



**CANOE KAYAK
CANADA**

It's Who We Are.
C'est Notre Nature.

Canoe Kayak Canada CODE OF SAFETY

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1. Preface

1.1. Introduction

Paddling is a safe sport when conducted with due consideration for the risks inherently associated with any outdoor water sport. There is the risk of personal injury from collision and the risk of drowning when Participants find themselves in the water. All risks are heightened in cold water. While contending with difficult weather conditions is part of the sport, safe enjoyment of the sport is the aim. Concern for personal safety must be paramount. Each Member organization, or club, is responsible for assessing the risks in its particular environment and in establishing the appropriate safety procedures to minimize those risks. Additionally, each individual is responsible for assessing their personal skills and for the outcomes of their decisions and actions.

Definitions (including capitalized words) can be found in Appendix A.

1.2. Purpose

Canoe Kayak Canada (CKC) is committed to the shared obligation of creating a sport culture and environment in which all Participants are safe and can thrive. In order to achieve this objective, CKC has developed this Code of Safety, which outlines the standards to be implemented for events under CKC jurisdiction and respected by all Participants. The standards found in this code are the minimum requirements for all CKC events and programming. The code does not specify the requirements for every conceivable activity or environmental condition, and other safety rules may apply for other activities not found in this code that Participants must be aware of. The onus is on coaches, instructors, or trip leaders to ensure that they undertake a thorough risk assessment prior to activities to ensure that additional requirements are considered and if required undertaken.

This code is considered best practices for PTSOs, Sprint Divisions, or clubs, which may, if feasible, take additional measures to enhance Participant safety. Where deviations in this code are expected and/or documented, CKC must be notified.

Along with this Code of Safety, CKC's Policy Manual (found on CKC's [website](#)) aims to protect the health and well-being of the organization, its members, and Participants by setting standards for conduct and an independent reporting process to ensure an environment free from maltreatment, violence, harassment, abuse, and discrimination.

To learn more about and facilitate adoption of CKC's policies, please visit [the CKC Safe Sport Hub page](#). CKC will continue to work with provinces and territories to support an aligned system with the shared goal of a safe and thriving sport environment for all.

1.3. Organization of document

CKC currently has the following disciplines under its jurisdiction, and will be referred to in the following groupings in this document (with respect to the specifics for Participants doing activities under each discipline):

1.3.1. Flatwater Disciplines

- Sprint Racing
- Paracanoes
- PaddleAll / Special Olympics (where applicable)
- Marathon
- Dragon Boat
- SUP – Flatwater *see Section 3.1.1(c) for clarification
- Outrigger
- Surfski

1.3.2. Whitewater Disciplines

- Slalom
- Kayak Cross
- Freestyle
- Wildwater/ Downriver
- River Running (Recreational)
- SUP – WW *see Section 3.1.1(c) for clarification

Many initial whitewater activities start in flatwater environments. While this is the case, the intention is that activities endorsed or sanctioned to be whitewater activities should refer to the additional specific guidelines in the whitewater section. These activities include recreational paddling, paddling trips, training, competitions, and events. These activities may be conducted in an indoor pool, flat water, moving water or whitewater.

1.3.3. Team Sport Disciplines

- Canoe Polo

2. Government Regulations

Each Member organization and their members in Canoe Kayak Canada (CKC) are responsible for knowing and adhering to the Transport Canada regulations that affect boating, for example, the [Collision Regulations](#), the [Competency of Operators of Pleasure Craft Regulations](#), and the Canada Shipping Act Small Vessel Regulations (SVR). This responsibility is mandated in the regulations themselves. Many of the regulations are summarized in the [Safe Boating Guide](#) available on CKC and Transport Canada's [website](#). This guide is helpful in determining what safety equipment is required to be carried onboard, for example, a boat the size of a Coach Boat.

The SVR applies to all boats associated with paddling activities (powered boats and human-powered vessels) and to the persons operating the craft, be they competitive, recreational, instructors, coaches, referees, volunteers, or regatta officials.

Note that the following section (Excerpts from SVR) has been transcribed here as of February 24, 2024 but it is up to the Participant to ensure they have consulted the most up-to-date version on Transport Canada's website.

2.1. Excerpts from Small Vessel Regulations (SVR)

The SVR contains exceptions for certain vessels, and among those are “Racing Canoes and Racing Kayaks”. The exceptions are, nonetheless, regulations, and must be adhered to. The following are the SVR exceptions that may be applicable to Canoe Kayak Canada (note that where certain items are not mentioned this means that CKC may not undertake these activities under their jurisdiction, but Members undertaking these activities that are referenced in the SVR should ensure they understand and follow the requirements):

2.1.1. Part 2 Safety Equipment for Pleasure Craft

Sub-Part 3 General Exceptions for Pleasure Craft

Section 216 Racing Pleasure Craft

A racing pleasure craft, other than a canoe, kayak or rowing shell, that is engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition, and that is operated under conditions of clear visibility and is attended by a *Safety craft*¹, may carry on board the safety equipment that is required by the rules of the governing body instead of the safety equipment required by this Part.

Sub-Part 5 Exceptions for Human Powered Pleasure Craft

Section 220 Paddleboats, Watercycles, Stand-Up Paddleboards and Sealed-Hull, Sit-on-top Kayaks

If every person on board a paddleboat, a watercycle, a stand-up paddleboard or a sealed-hull, sit-on-top kayak is wearing a personal flotation device or lifejacket of an appropriate size, the paddleboat, watercycle, paddleboard or kayak is required to carry on board only the following safety equipment:

- (a) a sound-signalling device; and
- (b) a watertight flashlight, if the paddleboat, watercycle, paddleboard or kayak is operated after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.

