of information could result in insurers limiting cover or denying indemnity. See the appendices for a copy of an incident report form. This is also available on the British Canoeing website or alternatively incidents can be reported via the British Canoeing / Perkins Slade insurance information site.

SECTION 3

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

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1. BRITISH CANOEING HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This policy applies to:

1. British Canoeing events and activities which are directly organised, administered, or within the control of British Canoeing, its Committees, Regions, Sports and Recreation Committees, which directly necessitate the use of their services or resources (NB. The inclusion of events and activities in the British Canoeing Calendar, or notified in British Canoeing publications, does not necessarily constitute British Canoeing recognition).
2. Courses run by members of the British Canoeing Coaching Scheme.
3. Other events and activities run by affiliated clubs, which are listed in the club's Newsletter or Diary.
4. British Canoeing qualified coaches and leaders participating in these events and activities.

The policy does not cover ad-hoc activities organised by groups of members. Canoeing* is an assumed risk sport, but all reasonable steps should be taken to reduce that risk. No one should lose their life or be seriously injured if this could have been avoided through the implementation of simple warnings or safeguards. Canoeing events and activities should be made as safe as is reasonably practicable through the application of risk assessment. The level of detail and formalisation of risk assessments should be proportionate to the level of risk. Typically site and major event risk assessments should be formally recorded, whilst ad hoc assessments may be verbally agreed between relevant personnel, who may include coaches, students and club officials, whereas dynamic risk assessments will often be undertaken by one person as situations arise.

Risk assessments should consider 'good practice', which is largely defined in British Canoeing guidance, coaching & leadership qualifications. Good practice is not mandatory, but deviations from it should be risk assessed. Routine deviations from British Canoeing guidance, coaching or leadership qualifications should be supported by written risk assessments. Where appropriate the written risk assessments should also identify the conditions for cancellation of the event or activity when the risks would be considered unacceptable.



The level of risk that children and vulnerable adults may be exposed to should be significantly lower than that of knowledgeable and experienced adults, who would be capable of making their own judgements. Participants should be aware of the risk nature of canoeing and should also be made aware of the most significant hazards relevant to the location or activity. Participation in competitive events should be limited to those who declare themselves competent to handle the conditions, taking into account the hazards and safety cover provided.

Where 'open water' is involved the risk assessment should identify the appropriate level of rescue provision (taking into account factors such as distances, types of canoe or kayak, use of buoyancy aids, ability of participants, water temperature, weather conditions and currents). It is recognised that rescue provision may not always be practicable, especially for tours by groups of paddlers trained and equipped for the venture, or under the leadership of suitably qualified current British Canoeing Coaching Scheme members. Where 'white water' or the shooting of weirs is involved the wearing of buoyancy aids and crash helmets is mandatory for slalom and wild water racing, and is strongly advised for other events and activities of this type where an obvious risk is present. Suitable safety cover could range from having reliable, competent canoeists strategically placed, to having trained bank-side rescue parties, or even divers on hand.

**Canoeing refers to open canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards and sit on tops, with single or double bladed paddles*

2. BRITISH CANOEING INSURANCE BRIEFING

INSURANCE ARRANGEMENT FOR MEMBERS AND AFFILIATED CLUBS

Cover is arranged through British Canoeing's Brokers. The cover provided, falls under two main headings: Civil Liability through Perkins Slade, and Boat Insurance through NW Brown.

1. CIVIL LIABILITY INSURANCE

This type of insurance (sometimes called Public Liability Insurance) operates when negligence has occurred causing injury or death to a third party or damage to their property. It provides worldwide (except North America) cover to a maximum of £10,000,000 for any one incident.

This applies in connection with:

- a. Canoeing privately
- b. Any British Canoeing recognised activity
- c. Approved social activities linked to a British Canoeing affiliated club

The cover includes all legal costs and damages awarded if negligence is proven or accepted by the insurance company. Member to member liability is included, which means that the third party can be another British Canoeing member.

Negligence sometimes resulting in six figure damages or more may occur through sheer carelessness or irresponsibility, but it can happen through unforeseen circumstances. British Canoeing takes the view that all who canoe must be covered by Third Party Insurance, and therefore the following are covered:

- a. All current individual British Canoeing members resident in the United Kingdom (includes members of Her Majesty's armed forces whilst serving overseas).
- b. Current registered members of currently affiliated clubs who pay the capitation fee for each member who is not an individual British Canoeing member. The capitation fee is only waived if the club's members are covered by Third Party insurance already, probably through a parent body, and a club officer has signed a declaration to this effect.

It is important to remember that should you be involved in an incident that may give rise to a claim against you to

NOT admit liability. Potentially, in doing this you are allowing insurers the option to walk away and cease their involvement in any case.

To maintain insurance cover renewal, membership subscription and affiliation **fees must be paid before the expiry** of the previous membership or affiliation. There is no period of grace. In addition clubs must maintain accurate and up-to-date membership records. If an incident arises involving a member these records will be checked to ensure the said in question was affiliated at the time the incident occurred. The insurers or their agents reserve the right to scrutinise any such records at any time. It is no longer necessary to submit membership lists to the British Canoeing office but the correct number of members, as in the accounts for the financial year most recent to their British Canoeing affiliation or renewal date, must be declared.

Those joining the club since their last financial year end ARE covered, provided they are entered correctly on the club membership records and have paid their club subscription in full before the incident.

