



QSKC Policy: Club Risk Management Policy

Introduction

This Risk Management Policy document is provided for Trip Leaders and member's benefit, and is to be used in conjunction with the QSKC Trip Plan. This policy document describes a clear set of risk management strategies designed to aid the Trip Leader in the management of the identified hazards on QSKC trips.

A hard copy of this document and the signed Trip Plan is to be taken on each QSKC trip.

Note: This chart is not an exhaustive list of possible hazards - The hazards and control/strategies actions listed are those considered most likely to occur on a QSKC trip.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Drowning	Significant Risk	People	Capsize, paddlers not able to rescue, not able to swim/keep head above water. Medical condition	Participants briefed in capsize, Trip Leader trained and practiced in rescues. Swim check done prior to activity. Medical forms completed and checked.
		Equipment	No PFD, PFD incorrectly fitted, PFD faulty	PFD mandatory, donned and checked by Trip Leader at regular intervals, PFD's condition checked by Trip Leader
		Environment	Waves too large, caught in rip, water too deep, objects in water	Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader, Trip Leader skilled in reading the water to avoid rips, launch and landing sites are chosen by Trip Leader, one experienced paddler goes out first to check waves.



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Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Hypothermia	Moderate Risk	People	Failure to dress accordingly,	Participants briefed on clothing required (on water and off),
		Equipment	Adequate clothing, lack of appropriate shelter	Trip Leader to be aware of clothing attire in use. Cags to be available, Trip Leader to ensure all participants have warm clothing, space blanket, matches.
		Environment	Weather conditions	Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Dehydration/ Hyperthermia	Moderate Risk	People	Failure to dress accordingly including hat, not drinking regularly	Participants briefed on fluid intake, clothing and hats. Trip Leader to know the symptoms and monitor fluid intake by participants, regular breaks.
		Equipment	Adequate clothing, lack of appropriate sun shelter.	Trip Leader to be aware of clothing attire in use. Additional water to be carried. Ensure water available from cockpit. Make use of natural and man made shade structures.
		Environment	Weather conditions	Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader. Avoid paddling in extreme heat where possible



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Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy	
Surf	Significant Risk	People	Panic, skills,	Avoid hazardous surf conditions. Ensure all participants can wet exit. Spray deck fitted correctly. Use helmets if appropriate. Stow loose deck gear and paddle leashes. Send more experienced paddler in or out first if possible. Only one paddler in surf zone. For surf sessions explain plan for catching wave and paddling back out (circular route)	
		Equipment	Boat loaded incorrectly		Trip Leader to be aware of how boats are packed. Trip Leader not attempt assisted rescues in surf zone.
		Environment	Surf conditions		Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader. Avoid paddling in extreme surf conditions.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy	
Equipment Failure	Significant Risk	People	Boats or equipment poorly maintained. Incorrect use of equipment.	Inspect equipment prior to event. Monitor use of equipment by participants	
		Equipment	Breakages		Carry essential spares and repair equipment. Shorten event if necessary
		Environment	Paddling conditions		Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader. Avoid paddling in extreme conditions.



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Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Major Weather Change	Significant Risk	People	Not physically capable to handle expected conditions.	Ensure paddlers are physically capable for the expected conditions. Monitor participants to ascertain how they are handling the change. Consider rafting up until weather passes? Monitor group spread.
		Equipment	Equipment/boats not appropriate for expected conditions.	Ensure participants are adequately equipped for the expected conditions.
		Environment	Not anticipated change in conditions	Weather forecast checked, weather visually checked by Trip Leader. Trip Leader to be aware of tell tale signs of a change in weather. Avoid paddling in extreme conditions. Gather local knowledge. Have alternative plans in place.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Stingers & Bites	Moderate Risk	People	Exposed skin, lack of insect repellent	Participants to be briefed on appropriate paddling attire. Trip Leader to monitor participants on the water. Be aware of potential stings and bites around camp. Aust Venom Research Unit for advice (03) 94838204
		Equipment	Clothing, paddle gear, repellent	Trip Leader to have first aid for stingers and bites and know how to treat them. Trip Leader to be competent in CPR/EAR for extreme cases.
		Environment	Stinger season	Trip Leader to be aware of stinger season. Watch for signs of stingers.