Section 221 Racing Canoes and Racing Kayaks

(1) A racing canoe or racing kayak that is engaged in *formal training*², in an *official competition*³ or in *final preparation for an official competition*⁴ that is governed by safety guidelines and procedures established by the *governing body*⁵ is not required to carry on board the safety equipment required by this Part if it is attended by a *Safety craft* that is carrying on board a personal flotation device or lifejacket of an appropriate size

- (a) for each person on board the canoe or kayak, if the *Safety craft* is attending only one pleasure craft; or

¹ **Safety craft** (SVR) means a vessel, aircraft or other means of transportation that has a crew on board and that is used for surveillance and rescue activities during formal training, final preparation or official competitions.

² **Formal Training** means practice for an official competition under the supervision of a coach or official certified by a governing body.

³ **Official competition** means a competition or regatta organized by a governing body or by a club or an organization that is affiliated with a governing body.

⁴ **Final preparation for an official competition** means activities scheduled by the event organizer to prepare for the competitions at the competition venue.

⁵ **Governing body** is a national water sport governing body that published rules and criteria related to the conduct and safety requirements for skill demonstrations, formal training or official competitions and that: certifies coaches and coaching programs; certifies officials and programs for officials; or recommends training and safety guidelines for certified coaches or officials

(b) for each person on board the canoe or kayak with the most persons on board, if the safety craft is attending more than one pleasure craft.

(2) However, if the canoe or kayak is not attended by a *Safety craft*, it is required to carry on board the following safety equipment:

(a) a personal flotation device or lifejacket of an appropriate size for each person on board;

(b) a sound-signalling device; and

(c) a watertight flashlight, if the canoe or kayak is operated after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.

2.1.2. Part 3 Human-Powered Vessels Other than Pleasure Craft

Safety Equipment: Exceptions for Certain Vessels

Section 312 Racing Canoes and Racing Kayaks

(1) A racing canoe or racing kayak that is engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition that is governed by safety guidelines and procedures established by the governing body is not required to carry on board the safety equipment required by this Part if it is attended by a *Safety craft* that is carrying on board a personal flotation device or lifejacket of an appropriate size

(a) for each person on board the canoe or kayak, if the *Safety craft* is attending only one pleasure craft; or

(b) for each person on board the canoe or kayak with the most persons on board, if the *Safety craft* is attending more than one pleasure craft.

(2) However, if the racing canoe or racing kayak is not attended by a *Safety craft*, it is required to carry on board only the following safety equipment:

(a) a personal flotation device or lifejacket of an appropriate size for each person on board;

(b) a sound-signalling device; and

(c) a watertight flashlight if the canoe or kayak is operated after sunset or before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility.

Section 314 Other Racing Vessels

A human-powered racing vessel, other than a canoe, kayak or rowing shell, that is engaged in formal training, in an official competition or in final preparation for an official competition, and that is operated under conditions of clear visibility and is attended by a *Safety craft*, may carry on board the safety equipment that is required by the rules of the governing body instead of the safety equipment required under this Part.

3. Responsibilities of Participants

Note this section is organized so that all *Participants*, no matter the role or discipline would follow all requirements in section 3.1. The subsequent subsections then have additional guidelines or requirements either by discipline and/or role. Additionally, Sections 4-6 should be reviewed as part of Participant responsibilities.

3.1. All Participants

All Participants have the following responsibilities.

General participation (theirs and others)

- a) Understand the risks involved, inherently, and with respect to their own ability (including but not limited to skill level, physical and mental condition, experience, level of fatigue, equipment, environmental conditions, etc.).
- b) Understand that they have the choice to participate or not given their ability or their assessment about their competence, and that their choice should be supported if they choose not to participate.
- c) Parents / guardians of Minors must take the responsibility to make these choices on behalf of their child, as the parent or guardian is ultimately responsible.
- d) Comply with any procedures and waivers.
- e) Refrain from drinking alcoholic beverages, using cannabis or illicit drugs, in the period leading up to, as well as throughout the duration of their participation, which may affect their ability to train or compete in a safe manner, or which may endanger the safety of the other Participants, or any other individual involved in the sport.
- f) Ensure Duty of Care is considered for all Participants.
- g) Must immediately cease their own activities to assist, within the boundaries of their own capabilities, and without putting themselves into danger, any other Participant who is in need of assistance. Key things to consider:
 - i. Keep calm but very alert.
 - ii. Be aware of your responsibility to assist your partner (in the case of pairs).
 - iii. Follow your rescuers' instructions.
 - iv. Leave your boat only if this improves your safety. If rescue is not close at hand and the water is dangerously cold or worse rapids follow, then swim in the appropriate direction for the nearest point of safety. The loss of a craft is not worth the risk of personal safety.
 - v. If swept into a rapid, then swim feet first on your back. Keep your head clear of the water for good visibility. Adopt a defensive swim position to avoid hazards when necessary.
 - vi. As a rescuer, go after the participant first, they are the priority.

Communication

- h) Ensure attendance at any safety briefing being held for the activity
- i) While not required, Participants should consider informing those who may be responsible for their participation (or with whom they are participating with, if applicable):
 - i. any change in their health which may affect their ability to safely participate in any activity, which may affect their well-being, or may endanger the safety of the other any other individual involved in the activity; and,

- ii. if they are using or are under the effect of any prescription medication that may affect their well-being, or may endanger the safety of the other *Participants* or any other individual involved in the activity
- iii. if they have any pre-existing conditions that would be helpful to those in supervisory roles to be able to quickly attend to any potential emergencies that may arise due to this pre-existing condition. The expectation that these would remain confidential and would only be accessible to staff. Examples may include (but not limited to): asthma, heart conditions, diabetes, and any previous history of exhaustion or heatstroke during training or competition.
- j) It is recommended that Participants never paddle alone, and that a minimum group size of three boats is maintained. Best practice to inform others of intended route and approximate duration. Ensure all required safety equipment is carried.

