Risk Assessment – Pool Sessions

Date of risk assessment completion	17/08/2025

Assessor's name	Russell Mason	Date of next review	30/10/2027

Description of risk assessment	All paddle craft

Location / environment details	Pool sessions

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks, and who is responsible for this?	Risk level (L/M/H)	Are further controls necessary?
Slips, trips and falls	Participants and general public: ● Strains, sprains & breaks	Participants to take reasonable measures to ensure that all areas are kept tidy at all times to remove trip hazards. Participants to ensure that boats and equipment are positioned tidily and off pathways when on the poolside. Participants to ensure that they walk carefully and don't run, particularly on damp and slippery surfaces, and when carrying equipment. Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants do not run.	L	No
Falling in	Participants: ● Drowning ● Secondary drowning	Lead Coaches to ensure that all Paddle Leaders have FSRT / PSRC qualifications or equivalent skills as a minimum. Paddle Leaders to ensure that all participants are able to swim 25m clothed.	L	No

	● Hypothermia ● Injuries from sharp objects in the water ● Head injury			
Entrapment in own craft	Participants: ● Drowning	Lead Coaches to ensure that all Paddle Leaders have FSRT / PSRC qualifications or equivalent skills as a minimum. Paddle Leaders to check clothing of participants and minimise risks (e.g. no long and loose lace loops). Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants using spray decks have practised a roll or wet exit within the previous 12 months. Paddle Leaders to ensure that craft are appropriately fitted to inexperienced participants. Paddle Leaders to brief inexperienced participants on safe exit from craft in an emergency.	L	No
Collisions with other water users	Participants: ● Drowning ● Entrapment ● Physical injury	Paddle Leaders to maintain awareness of participants' locations and advise on appropriate spacing where necessary. Participants to be aware of other participants' locations and give sufficient space, particularly when performing freestyle tricks. If necessary, Paddle Leaders to create roped off sections of the pool for specific activities (e.g. freestyle or rescue practice). Paddle Leaders to ensure that there is no swimming in the pool, to reduce the chance of boat-to-head or paddle-to-head collisions.	L	No
Manual handling	Participants: ● Musculoskeletal injury	Lead Coaches to ensure that all Paddle Leaders are aware of good manual handling techniques for boats and equipment, particularly swamped boats. Paddle Leaders to advise participants on good manual handling techniques for boats and equipment.	M	No
Equipment failure	Participants: ● Pinch injuries ● Lacerations ● Entrapment	Club Safety Officer to ensure that equipment is checked at least annually. Paddle Leaders to monitor club equipment when used. Paddle Leaders to report club equipment damage on the TeamApp Maintenance Repairs chat.	L	No

Pre-existing medical conditions	Participants	All participants to complete medical information in ClassFit. Lead Pool Coach to ensure that Paddle Leaders are informed of relevant medical information. Paddle Leaders to give opportunity for discussion about medical conditions after paddle briefing. Participants to ensure that Paddle Leaders are aware of medical conditions and any medication required on the water.	L	No
Canoe Polo	Participants: ● Cuts / grazes ● Head / facial injuries ● Finger injuries	Paddle Leaders to ensure that all participants wear a buoyancy aid and helmet to protect against impacts (these are available from the boat store at the pool). Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants only use paddles with plastic blades (no carbon, glass fibre, wooden or metal tipped blades – plastic blade paddles are available from the boat store at the pool). Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants do not wear watches, locker keys or jewellery on hands or wrist. Paddle Leaders and participants to ensure that canoe polo safety rules are followed: ● a paddle must not contact another player; ● a paddle must not be used to play or attempt to play the ball when the ball is in arm's reach of another player; ● a paddle must never be thrown; ● a player must not reach over another player's boat with either paddle or arm; ● a player must not kayak-tackle another player if there is likely to be significant contact with their head or body; ● a player must not allow their boat to strike the side of another player's boat at an angle between 80 and 100 degrees; ● a player must not hold another player's boat, paddle, or person.	M	No
SUPs	Participants: ● Drowning ● Secondary drowning ● Head injury	Paddle Leaders to brief participants to kneel down when within paddle length of bank or other craft. Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants wear helmets when practising rescues or other skills that risk capsize close to the bank.	L	No

Rescue practice	Participants: ● Head injury	Paddle Leaders to ensure that participants wear helmets when practising rescues of other craft (i.e. not self-rescues or T-rescues / eskimo rescues).	L	No

Notes:

At the pool sessions, it is the responsibility of trained staff employed by the pool to rescue participants from the water, perform first aid, and call for emergency services where required. Paddle Leaders (or other participants) need to rescue participants from their craft (where necessary) and can aid with rescue from the water.
The pool has their own risk assessment and methods for reporting accidents and near misses that Paddle Leaders and participants need to follow.