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IDBF

WATER SAFETY POLICY

Attachment 1 to the IDBF Competition Regulations

Regulations 1.8 – 1.81
and
7.5 – 7.10 refer



This Policy is issued as advice to IDBF Members for use as safety guidelines within their own spheres of influence.

Where appropriate or it is a legal requirement, the advice given may be adapted as safety regulations for the member concerned

IDBF COMPETITION REGULATIONS AND RULES OF RACING

(4th Edition)

WATER SAFETY POLICY

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IDBF WATER SAFETY POLICY

(IDBF Competition Regulations 1.8 - 1.8.1 and 7.5 – 7.10 refer)

The Council of the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) is committed to minimising the risks that competitors, coaches, officials and administrators are exposed to through their participation or involvement in, the sport of Dragon Boat Racing. It is the duty of everyone involved in the sport to follow the general principal that prevention reduces risks and injuries and saves lives. In addition to the IDBF requirements of the IDBF Competition Regulations for IDBF controlled competitions, this Policy is issued as recommended advice to IDBF Members for use in dragon boating activities that come within their own jurisdiction and spheres of influence. For IDBF Championships, additional Safety Regulations may be published, from time to time, as part of the Competition Regulations

PART. A. IDBF Safety Requirements; Minimum Safety Standards for Competitive Events and Advice for Dragon Boat Clubs and Crews in a Training situation

1. Requirements for IDBF Member Organisations.

1.1. The IDBF Executive Committee will take appropriate corrective action against any member organisation in breach of Part A of this Policy.

1.2 Each IDBF Member shall appoint an official whose duty will be to fully understand the IDBF Water Safety Policy and to give advice to the IDBF Member concerned, on the Policy's use.

The role of the Safety Official, is to ensure that the IDBF Water Safety Policy is observed; that guidance is given on safety matters to those involved in Dragon Boating, within the IDBF Member's sphere of influence, and to advise the IDBF on any matters of concern that are not covered in this policy

1.3 The IDBF requires that IDBF Members' develop systems to ensure that every participant in the sport is given full and proper instructions on safety procedures, paddling techniques and capsizing drills before going afloat and at regular intervals thereafter. Novice and Junior competitors must be given clear and particular attention.

1.4 It is suggested that this requirement can best be achieved through the establishment, by IDBF Members', of Coaching Awards Schemes and the encouragement of all participants in the sport to undertake training for these Awards.

1.5 IDBF Members should also encourage their member clubs, crews and individuals to become fully conversant with Life Saving; First Aid and resuscitation techniques. Courses in these important safety issues are provided by a variety of organisations that specialise in them.

1.6 Dragon Boating is an out of doors water based activity and therefore subject to a variety of climatic conditions. It is important that IDBF Members' ensure that everyone involved in Dragon Boating becomes aware of the dangers of adverse weather conditions and learns how to deal with them so that they can continue to enjoy the sport in safety.

1.7 The advice and direction of water controlling bodies, should be sought by IDBF Members' and their Event Organisers, with regard to the dangers in various water conditions. Such advice must be followed at all times, especially where the wearing of Personal Flotation Aids (PDAs) by participants is concerned.

1.8 Every IDBF Member should hold adequate insurance cover for its own events and make such cover available to its Member Clubs and Crews.

1.9 IDBF Members are advised that their own member clubs and crews should have ongoing Induction, Training and Safety programmes for dragon boating and that such programmes should be reviewed annually. IDBF Controlling Associations should give consideration to producing guideline advice on Induction, Training and Safety for their member clubs and crews.

1.10 Coaching Personnel. Those involved in coaching crews are not only concerned with improving the performance of their crews, but also have a responsibility for the welfare of the crew whilst they are under the coaches supervision.

1.11 IDBF Members' should ensure that all those involved in training and coaching competitors have undergone formal training and assessment.

1.12 Race Officials. All Race Officials have a duty to ensure that Dragon Boat Events are organised safely. Those appointed as Race Officials at events are not only concerned with conducting fair racing but also have a responsibility for the welfare of the participating crews.

1.13 IDBF Members' should ensure that all Technical Race Officials undergo formal training and assessment.

NOTE: The IDBF Competition and Equipment Commission (C&TC) can offer advice and assistance in running officials training courses. Once qualified by a Controlling Association, Race Officials may apply for assessment under the IDBF International Race Officials Scheme detailed in the Annexes to the IDBF Competition Regulations.

2. Recommendations for Event Organising Committees and Race Organisers .

2.1 At every IDBF Championships and at competitive event sanctioned by the IDBF (and it is recommended at races sanctioned by IDBF Members) the Organising Committee shall display at the race venue concerned Safety Notices appropriate to the Dragon Boating being conducted and **publish in their Race Programme, the Guide to Safety on the Water Leaflet, which forms part of this policy document and is shown at Annex A.**

The use of the Safety Notice and Safety leaflet is also recommended to Controlling Associations and their Crews for use in Competitions and at Training venues. It is further recommended that:-

2.1.1 An Event Safety Plan should be produced, for each event, **based on the Model Plan shown at Annex B.**

2.1.2 Appropriate Safety and First Aid equipment shall be readily available at race and training venues, appropriate to the levels of competition or training taking place. The minimum requirement is:

- * First Aid boxes.
- * Throw Bags.
- * Personal Flotation Aids (PFAs).

2.1.3 In the event of a fatal accident concerning dragon boating, **the Accident Report Form shown at Annex C** should be completed and forwarded to the IDBF Safety Commissioner, *whose address is shown in the Annex.*

Risk Assessments should be considered for every race venue and an Accident Book should be prepared for every event. **See Annex D.**

2.1.4 Every Race organisation must provide details of local conditions applicable to the safety of users on the water. The details must include:

- * a plan of the local water.
- * details of potential hazards.
- * details of local tides, wind or climatic conditions, when appropriate.

2.2. Equipment. It is the duty of every race organisation to ensure that all equipment used in Dragon Boat Racing is properly maintained and fit for use. (See also paragraph 2.13).

2.3 Every Event or Race sanctioned by the IDBF or an IDBF Member, must conform with the insurance, operating and safety standards expected by the IDBF and the Member concerned, for a competitive dragon boat event, as published in the appropriate Competition Regulations.

2.4 For non Championship events, the IDBF defines an **Event Organiser (EO)** as the organisation or person, responsible for organising and co-ordinating the whole event. **This** includes any non-water based activities, facilities hire, safety cover, appointing race officials, issuing invitations, collecting fees and paying the bills.

2.5 The Event Organiser who plans the event, is recognised as the primary focal point for safety matters and as such, has a duty of care to all those involved in delivering the event. **For an IDBF Championships the EO is the Championships Director.**

2.6 The IDBF also recommends the appointment of a **Race Organiser (RO)** who is the person that manages the actual competitive Dragon Boating (formal or informal) on the day of the event. In essence the Race Organiser is responsible for running the water activities, including the writing of the technical race programme, before the event takes place, on behalf of the Event Organiser. (The Event Organiser, if an individual and not an organisation, and the RO can be one and the same person). **For an IDBF Championships the RO is the Technical Director.**

2.7 The Race Organiser is normally the main point of contact for crews entering a dragon boat event, and is therefore the person to whom the crews will, most likely, turn to for assistance during the competition. The Race Organiser should be fully qualified in all aspects of running a dragon boat competition and approved by the Controlling Association sanctioning the event.

2.8 It is essential that the Event and Race Organisers communicate effectively with each other and with all crews and officials before, during and after the event so that everyone is fully informed and able to report on any problems encountered.

2.9 In addition, the Event Organiser, in consultation with the Race Organiser, is responsible for appointing a Safety Officer (SO) for the event. The working relationships between the EO, RO and SO are of paramount importance to the successful organisation, delivery and safety of any event. (The duties of the SO are published in the Rules of Racing - Rule 3.13).

2.10 In summary, the EO and RO are primarily concerned with “on shore” matters and the event SO with “on the water” safety. The SO must have the power to suspend water activities should he or she consider that the conditions for racing are unsafe, for whatever reason.

2.11 The EO must ensure that the following are adequately planned and provided for:

- * that permission to use the venue has been approved.
- * that all conditions of use are complied with and public access is provided.
- * that sufficient parking is available.
- * provision of adequate toilets and changing facilities is made.
- * pertinent information is provided to the local police.
- * all necessary permission /licences including food, drink and entertainment (as appropriate) have been granted by the appropriate authorities
- * plans and arrangements for the control of large numbers of people (crews and spectators can make for large numbers).
- * a well signed race control and / or registration point.
- * that suitably qualified and equipped first aid personnel are available.
- * that all temporary structures comply with all regulations for Health and Safety.
- * that all temporary electrical supplies and services comply with current governmental regulations
- * that a clear access route is maintained for emergency vehicles.
- * that a public address system appropriate to the size of the event is available.

2.12 The Race Organiser is responsible for ensuring that:-

- * detailed race instructions are sent to all the teams before the event.
- * a meeting place and time for crew managers is organised.
- * all race officials are briefed before the event.
- * race results are posted throughout the racing and a full report is sent to the Controlling Association concerned after the event.