Governing body rules and regulations

- k) Ensure compliance with the minimum standards outlined by Transport Canada (TC) and this Code of Safety (including Environmental Guidelines in Section 4) and to be familiar with TC's "[Safe Boating Guide](#)".
- l) Ensure they understand and follow any concussion-related protocols prior to returning to activity (please refer to CKC Concussion protocol on website [here](#)).

Equipment

- a) To the best of their knowledge, and where possible with additional experienced guidance, ensure:
 - i. that their boat and other equipment is safe and free of hazards;
 - ii. that they have the correct equipment and are confident in their ability to use it; and
 - iii. that their boat remains buoyant when filled with water.

3.1.1. All Coach, Instructor, or Leader Participants

All coaches, instructors, and leaders have the following additional responsibilities to those outlined above.

Governing body rules and regulations

- a) Be familiar with this Code of Safety and all applicable sections.
- b) Be trained and certified at the appropriate level for the required activity.

Environment and equipment

- c) For any boat type, and particularly **SUP**, a risk assessment with respect to the environment, appropriate Discipline (as per Section 1.3) must be performed to determine the appropriate safety equipment. Examples to consider for risk assessment based on environment, Discipline, or Participant competencies may include (but not limited to) the use of helmets and ankle leashes (please refer to appropriate Discipline and Role section once this has been determined).
- d) Before leading a group at a new site, they must become familiar with the site and water conditions, in order to become aware of any hazards, obstacles, or variations in the water patterns or conditions that may endanger Participants.
- e) They must make sure that every instruction, training, and racing site is safe, and must be prepared to change or cancel the activity in accordance with changing water conditions,

adverse weather conditions, changes in course conditions, or any other condition which increases risk above an acceptable level.

- f) They must be prepared to adjust or cancel plans and activities in accordance with changing water conditions, adverse weather conditions (please refer to Section 4), changes in river conditions, or any other condition which increases risk above an acceptable level.
- g) They have the responsibility to manage on-water Participants based on the Participants ability, the water and weather conditions of the day and must be constantly attentive to any indications that could impact these variables.

Risk Management

- h) Must ensure that the ratio of instructors/coaches to Participants is safe and appropriate for the conditions, and the skill level of the Participants.
- i) They will possess or have created of their site's Emergency Action Plan. They will know the site's emergency procedures and the location of first aid kits and any other safety equipment.
- j) They shall be trained in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (including AED) and Concussion protocols (please refer to Appendix B).
- k) They will identify any discernable medical conditions of an athlete that could become a safety issue. Where Minor athletes are involved, the coach shall obtain such information from the athlete's parent/legal guardian or with the written consent of the Minor athlete's parent/legal guardian.
- l) They must have the ability to call for help in the event of an emergency by carrying a cell phone or other means of communication with them during practice if cell service is not available on the water (ie: portable radio, ensuring someone with the ability to call for help is on standby at the other end of the radio); and
- i) An "Accident Report Form" (see Appendix B), or equivalent, must be filled out by the instructor/coach/trip leader for any incidents that involve medical attention, rescue involving entrapment, or any other situation from which there is something to be learned by others, or for which legal action could potentially result. Copies of forms for these types of incidents must be submitted to the PTSO.

3.2. Flatwater Discipline Participants

In addition to section 3.1, all Participants engaged in Flatwater Discipline activities (as defined in Section 1.3) have the following additional responsibilities.

3.2.1. Flatwater Discipline Athlete Participants

All athlete Participants engaged in flatwater discipline have the following additional responsibilities.

- a) If engaged in on-water, or 'near-water' activities, should be able to swim at the level of the Lifesaving Society Swimmer Level 6, prior to their participation in water-related programs. If not, they must wear a Government of Canada approved PFD in the manner in which it was intended while engaged in all on-water activity. Consideration of clothing worn during activity should be considered.
- b) Notwithstanding the aforementioned, all Participants under 16, must wear a non-inflatable Government of Canada approved PFD while engaged in any on-water activity

3.2.2. “Big Boat” Participants

Note that “Big Boat” can be any of the following (but not limited to): C-15, Dragon Boat, Rabaska, Voyageur, OC-4, OC-6.

- a) It is recommended that each paddler in a “Big Boat” identify a “buddy” at the start of the practice or competition. Note that in some cases, it may be a 3-person “buddy” system for the front and/or back Participants. In the event that the boat capsizes, once the paddler is safe, they should, without endangering any other paddler, use their best efforts to find their buddy;
- b) In the event of an overturned “Big Boat” the captain, coxswain or steersperson should verify that all paddlers have their head above water and are not experiencing difficulty;

3.2.3. Athlete Paracanoes Participants

All Paracanoes Participants with strapping to their boat or paddle:

- a) Any strapping used to connect an athlete with their boat and the athlete with their paddle must be of a “quick release” type. An athlete must be able to activate the ‘quick release’ function without assistance. The athlete can be required to demonstrate prior to the competition. An athlete is required to prove capsize and self-escape either through submission of a video or demonstration at a competition upon request. *(Note ICF rules talk about an athlete’s equipment passport for ICF competitions which will be implemented in the future for CKC events.)*
- b) must sign [the CKC Strapping Waiver](#) and provide it to the *Chief Official* prior to each competition in which the athlete competes;

3.2.4. Flatwater Discipline Coach or Instructor Participants

Flatwater coaches/instructors have the following additional responsibilities.

