

Risk Assessment - BFOC Water Activities

Date of Assessment: 14th March 2024 - Charlotte Russell

Last Review date: 6th March 2026 - Fran Cains-Ward

Next Review date: 6th March 2027

Description of Area: Blackland Farm Outdoor Centre

Risk Assessment Matrix

Severity / Likelihood	1 Rare	3 Possible	5 Almost Certain
1 Insignificant	1	3	5
3 Moderate	3	9	15
5 Catastrophic	5	15	25



Severity: How severely could the hazard hurt someone or cause damage?

Catastrophic: Injury would require expert medical attention, and has the potential to be fatal

Major: Injury would require the participant to stop doing the activity, medical treatment is beyond the skills of a basic first aider

Insignificant: Minor injury requiring simple first aid or no treatment.

Likelihood: How likely is it to happen?

Almost certain: Expected to occur in all circumstances.

Possible: Might possibly occur at some time

Rare: May occur only in exceptional circumstances

Definitions:

Risk Score:

Risk Score	Risk Level	Action Required
20-25	Extreme	Immediate action required
12-16	High	Action plan required
6-10	Moderate	Specific monitoring or procedures required
1-5	Low	Manage through routine procedures

This Risk Assessment is to be used in conjunction with the Generic Activity Risk Assessment Document.

Generic						
Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Weather - Wind	The group could become displaced and the instructor could lose control of the group.	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See SOP for the environmental controls. 	3	2	6
Weather - Lightning	Injury caused by lightning	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the event of lightning storm, the 30/30 rule is followed- https://www.rospa.com/leisure-water-safety/leisure-safety/lightning Reservoir Supervisor to monitor weather conditions throughout the paddle session. 	5	1	5
Water	Drowning	All users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All participants and instructors must wear buoyancy aids near/ on water. Participants must be water confident. Lone working does not occur at the water. All users are supervised in and around water (1:8). 	5	1	5
Effect of cold water	Cold water shock	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants are told to wear suitable clothing for weather conditions. Any participants who capsize in cold weather are rescued quickly, monitored for signs/ symptoms and sent off the water to change/ warm up if needed. Buoyancy aids to be worn at all times when on activity, spare clothing and group equipment is taken to the reservoir when sessions are taking place. 	5	1	5
Lone Working	Unable to get help	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff never work alone at the reservoir, instructors carry radios on the water. 	3	1	3
Injury from loading trailers	Back injuries, trapped fingers/ limbs, head injuries from overhead working	Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff trained in un/loading using correct manual handling techniques. Trailers to be weighted at the front to avoid tipping, chocs used to ensure trailers are stable. If necessary, trailers will be attached to vehicles to aid with stability. Additional step jigs and ladders are available for loading at height (Box Trailers). 	4	2	8

Contact with/ingestion of blue-green algae	Skin rashes, nausea, vomiting, stomach pains, fever and headaches. Occasionally it can cause more serious illness such as liver and brain damage.	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low levels of algae: warn participants of the hazard, run the session away from the bloom(s), don't play wet games, provide fresh water to rinse off with after the session. • Mid levels of algae: run all sessions as rafted canoe sessions, run sessions away from the bloom(s), don't play wet games, provide fresh water to rinse off with and showers back on site after the session. • High levels of algae: cancel all sessions. 	5	1	5
Launch area	Natural Bank can become slippery when wet or when participants have wet shoes. Participants slipping into the water whilst climbing in and out of boats. Slips, cuts and potential bone injuries on hard surfaces.	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors to help with getting participants into and out of craft or providing instruction for participants/ supervising adults to do so. • Brief participants on the hazards of the launch areas. • Bank to be monitored throughout the season and additional measures introduced if necessary (e.g. non-slip mats). 	3	2	6
Insufficient Adult Supervision	Minor injury and loss of group control	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to Generic RA- • Instructor to participant ratio on the water is 1:8 and poor behaviour under these conditions is not tolerated. 	3	1	3
Groups floating into out of boundary areas	Potential disbursement of group, problematic if participants then capsize	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear boundaries set within Blackland Farm license. Groups supervised by a reservoir supervisor at all times (see SOP for specific ratios) who will monitor environmental and group variables and act within the remit of their qualification. 	2	2	4
Multiple capsizes	Many people in the water adding to time in potentially cold water	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:8 ratio of staff to participants. • Max group size of 24 participants on each individual session. • Weaker paddlers are kept close to the bank so they can stand up & self-rescue if they capsize. • Instructors to keep the group in the same area, and be within easy reach of all participants. 	3	2	6