NOTE – Clubs and affiliate members should note that affiliate members are only covered by the liability insurance when taking part in recognised club activities.

2. ADVICE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUB OFFICIALS

It is presumed by the Council of British Canoeing, and the Insurers, that elected officials of British Canoeing clubs, or members acting officially on their behalf, are responsible persons acting in a responsible manner. It is also accepted that canoeing is an activity which involves certain inherent risks.

It is known that good initial training, a gradual building up of experience, the wearing and use of recognised safety gear, allied to the knowledge of its use and of the canoeing environment, have provided a good track record of safety. It is not expected, in other words, that activity should be restricted to very 'safe' canoeing. But it is expected that when others are let into more dangerous ventures, this will be done in accordance with accepted precepts. There is clearly both a legal and a moral responsibility to do so.

Irresponsible or careless leadership, however, will not invalidate the Third Party insurance. In fact, it is only when negligence is involved, that the policy is likely to be invoked! There are no grounds for compensation to be paid if those authorising the activity are not considered by a Court to have been guilty of negligence.

NOTE – While it is not an insurance requirement that club journeys, club activities or events to be covered by qualified coaches, the holding or not of a Coaching qualification by the appointed, or presumed leaders of a canoeing venture, is a factor which would be taken into account by a court in determining whether or not negligence was involved.

In any situation Club Officials should ensure that all club events and activities are endorsed by them and led by appropriately experienced / qualified individuals, and such individuals are confirmed by them as being appropriate to do so through club records and or committee event minutes.

Club officials should also make a distinction between club trips and events and peer only trips / events. Such distinction should be made very clear to their members and highlight the degree of individual responsibility in attending either type of trip / event.

3. ADVICE ON THE IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS HOLDING COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

A person holding a coaching qualification, who happens to be present at an authorised club activity but has not been specifically appointed by the club officials to run the activity, may not have an automatic legal responsibility in the case of an accident occurring.

He or she may well feel that they have a moral responsibility, but that is not the same thing. Should the qualified member express doubts about the safety provision at a given activity, this should be taken into account by club officials. Should an incident arise and a claim be made against the club, a court would seek to determine all facts to decide whether the club was in fact negligent.

4. ADVICE FOR THOSE RECEIVING FEES FOR COACHING

The Public Liability insurance does not exclude advice provided for a fee.

Consequently, when coaching is provided within British Canoeing, to members or clubs, liability is included for

errors or omissions in such instruction. Since 1st November 1998 all registered British Canoeing Coaches are insured, through their subscription to British Canoeing, for Civil Liability to a limit of indemnity of £10,000,000.

The cover includes all coaching advice and instruction given for a fee or not, to any person. The cover excludes North America unless the coaching delivered is on an agreed / recognised British Canoeing / British Canoeing NA course / event and British Canoeing are informed on each and every occasion such activity takes place.

Civil Liability cover is provided to coaches as individuals provided their annual turnover is less than £25,000. The policy includes cover for coaching being carried out as a sole trader.

The use of a trading name is permitted as is operating as a partnership (each partner can turn over up to £25,000). However, limited companies are not permitted and the insurance does not cover employing staff. Employers Liability if needed must be purchased separately.

Civil Liability is a very wide insurance that includes Public Liability (damage to third party property or persons), Product Liability (goods supplied), Errors & Omissions (advice given or not given), Member to Member Liability, Trespass, Libel, Slander and all other matters under Civil Law. Voluntary Helpers and the Interest of Principals are also included within the insurance. If there are any queries or if we can be of any further help please do not hesitate to contact Perkins Slade (0121 698 8052).

NOTE – Coaches should note that, save for instances where they are seconded by British Canoeing to advise on or be part of development working groups, or act as or provide technical advice to commercial third parties, insurance cover does not extend to aspects of advice / development support in respect of non-British Canoeing related activity (including non-British Canoeing Coach Education matters). This would be subject to a specific and individual professional indemnity liability cover.

5. INSURANCE AND COACHES HOLDING 'FOREIGN NATIONALS' STATUS

While British Canoeing Coaching will award its qualifications to foreign nationals attending an appropriately British Canoeing authorised course, provided the candidate fulfils all the requirements necessary for that award, including continuous British Canoeing membership, in the normal way, British

Canoeing cannot protect them with any liability insurance and as such they must provide evidence of holding such cover in order to have their status validated.

6. INSURANCE FOR COACH EDUCATORS

Recognised British Canoeing Coach Educators are covered by the Liability insurances when directing / tutoring on authorised British Canoeing Coach Education courses in the UK. Course directors 'employing' tutors to provide the required ratio cover on coach education courses are also covered for employer liability purposes for the duration of the course only.

Any recognised course director / tutor wishing to deliver British Canoeing Coach Education Courses overseas is not automatically in a position to either run courses nor are they covered by the insurance. Any such course needs to have been agreed and authorised by the British Canoeing Coaching Department and insurance provision extended on such basis as required.

7. ADVICE ON THE USE OF 'APPROVED' EQUIPMENT

If the equipment provided for use by a club was clearly sub-standard when compared to that which was commonly accepted within the sport, and if the type or standard of the equipment could be shown to be a contributory cause of the accident, then grounds for a claim of 'negligence' could exist on this score. The use of properly maintained 'approved' equipment would make the establishment of a claim less likely. It is necessary for equipment to conform to generally accepted standards. It is not necessary for formally approved gear only to be used.