2.13 All equipment used in Dragon Boating must be regularly and properly maintained to ensure it is safe for its intended purpose. To ensure that all equipment is maintained in a sound and usable condition requires that the Race Organiser establishes procedures where-by defects to equipment are reported and action taken to remedy the defect before it is used again.

2.14 Powerboats. Powerboats are used extensively in Dragon Boating for coaching, rescue and for umpiring at events. A powerboat will provide additional safety for a Dragon Boat crew if used competently.

2.15 All drivers of powerboats should be properly and effectively trained. Where a specialist national association exists that provides training and certification courses in the handling of powerboats, it is recommended that all drivers involved in Dragon Boat competitions undertake such training and obtain the necessary certification of competence.

2.16 All powered boats involved in Dragon Boat Racing must be adequately and effectively maintained and should have engines fitted with an engine cut off device - general called a “kill cord” and carry the following equipment:

- * bailers and a throw bag.
- * exposure bags / blankets.
- * first aid kit.
- * sharp knife
- * a paddle.

2.17 Power boats, when acting as Rescue Boats at a dragon boat race, must be suitable for the task of rescue and under the control of persons trained in boat handling and rescue techniques and shall be properly equipped for such purposes. They should be sufficient in number and capable of being deployed rapidly so that assistance and recovery can be provided whenever the need arises.

3. Advice for Dragon Boat Clubs and Crews .

3.1 It is the responsibility of the Crew Manager and the Boat Helm to ensure that each and every member of the crew is “fit to paddle” both medically and physically. The Helm should also ensure that each crew member is dressed adequately for the conditions and that they are not wearing anything (such as personal accessories or jewellery) which may impede their ability to escape from a capsized boat or swim unaided once in the water, for example, wrist weights.

3.2 Boat Helms should check before every water session that their boat is in a fit condition for use. These checks should include:

- * that the head; tail; drum; the drummer’s seat and the steering oar are securely fitted.
- * that there are no loose ropes - particularly in the area of the drummer’s feet.
- * that the boat is not leaking and that there are bailers in it available for use.
- * that bow and stern mooring ropes are securely fastened.
- * that the centre seat cover is in place.
- * that the buoyancy compartments will function as intended.

3.3 Medical Information. The Crew Manager and the Boat Helm should be aware of any medical conditions of crew members such as perforated eardrums, epilepsy, diabetes, heart conditions or asthma. This information should be held on record by the Crew or Club concerned.

3.4 Ability to swim. Ideally all members of the crew should be able to swim at least 50 metres, without a PFA but for Sport Racing when not wearing a PFA, they must be **water competent** in cold and slow moving water when dressed in light clothing as worn in a race. (See Annex A, the Guide to Safety on the Water).

The ability of a person to swim should be tested (or their water competency proven) in a controlled situation as part of a Dragon Boat Club's or Dragon Boat Provider's dragon boating induction and training programmes.

3.5 It is suggested that **'water competent'**, means an ability to swim and hold a position in cold or slow moving water by treading water and remaining afloat, unaided, in such water conditions for at least 3 minutes. If there is any doubt about the water competence of any member of a crew then they must wear an approved Personal Flotation Aid (PFA).

3.6 A person who is **'confident in water'** (not competent) may be permitted to take part in Sport Racing, but must wear a PFA. It is suggested that a **'water confident person'**, should be able, when wearing a PFA in cold or slow moving water, to remain calm and tread water without supervision.

3.7 Personal Flotation Aids (Devices) – PFAs (PFDs). For informal competitive events, that is Festival Racing, and in training situations, it is an IDBF recommendation that **all Novice and Junior Crew Members** must wear PFAs, irrespective of their swimming ability. (see also Competition Regulation 2.1 for crew definitions).

In general terms a 'Novice' Competitor is one with less than a year's experience of competitive dragon boat racing, A Junior Competitor is one who is under the age of 18 on the first of January in a given year). **For formal competitive events, that is, Sport Races, the Controlling Association's Competition Regulations concerning the wearing of PFAs will apply.**

3.8 Crew Training Situations Risk Assessments should be considered for all training locations and an Accident Book should be maintained by dragon boat clubs. The Accident Book should be available for inspection any time by the Safety Official of the IDBF Member concerned.

3.9 The IDBF also recommends, that when on the water in a training situation, especially in temperate winter conditions, Dragon Boat Clubs and organisations should maintain a log of those crews on the water. The log should contain the following information:-

- * number of people afloat.
- * direction and details of journey.
- * estimated time of return.

3.10 For those crews that train without the provision of a rescue boat, that is, **unescorted**, or when individual paddlers train in Outrigger Kayaks (see Annex D, for details) all participants are advised to wear PFAs. When training in adverse temperate summer weather conditions, particularly when unescorted, Novice adult crew members and any crew members under the age of 18 years of age, should wear PFAs.

In cold water (temperate winter) training conditions, when a crew is operating 50 metres or more from a shore, river bank or other landing point, without rescue cover, then the Helm should ensure that the wearing of PFAs, by all crew members is mandatory. It is particularly important that a crew log is maintained in such circumstances.

3.11. When a crew is training on Open Water or at a recognised water sports centre, in cold water (winter) conditions or in adverse temperate summer weather, the IDBF advice is to make use of a Rescue Boat, whenever possible. If for whatever reason this is not possible or practical, then good practise is that all crew members wear PFAs or that the dragon boat does not operate more than 50 metres from any point of landing. For any crew training without motorised rescue cover, in any weather or water conditions, the boat should also carry water bailers; a throw line and a tow line, for use in an emergency.

B: IDBF Advice on Standards of Operation for Non-competitive Events.

4.1 Terms of Reference. The advice that follow is suggested as acceptable Terms of Reference for providers of non-competitive Dragon Boating who wish to be recognised by their IDBF Member, as competent to conduct dragon boat activities to a standard of operation and safety acceptable to the IDBF Member concerned. Particular emphasis has been placed on the minimum training and safety standards that IDBF Members' should expect from providers of Dragon Boating services for young people.

4.2 Whilst primarily concerned with non-competitive dragon boating, the Terms of Reference should be applied equally to those IDBF Members' whose Clubs and Crews offer 'Come and Try It' sessions to the general public and when they are introducing novices to dragon boating.

4.3 There is obviously a very different level of risk involved when crews are operating on the sea, than that concerned with the first introductory lesson on very sheltered inland water. It is important therefore, that the person or persons supervising such activities are suitably experienced and qualified, for the conditions in which they are operating. Such qualifications should be laid down by the IDBF Member concerned.

4.4 The requirements are examples of good practice, related to an appreciation of the actual level of risk in each of the situations identified. It is emphasised that the requirements shown should be the minimum expected from those offering dragon boating as an activity.

4.5 Assumptions. The advice given here is based on the assumption that providers of non-competitive dragon boating, seeking Controlling Association recognition, operate a training regime for every student that is relevant to the locations in use. That the operator will ensure that everyone concerned in delivering the training has adequate personal competence, is equipped and practised in the use of all necessary equipment, and is aware of all the potential hazards of the environment in question. It is also assumed that equipment will be maintained to an acceptable standard, and that students will be trained in its application and use.

4.6 Types of Provider. Such operational delivery of Dragon Boating will be dependant upon the emphasis of the particular provider of the dragon boating. In this context, they are generally perceived to work in five main ways.

1. **Activity Holiday Companies** - typically providing one-off introductory sessions on very sheltered water to children under 16 and young adults (17-21 years old).
2. **Education Authority Centres** - the emphasis (but not the entire end purpose) being on the Dragon Boat as a vehicle for achieving educational, and personal development and team building skills.
3. **Outdoor Activity Centres** - the emphasis (but not the entire end purpose) being on the introduction of candidates to the skills, techniques and understanding of the sport and its practice; to enable them to be competent recreational participants.
4. **Recreational Activity Companies** - generally Private Companies organising informal competitions (Festival Races) and recreational dragon boating on a commercial basis.
5. **Dragon Boat Clubs** - the emphasis (but not the entire end purpose) being to introduce novices to the skills and techniques needed to become part of a competitive Dragon Boat crew and to develop the experience and understanding of the sport needed to enter the Coaching Scheme of the IDBF Member concerned.

5. General Guidelines

5.1 The IDBF and its Members' assume the integrity of the management and those performing in the field, and wish to offer their support to those providers of dragon boat services which operate within accepted good practice. Any reading of these guidelines with a view to seeking 'loopholes' or to establish 'the minimum we can get away with' is out of keeping with the spirit in which they are presented.

5.2 Swimming Ability and Personal Flotation Aids (PFAs). All participants under the age of 18 undertaking activities outside of a competitive event run under the Rules and Regulations of the IDBF or its Members', should wear a PFA (Buoyancy Aid or Life Jacket) to an acceptable national standard for water sports, the fitting of which should be checked by a suitably qualified leader, who has given instruction on its application and use.

A PFA should always be worn by weak or non-swimmers in sea conditions.

5.3 Normally participants in Dragon Boat activities should be able to swim 50 metres in light clothing.. Some non-swimmers may in fact, be safely introduced to Dragon Boating by trained instructors, in a controlled environment, as a means of instilling water confidence. Such discretion may be exercised in line with the instructor's training and experience, where such special circumstances exist.