- a) They must wear a Government of Canada approved PFD at all times while on the water;
- b) While coaching on-water activities and while doing so in a Safety/Coach motorboat, they will ensure that all paddlers engaged in *Formal Training, Final Preparation or Competitions (as defined in SVR section 221)* and who are not wearing PFDs do not stray 500m from the *Coach/Safety Motorboat*, unless the paddlers are carrying in their own boat,
 - o A lifejacket or PFD that fits, for each crew member
 - o A sound-signaling device, and
 - o A watertight flashlight if operated after sunset, before sunrise or in periods of restricted visibility; as per Transport Canada requirements.

3.3. Whitewater Discipline Participants

In addition to section 3.1, all Participants engaged in Whitewater Discipline activities (as defined in Section 1.3) have the following additional responsibilities.

- During on-water activities, must wear a personal floatation device (PFD).

3.3.1. Whitewater Discipline Athlete Participants

All athlete Participants engaged in Whitewater Discipline activities have the following additional responsibilities according to the information below.

WHO	Equipment (E) / Competency* (C)		Body of Water			
			Flatwater	Moving Water	Whitewater	Surf
Paddler	E	PFD	TC required	TC required	TC required	TC required
	E	Helmet	Optional	Required	Required	Recommended
	E	Sprayskirt / spraydeck	Optional	Recommended	Required	Recommended
	E	Grab loops on boat		Recommended	Required	Recommended
	E	Floatation bags in boat		Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	C	Capable of swimming in paddling gear	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	C	Capable of a competent wet exit	Optional / Required w Spraydeck	Recommended / Required w Spraydeck	Required	Required
	C	Surfwater safety				Required
	C	Swiftwater safety		Recommended	Required	Recommended
Paddler OR Instructor	E	Whistle	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
	E	River knife**		Recommended	Recommended	
	E	Throw bag / Rope**	TC required	TC required	TC required	TC required
	C	Flatwater boat/gear recovery - unassisted	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended	Recommended
Instructor	E	First Aid kit	Required	Required	Required	Required
	E	Pin kit		Recommended	Recommended	
	C	Flatwater boat/gear recovery – assisting a participant	Required			
	C	Wilderness/remote first aid			Recommended	
	C	Surfwater Rescue				Required
	C	Swiftwater rescue and safety		Recommended	Required	
Paddler (SUP only)	E	SUP ankle/calf leash	Recommended	Do not use	Do not use	Recommended
	E	SUP quick release waist leash	Recommended	Optional with training	Optional with training	Recommended

Table 3.3.1 Equipment and Competencies required for different bodies of water.

* Note Training is required to demonstrate Competency in most cases.

** CKC's position is that river knife and throw bag is not appropriate for novice paddlers. Instructor will carry these items. Knife is required on moving and whitewater but not suitable for inexperienced paddlers.

Environment and communication

- a) Must seek route details in advance of paddling, especially potential hazards such as rapids, low-head dams, obstructions, or dam releases.
- b) Must be familiar with basic river communication (hand and paddle signals).

3.3.2. Whitewater Competitive Participants

All Whitewater competitive Participants must conform with ICF safety standards as found in their respective [ICF Competition Rules in Chapter 3](#).

Slalom Cadet athletes may also use safety equipment as described in the CKC Cadet Slalom Race Guidelines.

3.3.3. Whitewater Discipline Coaches, Instructors, and Leaders

Whitewater Discipline instructors, coaches, and trip leaders have the following additional responsibilities.

Training and education

- a) Swiftwater Rescue and Safety training is required for all activities involving whitewater. This training would include: basic whitewater rescue techniques (hazard awareness, equipment knowledge, safety preparation and planning, basic self-rescue and extraction skills).

Risk Management

- b) At every whitewater session, at least one instructor/coach/leader must be equipped with a whistle, first-aid kit, throw rope, and a river knife, plus the knowledge of how to use these items. These items must be easily accessible in case of emergency.
- c) Please refer to Table 3.3.1 for recommended equipment and competencies for paddlers and instructors in different bodies of water.

3.4. Team Sport Participants

In addition to section 3.1, all Participants engaged in Team Sport Discipline activities (as defined in Section 1.3) have the following additional responsibilities.

3.4.1. Canoe Polo Athlete Participants

All athlete Participants engaged in team sport discipline activities have the following additional responsibilities.

- a) All paddler/player equipment used must conform to the ICF standard as found in the [ICF Canoe Polo Competition rules](#), specifically outlined in Chapter 3
- b) Must be capable of executing a safe wet exit from their boat. It is required that beginners demonstrate a safe wet exit in flat water before they engage in any further paddling activity.
- c) Must be capable of executing a self-rescue in the event of a capsized.

4. Environmental Guidelines

Please see below the general requirements for environmental occurrences. Specific requirements depending on discipline, event or other will be outlined in the sections below.

4.1. Lightning/Thunder

All Participants:

- a) On-water Participants should immediately head for the nearest shoreline to seek shelter;
- b) In the event of lightning and/or thunder, a 30-minute rule should be implemented. All Participants should remain sheltered and off the water for 30 minutes after the last thunder and lightning.
- c) Safety motorboats should remain on the water until all on-water Participants have safely made it to shelter, unless otherwise instructed to do so in a safety briefing;
- d) During competitions, this rule will be enforced by the Chief Official with input from the Safety Officer and Competition Committee;

4.2. Winds and Rough Water Conditions

All Flatwater Discipline or Team Sport Discipline Participants:

- a) Where possible, stay close to shore during rough water conditions (due to weather or unplanned environmental effects);
- b) Should winds exceed 39 km/h (defined as strong breeze winds), or if conditions (wind direction, gusts, waves) appear potentially threatening, practice or competitions may be stopped, postponed or cancelled. Training or regattas may only be resumed when the appropriate individual(s) determines that the conditions are safe;
 - i. In training, Coaches or Instructors will make this decision;
 - ii. In Competitions, the Chief Official, in consultation with the Regatta Safety Officer and Competition Committee will make this decision.
- c) Reported *Gale Force Winds* (Gale Force Wind is defined as wind speed of 62 to 74 km/h inclusive.) or higher will result in the immediate postponement of any practice or regatta and all Participants must immediately seek safe shelter;
- d) Safety Motorboats will remain on the water until all on-water Participants have safely made it to shelter, unless otherwise instructed to do so in a safety briefing;.