8. ADVICE ON THE USE OF PREMISES

The Third Party Liability insurance also covers the club for leased, hired, rented or borrowed premises – such as swimming pools.

9. FINAL WORD ON THIRD PARTY INSURANCE

The law requires us to take reasonable care for the safety of others. The moral code clearly also implies this duty. In practical terms, if a large claim occurred, the renewal premium could be prohibitive. There is therefore a duty on all of us to ensure that it remains at modest cost to British Canoeing for the benefit of the member who may become a genuine victim of circumstance. It is important that the policy is not invoked through irresponsibility.

10. INCIDENT REPORTING

We would recommend that a designated person within your organisation is made responsible to record any reportable accident. Records must be kept for at least 25 years. Names and addresses of any possible witnesses should also be recorded.

From 31 December 2003 businesses must have a new style accident book which is compliant with data protection legislation. The new style book is available from HSE Books.

The register must contain the following information relating to all reportable accidents or dangerous occurrences:

- Date and time of accident
- As regards a person at work – full name, occupation, nature of injury, age
- As regards a person not at work – full name; status (e.g. customer), nature of injury, age
- Place where accident occurred
- A brief description of the circumstances
- Method by which the event was reported

With regard to all British Canoeing related activity, individual members and clubs are advised that they must report all incidents to British Canoeing / British Canoeing insurers via the incident report form available on websites or via the Perkin Slade insurance site www.ps-bcu-insurance.com

Individuals reporting incidents in this way need have no fear or concern about action being taken against them. The details of incidents reported will only be used for the purpose stated and will be held confidentially. The forms purpose is to ensure that reporting requirements are met and that, in the unlikely event that a claim is made against you, insurers can act speedily to cover the claim.

11. BOAT INSURANCE (GREAT BRITAIN AND EIRE)

Insurance of canoes and kayaks is available to British Canoeing members only to cover accidental damage or loss, or theft, providing the boat was secured. This includes damage to equipment when in use. There are a number of package deals available at reduced rates and a discount for individuals or clubs insuring three or more boats. Cover can also be provided on a New for Old basis.

For premiums, contact Towergate Insurance:
Tel: 0844 892 1987 Email boat@towergate.co.uk
Visit: www.towergateinsurance.co.uk

12. INSURANCE OF CLUBHOUSES

For affiliated clubs cover may be arranged for both buildings (if owned) and the entire contents, including canoes. The cover would embrace fire, theft and the normal additional perils of storm, flood, burst pipes, aircraft, explosion, impact, riot and malicious damage. No survey of the premises would normally be required but a general view photograph is needed. Cost would depend on the construction of the premises and the values involved. If the club employs a cleaner or steward, the necessary Employers Liability cover, required by law, can be incorporated, or can be provided as an extension to

the club's Third Party policy at additional cost. Contact Perkins Slade Ltd, 3, The Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1BQ Tel: 0121 698 8000 Email: bcu@perkins-slade.com

CLAIMS PROCEDURE

Third Party and Other Insurances: Perkins Slade Ltd, 3, The Broadway, Broad Street, Birmingham B15 1BQ Tel: 0121 698 8000 Email: bcu@perkins-slade.com.

Boat Insurance: for all claims please contact the relevant insurer: Towergate Insurance – boat@towergate.co.uk

3. INCIDENT REPORT FORM

On 26 April 1999, the civil Justice system was amended to reflect a number of changes now known as the Woolf Reforms. These changes relate specifically to resolving disputes and personal injury claims. As a result it is important that details of any known incidents or injuries that occur to students, while undergoing coaching or taking part in canoeing or kayaking activities, are recorded. Indeed those involved in any sport are required to report (to their insurance brokers) every known incident, particularly those involving a personal injury, which may give rise to a subsequent claim.

While it is recognised that centres and clubs may already hold information relating to incidents and accidents in their accident and or near miss books, this form is provided for the use of all individual coaches wishing to report incidents, particularly those operating under the British Canoeing third party liability scheme. Covered or not through a centre or club, we would encourage you to ensure relevant information is recorded via this route. Sharing this information with British Canoeing will ensure that the information is passed through to British Canoeing's insurance brokers and perhaps, more importantly, the information will allow us to build a database of injuries and incidents that will enable us to further develop future good practice guidelines to help protect those taking part in paddlesports.

Individuals reporting incidents in this way need have no fear or concern about action being taken against them. The details of incidents reported will only be used for the purpose stated and will be held confidentially. The purpose of this form is to ensure that reporting requirements are met and that in the unlikely event that a claim is made against you insurers can act speedily to cover the claim.

Please help us support you in this matter. The non-reporting of this type of information could result in insurers limiting cover or denying indemnity.

Please complete this form in clear print and using black ink. Return to: British Canoeing Coaching Office, National Water Sports Centre, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG12 2LU Tel: 0845 370 9500

Club / Centre / Organisation:
Your name:
Your contact details:
Date and time of incident:
Name of individual(s) involved in incident:
Contact details of individual(s) involved in incident or injured:
Brief description of incident:

Details of any injuries:
Outline of actions taken:
Details of on-site first aid:
Details of any emergency service support:
Details of any evacuation:
Details of any witnesses:
Outcome (as far as can be determined at time of report):
Any additional information:

Thank you for filling in this form.

