



**Reviewed By**

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## Activity Scope

This risk assessment refers to Flat Water Canoeing conducted under the direct supervision of a qualified YMCA Instructor. All information supplied is based on best practice for the relevant activity.

## Risk Assessment

In assessing the level of risk, considerations such as the likelihood of an incident happening in combination with the seriousness of a consequence are used to gauge the overall risk level for an activity. The matrix below has been used as a guide to assist with developing the risk assessment:

RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX		CONSEQUENCES				
		Minor – first aid treatment only.	Significant – treatment required by a medical professional.	Substantial – overnight hospitalisation, multiple medical treatments, short-term rehabilitation.	Major –permanent impairment or loss, long term rehabilitation.	Disaster – fatality, multiple Major consequences.
LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain – expected to occur in most circumstances.	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME	EXTREME
	Likely – probably occur in many circumstances.	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME	EXTREME
	Possible – might occur in some circumstances.	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH	EXTREME
	Unlikely – could occur in unusual circumstances.	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	HIGH	HIGH
	Rare – possible only in exceptional circumstances.	LOW	LOW	MODERATE	MODERATE	MODERATE

## Risk Level for Canoeing

The risk levels for this activity have been measured using the risk assessment matrix. The highest individual risk assessment level associated with the activity determines the overall risk level given.

Initial risk level (before controls)		Action required/approval
<b>High</b>	Likely chance of a serious incident and injury requiring medical treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Risk level not acceptable – control measures must be implemented to reduce risk to acceptable level.</li> <li>✓ Documented Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) required for Canoeing activity.</li> <li>✓ To be approved by Camp Manager and WHS Manager.</li> <li>✓ All instructors must be provided with training in SOP's prior to leading activity.</li> <li>✓ Obtaining parental permission is recommended.</li> </ul>

## Hazards and suggested control measures

Listed below are the indicative hazards/risks and the suggested control measures.

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<b>Biological material</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bodily fluids (e.g. blood, sweat, saliva)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants with open cuts and abrasions are to be removed from the activity and treated immediately. If bleeding cannot be controlled completely, the participant should not be allowed to return the activity. All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood should be treated as potentially infectious.</li> <li>• Have sufficient and suitable containment material (bandages, etc) available</li> <li>• Ensure that personal items are not shared.</li> </ul>

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<p><b>Environmental conditions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High temperature</li> <li>• UV radiation</li> <li>• Storms – high winds, rain, hail, lightning</li> <li>• Surfaces – slips / trips</li> <li>• Surrounds</li> <li>• Depth of water</li> <li>• Tides/currents</li> <li>• Submerged hazards</li> <li>• Visibility</li> <li>• Overhanging hazards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess weather conditions before and during activity (e.g. temperature, storms). Activity not to proceed / cease in the event of storms or high winds.</li> <li>• Instructors and participants for wear hats (when not wearing helmets) and sunscreen.</li> <li>• Instructor to utilise shade wherever possible (eg – during briefings).</li> <li>• Instructor and participants encouraged to bring drink bottles to the activity.</li> <li>• Check and assess surrounds for loose items, debris such as fallen/submerged tree branches, rocks etc, and other hazards.</li> <li>• The location should allow safe access to the staging areas.</li> <li>• Visibility and access to be considered before choosing routes. Select an appropriate route and location, having regard for; experience of instructor, number and type of craft, depth of water, tidal flow, currents, visibility, water temperature, underwater vegetation, marine life, protection from water craft.</li> <li>• Consider hazards associated with types of fencing material, gates and other infrastructure.</li> <li>• Enclosed study shoes must be worn.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Equipment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment failure</li> <li>• Tangle of equipment</li> <li>• Incorrect set up / use / fit of equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use, maintain and store equipment according to manufacturer’s specifications.</li> <li>• Conduct regular equipment checks prior to start of sessions. Particular attention to condition of tubes/inflatable items and fastening systems on Life Jackets. All equipment to be in a clean and serviceable condition prior to use.</li> <li>• Routine checks for worn or faulty equipment, and adhere to manufacturer’s guidelines for life of equipment.</li> <li>• Ensure all safety equipment is in place and in good condition and discard immediately if not suitable.</li> <li>• Activity to be conducted only by qualified instructors who are competent in the use of all equipment and who have been instructed in the Safe Operating Procedures. Ensure wet equipment is dried before storing.</li> <li>• Provide specific (written and verbal) training to instructors in use of equipment and awareness of safety requirements.</li> <li>• Instructor to carry rescue throw bag, basic repair kit (tape).</li> <li>• Canoes do not sink but remain horizontal when swamped, and are useable as buoyancy.</li> <li>• Canoes are of a colour that is clearly visible to other water users or rescue authorities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Manual handling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lifting equipment</li> <li>• Manipulating/ moving participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adhere to manual handling guidelines to prevent or minimise the risk of injury.</li> <li>• Use mechanical aids where possible to reduce manual handling requirements.</li> </ul>