5.4 General Safety Advice - Non Competitive Situations. The provider should ensure that there is adequate First Aid provision available at all times, both on and off the water. In addition, Providers of dragon boating activities should:

- * hold adequate Public and Employers' Liability Insurance.
- * have an Safety Policy Statement in force.
- * have a satisfactory Operational Plan and an Emergency Action Plan in place.
- * have a Safety on Water Poster clearly displayed.

5.5 Staffing. The provider should employ or appoint an IDBF Member qualified person, as the member of staff with total responsibility for all Dragon Boat activities, including the choosing of venues and their suitability, and for informing Centre/Club Management Staff of the chosen location(s). In addition when informal competitive Dragon Boat Racing is being organised, by a provider of dragon boating services, such racing should be under the control of IDBF Member qualified Race Officials.

5.6 Staff Competence. It is an IDBF recommendation that all Boat Helms should be IDBF Member Association qualified. It is recognised that as qualified Helms progress through their IDBF Member's Instructor training programme, that they will develop skills, knowledge, and experience that will increasingly equip them for taking greater responsibility for novice crews on the water. However, on sheltered tidal water (see definitions below) or if the prevailing weather conditions dictate, a qualified Instructor should always be on the water in charge of the crew.

5.7 The decision to allow Boat Helms to operate unsupervised by a qualified dragon boat Instructor, must be understood to be an operational judgement which can only be made on the day, by an experienced and qualified member of staff. The terms of reference for these decisions should be clearly registered in the Providers normal operating procedures. Details should always be recorded in the Activity Log.

5.8 Participants. PFAs when worn must be correctly fitted and must be checked by the Instructor before going afloat. Clothing must be appropriate, taking into account the following factors:

1. Water temperature, Air temperature, Wind Chill factor.
2. the ability of the group.
3. the type of activity, the length of the session and the location.
4. the availability of support – e.g. rescue craft.
5. the type and size of the water course

5.9 Suitable foot protection must also be worn to prevent cuts due to ground or water hazards such as glass, shells or flints or due to contact hazards in the boat.

5.10 Crews should be briefed that, in the event of a capsize, the crew will operate the 'buddy buddy' system, detailed in the Guide to Safety on the Water Leaflet show at Annex A. They should be informed of their responsibility towards each other

6. Water Definitions For Dragon Boating.

6.1 Very Sheltered Water. The definition involves:- Quiet canals with easy bank access and egress. Park lakes, which do not have difficult landing areas, and which are not large enough for problems to occur if there is a sudden change in conditions. Specified sites on slow moving rivers.

The definition implies temperate summer weather conditions which are not in themselves likely to cause problems. Care must be exercised when water temperatures are low or wind strengths cause adverse wave conditions, as can be expected in winter conditions.

6.2 Sheltered Water. The definition involves:- Enclosed Docks; Small Lakes and Reservoirs; Licensed Water Sports Centres; placid water rivers, faster flowing rivers but not involving the shooting of Weirs or running rapids.

The definition implies normal temperate summer weather conditions. Care must be exercised when water temperatures are low or when operating more than 50 metres from a shore or landing point.

6.3 Sheltered Tidal Waters. The definition involves:- Small enclosed bays when there is minimal possibility of being blown offshore. Enclosed Harbours and the upper reaches of some estuaries. In all cases the wind and weather conditions must be favourable.

6.4 Open Water. The definition involves;- Large and Very large Inland lakes and Reservoirs; tidal estuaries, open harbours and the Sea.

The Sea. The Sea is a very different environment from inland waters. Both air and water temperatures should be considered. For example, sea temperatures are normally low in the Northern Hemisphere, especially between November and May. The sea can easily ensnare the unwary, the uninitiated, or the careless, with its sometimes apparently tranquil appearance. It can change, often gradually and imperceptibly, at other times dramatically and suddenly.

The IDBF does not encourage the use of Dragon Boats for Open Sea Journeys

7. Staff Ratios

7.1 The following Staff Ratios are suggested as ideal for practical teaching purposes. The person in charge should always be allowed to exercise discretion.

Very Sheltered Water:- One Controlling Association qualified Helm per boat in cool water and warm weather conditions (temperate summer).

One Controlling Association qualified Instructor supervising in cold water and adverse weather conditions (temperate winter).

Sheltered Water:- One Controlling Association qualified Helm per boat (cool water etc).

One Controlling Association qualified Instructor per boat (cold water etc).

Sheltered Tidal Water:- A staff ratio of One Controlling Association qualified Helm per boat for general activities close in- shore, with one Instructor supervising from the shore, is suggested as practical for teaching purposes in Sheltered Tidal Waters, in all water and weather conditions.

Open Water:- One Controlling Association qualified Helm and one Instructor, per boat plus 1 -3 competent paddlers in support (all conditions).

Novice crews on very large lakes and on the open sea should also be accompanied by a qualified Instructor in an accompanying boat, in all water and weather conditions.

8. Advice on Boats And Equipment.

8.1 The Boat. Boats should carry an IDBF Boat Manufacturers Certificate indicating that the boat has been fitted with adequate buoyancy and is constructed to a standard acceptable to the IDBF. Paddles should also be made to an IDBF Specification.

8.2 Open Water Use. All boats should, ideally, be clearly marked with the Telephone Number and name of the Operator so that in the event of a boat being found adrift, in Open Water or Sea conditions, the owner can be easily contacted and any need for Search and Rescue, rapidly established.

8.3 Equipment. Dragon Boats operating in open water should carry towlines and a 20m throw-line. The Helm should carry an audible alarm signal - whistle or Air Horn - for the attention of the Support Boat or others. A single signalling system should be established with the Support Boat or land base, particularly to indicate if help is required, and when to come immediately to shore.

8.4 For very large Lakes and on the open sea Dragon Boats should be fitted with additional buoyancy and crew members should wear PFAs. In addition the Instructor must carry a throw line and there should be at least two spare Paddles in the boat.

8.5 Support Boats when accompanying a dragon boat or boats, should carry a First Aid Kit and Survival Bags and alternative means of propulsion. Anchor and Spare Rope, Bucket and Bailers and Tool Kit including spare Boat Bolts, Spanners etc.

9. A Code Of Practice For Providers Of Dragon Boating

9.1 This Code of Practice is suggested for those dragon boating providers who offer Dragon Boat Services on a fee paying basis. The Code of Practice is a statement of principles for the responsible provision of dragon boat activities. The Code forms a framework within which providers develop their own operating procedures to ensure that the principles and expectations expressed in this Code of Practice are fully realised.

9.2 The emphasis within the Code of Practice is placed upon the safety and welfare of participants as well as management and quality provisions. The aim of the Code therefore is to indicate to Providers good working practices that are of a standard acceptable for IDBF Member Association Registration or Accreditation.

9.3 Customer Care. Dragon Boating Providers must be clear about the aims and objectives of their Dragon Boat programme and ensure that these are clearly communicated to potential participants. All dragon boating must be appropriate to these aims and objectives.

1. Providers must describe fairly and accurately the amenities and facilities that are available for Dragon Boating.
2. Providers must indicate clearly that in the interests of safety it may, on occasion, be unavoidable to cancel or modify advertised Dragon Boat activities due to adverse weather conditions or unavailability of staff.
3. Providers must inform groups or individuals, prior to their arrival, if any special rules apply and of any special clothing that is required to be brought by the participants.
4. Providers must make clear to all prospective participants details of charges and any additional costs including taxes. Where there are pre-entry requirements for Dragon Boat activities, providers must ensure that these are clearly stated.
5. Providers must deal promptly and courteously with all enquiries, requests, reservations, correspondence and complaints from participants.

9.4 Activity Management and Staffing. Providers of dragon boating should maintain written operating procedures for the Dragon Boat programmes they offer. They should ensure that their operating procedures are appropriate to the site and the level of ability of the participants. Providers operating procedures must define the competencies, qualifications, and/or experience of staff undertaking Dragon Boating.

1. Providers must maintain a policy for the recruitment, training, assessment and management of staff conducting Dragon Boating. This policy must ensure that all staff with direct involvement in the supervision of participants possess appropriate personal qualities and communications skills and are assigned to duties within their proven competence and in line with the qualifications required by their IDBF Member.
2. Providers must ensure that the chain of responsibility for the management of Dragon Boating is clearly defined and that there is in place a well understood system of reporting and accountability. Staff must possess the competencies, qualifications and/or experience required for the discharge of their responsibilities. A full list of staff with qualifications and responsibilities must be available for inspection by the public.
3. Providers operating procedures must be fully consistent with any Controlling Association concerning the conduct of Dragon Boating at the level being undertaken.

4. Staff competencies should be confirmed by the possession of IDBF Member qualifications. Any in-house assessments of staff competence should be monitored by persons appropriately qualified by the IDBF Member concerned.
5. Providers must undertake to instil in their staff an ethos which is conducive to safety. Staff must display sensitivity to the needs and abilities of all participants. Dragon Boating must be conducted with flexibility and discretion taking account of variables such as weather conditions.
6. All staff have a duty to convey to management suggestions which would contribute to the safe operation of Dragon Boat sessions. Providers must ensure that staff recognise this duty, and that procedures for conveying, recording and responding to suggestions are maintained. All staff must be practised and competent in accident emergency procedures.
7. Providers should maintain written accident and emergency procedures, including written procedures for contacting next of kin. Providers should maintain and review on a regular basis an accident log book. This must specify any injuries and the measures taken to avoid recurrences.
8. Providers must ensure that whilst in their care, participants have ready access to at least one responsible person with a current nationally recognised First Aid qualification.

