

## Risk Management Plan – Guide

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.

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.

A written risk management plan 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 consequences of a wrong decision in the initial stages of an incident may be irreversible. Start making your decisions before the groups arrive and the event starts. Think about the weather, water levels, level of paddlers, 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?

Below is an example template of a risk management plan. This is not to be copied, as every risk management plan is unique to each individual event.

### Weather Hazards:

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Unexpected bad weather causing dangerous conditions	Event organisers or key race official will stop the event. Any boats still on the water will be moved into the most sheltered area and supported back to exit points.	Boats capsizing or getting stuck.	A fully equipped water safety team watching the water at all times whilst competitors/participants are out. Radio contact at all times between safety team and event organisers. Buoyancy aids checked by officials before the event starts.
Electrical Storm	All participants must leave the water. Little transport to move all participants to areas of safety.	Participant struck by lightning.	

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### Water Hazards:

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Boats on the water for practice	Coaches and crews must have read the pre event information and safety plan before beginning practice	Capsize or sinking during practice	Pre-event information and event briefing will highlight that participants cannot go on the water out of the allotted practice times unless there is water safety and it has been agreed by event organisers.  Fully equipped water safety team in operation during practice and event times.
Event Activity e.g. During racing	All participants must read the rules before starting. Marshalls/event umpires must monitor races.	Collision between two boats. Capsize (see above)	If a clash becomes serious and is likely to damage equipment or athletes, event should be stopped and participants helped.  Water safety team to assist in case of capsize.  First aid team on site and contactable by radio to assist if any injuries.

### Boat Storage Hazards:

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Boats being moved	Boats must be carried across pedestrian/spectator areas.	Collision of boat or cyclist with pedestrian.	No cycling signs put up around areas where lots of traffic will be. Marshalls to contact event control and first aid if a collision occurs.
Boats being moved	Participants left to transport their own equipment.	Injury due to poor lifting technique.	Advice on lifting equipment safely in pre-event information. Volunteers to support

### Environmental Hazards:

Hazard	Barriers	Hazardous Events	Controls
Landing slipway for entry/exit	Only entry/exit available	Participant slips and injures themselves.	Landing slipway checked before event and covered with non-slip materials. Event Marshall radios through to event control, who then sends the medical team/first aid to assess injuries.