Please return to: British Canoeing Coaching Office, National Water Sports Centre, Adbolton Lane, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG12 2LU Tel: 0845 370 9500

4. CLUB SAFETY REVIEW

The purpose of this document is to assist you and your club assess the management of safety within your club and club activities, and in particular assist you in producing a club Safety Plan. At this stage it is not meant to be comprehensive, merely a guide to which you may wish to add further items and comments as a means of completing a thorough review as part of an ongoing safety management process.

This document outlines a number of responsibilities and actions for club members, committees and coaches / leaders.

IS YOUR CLUB A SAFE CLUB?

PERSONAL

All members should read, acknowledge and follow all appropriate safety guidelines within the club Safety Plan.

CLUB (CLUB COMMITTEE)

- Actively promote a culture of safe practice
- Produce and communicate a Safety Plan for all your members and coaches to follow
- Modify the Safety Plan in the light of incidents, risk assessments and current good practice
- Be clear about when club activity is club activity

COACH

Coaches should educate and train paddlers in understanding safety management practices and in understanding and following the club's Safety Plan.

CLUB SAFETY ADVISER

It is advisable for clubs to appoint, from within their committee, a safety adviser or officer to:

- Advise on matters of safety for the club and all club activities
- Advise on the effectiveness of the club's Safety Plan
- Undertake an annual Safety Plan review

Minimum standards to be adopted within the safety plan.

SAFETY PLAN

A Safety Plan must be formulated and communicated by the club, by all appropriate means possible to educate and train its members, including Induction Programmes for all new members. All new members must receive a copy of the Safety Plan and participate in an Induction Programme.

It is the primary function of the Safety Plan to care for the safety of club members, other water users and the public at large.

As a matter of good practice clubs are advised to complete, ahead of producing a safety plan, a thorough audit of club activity and current practice. Such an exercise will then provide an indication of existing areas of good practice as well as areas needing further work / development in order to ensure the safety of members in all club activities.

Further documents are available to assist you in this process – **British Canoeing Event Safety Audit, British Canoeing Safety Checklist – All Activities.**

THE CLUB SHOULD PROMINENTLY DISPLAY:

- A plan of the local water highlighting hazards, any zoning, navigation or circulation rules along with emergency access points (named and where necessary with postcodes).
- Guidance to members when taking part in club events.
- Guidance on the club's Health and Safety policy.
- Guidance on the club's Child Protection and Screening policy.
- Instructions to cover any variation to normal procedures needed to manage risks resulting from tidal currents, stream, wind or other climatic conditions.
- Visual Aids on safe practice, life saving and up-to-date resuscitation techniques.
- Instructions for reporting incidents.
- Telephone numbers for Emergency Services including the exact location and directions to the club, and any access points including postcode or identifiers used by the Emergency Services.
- Vital telephone numbers relating to safety e.g. club officials, First Aiders, the local accident and emergency hospital, navigation authority, river or harbour police, RLNI, etc.
- Clear directions to the nearest and alternative telephone points.
- The position of First Aid Boxes and equipment.

Further good practice (in addition to minimum standards to be adopted):

- Emergency services, local navigation authorities and other water users should be provided with a copy of the Safety Plan for any comment or suggestion to be made.
- Safety Plans should be modified in the light of incidents or changes in good practice.

Topics to be addressed by the Safety Plan should include:

- Rules for club members relating to their responsibilities in relation to safe practice.
- When and where crews can train, warm up and cool down on the water.
- The criteria for assessing the risks associated with any local on the water activity.
- Rules relating to the training of junior members.
- Emergency Action Plan – members should be made aware of their roles and action to be taken in the event of an emergency.

5. BRITISH CANOEING CHECKLIST – ALL ACTIVITIES

The purpose of this document is to assist you and your club assess the management of safety within your club and club activities, and in particular assist you in producing a club Safety Plan. At this stage it is not meant to be comprehensive, merely a guide to which you may wish to add further items and comments as a means of completing a thorough review as part of an ongoing safety management process.

This document outlines a number of responsibilities and actions for club members, club committee and coaches / leaders.

INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

This checklist is the recommended minimum standard to ensure safety of **recreational activities** of *British Canoeing canoeing affiliate groups*. Its purpose is to ensure that all appropriate steps have been taken to ensure the safety of participants in British Canoeing canoeing-sanctioned paddling activities.

How to use this checklist:

1. This checklist is a useful tool for club safety officers to assist them complete a generic audit of all club activities, in order to provide the club committee with the reassurance that standard safety measures for club activities are met.
2. This checklist is also a useful tool for trip / journey leaders when organising either a series of club trips or new single trips or journeys. **This checklist is all you need.** Please refer to it when planning for a safe activity, and complete as required to confirm that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure the safety of all participants.

Guidance noted in this checklist are based on the following documents:

- British Canoeing Safety Guidelines for Paddlers Clubs and Volunteers
- British Canoeing Terms of Reference
- British Canoeing Course Staffing Requirements and Ratio's
- British Canoeing Canoeing Handbook
- British Canoeing Coaching Handbook

You may find it helpful to have these documents on hand.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE ACTIVITY

Name of organisation hosting the activity	
Name of activity:	
Description of activity:	
Description of participants ('participants' include paddlers, officials, guides, instructors, coaches, observers, etc.):	
Activity date(s) & times:	
Activity venue(s):	
Other relevant information about the activity	

Please document whether or not the following safety measures have been taken in preparation for your activity by completing the checklists that follow.

