



BOURNEMOUTH OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB

OFFSITE SAFETY POLICY

The outrigger canoe is designed primarily for use on the sea. It is used in open sea crossings, waves and surf. For the outrigger club to train in conditions that they may race in it is therefore necessary to experience these conditions. The canoe can be righted in the event of a huli (capsize). This safety policy therefore takes account of this need and how we manage safety.

The policy relates to training sessions on the sea.

The Risk Assessment takes account of a range of risks and measures taken to minimize them. In addition to the Generic Risk Assessment, a dynamic risk assessment will be undertaken for each session at which time there are five factors to consider.

1. Sea conditions
2. Temperature of water
3. Weather conditions
4. Visibility
5. Experience of the crew

Sea Conditions

Consideration should be given to the tide movements (including incoming/outgoing tide as well as tidal flows) and surf conditions.

As most trips will be along the coast, incoming and outgoing tides will have less impact than tidal flows. However, it will impact on safe launching and landing and must be taken into account to avoid damage to the boat or crew in heavy beach breaks. Tidal streams combined with wind can make steering very difficult and passage slow. Consequently, additional care should be taken and crew must ensure that the increase in risk is understood and planned in their intended area of paddling. Advanced preparation is needed to include gaining an understanding of local tidal flows.

Temperature of the Water

Winter sea temperatures pose additional risks. Consideration should be given to very cold water temperatures and the risk of sudden immersion drowning as part of the risk assessment in the event of a capsize. Therefore careful consideration must be given to any proposed outings from November to March or in sea temperatures below 10 degrees Celsius.

Weather Conditions

Cold air temperature and strong wind combined with any of the other factors will increase the risk. Strong winds will affect the ability to control the boat which with



waves and tidal movement can make the boat more unstable. The planned route should take account of the forecast conditions paying attention to changes during the day. On the day the route should be amended or a return to shore in advance of worsening conditions. In winds above (20 – 25 knots) a revision of the route may be required to find a sheltered passage.

In very hot conditions the crew should be reminded of heat stroke – using sun screens and taking with them plenty of fluid. In all weather conditions it is important to be aware of the limiting effect of dehydration and ensure appropriate drinking systems are used by the crew.

Visibility

The outrigger should never be used on the sea outside of daylight hours or when visibility is below 500m.

Experience and Ability of the Crew

To use the club OC6 on the sea the crew must have agreement from the club captain and be adequately experienced in OC6 paddling. A route plan should be submitted to the club captain prior to the outing taking into account the five risk factors outlined above.

Personal Safety

Buoyancy Aids (PFD) – The crew should always carry out risk assessments before going afloat, and assess the needs as regards the use for PFDs. This will be based on the five factors listed above. Buoyancy aids should be appropriately fitted to the paddler – the condition of the buoyancy aid is the responsibility of the paddler.

Clothing – the paddlers should be advised of suitable clothing for outrigger paddling for both hot and cold weather conditions.

Swimming Ability – use of the OC6 on the sea necessitates good swimming ability. Paddlers should be able to swim 50 meters in paddling kit.

Medical conditions - Members are asked to declare medical conditions to the Club on joining (via the membership form). This information is maintained by the Club Secretary and passed to the Club Captain/Coach. Newcomers who have not yet joined will be asked verbally by the coach to declare any conditions that they should be aware of. This will be done in confidence.

Capsize Drill

Capsize of a canoe is a normal occurrence and is not in itself of high risk. The risk would increase according to the Five Factors listed above and should be taken into consideration by the steerer at the start of the session. In addition to dry land training, practice at the club during the summer months by the crew should be



included in training to ensure all members practice capsize drill in controlled conditions.

CHECKING CONDITIONS

In-shore forecasts are available from the BBC:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast/inshore/regional_forecast.shtml?7

What Hazard	1. Impact with stationary obstacles – groynes, marker buoys, anchored boats etc
Who is at risk	Boat and crew
How Often	Every outing
How Likely	Highly unlikely providing experienced crew using the canoe
Consequences	(i) Possible pinning of boat (ii) Boat is damaged or breaks up (iii) Crew in water
Existing precautions	Use of experienced crew Remain vigilant in assessing position relative to obstacles Consideration of tidal movement/wind direction
Risk Level	Harmful + Highly unlikely = Moderate risk
ACTION	i) Crew to carry a charged mobile phone or VHS radio to alert if a situation arises that requires emergency support. ii) Crew briefing of capsize drill.
What Hazard	2. Moving obstacles - other water users etc.
Who is at risk	Boat and crew
How often	Every outing
How Likely	Highly unlikely
Consequences	(i) Boat is damaged or breaks up (ii) Crew member injured (iii) Crew in water
Existing precautions	(i) Look out and verbal warnings from crew. (ii) Know and follow the rules for navigation of the sea (iii) In busy shipping lanes maintain an alert lookout and take early, clear change of