4.3. Cold Weather and Cold Water

Cold weather and cold water must be considered when paddling in order to protect all Participants from [*hypothermia*](#) (occurs when the core body temperature drops below 36 degrees Celsius (36 °C)) and the negative effects of cold-water immersion.

When water temperatures are below 8 °C degrees ⁶ all Participants engaged in an on-water activity must also:

- i. wear a Government of Canada approved PFD at all times;
- ii. train as close to shore as possible;
- iii. ensure they are with others;

⁶ As measured by each individual club during training by a reliable measurement device (i.e., swimming pool thermometer submerged in an area of water that is representative of the main body of water).

- iv. have notified someone of their planned activity (e.g. location, arrival/departure estimated times); and
- v. wear clothing appropriate for the weather and water conditions.

Air temperature and wind chill must also be considered, and paddling should not occur when there is a risk to Participant safety due to cold air temperatures or extreme wind chills.

For tips on surviving in cold water and more information on cold water immersion, consult Transport Canada's [Safe Boating Guide](#).

Flatwater Discipline Participants

When water temperatures are below 8 °C degrees ⁷ all Flatwater Discipline Participants engaged in an on-water activity must be accompanied by a motorboat (unless otherwise sanctioned to do otherwise by PTSO governing body).

4.4. Extreme Heat and Humidity

Extreme heat and humidity must be considered when paddling in order to protect all participants from heat-related illnesses. These include mild disease (heat edema (swelling), heat rash, heat cramps, heat syncope(fainting), heat exhaustion, and exertional heat stroke which is the most severe form and can be life threatening. Factors that affect a participant's ability to handle these conditions include no acclimatization, febrile illness, level of physical fitness and hydration status. Modifications to activities to help prevent heat related illness may include reduced training duration and/or intensity, more frequent breaks for hydration and cooling strategies such as fans, ice and provision of shade.

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is a measure of the heat stress in direct sunlight, which takes into account: temperature, humidity, wind speed, sun angle and cloud cover (solar radiation).

In general, four risk levels can be considered according to the ambient temperature and WBGT (Table 4.1). Taken from World Rowing, Hot Weather and Heat Safety Guidelines (updated 26/07/2021).

AMBIENT TEMPERATURE	WBGT	RISK OF THERMAL INJURY
Below 25°C (77°F)	21°C – 24.9°C (69.8° – 76.9°F)	Low
25°C – 31.9°C (77.1° – 89.5°F)	25°C – 27.9°C (77° – 82.3°F)	Moderate
32°C – 37.9°C (89.6° – 100°F)	28°C – 31.9°C (82.4° – 89.5°F)	High
38°C and above (> 100°F)	32°C and above (> 89.5°F)	Extreme

Table 4.1 Risk levels. Taken from World Rowing, Hot Weather and Heat Safety Guidelines.

⁷ As measured by each individual club during training by a reliable measurement device (i.e., swimming pool thermometer submerged in an area of water that is representative of the main body of water).

WBGT should be consistently monitored (recommendation is measuring 1m above water level from a dock, every 2 hours during the time of competition). Mitigation strategies should be considered and discussed once the RISK OF THERMAL INJURY, as indicated in Table 4.1 reaches High. Mitigation strategies may include any or many of the following, but are not limited to:

- Shaded rest areas are available.
- Air-conditioned areas or cooling stations are available (cool shower, towels, ice, extra water).
- Training and racing times adjusted to limit the time during the hottest part of the day.
- On-water safety teams provided with extra water, and other provisions to support.
- Reduce event distances if possible (depending on event).

Should the WBGT continue to rise and reach the Extreme level as indicated in Table 4.1, consideration for postponement of the event until the weather changes is appropriate. During competitions, this will be enforced by the Chief Official with input from the Safety Officer and Competition Committee. Notwithstanding the above, training or competition may be postponed or cancelled if, due to the WBGT (when possible) or combined heat and humidity level, the health condition of any Participant appears to be negatively impacted or reasonably threatened or where they have otherwise received reliable medical advice that it is no longer safe to continue the training or competition⁸.

For more detailed information consider the consensus statements from the [IOC](#) and [ACSM](#)

⁸ Whenever possible, coaches or the Club Safety Officer (in training) or the *Chief Official* (in competitions) shall consult with any available on-site medical practitioner(s), such as physicians or paramedics, or make reasonable efforts to contact such individuals.

4.5. Air Quality

Air quality must be considered when participating in outdoor activities such as paddling, and proper precautions must be used to ensure Participants are not exposed to high levels of Air Pollution.

Air Pollution and SPORT SAFETY

Sport organizations are responsible for ensuring the **safety** of sport participants, including athletes, spectators, coaches, and officials. Sport safety can be affected by **air pollution** levels.

Who is at risk?

Everyone experiences health issues on days when the air quality is poor, but some groups of individuals are at **greater risk** than others. These individuals include:

- Seniors, pregnant people, infants and young children
- People living near sources of air pollution such as busy roadways
- People with an existing illness or chronic health condition
- **People engaging in outdoor physical activity, such as sport participants**

What is air pollution?

Air pollution is a mixture of gases, particles and other chemicals that can adversely affect human health. Key outdoor air pollutants include:

- Ground-level Ozone (O₃)
- Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂)
- Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5})

In Canada, air pollution comes from:

- Agriculture
- Electricity generation
- Forest fires
- Construction
- Traffic
- Oil and gas industries
- Factories
- Wood burning

How does air pollution affect human health?