1. MEMBER PROTECTION

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>1.1. CRB Screening and Prohibited Person Declarations</p> <p>Have all coaches / instructors and guides been screened* for their roles as per British Canoeing Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy?</p> <p>Have all volunteer personnel who will or are likely to have unsupervised contact with, or travel away with, teams of canoeists under 18 years of age, been screened as per British Canoeing Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy?</p>					
<p>NB: In the event that the person screened is found to have committed any criminal offences or whose history suggests that he/she may be a questionable candidate for the role has appropriate action been taken?</p> <p><i>Refer to British Canoeing for details of appropriate action.</i></p>					
<p>1.2. Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy</p> <p>Has your club / group developed and implemented policies and procedures to prevent harassment of any kind, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual harassment • Racial harassment • Sexuality harassment • Disability harassment • Abuse • Vilification Discrimination – direct / indirect equity 					

2. PLANNING

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
2.1 Risk Management: Has a Safety Management Plan been developed, which includes the following:					
a. Chain of command Who will report to whom in the event of an emergency.					
b. Communication systems and technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication technology (mobiles, radios, satellite phones, etc.) that can be relied upon to work at the venue has been organised. • Has emergency response information been documented, and is it readily available in the event of an emergency that requires external assistance? Information should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication and contact details - Escape route and location information - Participants lists - Medical forms - Transport details 					
<i>Continued over...</i>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>c. Emergency procedures</p> <p>Have emergency procedures been developed and documented, for each of the following events (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serious injury or fatality • Serious threats to personal safety from high-risk environmental conditions (e.g. flood, storm, fire, etc.) • Lost participants • Behavioural management problems <p>Do the emergency procedures include (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority of tasks; immediate, second, third • Roles and responsibilities • Exit routes, emergency and evacuation procedures • Contact details for base camp, and program administrators as required • Contact details for police, rescue and medical services in the area • Communication modes and protocols • Location management • Vehicular access • Boat access • Helicopter access • Identification of nearest medical facilities • Identification of natural hazards and appropriate response (as required) • Post incident management; contact of insurer, legal procedures, post incident trauma, counselling? 					
<p>2.2. Float plan</p> <p>Has a float plan been established for the event?</p> <p>Does the float plan include full details of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The route • The participants • Contingency plans 					

3. PEOPLE

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>3.1 Leader responsibilities</p> <p>Does the leader have the following minimum responsibilities (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research likely hazards • Confirm group experience/capabilities • Adhere to the British Canoeing Safety Guidelines • Ensure a full briefing of participants is clearly carried out and understood • Check river levels and weather reports • Ensure that all group equipment is stored correctly • Confirm head count before departure and throughout trip • Be alert for physical and psychological condition of the group • Control pace of the group (trips & expeditions) • Rest group if necessary (trips and expeditions) • Ensure, to the best of his/her ability, that participants do not get into situations beyond their capabilities • Designate responsibility to other leaders • Confirm headcount after trip (trips & expeditions) • Notify appropriate persons of safe completion (trips & expeditions) • Check all equipment on return <p><i>Continued over...</i></p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>3.2. Competency and qualifications of instructors and/or guides</p> <p>Are all instructors and/or guides qualified for the roles that they will perform at the event?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relevant qualification (see pages 10–11 of the British Canoeing Safety Guidelines document for overview of what activities people holding each qualification are licensed to conduct). • Proof that their qualification and skills are current – this means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Coaches meet British Canoeing Coach Update Requirements b. Coaches/guides comply with Best Practice guidelines and observe the relevant club / British Canoeing constitution, bylaws, regulations <p>Experienced volunteer leaders</p> <p>Experienced volunteer leaders have had their experience formally verified and confirmed by club / group.</p>					
<p>3.3. First aid qualifications</p> <p>Do all instructors and guides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a current recognised body approved first aid qualification? • Have a designated first aid kit as a minimum? <p><i>Continued over...</i></p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>3.4. Communication and authority</p> <p>Has the leader ensured that all participants are given clear and concise instructions on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The status of the trip in the club / group calendar, etc. • Personal responsibilities • Arrangements for travel and meeting • Personal equipment needs • Communication arrangements for off / on the river • The correct and safe handling and navigation of any canoe or kayak • The correct fitting and wearing of appropriate Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) which are to be worn at all times • The whereabouts of all group and safety equipment • In sea programs, the group spacing and average speed, as well as the signals to be used by the trip leader and participants • The group's capsize procedure • Sun/and/or environmental protection • Group medical concerns • The program for the day • The role of each participant • The expectations of each participant 					
<p>3.5. General equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have all the possible eventualities been considered when selecting equipment for the activity? • Have measures been put into place to ensure that all necessary equipment (including emergency supplies) is available to all participants, as appropriate for the event? <p><i>Continued over...</i></p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>3.6. Boats and associated equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the kayaks and canoes used suitable for the nature and duration of the activity, the conditions expected during the activity, and the skill levels of all participants? <p>Are measures put into place to ensure that all craft:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a stable platform allowing strokes to be performed effectively • Possess the strength to withstand all foreseeable forces • Not sink, but remain horizontal when swamped and be useable as buoyancy for its crew • Be capable of being towed by rope and grasped by hand • Allow for easy exit in the event of a capsize • Not to be designed, made of a material or finished in a way that could cause injury to impede exit • Are fitted with end loops or toggles • Are fitted with a footrest that will not allow feet to become entrapped and that will not break in the event of foreseeable paddling forces or impacts • Are of a colour that is clearly visible to other water users or rescue authorities • Have positive buoyancy at each end • Are rudders, skegs or retractable fins used on sea kayaks? If yes are they in good working order? <i>NB – paddlers should not be reliant on them for directional control of the craft.</i> • Pump or self-bailer – is a pump or self bailer carried so that water may be removed from a sea kayak cockpit as necessary <p>Continued over...</p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>3.7. Ratios and group size</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there an appropriate instructor/guide: client ratio for this trip? <p><i>To determine the correct ratio for your trip refer to British Canoeing Terms of Reference and Ratio documentation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are appropriate safety management procedures in place to cover all safety scenarios? 					
<p>3.8. Skills of participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the leader taken all reasonable steps to ensure that participants are competent to participate in the proposed activity (ideally an on-water familiarization* or appropriate Star Award Status)? <p><i>*Purpose of the on-water familiarisation session to demonstrate and practice relevant skills and procedures including but not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Personal performance</i> <i>Rescue</i> <i>Self rescue and capsize drills</i> 					

