

Poole Harbour Canoe Club
Risk Assessment Record

☐ Ref no: PHCC26

☐ **Assessor(s)**

John Wheeler, Andy Coomes

☐ **Activity:** Harbour Race – 19th Sep 2026

Location: Lake Pier and course within Poole Harbour.
Note: This RA follows headings used in paddle UK Risk assessment.
Please also read site specific risk assessment for lake pier and club generic risk assessment which covers issues such as drowning, hypothermia etc.

☐ Date of assessment 15/05/26

Last assessment date 15/05/26

PLEASE NOTE: This Risk Assessment **MUST** be read and used in conjunction with the club Generic Paddling Risk Assessment. It is also essential that all coaches carry out ongoing Dynamic Risk Assessments. The Paddle UK Risk Assessing Marathon Races Template has been used to identify areas to consider.

Risk Groups: **PM**=Paddling Member inc Participants, **J**=Junior, **DM**=Member with disabilities, **V**=Volunteer (Land Based), **MP**=Member of the public, **OA**=Outside Agencies, **C**=Contractor, Other – Specify

(S) Severity of Risk: 1=Low, 2=Medium, 3=High, 4=Very High **(L) Likelihood of Risk:** 1=Unlikely, 2=Occasional, 3=Likely, 4=Inevitable

	What are the Hazards	Who Might be Harmed	What are you doing to Control the risks, What further action is needed, by whom and when is action needed by.	Done	S	L	Risk Rating
1	Vehicle traffic on road and in car parking areas	ALL	‘Busy - Canoe race’ signage is to be displayed on approach to site so that public/ participants use caution and slow speed. Check in and Beach access detailed. - Briefing signs to be displayed to inform everyone of pedestrian routes to beach, registration and race start, car access routes and parking zones. - Car Park Stewards wearing Hi-Viz jackets to guide vehicle parking to avoid blocking access to Club House, ramp to beach and Public Toilets. Guidance will minimise injury risk to participants, general public or property. - In the event of car park overflow the plan is to offload boats and then direct vehicles to street parking elsewhere – the road down to the car park is kept clear at all times.		2	2	4

2	Damage to equipment from moving traffic and visa versa	ALL	- Equipment is to be kept out of corridors of traffic movement. - Offloaded boats are to be taken down to beach to keep car park and footpaths as clear as possible.		2	2	4
3	Pedestrians - Slips and Trips on footpath to beach. Avoiding creation of trip hazards on site. Spectators – Keep start/finish clear of non-participants at key times.	ALL	- Event Organisers to check hazards prior to the event and if appropriate brief helpers and participants and display warning signs. (Set up crew leader to check day before) - Assistance to be provided in carrying equipment to the beach area particularly for users with mobility issues (Car park stewards) - Boat scrutineering area and race start and finish areas to be marked with signs. - Beach area to be marshalled particularly during start and finish times to avoid collisions between spectators and participants etc. - Cables to be sensibly routed and equipment to be clear of pedestrian routes.		2	2	4
4.1	The Course - <u>Risk of Drowning</u> Course(s) will be affected by weather and tide conditions. Capsized participants may well be a long way from shore and unable to self-rescue. Possibility of multiple capsizes in certain wind conditions.	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- Safety Plans set out how weather conditions will be monitored and the alternative bad weather courses. The plans includes course marking and Rescue Boat cover. If weather situation demands race will not be run. - Race entry covers health issues, wearing of BAs and buoyancy in Boats which will be checked by Marshalls as boats are brought to the beach. - Participant Briefing on day will cover the following:- <i>For 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 the following safety points apply:</i> <i>Safety briefing at start, All competitors to wear buoyancy aids</i> <i>Checking of boats for governing body compliance to buoyancy recommendations</i> <i>Stake boats and mobile Safety Boats stationed at high-risk areas.</i> <i>RLSS life guards providing radio communications and first aid cover</i> <i>All safety boats to be manned by suitably trained and qualified personnel.</i> <i>PHC Small Craft Emergency Protocol to be used as a guide.</i> <i>Communications link with Poole VTS (VHF Ch 14 or 01202 440230)</i> <i>Coastguard to be notified of numbers prior to and on completion.</i>		3	1	3