Air pollution can **negatively affect health** leading to:

- Difficulties breathing
- Worsening of chronic breathing diseases
- Irritated lungs and airways

Did you know?

Sport participants are at increased health risk because they breathe deeply and rapidly when they are exercising. The more heavily a person breathes, the more air pollutants that person will inhale.

Increased exposure to air pollutants = increased health risk

Reduce exposure to air pollution

- Monitor local air quality alerts and follow public health advice regarding the safety of outdoor exercise
- Schedule outdoor practices and games **early in the morning** or **later in the evening** to avoid exercising during rush hour traffic
- Choose outdoor practice and game locations away from major roadways to avoid traffic emissions
- When air quality is poor, postpone outdoor sports activities or, if possible, carry out the activity indoors

Be air aware : The air pollution levels in Canada are generally low, but there are times when air pollution levels rise, like during wildfire and extreme heat events. Check the **Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)** at [AirHealth.ca](https://www.airhealth.ca) or through the **WeatherCAN app** to learn about the air quality in your area.

For more information, please visit www.AirHealth.ca or www.SIRC.ca

SIRC Canada

Figure 5.1. From this website: <https://sirc.ca/air-quality-and-sport/>

Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is a scale designed to help you understand what the quality of the air around you means to your health. It is a health protection tool that is designed to help you make decisions to protect your health by limiting short-term exposure to air pollution and adjusting your activity levels during increased levels of air pollution.

The Government of Canada's Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) should be monitored to determine air quality in a given location and whether training or competition should be postponed, shortened or stopped.

Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC) and the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) have created an [AQHI Module](#) to explain this concept. All Participants are encouraged to take this module which can be found on CAC's Locker.

The infographic below provides guidelines to be followed.

Clearing the Air Around the AQHI

While the air quality in Canada is generally good, this is not always the case. As a coach, official or sport administrator, it is important to monitor your local air quality to ensure participants in any outdoor sport activities are protected from exposure to poor air quality.

What is the AQHI?

The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) presents the relative health risk for short-term exposure to common air pollutants on a scale of 1 to 10+. There are four health risk categories, low (1 to 3), moderate (4 to 6), high (7 to 10), and very high (10+).

→ The health risk categories are accompanied by health messages specific to at-risk populations and the general public.

What does it mean?

- ✔ If the AQHI value is low (1 to 3), plan outdoor activities.
- ⚠ If the AQHI value is moderate (4 to 6), reduce the intensity of the outdoor activity.
- ✘ If the AQHI value is high (over 7), move the session indoors or reschedule it to another time.

Air Quality Health Index

RISK	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	+
	LOW			MODERATE			HIGH			VERY HIGH	

How to use the AQHI?

- 1** Go to AirHealth.ca or download the WeatherCAN app and look for the local AQHI conditions. Select your region from the list.
- 2** On the day of your activity, check the current AQHI value by looking at the observed conditions. Monitor this reading and be ready to adapt your activity as needed.
- 3** When planning an outdoor training session or competition, look at the forecast maximums to see the estimated AQHI level for your area on your practice or competition day.
 - Choose to hold activities on days and times of day when the AQHI value is forecasted to be low risk.
- 4** Review the 'Who is at risk?' resource. Remember, all sport participants are at risk, but some may be at a higher risk than others.
 - Special considerations may be needed for high-risk groups, even when the health risk is moderate.

Public Health Air Quality Alerts

Monitor radio and TV news for the regional air quality alerts issued by Environment Climate Change Canada and the regional health authorities. Based on the public health advice, you can:

- Cancel, postpone and reschedule activities
- Move the activity indoors when possible
- Reduce the intensity level of your activity if you have to conduct outdoor activities that day

Please remember these are general guidelines. It is up to you to consider the needs of your participants and the environmental conditions when planning and safely delivering outdoor sport activities.

For more information, please visit www.AirHealth.ca or www.SIRC.ca

Figure 5.2. From this website: <https://sirc.ca/air-quality-and-sport/>

As indicated in Figure 5.2, the AQHI should be monitored when in the Moderate Risk level and mitigation strategies should be considered. Should the AQHI reach a value of 7, activities should be postponed.

Note that a combination of the WBGT (from section 4: Extreme Heat and Humidity) and AQHI should be monitored closely should it appear that both are increasing to levels that may interact and necessarily need mitigation strategies for lower risk levels of each individual measure on its own.

Notwithstanding the above, training or competition may be postponed or cancelled if, due to the AQHI, the health condition of any Participant appears to be negatively impacted or reasonably threatened or where they have otherwise received reliable medical advice that it is no longer safe to continue the training or competition.

4.6. Water Quality

Local water quality indexes, and guidelines around Participant safety should be followed.

5. Guiding Principles for CKC Members and Divisions

CKC Member is defined as per the CKC Definitions on the [website](#).

5.1. Member PTSOs

Note PTSO is a Provincial/Territorial Sport Organization and is defined in CKC Member definition referred to above.

CKC's PTSO Members should:

- a) actively promote the Code to their membership;
- b) maintain records as required, such as completed Accident Report Forms;
- c) obtain EAP's for permanent facilities from clubs;
- d) support the implementation and administration of the required training and certification for the activities being performed at a club for any coach, instructor, and trip leader; and
- e) enforce the Code by sanctioning individual or club members who do not follow it. Sanctions may include warnings, written warnings, suspension of services or privileges, temporary revocation of membership, or permanent revocation of membership.

CKC's PTSO Members are recommended to:

- f) inform their insurer that this Code exists, and how it will be implemented for their members and member clubs.