4. EQUIPMENT

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>4.1. Paddles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are paddles appropriate to the type of craft, and do they build the skill levels of the participants? • Are there appropriate spare paddles available, as appropriate for the activity(s)? 					
<p>4.2. Personal flotation devices (PFDs)</p> <p>Are PFDs that comply with the requirements below available for each participant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction complies with CE Standards • Are the correct size and are adjustable to ensure a proper fit • Each PFD has a whistle attached (recommended) • Where applicable towing cowstails are quick release • The PFDs must not contain any pocket or other component that may impede paddling, normal rescue practices or exit from craft. • All PFDs are bright in colour (recommended) 					
<p>4.3. Helmets</p> <p>Are canoeing helmets available and worn for all of the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paddling water grade 2 and above • Surfing • Paddling among rocks or in sea caves • During rescue practice <p><i>Continued over...</i></p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>4.4. Navigation equipment (where appropriate)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will an appropriate choice of navigation equipment be used? This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maps and/or marine charts - Compasses - GPS receiver • Is the navigation equipment treated and/or stored in such a way as to make them water resistant? 					
<p>4.5. Communication equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the leader determined what equipment should be carried by the participants? Equipment chosen must be appropriate for the activity and area of operation. It may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Marine Whistle - Mobile phone - Signaling mirror - Marine VHF radio (operators should hold the VHF certificate for proficiency) - Flares (red, smoke, parachute) - Marine 27MHz radio - Torch - Strobe light - VHF radio - Satellite phone - Chemical light stick (or electronic equivalent) - EPIRB • Is all electronic and other equipment that can be damaged by water carried in water resistant containers? <p><i>Continued over...</i></p>					

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>4.6. Safety and rescue equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is all safety and rescue equipment carried in such a way that it is quickly and easily accessible? • Do leaders have an appropriate towing system easily accessible, so that it can be deployed quickly when needed? • Are other participants carrying towlines as appropriate for the activity and at the discretion of the leader? • Are all towing systems quick-release, and are they set up so that they do not restrict the maneuverability of the towing boat? • Do all leaders in any activity involving moving water carry throw bags. • Are throw bags available? • Do some other participants who are trained in the use of throw bags carry them as well (at the discretion of the leader)? • Is a rescue knife available for all white water activities? • Are the knives quickly and easily accessible (but not carried on the outside of a PFD)? • Does the leader (and other participants at the leader's discretion) carry a basic repair kit that is appropriate for the boats that are being used? 					
<p>4.7. Maintenance, replacement and storage of equipment</p> <p>Is all equipment used in canoeing activities used, maintained and stored according to manufacturer's instructions where applicable?</p>					

5. RECORDING AND REPORTING INCIDENTS

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>5.1. Recording and reporting incidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does your club / group maintain centralised records of canoeing incidents and accidents that resulted in injury or had the potential to result in injury? Does your club / group report these incidents to British Canoeing? In the event of an incident, are all personnel encouraged to complete an incident report form and forward directly to British Canoeing for processing (recommended)? <p><i>See British Canoeing website for a copy of the Incident Report Form or contact Customer Services 0845 370 9500</i></p>					

6. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Have the following steps been actioned?	Yes	No	Relevant Yes/No	Action	Date completed
<p>6.1. Clothing</p> <p>Do trip leaders and all participants adhere to and promote best practice in their choice of clothing, footwear and personal equipment?</p>					
<p>6.2. Sun protection</p> <p>Do trip leaders and all participants adhere to and promote best practice sun protection behaviour?</p>					
<p>6.3. Food and drink</p> <p>Are adequate food and drink supplies as appropriate for the nature and duration of the activity for all participants carried or available?</p>					

6. BRITISH CANOEING EVENT SAFETY AUDIT

The purpose of this document is to assist you and your club assess the management of safety within specific club events / races, and in particular assist you in producing a club safety plan. At this stage it is not meant to be comprehensive, merely a guide to which you may wish to add further items and comments as a means of completing a thorough review as part of an ongoing safety management process.

This document outlines a number of responsibilities and actions for club members, club committee, and coaches/leaders.