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<p><b>Participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special needs</li> <li>• High risk behaviours</li> <li>• Medical conditions / illness</li> <li>• Participant numbers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obtain parental permission including relevant medical information.</li> <li>• Brief participants on behaviour expectations.</li> <li>• When participants with medical conditions are involved, ensure relevant medical/ emergency plans and medications are readily available (insulin, Ventolin, EpiPen, etc).</li> <li>• Refer to individual education plan/educational adjustment plan/behaviour management plan and other participant documents. Where necessary, obtain advice from relevant advisory visiting teachers or specialist teachers.</li> <li>• Ensure there is adequate adult supervision</li> <li>• Ensure long hair is tied back before participating in the activity</li> <li>• All forms of jewellery should be removed or protected (e.g. tape) before participating in the activity.</li> <li>• Participants who are actively participating in the activity, to be seen by at least one adult at all times.</li> <li>• No participant to be forced to participate beyond their readiness – “challenge by choice”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Vehicles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boats and other sea craft</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess vehicles/marine craft prior to use, ensure structural integrity, are in good repair and meet their intended design characteristics.</li> <li>• Ensure marine craft are capable of being towed by rope and grasped by hand, either through hand holds or toggles, depending on the type of craft.</li> <li>• Continually assess the threat of vehicles/marine craft to participants.</li> <li>• Where an accompanying marine craft is used, the craft must conform with boating regulations.</li> <li>• Comply with governing authority in water reservoir (ie water contamination).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Water</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of drowning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure each participant has a Life Jacket that meets Australian Standards for its intended purpose.</li> <li>• The Life Jacket should be the correct size for the wearer and be adjusted correctly before entering the water. The Life Jacket should be a bright colour.</li> <li>• Instructor to check the suitability and swimming competency of participants.</li> <li>• Instructor to negotiate areas of moving water prior to participants.</li> <li>• Throw bags, 15-20 meters, and or tow-lines must be carried on rescue craft.</li> <li>• A safety knife should be carried by all Instructors. Knives should be easily accessible, however should not be carried on the outside of the Life Jacket.</li> <li>• Adhere to Exclusion Zones as directed by relevant authority (Dam Wall, Wier).</li> <li>• Ensure the instructor has an appropriate towing system easily accessible so that it can be deployed quickly when needed.</li> <li>• Instructor to remain aware of the distance from shore as the weather, wind and tide can create hazards. The activity may need to be modified or abandoned in adverse conditions.</li> <li>• All gear should be correctly waterproofed and stowed securely in canoes.</li> </ul>

Hazards/risks	Control measures
<p><b>Physical exertion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strains and sprains</li> <li>• Cramps</li> <li>• Exhaustion and fatigue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuously monitor participants for sign of fatigue and exhaustion.</li> <li>• Have appropriate warm-up and warm-down activities.</li> <li>• Follow progressive and sequential skills development.</li> <li>• Have ice packs available.</li> <li>• Continuously monitor participants for fear and/ or hesitancy, or loss of balance.</li> <li>• Ensure paddles are appropriate to the type of craft and the build and skills of the participants.</li> </ul>

## Minimum equipment/facilities

First aid kit suitable for activity.

### Communication system

Electronic and other equipment that can be damaged by water is to be carried in water resistant containers.

The following communication equipment should be appropriate for the activity and area of operations:

Phone-line at location    UHF Radio    Whistle    Mobile phone

Sun Safety equipment (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, shirt etc ) & insect repellent (participant to supply their own)

Appropriate clothing and footwear (no singlets, skirts, short shorts, thongs, crocs etc).

Instructor will inspect the area and ensure its soundness before commencing the activity.

Equipment use and maintenance log to be kept or each session.

Drinking water (participants should not share drinking containers).

Vehicular access to within a reasonable distance of the activity in case of emergency.

Safety, repair and rescue equipment comprising of; throw bag, equipment to tow a participant, rescue knife, roll of duct tape.

Spare equipment to be available in case of emergency.

## Minimum supervision

A minimum of 1 qualified YMCA Instructor + 1 Teacher/Group Leader is to be present to run Canoeing. Canoeing is suitable for all ages.

It is strongly recommended that at least 2 Teachers/ Group Leaders are present to assist with participant behaviours.

1 YMCA Instructor per 15 participants (minimum and maximum numbers apply). Alterations to YMCA Instructor : participant ratios must be done in consultation with Camp Management.

All YMCA staff, contractors and volunteers hold required qualifications /skills sets or other recognised skill sets/ qualifications from another jurisdiction, along with mandatory First Aid/ CPR and QLD Blue Card (working with children check).

Emergency Procedures	Teacher/ Group Leader Responsibilities	Participant Briefing Instructor should cover	Participant Requirements
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effect Rescue as required.</li> <li>2. Conduct First Aid as required.</li> <li>3. Contact Emergency Services via mobile phone.</li> <li>4. Depending on injury: stabilise patient and await ambulance or remove patient to appropriate site to recover.</li> <li>5. In the event of serious injury, suspend activity until incident can be investigated.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform and liaise with Activity Instructor regarding any potential issues with group.</li> <li>• Listen to activity briefings and assist Instructors in procedural aspects of session as required.</li> <li>• Monitor and take charge of behavioural issues if needed and attend to any pre-existing medical conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge by Choice Philosophy</li> <li>• Session Objectives</li> <li>• OH&amp;S Brief</li> <li>• Safety Brief</li> <li>• Equipment Familiarisation</li> <li>• Skills Demonstration and Practice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunscreen, insect repellent.</li> <li>• Medication (if relevant).</li> <li>• Water bottle.</li> <li>• Fully enclosed shoes, hat</li> <li>• Swimming togs, rash shirt/t-shirt.</li> <li>• Towel and change of clothes. removed.</li> <li>• Hair tied back, jewellery removed.</li> </ul>