9.5 Participants' Welfare. At all times during their participation in dragon boating, the responsibility for the supervision and welfare of participants under 18 years of age must be clearly defined by the Provider and agreed in advance with the party leader or parent.

9.6 Providers must enquire whether potential participants have any special needs (e.g. dietary or medical treatment) or particular physical or psychological conditions (e.g. learning difficulties) and ensure that all such information is clearly communicated to all relevant staff but especially those Helming a Dragon Boat.

9.7 Equipment. All vehicles used by Scheme Members for transporting participants, boats and equipment must meet the requirements of the law. Providers must ensure that the boats and equipment used is safe and fit for Dragon Boating. Where applicable, boats and equipment must meet the relevant nationally accepted safety standards. Boats and equipment should be subjected to frequent checks for condition and safety and the results recorded in an equipment log. Equipment must always be checked prior to use to ensure that it is safe to use.

9.9 General Condition. All Providers are required to fulfil their statutory obligations, such as Health and Safety and carry adequate insurance cover for the dragon boat activities they are undertaking. Details and copies of current certificates must be available for inspection upon request, by the appropriate legal authorities and the Controlling Association

The IDBF acknowledges the assistance of the British Dragon Boat Racing Association (*BDA*) in compiling this Water Policy which is based on that applied to Dragon Boating in the United Kingdom and the BDA 'Providers' Registration and Accreditation Scheme.

DRAGON BOAT RACING

A GUIDE TO SAFETY ON THE WATER

This guide is primarily for those organising or competing in the sport of Dragon Boat Racing. It covers their responsibilities when participating in a dragon boat event and should therefore be used as a general guide to '**Safety on the Water**' in a competitive situation. (In a non-competitive situation *and when training* it is recommended that all participants and the activity organiser, also follow the general advice given in this guide). *For IDBF Sanctioned Competitions* this guide forms part of the IDBF Competition Regulations and is to be read in conjunction with both the IDBF Competition Regulations and the Rules of Racing.

THE CONDITIONS

Because of the size and design of the Dragon Boat, and the water conditions in which racing takes place, that is placid water, dragon boating is inherently safe and a capsizing especially in such conditions, unless the crew is at fault, is a rarity.

However, in any water sport, because of the environment itself, there is always an element of danger. Add to this the folly and impatience of human nature and the ingredients for an accident may eventually come together to the detriment of the sport as a whole. Dragon Boat Racing is no exception to the rule and it is the duty of all who practise the sport - competitors, race organisers, coaches and officials alike - to be aware of the potential dangers inherent in the sport; to be safety conscious - not safety extreme - and to ensure that dragon boating is conducted in a responsible manner.

In adverse weather conditions and when there are strong winds, Dragon Boats can be swamped with water and have been known to capsize, especially when turning sideways on to the prevailing wind or wave pattern. The inexperience of the crew in such circumstances can be a major factor in a boat capsizing.

In all water conditions, good or bad, the key to safety is the application of good old **COMMON SENSE** by all those taking part in the activity. Playing around in a Dragon Boat and deliberately capsizing it, even in warm and sunny conditions, can be dangerous to both the crew and other water users alike. In certain circumstances it could be lethal; a Dragon Boat moving at speed through the water cannot easily be stopped and another crew in the water from a capsized boat cannot easily be seen!

Crews that cause another boat to capsize when racing, or who ram another boat during a race, will be disqualified from the event.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

Dragon Boat Racing is a 'team sport', each boat carries a crew equivalent **to two soccer teams**. It is not unusual for nearly 100 competitors to be on the water, in one race. The safety of this number of competitors at any one time, is the concern of many people but primarily the **Event Organiser** and the **Chief Official**. However, '**Safety on the Water**' is also the concern of every **Crew Member**.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The broad areas of responsibility for safety are:-

The Event Organiser. It is the Event Organiser's responsibility to ensure that adequate rescue boats, rescue personnel and Personal Flotation Aids (PFAs) are obtained for the event; that First Aid cover is provided off the water; that changing rooms, toilets and warm showers are provided and that all temporary structures comply with all regulations on such matters.

The Event Organiser shall ensure that Crews are sent basic information on all safety matters appertaining to the competition.

The Chief Official. It is the Chief Official's responsibility to ensure that during the racing, all rescue boats are in place and briefed; that *in all conditions* competitors under 12 wear PFAs and that in adverse *water* conditions PFAs are worn by known weak swimmers; Novice and Junior *competitors*; and that in all conditions the IDBF safety procedures are complied with.

The Crew Manager. It is the Crew Manager's responsibility to ensure that all the crew members can swim to the required standard; that any weak swimmers are provided with PFAs; that the Crew List is completed and lodged with the Race Secretary; that the crew is briefed on the Racing Rules and 'Safety on the Water' and that at all times they are 'fit to race'.

This means that it is the Crew Manager's responsibility to ensure that 'socialising' does not adversely affect the performance of the crew on the water.

The Crew Members. It is the responsibility of the crew members to ensure that when *they are on the water* that they are adequately dressed for the weather conditions and comply with all instructions given to them. Dragon Boating is a social sport too, so don't put the safety of the whole crew in jeopardy through alcohol, thoughtlessness or excessive horseplay.

The Helm (Boat Steerer). The Boat Helm is normally the **Boat Captain**. It is the helm's responsibility to make the final check to ensure that that the boat is water worthy and in racing condition and that all crew members are correctly briefed on boat handling and capsize drills. *The Helm should also check that crew members are suitably dressed for the weather conditions and not wearing anything that may impede their ability to exit the boat or swim in the event of a capsize or boat swamping.*

When on the water the Helm shall ensure that collisions with other craft are avoided. In the event of a *boat swamping* or capsize, the Helm shall ensure that the capsize drills are correctly carried out and that all competitors are accounted for and rescued

The Safety Officer. It is the Event Safety Officer's responsibility to ensure that all Race Officials and Crew Managers are aware of, and briefed 'on the day' regarding '**Safety on the Water**' and **any notifiable diseases, for example Weil's Disease**. The Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Chief Boat Marshal is made aware of any known weak swimmers or competitors with medical conditions that may affect their ability to race.

The Safety Officer is responsible for producing a safety plan for the competition, to include a water circulation system for crews going to the start or 'warming up'.

The Chief Boat Marshal. The Chief Boat Marshal shall determine if a crew is 'fit to race' or not and will keep a record of the number of people embarked in each boat, in each race. The Chief Boat Marshal shall ensure that all boats and equipment are in good racing condition before the first race and that they remain in good racing condition throughout the competition.

THE DETAIL

Swimming - The Standard Required. Ideally, all members in a dragon boat crew should be able to swim at least 50 metres, but as a minimum, they must be water competent in cold and moving water and when dressed in light clothing, that is, racing dress (shorts and vest) plus waterproof top and trousers and light footwear (trainers, flip flops or similar footwear). (*A persons swimming ability should be confirmed by testing, where possible, during training*).

Personal Floatation Aids (PFAs) - When to wear them. In a formal competitive event and on a placid water-course, in normal summer conditions, and providing that the individual can swim, the IDBF Rules of Racing do not require an experienced competitor to wear a Personal Floatation Aid (PFA), such as a Buoyancy Aid. (*This is in line with comparable water sports.*)

Where local regulations at race site require water users to wear PFAs, all crews will wear them, irrespective of their experience in the sport. In such cases it is the Event Organisers responsibility to notify crews whether or not the water operator provides PFAs and if NOT, it is the Crew managers responsibility to ensure that the crew has sufficient of their own to cater for any *water* conditions that they may encounter.

However, even in perfect racing conditions, both the Boat Helm and Drummer are advised to wear PFAs and all competitors under the age of 12 years old, must wear them. The Event Organiser should also provide PFAs for all other competitors who request them, or at the Crew Manager's *request*.

In an informal competitive event, such as a Festival Race, all competitors are advised to wear PFAs, which should be supplied by the Event Organiser concerned.

In adverse racing (or training conditions) *in temperate summer conditions*, especially on open water or rivers, Crew Managers of experienced crews should advise all their competitors to wear PFAs and ensure that weak swimmers and those uncomfortable in such conditions do wear them. In any event Novice Paddlers (*those with less than 1 years racing experience*) and Junior Paddlers (*those under 18 years old*) will wear PFAs in such conditions. *When racing or training in cold water (temperate climate winter) conditions, all competitors are advised to wear PFAs.*

SAFETY ON EMBARKATION

Boat Balance. Before leaving the embarking area, the Boat Captain (normally the Helm) should ensure that the boat is well balanced. That is, that each pair of racers are of similar weight or height and that, generally, the heavier pairs are seated in the boat's middle section. **The Boat Captain must know the number of people in the boat**, when the crew is embarked.