Questions: Yes / No / Action

Stage 1	ACTION	Audit/comment
	What are the club's / organiser's motivations for running the event	
	Does the club already have a process in place for managing the event / race?	
	What are the specific pressures on the club in running the event?	

Stage 2	ACTION	Audit/comment
Early Planning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application and authority to run the event • NGB Issues • Personnel 	Does the event / race require NGB authorisation?	
	Are there any NGB issues to note / build into the planning?	
	Has the club appointed an overall event organiser and established a clear chain of command between committee, organiser, safety coordinator, marshals, safety supporters, etc.	
	Have all relevant members of the event delivery team been screened for competence and CRB? 'Right people right job'	

Stage 3 Pre-Event Considerations	ACTION	Audit/comment
<p>'Span of Control'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Safety • Facilities • Race/event needs • Comms 	Is there an appropriate 'Span of Control' / management infrastructure in place for the event / race ?	
	Has a person been appointed to act as Water Safety Adviser for the event as required by British Canoeing?	
	Is the Water Safety Adviser a member of the Organising Committee?	
	Is water safety a regular item at each meeting of the Organising Committee?	
	Is water safety part of the event review?	
	Has a Risk Assessment been undertaken covering situations on both land and water?	
	Is the nature of the course/event environment taken into account, including spectator areas, car parking, start/finish areas, room for paddlers to take over the majority of the course, and room to accommodate other water users or paddlers not racing?	
	Is the Risk Assessment reviewed after each event, taking account of previous incidents, changes to arrangements, changes to the course, etc. or new hazards?	
	Do you have a Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Screening Policy and if so does it meet the British Canoeing Child Protection and Vulnerable Adults Policy requirements?	
	<p>Has a Safety Plan been formulated, based on your Risk Assessment?</p> <p>Does the Safety Plan cover the decision-making process for cancellation due to inclement conditions, rules applying to the event, communications, medical and first aid, the start and finish, race monitors/ umpires, instructions to officials and competitors, emergency vehicle access and an Accident and Emergency Action Plan?</p>	
	Has the Safety Plan been shown to the police, water authority, ambulance service, life saving and first aid organisations to confirm that the event can take place under safe conditions for both competitors and the general public?	

	Do you ensure that officials, safety boat crews, umpires, first aiders and medical officer are fully briefed about your Accident and Emergency Action Plan?	
	Do you generate a participant register?	
	Do you require participants to complete an event registration form?	
	Do you take bookings for your event on the day? If so, how is this managed in relation to venue access, venue authorisation and risk assessment activity?	
	Do you require participants to sign a statement of physical competence and where appropriate a medical declaration form?	
	Do you require parental Consent forms to be completed for participants under the age of 18?	
	Is all such data sensitively held and subject to Data Protection best practice?	

Stage 4 Day of the Event	ACTION	Audit/comment	
CALM – Communication /Avoidance/ Line of sight / Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Event plan • The venue / routes and rules • Decisions and dynamic risk assessment • Communications • IT needs • The entrants and others 	Have all the event team been given clear guidance and concise instructions in respect of the event / race?		
	Instructions to officials and competitors		
	Do you provide training to event organisers, race marshals and safety teams?		
	Do you provide officials and competitors with instructions which include local racing rules, navigation rules, flow pattern and identification of local hazards, together with a plan of the course illustrating these features?		
	Do you advise competitors of the actions they should take in the event of an accident, together with emergency telephone numbers and the location of the nearest telephone?		
	Do you provide officials with specific instructions regarding their particular duty?		
	Do you instruct course officials and safety launch crews to be in position prior to crews boating?		
	Safety teams / umpires		
	Do you provide lifejackets/buoyancy aids for all safety team members / launch umpires when on duty?		
	Do your safety teams / umpires carry buoyancy aids / helmets, throwlines, river knives, first aid equipment and thermal blankets?		
	Do you instruct your safety teams / umpires that in the event of an accident their first duty is to the safety of the competitor?		
	Do you provide safety team members / launch umpires with radio communication and loudhailers?		
	Where practical do you provide bank safety teams / umpires with throwlines and safety equipment?		
	Race marshals		
	Do you appoint sufficient race marshals so that between them they can observe the full event / course?		
	Do you place race marshals in positions where there are tight bends, narrow passages		

	that prevent overtaking, or where special care needs to be taken?	
	Do you provide race marshals with radio communication and loud hailer?	
Safety boats		
	Do you provide safety boats suitable for the task in sufficient numbers to provide rapid response?	
	Are the crews of your safety boats competent in boat handling and rescue techniques (preferably trained to RYA Powerboat Level 2)?	
	Do your safety boats carry buoyancy aids, line throwing equipment, thermal blankets, first aid equipment, bailer, knife, paddle, engine cut-out lanyard device, anchor and line and simple hand holds fixed to the side?	
	Are the crews in radio contact with Event Control?	
	Do you provide lifejackets / buoyancy aids for all safety boat crews on duty?	
First Aid		
	Do you provide first aid cover?	
	Do you appoint a Medical Adviser to ensure that all medical aspects, recovery and first aid are put in place?	
	Do you ensure that competitors, supporters and the general public know where to obtain first aid?	
	Do you have a medically qualified doctor on site to provide general medical support and advice?	
	Do you have a method of communication to summon first aid to an accident?	
General		
	Do you have a system to check that competitors' boats are in a safe condition to race before embarkation is allowed?	
	Where required do you display warning notices of the event to other water users and the actions they should take?	
	Where practical do you clearly buoy the event / race course and traffic lanes for other passing river users as required by the local navigation or harbour authority?	