4.2	- <u>Hypothermia</u> Influence of weather conditions- clothing needs to reflect conditions. Officials both on and off water sitting in one position for long periods.	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- This is part of safety briefing and guidance to both competitors and to officials - Safety boats/some kayaks will carry equipment to deal with and prevent hypothermia.		1	2	2
4.3	- <u>Injury due to Collision</u> Other water users and participants in race. Includes rescue craft. Other water users include ferries to Brownsea Island and sailing Clubs, water ski area etc,	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- Other Harbour Users – sailing Clubs, Poole Harbour Commissioners, Brownsea Island Ferries will be notified of Event by direct contact. - Poole Harbour commissioners will be requested to publish a local notice to Mariners detailing the course and publicising the event. - Stake boats and Safety boats will warn vessels approaching the race route of the race by VHF, verbal means or hand signals. - Race Briefing will make clear that participants give way to other water users to avoid risk of collision. Briefing will also highlight higher risk areas such as Brownsea Castle area. - Stake boat at Arne and lookout at pier monitor channel between Lake pier and Arne and inform Race control desk if vessels are approaching the start area. Race control desk will be in communication with starter to say clear to start or delay start if required. - Competitors advised whether Water Ski Area will be operational.		3	1	3
4.4	- <u>Illness caused by Environment</u> Pollution risk due to spillage or heavy rain causing pollutant run off.	PM, J, DM, V, OA	Any concerns will be monitored in run up to race and in the event of a pollution spill that would threaten health advice from the Environment Agency/Poole Harbour Commissioners will be taken – if in doubt the race will be cancelled.		1	1	1
5.	Club House and Public Toilets Too many people in Club House with associated risks of accident etc.	PM, J, DM, V, OA, MP	- There is minimal changing space within the Club house thus it will not be used by participants. Clubhouse shower is available in event of emergency. Signage will make this clear. - Council Public toilets will be regularly inspected to identify any problems – none are envisaged.		2	1	1
6.	Marquees, Tents used for Registration, Catering etc. Risk of injury in putting up or being erected in an unsafe manner.	PM, J, DM, V, OA, MP	- Volunteers with previous experience in erecting and securing gazebos are used to oversee the process. - Impact of Strong winds is minimised by using water filled containers – assessment to be made on day.		2	2	4

7.	Catering and Temporary Power supply. Safety of gas and other appliances, safety of electrical supply etc	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- Dynamic risk assessment on the day to ensure power and gas appliances are safely used. - Danger areas cordoned off from participants and general public		3	1	3
9	Catering. Risk of Food Poisoning, allergic reactions, scalds from hot drinks etc	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- Cakes and Hot and Cold Drinks will be provided. Cakes fresh or just defrosted. - Hot Food – Checks to ensure fully cooked. - Hand cleaner for public – gloves worn by servers. - Hot drinks area not allowing public access - Allergy Notices		3	1	3
10.	Emergency Evacuation of Lake Car Park Site – for example could be as a result of heath fire.	PM, J, DM, V, OA	- Emergency Services instructions would be followed as regards evacuation of site, removal of cars and other equipment. - When agreed with Emergency Services, the emergency response plan would direct competitors to divert to Hamworthy Park.		3	2	6

Emergency Response –

Note: Race Safety Plan to be used to guide response. PHC Small Craft Emergency Protocol as reproduced below to be used with exception of paragraphs 9 to 10 – not applicable to kayak race situation).

- Emergency Contacts - List to be produced – VHF Channel agreed, mobiles contact list**
- First Aid Cover - At Lake. All Rescue boats have trained First aiders.**
- Insurance – Paddle UK**
- EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN**

LAND MINOR INCIDENT

Notify First Aid Officer (injury) or Race Safety Officer (near miss or possible problem identified) as appropriate

First Aid Officer to notify Race Safety Officer and Event Co-ordinator if required

First Aid Officer to call for outside assistance if required

LAND BASED MAJOR INCIDENT

As above but involve Race Safety Officer and Event Co-ordinator from the start.

SEA BASED INCIDENT

Pass details to Race Safety Officer asap

Send Rib or kayak to scene – if not already there.

Recover paddler to beach or base depending on situation – ensure Race Control know paddler off water (competitor number etc) (Ambulance pickup points - Baiter public slipway, Haven Hotel, Lake Pier)

SEA BASED MAJOR INCIDENT

Contact Race Safety Officer to agree contact with Coastguard on Channel 16 – all parties tune to Channel 16 and monitor response

Safety Boat calls **'Mayday, Mayday, Mayday;; Solent Coastguard; Solent Coastguard; this is (.....) Poole Harbour Canoe Club Race Safety Boat, we have an injured person(s) in Poole Harbour and need immediate assistance. Over'**

Race Safety Officer, as appropriate to provide additional support or information to assist the response and to focus on responsibilities to other participants and the ongoing running of the Race.