The Buddy System. The crew should be 'numbered off' from the front of the boat and made aware that they are each responsible for the person they are paired with (across the boat) and that in the event of a capsize *or the boat being swamped*, their first responsibility is to ensure that their partner is safe and well.

This is called the 'buddy system' and it gives each person in the boat a specific responsibility for another. The 'Stroke Pair' (first pair – No.2 left and 3 right) in the boat are responsible for the Drummer (1) and the 'rear pair' (last pair) for the Helm (22).

Steadying the Boat A boat will feel 'tippy' especially if the crew is out of balance or moving about in an uncoordinated manner. To steady the boat in such circumstances (and when sideways on to the wind or wave pattern) the crew should be instructed by the Helm to slightly lean out over the side of the boat and place their paddle blades flat on the water, at arms length.

With all of the paddles on the water in this manner (10 either side) the boat is effectively stabilised. This is called a paddle brace and the Helm's command should be '**Brace the Boat**'.

Stopping the Boat

When manoeuvring, turning or in a race it may be necessary to stop the boat suddenly, say to avoid a collision with another vessel. It is important that the crew reacts quickly but safely. An unbalanced crew over-reacting can capsize their own boat!

The quickest way to stop a boat is for the crew to do a reverse paddle stroke, that is, everyone takes a backwards stroke with their paddle instead of a forward stroke.

The initial command should be '**Stop Paddling**' followed immediately by '**Brace the Boat**' if the boat is unstable and there is no immediate danger of a collision. If there is a danger of a collision the command '**Stop the Boat**' should be given and the Crew instructed by the Helm to paddle backwards.

In a race situation when a collision is imminent, the Helm must immediately tell the crew to 'Stop the Boat'. Failure by the Crew to stop the boat in such circumstances will result in disqualification.

RESCUE BOATS

The number of rescue boats that an Event Organiser provides will vary according to the number of boats in each race. The chances of more than one boat capsizing *or being swamped* in a race are extremely low and therefore, unless the weather conditions are extreme, it should not be necessary to have more than four (4) rescue boats in total at any one event.

Each boat should be able to hold at least eight (8) passengers and should not carry more than two crew members, that is, the driver and an assistant to help with any rescues.

At least one rescue boat should be on the water for each race. The rescue boats should have a low freeboard and hand ropes on it, to allow a person to enter the boat from the water unaided. A throw line, kept on the boat, is also advised.

An added rescue service is to use experienced canoeist Lifeguards, who can provide a number of rescue kayaks, to act as 'one to one' rescuers. The advantage is that they can get in amongst a capsized crew without the fear of injury to the competitors from boat propellers. When training in cold water (winter) conditions, *without wearing PFAs* or where a crew is operating 50 metres or more from a shoreline, they should be accompanied by a Rescue Boat, whenever practicable. *Water Bailers should also be carried in the boat for use as necessary.*

CAPSIZED or SWAMPED DRAGON BOAT

What to Do. In the event of a Dragon Boat capsizing or being swamped, each pair of paddlers should account for their buddies. The Boat Captain should immediately ensure that all the crew are accounted for by calling out their numbers and noting the response. The crew must initially stay with the boat. When a boat has over-turned (capsized) never swim underneath it but leave it in the capsized position.

Provided the crew space themselves evenly around a capsized boat, it can be used as a floating platform. Even a fully swamped boat will float and remain stable if the crew space themselves evenly around the gunnels of the boat.

The Boat Captain must remain in control of the crew at all times and first ensure that all the crew members are accounted for as described above.

In a race situation, await the arrival of the rescue boats. The crew should if their paddles are within easy reach, attempt to retrieve them. On the arrival of the rescue boats, the crew should move as directed by the operators of the boats, with the Boat Captain remaining *with the boat* until all members of the crew have been rescued.

If there are insufficient boats to rescue all the crew in one go and the water conditions are kind, or it is shallow, then if the boat is capsized, up to six crew members can remain with the boat and start to 'swim it' to the nearest shore.

*This should only be done under the Boat Captain's control and when the swimmers are capable **and not at risk**. After the crew is safe a rescue boat may be used to recover the Dragon Boat. (In cold water conditions, whilst awaiting rescue, crew members should, when holding onto the boat, try to conserve body heat by curling their legs up towards their chests and remaining as still and as calm as possible).*

Unescorted Crews. *Should a rescue boat NOT be available then in calm conditions, the crew may attempt to 'swim' a capsized boat to the nearest safe landing point, as directed by the Boat Captain. If conditions are not suitable for easily 'swimming' the boat, over a short distance, then under the instructions of the Boat Captain it is recommended that the boat be rolled back to the upright position, which will result in the boat becoming swamped. (Oct 2005)*

Swamped Boat. *A swamped boat can be used to support the crew, with the crew members evenly spaced around the boat's gunnels, whilst the boat is partially bailed out using paddles (and any other suitable implements available, e.g. boat bailers) until the crew can regain entry to the Boat, complete the bailing out process, and paddle the boat to the nearest shore. (Oct 2005)*

If self recovery of the boat is not possible, then as a last resort, the crew may leave the boat and swim to shore in pairs, using the 'buddy' system, again under the control of the Boat Captain. As with other methods, the crew must be accounted for at all times during any attempts to swim the boat or as pairs under the buddy system.

However, In a training situation crew members are advised not attempt to swim to shore unless they are wearing PFAs. *Should there be no alternative but to swim for the shore then any crew member who is not wearing a PFA should join a 'buddy pair' with PFAs, or make up a group (groups) of three, to provide mutual support and assistance during the swim.*

Recovery of Craft. *As soon as the boat is alongside the water's edge, the crew must again be accounted for on the land and any injuries dealt with immediately. If upturned, the boat may then be turned the right way up (in the water) and bailing out commenced. The boat SHOULD NOT be dragged out of the water unless there is only a small amount of water left in it, as this puts a considerable strain on the hull of the boat. Once the boat is almost empty of water it may be lifted on to the bank and checked for damage and all the boat's equipment accounted for.*

Practice Drills. *It is recommended that crews training regularly together should be introduced to a least one controlled capsize and an unescorted recovery exercise, at an early stage in their training and then annually. This practice drill should be set up carefully taking into account the time of year and the weather and water conditions. During such drills all crew members must wear PFAs, irrespective of their competitive experience, general physical fitness or swimming ability and a rescue boat should be on standby.*

IN CONCLUSION. **Safety is the concern of every crew member and is largely a matter of COMMON SENSE - USE IT! The overall responsibility for the crew off the water is the Crew Manager's and on the water is the Boat Captain's.**

It is every competitor and official's responsibility to ensure that Dragon Boat Racing is conducted as SAFELY AS POSSIBLE.

SAFETY NOTICE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE LOADING YOUR BOAT



This notice gives important safety information for crew members taking part in Dragon Boating. Please take time to read it carefully.

Dragon boating is inherently safe and capsizes are rare, except where the crew is at fault. However, in any watersport there is always an element of danger. This information is intended to minimise the risks to you.



CONDUCT

Crews must comply with all instructions given to them. Once in the boat, crews must obey the commands of their Helm. Crews who engage in dangerous, unruly, thoughtless or offensive behaviour will be disqualified.

Deliberately capsizing a Dragon Boat can be dangerous and may damage the boat. It also disrupts the racing programme. Crews that cause their own or another boat to capsize or who ram another boat will be disqualified.

Alcohol impairs judgment and can increase the risk of hypothermia. Crews who have been drinking excessively will not be allowed to race.



ABILITY TO SWIM

All crew members must be able to swim at least 50 metres when dressed for racing, and must be competent in cold, deep and open water.



BUOYANCY AIDS

Buoyancy aids must be worn:

- by weak swimmers
- by all crew members under the age of 12
- by Junior crews (under 18) when directed by the Race Organiser
- by those uncomfortable in the prevailing conditions
- in adverse or winter racing conditions, i.e. open water or rivers
- when required by the Race Organiser or Crew Manager
- where local regulations require them

The Race Organisers cannot undertake to provide buoyancy aids for crews.



DRESS

Crew members must be adequately dressed for the conditions. Typically, paddlers should wear:

- T-shirt or vest, and shorts - not jeans
- buoyancy aid, when required
- suitable light footwear e.g. trainers, plastic sandals, wetsuit boots
- waterproof top and trousers, when conditions require it



BEFORE RACING

Before racing begins, Crew Captains must complete a Crew List and give it to the Race Officials.

Crew members must tell their Crew Managers if they are weak swimmers, or they have a medical condition that may affect them during the day.

Before each race, a count of the number of people in the boat must be made by the Crew Captain, and notified to the Boat Marshall. This will be used in the event of a capsize to ensure no one is lost.



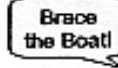
AFTER RACING

The crew remains under the command of the Helm until the boat is unloaded.

When approaching the landing stage, keep your hands clear of the boat's gunwales, to avoid them being crushed between the boat and the jetty. Do not try to fend off the jetty.

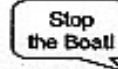
Stay seated in the boat until told. Then unload one person at a time starting from one end, as directed by the Helm. Otherwise the boat can capsize or be damaged.

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BRACING THE BOAT

To steady the boat, when sideways on to the wind or waves, the Helm will tell the crew to 'Brace the Boat'. Paddlers must lean out slightly over the side of the boat and press their paddle blades flat on the water, at arms length.