Stage 5 – Post Event

- Recording / reporting of incidents
- NGB issues
- Cleaning Up
- Review and Lessons learnt
- Results
- Thank yous

7. BRITISH CANOEING COMPETITION SAFETY MANAGEMENT

The purpose of this document is to assist you and your club assess the management of safety within your club and club activities, and in particular assist you in producing a club Safety Plan. At this stage it is not meant to be comprehensive, merely a guide to which you may wish to add further items and comments as a means of completing a thorough review as part of an ongoing safety management process.

This document outlines a number of responsibilities and actions for club members, club committee and coaches / leaders.

RESPONSIBILITIES PERSONAL

- Read and understand the instructions to competitors
- Report any incidents at the competition

CLUB

- Distribute instructions to competitors
- Provide a representative to attend any safety briefings

COACH

- Read and understand the instructions to competitors
- Discuss these plans with their paddlers and check their understanding

COMPETITION SAFETY ADVISER

- Facilitate the production of the Competition Safety Plan for the competition

COMPETITION ORGANISERS

- Ensure that an effective Competition Safety Plan is produced
- Ensure that the Competition Safety Plan is distributed to all competing clubs and other relevant parties, race officials, safety boat and other personnel
- Read and understand the Competition Safety Plan
- Keep competition organisers informed with ongoing safety aspects of the competition
- Set an appropriate time line for race entry
- Ensure that the Race Application includes medical declaration details from all competitors

DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE

- Appoint a Discipline Safety Advisor

- Approve Competition Applications
- Approve the submitted Competition Safety Plan

DISCIPLINE WATER SAFETY ADVISER

- Review / advise on the effectiveness of the Competition Safety Plan

MINIMUM STANDARDS TO BE ADOPTED

SAFETY PLAN

The primary purpose of the Competition Safety Plan is to ensure the safety of competitors, officials, other water users and the public at large.

- The Competition Safety Plan must be formulated, published and circulated by the competition organisers
- It is vital that those affected by the Competition Safety Plan know what actions are to be taken, by whom and when, and in what sequence, to maintain effective control and coordination
- Competition Safety Plans or relevant copies must be received by both competitors and officials at least three days prior to the competition
- Competition Safety Plans must be in place even for small private competitions

TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE COMPETITION SAFETY PLAN (COMPLETE COMPETITION SAFETY AUDIT SHEET):

- Vehicle and trailer access routes
- Circulation patterns to be followed at all times during the period of racing and during practice sessions on, or in the neighbourhood of, the course
- Any special points of danger on or near the course
- Safety boat type, numbers and locations
- First Aid positions
- Safety equipment required for the competition
- Summoning help
- Cancelling or suspension of the competition
- Medical support arrangements
- Location of emergency telephones and suitable communications systems, (including back-up) covering on the water, internally and to outside agencies and emergency services

- Marshaling instructions and control
- When and where paddlers / teams can practice, warm up and cool down on the water
- Access and transport arrangements (there needs to be a distinction between the levels of response needed for major and minor incidents)
- Boat storage arrangements
- Launching and landing provision
- Emergency Action Plan with details of immediate actions to be taken

FURTHER GOOD PRACTICE (IN ADDITION TO MINIMUM STANDARDS TO BE ADOPTED)

- Print outs, or information and instructions based on, the Competition Safety Plan should be produced to give separate succinct information to the competitors and to the various officials to highlight individual responsibilities
- Pre-competition meetings for team leaders, coaches, officials, etc. to reinforce the requirements of the Competition Safety Plan
- Emergency services and local navigation authorities should be provided with a copy of the Competition Safety Plan in sufficient time for any comment or suggestion to be made
- Competition Safety Plans should be subject to dynamic review and modified in the light of the competition review or any changes in the risk assessment
- Competition organisers should set the criteria to enable them to judge when a competition should be cancelled or suspended (e.g. strong winds, poor visibility, rough or fast flowing water, etc.)

8. EXAMPLE PARTICIPANT STATEMENT

TOUR: _____ TOUR DATE: _____

TOUR LEADERS: _____

'Go Canoeing' Tour Participant Declaration

1. I have watched and understood the safety brief given by the tour leader(s) for the tour I am taking part in. I have asked the leader(s) to clarify any points I am uncertain of.
2. I am aware that the activities I am to take part in are of a strenuous and adventurous nature. I acknowledge such risk and therefore accept the need for responsible behavior, including listening to and following safety instructions.
3. I have no medical condition or disability which may be relevant to me participating in this activity.
4. I have been advised on the water quality issues.
5. I am not under the influence of Alcohol or Drugs.
6. I am able to swim and I am confident in open water wearing the clothing I will be wearing whilst participating in the activity.
7. I am aware that the session may be cancelled for operational, weather or environmental related safety issues.
8. I agree to abide by British Canoeing's 'Go Canoeing' Code of Practice.

In signing below I declare that I agree with the above statements and am aware of the risks associated with participating in this activity. By filling in my email address I agree to receive future offers and updates from British Canoeing.

Name	Signature	Emergency contact	Email address

British Canoeing, National Water Sports Centre, Adbolton Lane, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham NG12 2LU