PTSO's may put in place additional requirements over and above this Code, if they deem necessary.

PTSO's are responsible to inform CKC of any deviations or additions, for themselves or their clubs.

5.2. Sprint Divisions

Ensure that for any activities (examples include but not limited to: competitions, camps, projects) undertaken by the Division, that appropriate sanctioning has been granted either by the appropriate PTSO, or CKC. Where additional safety measures have been adopted by the PTSO or Division, ensure that they have been reviewed and accepted as best practice by the sanctioning body.

Sprint Divisions are responsible to inform CKC of any deviations or additions.

5.3. Member Clubs

With respect to these guidelines, clubs are required to:

- a) adopt and ensure compliance with the minimum standards outlined in this Code of Safety for CKC sanctioned events; and, as directed by the provincial or territorial organization for Club or PTSO activities. Failure to comply with the Code (CKC or PTSO) may result in suspension of club membership in the provincial/territorial sports organization and/or CKC;
- b) ensure Participants that fall under their scope of authority are aware of this Code of Safety (by having it accessible either digitally or in print) and their responsibilities with respect to the Code;
- c) ensure all Participants have signed all appropriate waivers (through membership or event/activity registration);
- d) ensure that all motorboats or other craft used for coaching, safety, officiating, or competitions meet the minimum requirements as set down in the [Canada Shipping Act, Small Vessel Regulations](#), and are in good working order; and
- e) ensure that coaching staff, instructors and /or leaders are adequately trained and competent in life-saving and resuscitation procedures, and ensure staff know where to find all equipment at their club/venue/site.

With respect to these guidelines and club's safety procedures, they should:

- f) notify Participants when any specific environmental considerations or conditions are present (i.e., cold water) and to inform them of the specific rules applicable in such conditions. To manage Participants based on the water and weather conditions at any given moment of the day and to be constantly attentive to any indications that could impact water or weather conditions;
- g) possess and post in a conspicuous place a plan of the local waterway and draw special attention to local rules and hazards;
- h) develop or have access to the club/venue/facility/site Emergency Action Plan, or EAP, (example [here](#), and in Appendix C with guidance on how to complete one) which must be posted, shared, and made available to Participants;
- i) ensure that critical safety-related information is communicated to Participants prior to the start of activities, programs, trips, or events;
- j) compile and prominently display a list of emergency telephone numbers at the Club/site/venue, or alternatively have been shared with the Participants in advance of the activity;
- k) ensure their concussion policy and procedures are aligned with CKC Concussion Protocols and the policy of their provincial/territorial association to ensure they are meeting requirements;
- l) abide by relevant worker safety regulations related to water safety and drowning prevention in force in their Province or Territory and ensure *Participant* compliance;
- m) evaluate and ensure the club equipment being used for an activity is safe and proper working condition. For applicable Whitewater club activities, Participants are encouraged to provide their own float bags where possible;
- n) have taken reasonable steps to determine that Participants have sufficient ability to safely participate in any specific activity, and/or ensure that their coaches, instructors, or leaders have the tools, policies and competencies to do this;
- o) have collected and maintain records of basic Participant health information, that has been shared voluntarily by Participants, that may be needed in the case of an emergency or other medical situation; and

- p) record incidents/accidents which occur during club sponsored activities on an “Accident Report Form” (see Appendix B), or equivalent form. Incident reports must be maintained with the club membership database, and submitted to the PTSO, or upon request.

With respect to these guidelines and club’s safety equipment, they should:

- q) maintain a comprehensive and up to date First Aid Kit and throw bags (if applicable) for club events;
- r) have access to a functioning telephone, or an alternate form of communication, to be able to call for help in case of an emergency; and
- s) ensure all safety or coaching motorboats are equipped with a reboarding device or ladder.

Clubs are also recommended to:

- t) have an AED for all clubs/venues/sites where possible;
- u) promote this Code of Safety and any visual aids related, but not limited, to on-water safety, lifesaving, hypothermia, or resuscitation procedures;
- v) appoint a Club Safety Officer, who will be responsible for ensuring the Club is following all recommended safety guidelines, or ensure that all Participants know their responsibilities with respect to the recommended safety guidelines;
- w) ensure near water safety⁹ measures are considered and implemented, including a lifesaving station on the dock (if applicable) with a rope and [Government of Canada approved PFD](#) in case of accidental immersion; and
- x) promote water-safety and encourage all Participants to learn life-saving techniques, including some or all of Swiftwater rescue, river safety, first aid, CPR, and cold-water workshops and/or courses.

⁹ Additional [near water safety measures](#) may include a pole and life hook, ring buoy or other safety devices.

6. Events, Competitions, and Activities

Please refer to the specific CKC competition or event documents for safety requirements for events, competitions, and activities.

Certification requirements for coaches, instructors and trip leaders will be found in specific rulebooks, registration documents or the competition documents below.

6.1. CKC Flatwater Discipline Events and Activities

- CKC Sprint Discipline Regatta Safety Manual (scope includes Paracanoe, PaddleAll/Special Olympics, and other boats as included in event)
- CKC Marathon Discipline Competition Safety Requirements
- CKC Sprint National Championships Technical Package
- Other manuals to be developed

6.2. CKC Whitewater Discipline Events and Activities

- CKC Whitewater Discipline Competition Safety Requirements (to be further developed and reviewed)
- Cadet Slalom Racing Guidelines

6.3. CKC Team Sport Discipline Events and Activities

- To be developed

Appendix A - Definitions

The terms defined below shall apply to all CKC policies including those included in this and the CKC Policy Manual.

Chief Official refers to the Official who takes responsibility for the overall operation of the canoeing competition in accordance with Competition Rules of the Discipline.

Club Safety Officer refers to an individual who may be appointed by a club whose duty is to ensure the club has implemented safety procedures.