STOPPING THE BOAT IN AN EMERGENCY

To prevent a collision, the Helm will tell the crew to 'Stop the Boat'. Paddlers must immediately place their paddles deeply and vertically in the water and hold them firmly. A backwards stroke with the paddle can then be made.

Crews who fail to stop the boat when there is a danger of a collision will be disqualified.



BUDDY SYSTEM

The Buddy System allows the crew to be checked quickly following a capsize.

- Each person in the boat is paired with the person on the same seat and is given a number by numbering off from the front.
- The 'Stroke Pair' (first pair) in the boat are responsible for the Drummer and the 'rear pair' (last pair) for the Helm.
- In the event of a capsize, each person's first responsibility is to ensure that their partner is safe and well.



CAPSIZED BOATS

If a Dragon Boat capsizes, each pair of paddlers must immediately account for their buddies, to ensure that no one is trapped under the overturned hull, lost or injured.

The Boat Captain must account for every crew member by calling out pair numbers and checking everyone answers 'OK'. He will ensure the number of crew corresponds with the count made when the boat was loaded.

The crew should stay calmly in the water with the boat and await the arrival of the Safety Boats or assistance. Do not attempt to turn the boat upright - in an overturned position it can be used as a float.

Once on the land all crew members must again be accounted for and any injuries dealt with immediately.

The boat recovery should only be attempted by experienced persons. The boat can be damaged if it is lifted while there is water left in it.



WATERBORNE INFECTIONS

The water may carry serious diseases such as Weil's Disease, hepatitis, gastro-enteritis, etc. To minimise your risk of contracting an illness:

- Do not drink or swallow the water
- Avoid deliberately splashing water on your face, or in your eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid swimming or wading in the water
- Cover all cuts and grazes with waterproof dressings
- Use footwear to avoid injuring your feet
- Wash or shower as soon as possible after watersports, before eating or preparing food
- If you fall ill after watersport, go to your doctor early, and tell him you are a watersports participant
- If your symptoms include a high temperature, an influenza-like illness, and joint and muscle pains (particularly in the calf muscles) also tell your doctor about the possibility of Weil's Disease and give him a copy of the Weil's Disease leaflet (ask your Crew Manager or the BDA if you do not have one)



FURTHER INFORMATION

This notice supplements the BDA leaflets 'Safety on the Water' and 'Weil's Disease', which contain further information on safety for Helms, Crew Captains, Crew Managers and Race Officials. Your attention is also drawn to the BDA Competition Regulations and Rules of Racing.

ANNEX. B. to the
IDBF Water Safety Policy

ADVISORY MODEL **EVENT SAFETY PLAN**

The procedures to be followed in the case of accident or emergency should be prepared and communicated to competitors and officials in their race instructions by the Race Organiser and raised as an item in the managers meeting by the Safety Officer. This Model Event Safety Plan is a suggested template for use in events sanctioned by IDBF Members.

Venue _____

Date(s) _____

Responsible Organisation _____

1. Key Personnel Contact List

1.1 Event Organiser Name

Address

..... Tel No

1.2 Safety Officer Name

Address

..... Tel No

1.3 Chief Official Name

Address

..... Tel No

1.4 Venue Name

Address

..... Tel No

1.5 First Aid Name

Address

..... Tel No

2.0 Emergency Procedures / Major Incidents

2.1 General Principle

- i. The Event Organiser will co-ordinate the plan until emergency services arrive.
- ii. The Event Organiser will then direct Event Staff to assist the emergency services.

2.2 A co-ordinated procedure following a multi-disciplinary approach is essential with a clear demonstration of duties and responsibilities. The following services will play an active part in the emergency plan:

- * Event Organiser.
- * Safety Officer.
- * Chief Official.
- * Fire Services.
- * Police.
- * Ambulance and Hospital.
- * Water safety personnel and craft.

2.3 Event Control is the major communication point and is located at:

2.4 A mustering point will be established at _____

In any major emergency everyone involved in the event will be asked to report to the mustering point to await further instructions.

2.5 First Aid.

2.5.1 The senior first aider will establish a first aid base at _____ in the event of major casualties.

2.5.2 The senior first aider will direct operations until medical services arrive.

3.0 Cancellation / Cessation of Event.

3.1 Land - this will be the decision of the Event Organiser.

3.2 Water - this will be the decision of the Safety Officer who may liase with the Event Organiser and Chief Official.

4.0 Emergency Route.

4.1 The emergency vehicle access / egress routes are:

5.0 Event Radios.

5.1 The normal working channel for event communications will be Channel 1.

5.2 If any emergency arises then the key personnel (Event Organiser, Safety Officer, Chief Official and Safety Boat operators) will turn to Channel 2.

6.0 Coded Messages - Emergency.

6.1 "Alert Message" - "Staff Call Alpha One"

6.2 On this announcement by radio and P.A. the key personnel will all immediately change to Channel 2 and await further instructions.

6.3 "Stand Down Message" - "Staff Call Zero Zero".

7.0 Press and Publicity. The only person authorised to make statements to the press is the Event Organiser.

8.0 Hospital. The nearest Hospital for accidents and emergencies is:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

9.0 Reports and Documentation.

9.1 The Event Organiser is responsible for the completion of all accident forms and reports required by the emergency services.

10.0 Lost Children / Meeting Points / Lost Property.

10.1 All these issues should be directed to Event Control.

11.0 Toilet / Washing Facilities. Toilet and washing facilities are located at:

12.0 Site Plan.

12.1 A plan of the site showing all the features listed in this safety document is attached.

13.0 Emergency Contacts:

13.1 Organisers: _____

13.2 Others: _____

ANNEX. C. to the
IDBF Water Safety Policy

International Dragon Boat Federation
Fatal Incident Report – Part A

Dragon Boat Association.....

Date of Incident..... Time of Incident.....

Incident took place at.....

Weather Conditions.....

State of Water.....

Name/s of Casualty *D/SI..... Sex.....Age.....
or Casualties

*D/SI..... Sex.....Age.....

*D/SI..... Sex.....Age.....

*D/SI..... Sex.....Age.....

*D/SI..... Sex.....Age.....

(list any others on a separate page as necessary)

* Ring D = Died. SI = Serious Injury.

1. Is the cause of death known (or suspected) YES/NO

If YES, give brief details (e.g. Heart attack, drowning etc)
.....

Were the Casualty (ies) part of a Crew YES/NO

If YES Name of Crew.....

Details of how Incident occurred.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Did the Incident take place during an Organised Event? YES/NO

If YES

1. Name of Event.....

2. State Type of Water (Lake, River etc).....

2. Were Rescue Boats at hand? YES/NO

3. Was First Aid readily available on site? YES/NO

4. Was an Event Safety Officer appointed and in attendance? YES/NO

5. Were any Racing Rules or Regulation ignored or breached? YES/NO

If YES give details.....

.....

.....

3. Did the Incident occur whilst a Crew was Training YES/NO

If YES 1. State type of Water (e.g. Lake)

2. What Safety Measures were in place including First Aid?

.....

.....

4. Did the Club/Crew have a person nominated to oversee the training YES/NO

1. Had the Crew received a Safety Briefing ? YES/NO

5. Did the Incident take place in circumstances other than at an Event or during Training? YES/NO

If YES give details.....

.....

.....

.....

6. Has a Civil Inquest or Inquiry been held? YES/NO

If YES complete **Part B** of the Incident Report

If NO send **Part A** to IDBF Safety Commissioner and complete **Part B** when full details of the Inquest and/or Inquiry are known

International Dragon Boat Federation

Incident Report – Part B

IDBF Incident Report – Part A submitted on (date)

Dragon Boat Association.....

Date of Incident..... Time of Incident.....

Incident took place at.....

Name(s) of the deceased(s)

.....

Place Inquest held

Date(s) Inquest held

Verdict of the Inquest.....

.....

1. Was any Person or Persons held to blame for the Incident? YES/NO

If YES give Name

Position held at the time of the Incident e.g. Race Official, Helm etc

.....

2. Remarks by Governing Body on why the Incident happened

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3. Suggestions as to how such an occurrence may be avoided in the future

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

4. Comments by the IDBF Executive Committee

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Reported to the IDBF Council and Recorded in the IDBF Council Minutes on

(date).....(at).....

Signed IDBF Safety Commissioner.....

Name.....

When the IDBF Incident Report Part A and/or Part B have been completed, they should be sent to:

**Adrian LEE
IDBF Safety Commissioner,
Suite 903
1575 Beach Avenue
Vancouver, BC
CANADA**

RISK ASSESSMENTS – FOR DRAGON BOAT ACTIVITIES.

The advice that follows is for IDBF Members', when assessing venues for dragon boat activities and when organising such activities. Competition Regulations are the Control Measures for Sport Racing events.

What Is A Risk ? In terms of health and safety a risk is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by a hazard.

So What Is A Hazard ? Anything that can cause harm to people, for example a dragon boat, noise, machinery, chemicals, electricity, etc.

So What Is A Risk Assessment? This is nothing more than a careful examination of what (in the case of a dragon boat activity) could cause harm to people. The reason for making the assessment is so that you can weigh up whether or not you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent people being harmed, through participating in the activity.