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Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Capsize at Sea	Moderate Risk	People	Panic, skills,	Avoid hazardous ocean conditions. Ensure all participants can wet exit. Spray deck fitted correctly. Practice assisted and self rescues if necessary.
		Equipment	Boat loaded incorrectly, skirt not fitted correctly	Appropriate safety equipment carried by participants. Trip Leader to carry additional safety equipment.
		Environment	Sea conditions	Trip Leader to be aware of the expected sea conditions and local conditions.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Exhaustion & Fear	Moderate Risk	People	Panic, skills, Physically and mentally capable.	Avoid extreme weather & ocean conditions. Trip Leader to look for signs of exhaustion and fear.
		Equipment		Appropriate safety equipment carried by participants. Trip Leader to carry additional safety equipment.
		Environment	Sea conditions	Trip Leader to be aware of the expected sea and weather conditions and local conditions. Be prepared to make alternative arrangements. Seek outside assistance if beyond ability of group?

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Excessive Group Spread	Moderate Risk	People	Skills, Exhaustion, fear, not following directions	Determine group spread before taking to water. Determine aspirations for trip and group speed. Break into sub groups if necessary, buddy up. Have predetermined Rendezvous points. Use regular breaks to regroup.
		Equipment	Damaged paddles or kayak	Trip Leader to have spare paddle, and two others amongst group
		Environment	Weather conditions	Trip Leader to be aware of the expected sea and weather conditions and local conditions. Be prepared to make alternative arrangements.



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Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Sea Sickness	Moderate Risk	People	Individuals prone to sea sickness	Trip Leader to check for participants prone to sea sickness prior to trip. Avoid foods that contribute to sea sickness. Advise participants to take medication prior to paddling. Drink lots of fluid to avoid dehydration. Monitor paddlers for signs of sea sickness.
		Equipment		Use a supported tow if required. Keep paddler busy to occupy their mind.
		Environment	Ocean Conditions	Move to calmer waters. Have paddlers look at horizon. Get to land if required.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Separation at sea	High Risk	People	Skills, exhaustion, conditions	In the event of a capsize and failed roll or self rescue, a whistle blast, no longer than a minute after the event. Next step to be a VHF. Next step, no longer than 5 minutes is a flare. Final step, no longer than 15 minutes is to set off an EPIRB, all equipment either on the PFD or strapped to our bodies.
		Equipment	VHF, Flares, EPIRB	All paddlers to have equipment on person.
		Environment	Ocean Conditions	All paddlers to closely monitor group spread on water.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
		People	Not following directions	Obey crocodile warning signs - they are there for



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Crocodiles	Significant Risk			<p>your safety and protection. Never swim in water where crocodiles may live even if there is no warning sign present.</p> <p>Crocodiles may be close by and may approach people and boats. Never dangle your arms or legs over the side of kayak. If you fall out of a kayak, get out of the water as quickly as possible.</p> <p>Camp at least 2m above the high water mark in designated campsites. Never prepare food, wash dishes or pursue any other activities near the water's edge or adjacent sloping banks.</p>
		Equipment	Sea Kayak	All paddlers to remain in kayak when on the water.
		Environment	Crocodile inhabited territory	All paddlers to be given National parks brochure on crocodiles

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Shipping Lanes	Significant Risk	People	Ignorance of shipping lanes	Trip Leader able to assess the risks from shipping in the lanes. Accept the need to give way and keep well clear of shipping in the lanes. Prepared to group up and cross shipping lanes by the shortest route.
		Equipment	Lack of VHF	Trip Leader to carry VHF and monitor Ch 16 whilst near or in shipping lanes
		Environment	Lack of visibility, high traffic area for large vessels	Cross shipping lanes at narrowest point or avoid if possible.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
		People	Skills, getting to close	Trip Leader able to recognise and avoid the risk of



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Rocks & Gauntlets	Significant Risk			being driven onto submerged or awash reefs or rocks particularly in difficult paddling conditions due to high winds, surf, swells or tidal currents.
		Equipment	Equipment/boats not appropriate for expected conditions.	Trip Leader trained in rescue techniques for rocky or gauntlet areas
		Environment	Weather and swell conditions	Avoid rocks and gauntlets when adverse swell conditions are present