PHC Safety Boat Emergency Protocol Ref version 5 Feb 2025 – review due Feb 2029

Nothing in this protocol should prevent any person involved in an emergency situation from taking reasonable and appropriate action (in accordance with their training and ability) to get a casualty to safety as quickly as possible, keeping others informed of the nature of the casualty and the landing place (as a minimum).

1. In the event of a safety boat recognising an Emergency situation the safety boat will call the Race Officer (RO) on the club's working channel and briefly explain the situation and state intention to call the Coastguard on channel 16. The RO will confirm.
2. (If fitted), the Safety Boat should transmit a DSC Distress Alert whilst alongside casualty.
3. Safety Boat and Race Officer tune to Channel 16. The safety boat calls: "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday; this is Canoe Race safety boat (xyz). Mayday; My Position within Poole Harbour is <coordinates or distance and bearing from a known position>, <Number and type of injuries>; Immediate assistance required; Over"
There should be a laminated prompt card on safety boats to this effect.
4. The Coastguard is now in direct contact with the vessel on scene and can glean any further information in order to conduct an effective rescue and also organise an ambulance.
5. This call should have been heard by VTS who monitors Ch16 in addition to Ch14. However, if VTS are transmitting on Ch 14 at the time of the Mayday, Ch 16 will be temporarily automatically muted so the RO should arrange for a brief further call to be made to VTS on Ch14 to get positive confirmation they are aware of the incident and will be actively participating on Ch16.
6. As the RO and the VTS are monitoring, they can offer support or additional information (ie number of competitors & safety craft available / shipping movements) ; once the Coastguard have assumed control, the RO is relieved of his duty of care in respect of the rescue of this casualty and can focus on his responsibilities towards the rest of the participants. RO should consider appropriateness of abandoning racing to ensure clear water and minimal distractions.
7. The Coastguard are aware and accept that they may be talking to the safety boat crew (rather than coxswain) who may not hold a VHF licence (this is permitted in distress situations under Article 47.2 of the Radio Regulations).
8. Remembering that this is an Emergency situation, communication remain on Ch16 until such time that HMCG specifies an alternative vhf channel. All transmissions should be prefixed with the word Mayday on Ch16. Note HM Coastguard only has one VHF aerial that reliably covers all of Poole Harbour so dual channel working for the Coastguard is rare.
9. ~~To aid in identification, the safety boat should have a buoyant orange smokefloat available if possible.~~

~~10. Repatriation points that all, including the emergency services, are familiar with should be used. Where there are fatalities then busy public areas should be avoided i.e. not Poole Quay Boat Haven. Recommended repatriation points:~~

National Trust jetty on N Haven point		BH13 7QJ	
Royal Motor Yacht Club	54 Panorama Rd	BH13 7RE	01202 707227
Parkstone Yacht Club	Pearce Avenue	BH14 8EH	01202 743610
Poole Yacht Club	New Harbour Rd	BH15 4AQ	01202 672687 68202
Poole Quay Boat Haven	The Quay	BH15 1HA	01202 649488

~~Training exercises should be conducted to ensure that the protocol is understood and refined and to reinforce confidence in non-professional parties. This should take the form of practical and/or table top as deemed necessary.~~

~~HM Coastguard and VTS to be advised of club racing programmes to enable them to respond to calls from members of the public by being better informed.~~

The advantages of this method are:

- Coastguard immediately in contact with first informant and can obtain all the info they and Ambulance / hospital need.
- No delays introduced by relaying through RO and VTS
- No interpretations or mistakes introduced by relaying through RO or VTS
- Coastguard now in constant contact with first informant on scene.
- RNLI or helicopter in constant contact with first informant as soon as they launch
- All parties kept updated
- As this is on an open VHF channel, others are kept informed and can contribute (negates the one-to-one closed network caused by phone calls)
- The RO can concentrate on their other participants
- VTS can concentrate on their priorities

The disadvantages of this method are:

- The Coastguard may end up talking to someone who is not very familiar with VHF procedures (but in truth they are used to that).
- The safety boat crew will be outside their comfort zone of Ch 'M'

Note: Since February 2005 it has no longer been a requirement for vessels to monitor VHF Ch16 where impractical to do so. However Poole VTS and HM Coastguard continue to monitor VHF Channel 16.