Why Does A Risk Assessment Have To Be Done ? Because, in keeping with Health and Safety principles, the IDBF advises its Members and their Dragon Boat Clubs that they should take 'reasonably practicable' precautions to safeguard participants taking part in their dragon boat activities.

Who Does The Risk Assessment ? Risk Assessments have to be carried out by a 'Competent Person'. For dragon boat activities a 'Competent Person' is deemed to be a qualified IDBF Member, Race Official; Coach, Instructor, Boat Captain, or Event Organiser, as appropriate for the dragon boat activity concerned.

So How Is A Risk Assessment Done ? **First**, visit the site of the dragon boat activity and look at what could reasonably cause harm, both on and off the water. For dragon boat activities, hazards are identified as those associated with equipment, procedures, tasks, machines (e.g. Rescue Boats) and the physical aspects of the environment in which the activity is taking place. Ignore the trivial and concentrate only on those significant hazards that could result in serious harm or affect people.

Second, think about who might be harmed by these hazards; a dragon boat crew, crew coaches, managers, race officials and staff members; members of the public, guests and visitors, etc. **Then** evaluate these hazards and decide for each significant hazard what the Risk Rating should be (see the Risk Table below). **Ask yourself** – 'Can I get rid of the hazard? If not, then how can I control it?'

Third, record your findings (a guideline template is included within this document) and write down any findings that are significant. Assessments need to be suitable and adequate, no more, no less. **The main points are:** are the precautions reasonable and is there something to show that a proper check was made? So keep a copy of your findings. **Finally**, remember to review assessments periodically, and in different weather conditions, to ensure that they are still valid and to see if there have been any changes to the site of the activity.

How To Decide What Action To Take and When To Take It? There is no set format for recording a Risk Assessment. How the information is recorded and tabulated is up to the person carrying out the assessment. However, it is general accepted that "**Risk** reflects the **likelihood** that harm will occur and its **severity**". It makes sense therefore to look at the real and potential hazards associated with a dragon boat activity, with this 'likelihood' and 'severity' of risk clearly in mind; for a combination of the two will indicate what the degree of risk may be for a given hazard. This degree of risk is known and recorded as a 'Risk Rating'.

Risk Rating. When carrying out a Risk Assessment it is therefore suggested that, using the Risk Table shown below and the judgement of the person carrying out the assessment; the likelihood of a risk and severity of a particular hazard can be determined. A Risk Rating can then be calculated and a judgement made regarding the action required, to reduce, contain or eliminate the hazard.

RISK RATING TABLE

Likelihood of Injury (with existing controls in place)	Rating Value (a)	Severity of Injury (with existing controls in place)	Rating Value (b)	Risk Rating (a x b)	Residual Action (in addition to existing controls).
Most Unlikely. = probability close to zero. (less than 10% chance)	1	Trivial. = injuries that Could be treated by Crew First Aiders, from a First Aid box.	1	1-2 (min)	Maintain Measures. Controls Adequate, if The Risk Rating is 1 or 2.
Unlikely. = injury a conceivable occurrence. (25% chance)	2	Slight. = injuries that May require more expert Treatment, administered at a First Aid Post, sick bay or out-patients.	2	3-5 (low)	Review Controls, if the Risk Rating is 3 to 4 and Take action if required, at Risk Rating 5
Likely. = high possibility of injury. (50% chance)	3	Serious. = injuries involving urgent hospital treatment.	3	6-8 (med)	Improve Controls. Action must be taken to Reduce the Risk, if the Risk Rating is 6 to 8.
Most Likely. = Injury probable. (75% plus chance)	4	Major. = injuries involving major trauma or death.	4	9-16 (high)	Urgent Action Required, if the Risk Rating is 9 to 16. Consider NOT holding the Activity or change location.

Residual Action. Once a Risk Rating has been given for a particular area of a dragon boat activity, then residual action, over and above the controls already in existence, may be required. It is recommended that the following hierarchy of options should be considered, in the order shown, when assessing the need for, and the means of achieving, additional controls.

1. Can the hazard be eliminated or reduced by the use of an alternative process, material, equipment or activity location. Examples: injury through the consumption of alcohol; wearing unsuitable clothing or equipment. Action: ban alcohol and dangly bits.
2. Can physical safeguards such as barriers, enclosures etc be used to protect participants from the hazard(s). Examples: Embarking and disembarking crews; wobbly drums and drummers seats. Action: crowd barriers in Boat marshalling area; secure drums and seats.
3. Can the number of participants exposed to the hazard be reduced by such means as changing the activity procedures. Examples: Racing or training on choppy water or on Open Water. Action: Reduce numbers in the Crews and hold the activity close inshore.
4. Can the time participants are exposed to the hazard be reduced by changing the activity procedures. Examples: Activity taking place in cold or wet weather conditions. Action: Reduce the racing distance, the total number of races or the time spent on the water.
5. Can Personal Protective Equipment provide protection. Example: Activities involving young persons and novice competitors. Action: The wearing of Personal Flotation Aids is made mandatory.

RISK ASSESSMENT – ADVISORY TEMPLATE

The advisory template that follows, in a matrix format, identifies some of the hazards that are likely to arise in a dragon boat activity. The template shows just the main headings for the hazards and the suggested control measures that should be in place for the Risk Rating shown against each hazard. Some examples of possible additional controls, for when the Risk Rating for an activity Item scores 4 or more, are also shown.

When completing Risk Assessments a preamble on the type of activity, its location, programme of events etc, should be included under the headings shown. More detailed information than that included in the template, may also have to be recorded against a particular Item Number. For example, the number of rescue boats required for an activity will vary, depending on the water and weather conditions; the time of year; the number of crews taking part and the type of activity.

NOTE: This template refers to on site risks only, it does not cover ongoing areas of risk associated with dragon boat activities, such as the loading and unloading of boats and equipment, on to trailers and into the water. Such risks, which are generic to the activity, should also be considered and assessed continually.

SITE AND ACTIVITY DETAILS

Activity Site Location: (e.g. Albert Docks, Liverpool)	Date of Assessment:
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Activity Type: (e.g. Charity Race)	Numbers Taking Part:	Assessment Reference:
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Activity Details: (e.g. Details of the site location, event programme; basic safety regulations.)
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RISK ASSESSMENT LEGEND

(L) = Likelihood of Hazard	(S) = Severity of Injury	(RR) = Hazard Risk Rating =	Action Required
1. Most Unlikely	1. Trivial Injury (ies)	1 & 2. Minimal Risk.	Maintain Control Measures
2. Unlikely	2. Slight Injury (ies)	3 - 5. Low Risk.	Review Control Measures
3. Likely	3. Serious Injury (ies)	6 - 8. Medium Risk.	Improve Control Measures
4. Most Likely	4. Major injury or death	9 -16. High Risk.	Consider stopping activity

HAZARDS - IDENTIFICATION AND RISK RATINGS.

(Activity taking place during the Summer)

No	Hazard Description (L)	Risk (S)	Control Measures to be in place.	L	S	RR	Additional Control Measures – (RR 5+)
1	Boat Swamp or Capsize.	Injury Hypothermia Drowning	Crew Buddy System. Rescue Boats, Buoyancy Aids (PFAs) First Aid Cover.	1	1 3 4	2 3 4	Increase the number of Rescue Boats and make wearing PFAs mandatory.
2	D. Boat collisions	Injury Immersion in Cold water	As above plus, clearly defined lanes and qualified Boat Helms.	1	2 3	2 3	Reduce the number of Dragon Boats in each race.
3	Collisions with other Types of vessels	Injury Immersion in Cold water	As above, plus marker Buoys, control boats (Umpires) and water circulation plan.	1	2 3	2 3	The movement of all other vessels to be restricted during each race.
4	Adverse or Cold Weather conditions Arising once the Activity has started.	Body Heat loss Hypothermia Drowning	Correct clothing advice. Indoor changing and Shower facilities. Extra equipment in boats.	2	2 3 4	4 5 8	Reduce the racing distance and the number of races. Stop the event for a period of time. Cancel
5	Waterborne Disease Related illnesses.	Leptospirosis Gastric illness Tetanus, polio.	Safety Notices, Crew Briefings, Health & Safety Advice given.	1	3	3	Move activity to an alternative location.
6	Alcohol related Incidents.	Illness and Injury	No access to Alcohol. Must be Fit To Race. Briefings	1	4	4	Exclude participants who have been drinking alcohol.
7	Trip & Slip Hazards In activity area. Crew Moving to board boat.	Personal Injury	All equipment to be clear of walk ways. Briefing of participants. Boat & Crew marshals.	1	2	2	Place Warning signs. Replace or remove Equipment. Segregate with crowd barriers.
8	Litter Hazards such broken glass.	Personal Injury	Provide litter bins and Plastic drinking cups.	1	1	1	Arrange litter removal From activity site.
9	Noise nuisance from PA system, DB drums In residential areas.	Personal Injury	Control PA sound level and frequency of use. Muffle drums.	1	1	1	Dispense with PA System and Drums.
10	Bad Communications Systems	Personal Injury	2 way radios, mobile telephones, PA system Safety Officer.	1	3	3	Increase numbers of Radios. Operate a Dedicated radio net.
11	Uncontrolled crowds And children. People swimming in area.	Personal Injury	Crowd barriers, signs, Site Stewards and briefings by Officials	1	4	4	Do not allow public Access to activity site.
12	Powered Boats in the Activity area, for Example Umpires and Rescue Boats.	Injury to people In the water From propeller blades.	Qualified boat drivers, Safety Officer briefings on rescue techniques and activity operating procedures.	1	4	4	Only use power Boats with engine Guards or electric Motors.