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Boat Traffic	Significant Risk	People	Paddlers not knowing what to do in channels	Trip Leader to be aware of likely boat traffic and brief paddlers on actions to be taken. Trip Leader to minimize time paddling in channels.
		Equipment	Navigation Charts	Trip Leader to refer to charts to ascertain where likely boat traffic will be.
		Environment	Ignoring lateral markers, not knowing where channels are.	Trip Leader to brief paddlers on lateral markers and route to be taken.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Fatigue	Moderate Risk	People	Paddlers physical capabilities	Trip Leader to tailor session to the weakest member's ability.
		Equipment	Overloaded kayaks	Trip Leader to check kayak loading and capabilities
		Environment	Adverse weather conditions/tides	Trip Leader to monitor weather and tides to gain maximum assistance when possible.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
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Sea Caves	Moderate Risk	People	Skill level of paddlers	Trip Leader to assess whether caves can be entered safely. Based on swell conditions and group ability. Time spent under cliffs should be kept to a minimum to minimize injury from falling rocks. Caves to be entered in reverse.
		Equipment	Lack of helmets	Helmets to be worn at all times.
		Environment	Large swell, confined space	Trip Leader to monitor weather and swell conditions

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Land fauna	Minor Risk	People	Lack of knowledge	All participants warned as to the dangers with wild native animals/reptiles and on how to behave near them.
		Equipment	Inappropriate clothing and shoes when on land	Trip leader to ensure shoes and appropriate clothing is worn when on land
		Environment	Scrub land, forests, everglades	Trip Leader to brief on appropriate actions to be undertaken when on land

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Rough Seas	Significant Risk	People	Inadequate training for paddlers, paddlers not graded	Activity Will not commence in very rough seas. Trip Leader will assess the sea conditions based on wind/swell forecasts and the conditions on the day. Problem areas will be well known and Trip Leader will assess whether the session can start/continue also based on the groups abilities.
		Equipment	Equipment/boats not appropriate for expected conditions.	Sea Kayaks meet minimum requirements as per club gradings
		Environment	Weather Conditions	Trips will not proceed when strong wind warnings for the area have been announced by the BOM (>25knts)

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
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Marine Life	Moderate Risk	People	Lack of understanding of marine creatures	Trip Leader able to recognise dangerous wildlife and assess the risk of coming into contact with same. Trip Leader able to apply effective first aid when necessary.
		Equipment	N/A	Trip Leader to carry appropriate first aid kit
		Environment	Lack of knowledge of what creatures can be found in the area to be paddled	Trip leader to be aware of marine life likely to be encountered in the area being paddled

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Medical Conditions	Moderate Risk	People	Paddlers have existing medical conditions	Trip Leader to ascertain if paddlers have any medical conditions prior to departure
		Equipment	Not taking appropriate medication	Trip Leader to ensure medication is taken as appropriate. Safeguards are in place so as to not aggravate existing medical conditions.
		Environment	Understanding how the environment may impact on paddlers medical condition	Trip Leader to ensure that paddlers are not extended beyond their capabilities.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Sunburn	Moderate Risk	People	Paddlers not taking precautions	Trip Leader should advise participants to wear sunscreen and carry some spare for emergencies. On very hot days the Trip Leader should be aware of the possibility of group members overheating.
		Equipment	Sunscreen, hat, clothing	Trip Leader to ensure appropriate clothing and hats are worn by paddlers
		Environment	Weather Conditions	Make use of shade whenever possible on hot sunny days.

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
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Paddle Related Injuries	Moderate Risk	People	Paddlers skill ability and technique	Trip Leader to monitor paddling techniques of paddlers and offer advice where necessary
		Equipment	Inappropriate kayak/paddle	Trip Leader to ensure kayaks and paddles are appropriate
		Environment	Adverse weather conditions	Trip Leader to monitor weather conditions

Risk	Risk Level	Causal Factors		Risk Management Strategy
Any other specific risks		People		
		Equipment		
		Environment		

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Any other specific risks		People		
		Equipment		
		Environment		



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Likelihood

Level	Descriptor	Description
A	Almost Certain	The event is expected to occur
B	Likely	The event will probably occur
C	Moderate	The event should occur at sometime
D	Unlikely	The event could occur at some time
E	Rare	The event may occur in exceptional circumstances

Consequences

Level	Descriptor	Description
1	Insignificant	No injuries, low financial loss
2	Minor	First aid treatment, medium financial loss
3	Moderate	Medical treatment required, high financial loss
4	Major	Extensive injuries, major financial loss
5	Catastrophic	Death, huge financial loss

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A	S	S	H	H	H
B	M	S	S	H	H
C	L	M	S	H	H
D	L	L	M	S	H
E	L	L	M	S	S

Risk Level
H = High Risk
S = Significant Risk
M = Moderate Risk
L = Low Risk