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the circumstance that there are multiple participants physically in the water (i.e. not in a craft), all remaining participants should be instructed to the bank or to raft up while the situation is corrected. • Group control should be maintained at all times by the instructor. • All instructors have completed paddlesport safety and rescue training or equivalent. 			
Unsuitable standing surface	Injury to feet	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants must have suitable footwear on, this could be trainers or wetsuit style shoes. • No open toe, flip flops or Croc style footwear should be permitted. 	3	2	6
Overcrowding	Crafts colliding with each other and participants	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All instructors to ensure the groups have enough space between them to operate safely- this can be supported by Lead Paddlers / Reservoir Supervisor if required. 	3	2	6
Waterborne diseases	Illnesses related to waterborne diseases	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants and instructors are advised to shower if they went swimming during their session. • All participants and instructors are advised to cover any cuts with a waterproof dressing. 	3	1	3
Remote Environment	Injury and illness / safeguarding	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors to carry additional equipment as detailed in the SOP (e.g. group shelter, spare clothes, etc). • Duty Manager and Emergency Procedures Policy in place. • Participants are encouraged to use facilities prior to leaving the site. In the event of participants needing to use toileting facilities, instructors must make a dynamic assessment of risk and mitigate as far as reasonably practicable. 	3	2	6
Members of the public	Safeguarding / nuisance behaviour	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors to ensure good group management and that members of the public are given the right of way on public routes. Members of the public should be managed by the instructors directly. Assistance can be provided by the onsite Duty Manager. • Security to be maintained within the boundary of the license area (i.e. gates locked when instructors on water, trespassing challenged where reasonable, etc). • Emergency Procedures Policy in place. 	4	2	8

Kayaking						
Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Entrapment	Drowning	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups briefed on capsize drills before going on the water. Spraydecks only to be used by Instructors or participants with specific training. Instructors ensure the appropriate size kayak is matched to participants to lower the chance of entrapment. 	5	1	5

Canoeing/ Rafted Canoeing						
Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Rafted canoes folding into each other	Canoes folding together trapping participants	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canoes are tied together in a secure way. Instructors trained in how to put together securely and the risks associated. Instructor to carry a knife that is easily accessed. 	4	1	4
Knives	Cuts, stabs, etc.	All users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors to be fully trained in use of knives. First Aid Kit to be present on session in case of injury. Participants are not permitted to use sharp tools. Knives to be securely held by the instructor as to avoid unauthorised use. 	2	2	4
Entrapment	drowning	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors brief participants what to do in the event of a capsize. Instructors trained in rescue procedures. Painters to stay inside the canoes when not in use. 	5	1	5

Stand Up Paddleboard/ Mega SUP

Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Entrapment	Drowning	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only instructors wear a waist leash. Mega Sup - instructors to brief participants on how to fall off the mega sup. If a sling is used as a step it must be removed once used. 	5	1	5
Paddleboard exploding	Minor injury	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stand Up Paddleboard and Mega SUP to be stored out of direct sunlight. 	3	1	3

Raft Building

Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Entrapment	Drowning	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants briefed on how to lash correctly. Instructor on the water before raft leaves the bank. Instructor to carry a knife that is easily accessed. Instructor to inspect the raft to ensure its a good build quality in order to ensure that the raft will remain intact and that ropes are tied securely. Participants briefed to swim away from any objects. 	5	1	5
Knives	Cuts, stabs, etc.	All users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructors to be fully trained in use of knives. First Aid Kit to be present on session in case of injury. Participants are not permitted to use sharp tools. Knives to be securely held by the instructor as to avoid unauthorised use. 	2	2	4
Multiple paddles in close proximity	Head injury	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helmets must be worn by everyone. Only 4 paddles permitted per raft to reduce likelihood of contact. 	4	1	4
Collision with raft	Injury	All users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helmets must be worn by everyone. 	3	1	3

Walk to / from the Reservoir for Adventure Club

Hazard	Potential outcome	Persons	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Road and Traffic	Injury resulting from traffic collision	All Users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructors position themselves at the front, back and middle of the group. • Instructors to wear high-vis. • Instructors to ensure group walk in a single file . 	4	2	8
Poor group behaviour	Missing person or Injury or accident associated with		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are scheduled headcounts throughout the walk outlined in the SOP. • The staff ratio is 3:24 with an additional staff member for every 12 more participants, this is so group management can be maintained throughout the walk. 	4	2	8