	<p>direction where required.</p> <p>(iv) Check forecast weather conditions for area of use, only undertake sessions when current and forecast conditions are within acceptable limits.</p> <p>(v) Crew to carry a charged mobile phone or VHS radio should emergency support be required.</p>
Risk Level	Extremely harmful + highly unlikely = moderate risk
ACTION	Do not use the OC6 unless good visibility and never outside of daylight hours
What Hazard	3. Boat Capsize
Who at risk	Boat and crew
How often	Every outing
How Likely	Infrequent occurrence
Consequences	Crew in water – possible drowning or hypothermia Injury during capsize
Existing precautions	<p>(i) Crew drill for re-righting boat</p> <p>(ii) All crew members to know their jobs.</p> <p>(iii) Appoint "ama lookout" for each outing.</p> <p>(iv) No wellies to be worn in the boat</p> <p>(v) Secure weights on iako's to help keep ama down in difficult conditions</p>
Risk Level	Not harmful + infrequent occurrence = low risk
ACTION	<p>(ii) Wear appropriate clothing to mitigate risks relating to cold weather/sea conditions</p> <p>(iii) Dry land drill before launching to remind crew of roles and action.</p>
What Hazard	5. Hypothermia
Who at risk	Crew
How often	Every outing -
How Likely	Highly unlikely summer. Unlikely winter
Consequences	Crew member hypothermic
Existing precautions	Crew advised to wear clothing suitable to the conditions
Risk Level	Extremely harmful + Highly unlikely = Moderate risk
ACTION	(i) Paddlers to be advised to be adequately clothed – and have with them windproof tops (ii) Spare clothing to be carried in a dry bag.
What Hazard	6. Injury after collision but boat still upright
Who at risk	Crew
How often	Every outing
How likely	Highly unlikely
Consequences	Injured crew member – needing medical attention
Existing precautions	Mobile phone or VHS radio carried by crew. First aid kit carried in boat
Risk Level	Harmful + highly unlikely = tolerable risk



ACTION	At least one member of crew to have first aid training.
What Hazard	7. Stranded or capsize due to changing conditions or equipment failure
Who at risk	Crew
How often	Every outing
How likely	Highly unlikely
Consequences	Increased risk of hypothermia, possible collision with other vessels
Existing precautions	(i) Mobile phone or VHS radio carried by crew (ii) Always check latest in-shore waters forecast before launch and maintain a watch on weather conditions to be prepared for changes – i.e., return to beach in event of incoming heavy clouds with potential for hail/lightning. (iv) Carry spare paddle on OC2 to use in event of a failure/loss of paddle. (v) Check rigging regularly and carry spare rigging ropes/rubbers. (v) Always inform others of location and intended return time to ensure emergency a search can be commenced at the earliest opportunity.
Risk Level	Harmful + highly unlikely = tolerable risk
ACTION	Practice rigging canoe from the water
	Training on use of the radio Training to give accurate position if help is required

RISK ASSESSMENT OF OTHER FACTORS

What Risk	8. Manual Handling Injury
Who at risk	Crew and any helpers
How Often	Every outing
How Likely	Unlikely
Consequences	Injured crew member
Existing precautions	(i) Crew given instruction in lifting the boat in and out of the water. Crew reminded at each outing. (ii) Trolley used to launch boat wherever possible (iii) Sufficient numbers used to move boat
Risk Level	Harmful + unlikely = tolerable risk
ACTION	None
What Risk	9. Canoe Damage
Who at risk	Canoe
How Often	Every outing
How Likely	Unlikely



Consequences	Damaged boat
Existing precautions	(i) Only rig the canoe on sand/soft earth and not on stones. (ii) Take necessary precautions when transporting the canoe to a) securely attach to the trailer using strong ties; b) use appropriate high visibility markers to make the canoe as easy to see as possible; c) maintain a moderate driving speed and observe speed
Risk Level	Harmful + unlikely = tolerable risk
ACTION	