Duty of Care: refers to exercising the care, diligence and skill that a reasonably prudent person would exercise in comparable circumstances. In addition, individuals are expected to act cautiously and try to anticipate the consequences of actions and potential risks in the circumstances.

Member see Definitions section in the CKC Policy Manual

Minor see Definitions section in the CKC Policy Manual

Officials Motorboat is defined as a designated motorboat for Officials during competition. Officials motorboats should not be included in the safety boat minimum count considerations, but can be used for rescue if needed.

Participants include, but are not limited to: athletes, coaches, officials, employees, volunteers, parents and any other individual who participates in the sport of paddling.

Safety (Motor)boat is defined as a motorboat with a crew on board for watch and rescue during formal training, final preparation or official competitions. Safety motorboats should have a reboard device, or ladder. Can also be considered a Safety Craft as defined in Transport Canada's SVR.

Safety Officer refers to an individual who must be appointed for every regatta by the Host Organizing Committee, Host Club, Division or Competition Committee. The Safety Officer for a specific regatta can be a Club Safety Officer.

Appendix B – Accident/Incident Report Form

Please use this form if you wish to report an incident that happened at a CKC or Member event or program specifically for reporting on any accident or injury.

Any incidents, questions, or concerns with respect to Safe Sport should be directed to the [Abuse Free Sport Helpline](#) who will then direct the individual to the appropriate reporting mechanism.

Please note this report may be sent to the provincial/territorial Member organization for insurance purposes and may also be sent to CKC's Independent Third Party or through the Abuse Free Sport or Canadian Safe Sport Policy process, for consultation, actioning, filing, or auditing purposes.

There are 4 sections to this form, the first includes your information, the second details on the incident, the third with any follow-ups that may have happened after the initial incident and the fourth will have an option for any file uploads (if applicable).

SECTION 1 - Your information	
Your name	
Your role or position	
Your email	
Your phone number	
Attestation (example: I attest that all information provided in this report is truthful.)	<i>Signature required</i>
SECTION 2 - Incident information	
Exact location and/or addresses of the incident	
The exact date and time of the incident	
Name of the event (if applicable)	
Please include all names, positions and contact details (if known) of all people involved.	
Please include the names, positions and contact details (if known) of any witnesses.	
Please include a detailed and clear description of what exactly happened.	
Please include a description of any injuries.	

SECTION 3 - Follow up/Actions taken	
Please include any follow ups or actions taken that happened after the incident (if applicable)	
SECTION 4 - Optional file uploads	
If you have a file you wish to upload, please include it here (room for up to 3 files?)	
SECTION 5 – Lessons Learned	
Any lessons learned from this incident that you can share and will help others in the event of something like this occurring?	

Appendix C - Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Example template

Completing the EAP is a way of systematically checking to be sure that you have a plan in place in case of an emergency. The plan itself should be visible and available, and it should be reviewed with the participants at the beginning of the season.

CLUB / Venue		DATE
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CONTACTS

TYPE	NAME	PHONE NUMBER
CHARGE		
CHARGE BACKUP		
CALL		
CALL BACKUP		
CLUB		
CLUB BACKUP		

RESPONSIBILITIES

CHARGE	CALL	CLUB
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct an initial assessment of the injury. 2. Designate someone to watch the other participants (stop all activities and ensure all participants are in a safe area if nobody is available to supervise). 3. Wait with the injured participant and help keep 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call for emergency help. 2. Provide all necessary information to dispatch: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The facility location b. The closest access point to the injured participant c. The nature of the injury d. A description of first aid that has been performed e. Other medical information, such as allergies or medical conditions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be available by telephone to support the charge and call people in case of emergency. 2. Make decisions on behalf of the club if required.

CHARGE	CALL	CLUB
them calm until emergency medical services arrive to assess the injury. 4. Record the injury using the club's accident report form.	3. Clear any traffic from the facility entrance or access road before the ambulance arrives. 4. Wait by the entrance to direct the ambulance. 5. Call the participant's emergency contact person. 6. Assist the charge person as needed.	

SITE INFORMATION

ELEMENT	INFORMATION
SITE NAME	
ADDRESS	
GPS LOCATION	
DIRECTIONS AND LANDMARKS	
NEAREST HOSPITAL	
MAP	
FIRST AID KIT AND AED LOCATION	
LOCATION OF PARTICIPANT INFORMATION Contacts, medical information	
NOTES	

SITE HAZARDS AND RISKS

HAZARD OR RISK DESCRIPTION	STRATEGY TO REDUCE OR AVOID

REMINDERS

- Save and reuse this form to prepare an EAP for your usual practice site and for any site where you host competitions.
- When preparing for away competitions, ask the host team or host facility for a copy of their EAP in advance.
- Attach the medical profile and parent or caregiver contact information for each participant to this EAP.

Appendix D – History of Document

This document is to be considered version 1 of the new CKC Code of Safety. It has been created from an amalgamation, review and rewrite of the 3 previous Discipline Codes of Safety:

- a. CKC Code of Safety Sprint Racing Discipline – 2021
- b. CKC Whitewater Code of Safety – November 2009
- c. CKC Marathon Canoe Racing Council Safety Policy – November 2018

To note, where competition or specific regatta information may have been included in the previous versions of specific Discipline Codes of Safety, these will now be part of specific documents as referenced in Section 6.

Thank you to the Working Group who have put in significant time to get the document to where it is now for review by CKC's Board, Council and Committees. The Working Group members included:

James Cartwright	Kim Houston	Elissa McColl
Eric Chaplin	Keith James	Kenna Robins
Edmond Duggan	Sarah Kennedy	Don Stoneman
Joel Hazzan	Carole Lavoie	
Michael Holroyd	Trevor L'Heureux	

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