**IDBF Example 1 of an
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK**

This example is designed for IDBF Members' and their Dragon Boat Clubs, when introducing participants to dragon boat activities and may need to be customised to a particular provider's circumstances. (Dragon Boat Clubs – the wording for members' induction training are shown in brackets)

Please print the name of the participant. _____

Enter the activity (*the Club*) the person will be undertaking (*joining*) _____

Activity (*Club Joining*) Date _____ Activity Ref (*Membership No*) _____

_____ (Name of Organisation) would like you to read the following carefully. It concerns your safety and the safety of others taking part in your (*the Club's*) dragon boat activity programme. Once you have read it you should sign the bottom of the form as an indication that you have read and understood it, then return it to _____ (name of activity organiser or club secretary), together with your medical information form and your application form.

Risks. We will take all reasonable steps to provide you with the level of care and assurances of safety appropriate to the dragon boat activities that you will take part in. However, you should be aware that such activities are conducted on various types of water from shallow park lakes and rivers to large open water, such as inland lakes and reservoirs. The activities take place in a variety of weather conditions too, which may affect the suitability of the water on which your dragon boat activity is being conducted, therefore, you are advised that certain inherent risks, associated with any type of water activity, remain which cannot be eliminated without destroying the unique character of dragon boating. Amongst other things, some of these risks can contribute to:-

- a loss or damage to your personal clothing or equipment.
- feelings of discomfort, fear and apprehension or even accidental injury,
- illness or trauma which in extreme but thankfully very rare cases, can be serious.

The level of real (as opposed to apparent or perceived) risk associated with participating in dragon boat activities are very low but the type of risk may be something with which you are not familiar. The level of risk associated with dragon boating is generally no greater than that associated with, for example, a normal adult undertaking recreational activities appropriate to their own physical ability, based on general fitness, age etc.

Swimming Ability. To take part in any dragon boat activity you must be confident when floating in cold water and wearing a Personal Flotation Aid (PFA) such as an approved buoyancy aid. Ideally, you should be able to swim at least 50 metres, unaided and without a PFA.

There are a number of other things, associated with dragon boat activities, that you should be aware of. These include but may not be limited to:

Physical Effort. All dragon boat activities involve physical effort, which at times may be more than you are used to. This may involve stamina or physical strength and paddling a dragon boat may put a greater strain on joints and muscles than you normally experience. If you have any medical conditions, injuries or medication, past or present, which may in certain circumstances adversely affect your ability to undertake dragon boat activities, then you should make this known to us before the activity takes place (*for voluntary recording in the Club's Medical Record Book*).

Environmental Risks and Hazards. These may include factors such as lightening and storm conditions, although more common would be adverse weather and cold water conditions during the summer or a sudden change in the weather and wind conditions when an activity is taking place. In such conditions dragon boats can be swamped by waves or in extreme conditions, capsize. Therefore, before taking to the water you should be aware of these possible dangers and ensure that you have been fully briefed and understand the 'buddy' system used by dragon boat crew members, to account for and aid each other, in the event of a boat being swamped or capsized. **Such situations can become stressful for some people, especially in rough and cold water conditions. If you have an aversion to such water conditions you should let that be known before taking part in a dragon boat activity where the water conditions may be adverse.**

Slips and Trips. These are the commonest types of accident throughout society and taking part in a dragon boat activity is no exception. As an organisation, we will endeavour to ensure that the consequences of such an accident are not serious but you should be aware that the likelihood of falling over or slipping on a wet surface, is likely to be greater than that you are used to. Moreover, given the nature of the environment in which dragon boat activities take place, more serious incidents can occur.

Responsibilities. _____ (name of organisation or club) has clear obligations and responsibilities and these are taken very seriously. However, we (*the Club*) expect (*s*) every participant (*Club Member*) taking part in our dragon boat activities to contribute to their own, and the safety of the other members in a dragon boat crew, by following the instructions given, from time to time, by our staff (*Club, Coaches, Instructors and Officials*) and particularly by the Boat Captain, when you are part of a dragon boat crew on the water.

Acknowledgement.

1. I recognise that taking part in a dragon boat activity or event may require an attitude and approach which is different from other activities that I have been involved with.
2. I acknowledge and accept that the nature of the risks may also be different to those with which I am familiar and that certain risks remain.
3. I understand and accept that I have a responsibility for my own safety whilst taking part in a dragon boat activity and a duty of care, whilst on the water, towards the other members of a dragon boat crew of which I am a member.

By signing this acknowledgement of risk, I do NOT release the organisation named at the head of this document, from any of its obligations towards me, nor does it effect my legal rights. I have however, read and fully understand the contents of this document.

Signature of Participant (*Club Member*). _____ Date _____

(in **all** cases)

Signature of Parent, Guardian or Responsible adult (where appropriate) _____ Date _____

Signed on behalf of _____ Date _____
(Name of Organisation or Club)

**IDBF Example 2 of an
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK**

This example is designed for Dragon Boat Races and may need to be customised to a particular IDBF Member's Event Organiser's circumstances. It can form part of the Race Entry Form for a Sport Race and as a minimum, at any race, should be signed by Crew Managers' on behalf of their crews. For Festival Races, ideally, every individual participant should sign a risk acknowledgement, after the safety brief and before their first race of the day. (The words in brackets are the alternatives for use when the Crew Manager signs).

Please print the name of the Participant (or Crew) _____

Address: _____

Please complete all parts:

1. I (*my Crew Members*) understand that this is a water based activity and that whilst all the normal and appropriate precautions, for a water sport will be taken, by the Organisers, such as the use of buoyancy aids, where appropriate, and the provision of rescue craft, that each Crew Member has a duty of care to each other whilst on the water. Yes No

2. It has been explained to me (*by me to my Crew*) that taking part in a Dragon Boat Race can be quite physically demanding and that some people may find some race situations stressful. Yes No

3. I confirm that I (*my Crew Members*) can swim 50 metres, unaided **or** as a minimum, I am (*they are*) confident in cold water conditions, when wearing a buoyancy aid. Yes No

4. I confirm that I (*my Crew Members*) to the best of my knowledge, do not have any present or previous medical conditions which may effect my (*their*) ability to take part in a Dragon Boat Race. Yes No *

- * (*If NO record details on the reverse, of the condition, e.g. asthma*)

5. I (*my Crew Members*) agree to follow all the instructions given by the Event Organisers and their Staff and Officials and to act in a responsible manner during the races, especially whilst on the water. Yes No

6. I am (*my Crew Members are*) over 16 years of age. I understand that a countersignature is required, on behalf of persons under 16 years old. Yes No

7. I (*my Crew Members*) would like Personal Accident Insurance cover. Yes No

By signing this acknowledgement of risk form I do NOT release the Event Organiser from any obligations towards me (*my Crew*) nor does the signing effect my (*our*) legal rights.

Signed (in all cases) _____ Date _____

Counter signature (for U 16s) _____ Date _____

Signed (on behalf of the Event Organiser) _____ Date _____

Details of
and
Guidelines for the use of Outrigger Training Boats

The use of Outrigger Kayaks as individual training boats for dragon boat competitors is on the increase and raises issues of safety on the water. These guidelines have been prepared by the British Dragon Boat Racing Association (BDA) and are recommended by the IDBF to other Controlling Associations.

Details of O1's and O2's

- 1. Designation.** Outriggers are purpose built boats associated with Dragon Boat training and used for individual performance testing. The boats are designated as outriggers and are therefore called O1's for the single seat boat and O2's for the double seat boat.
- 2. Design.** The Boats are of a single hull design with one or two cockpits, with an armor (or float) on one side, held by two support bars. The boats are steered by a rudder operated by the feet.
- 3. Use.** The foot rudder system allows the boat to be paddled with a single blade on one side only, using a dragon boat stroke. Thus they can easily be used for individual training sessions or for individual time trials. The time trials can be used to monitor the progress of individual performance or for the selection of paddlers for a national team or training squad.

Guide lines for the use of Outrigger Training Boats

- 4.** Outriggers are designed for use on placid inland waters such as small lakes, docks, calm rivers etc. They should only be used under these conditions.
- 5.** Outriggers should not be used in rough weather, particularly in strong winds where they may become hard to handle.
- 6.** Spray decks can be used for training purposes, to keep out excess water from waves and to keep the crew warm. However, they may not be used during official time trials.
- 7.** Outriggers should not be used on their own, the minimum number should be two or an outrigger should be accompanied by another craft such as a canoe or kayak.
- 8.** Buoyancy aids of an approved standard should be worn at all times when paddling an outrigger.
- 9.** Outriggers should only be used under the guidance of an attending qualified dragon boat Helm, Instructor or Coach.