



## Normal Operating Procedure (inc. Risk Assessment) Raft Building

### Risk Profile

The following risks have been identified through PGL's risk assessment process:

- a. Drowning – primary and secondary.
- b. Entrapment – in equipment, in water or underwater and surrounding wildlife.
- c. Hypothermia.
- d. Hyperthermia.
- e. Slips, trips and falls – onto wet surfaces, into water, onto equipment.
- f. Injury to participants when not wearing adequate footwear.
- g. Injuries when constructing, lifting, moving & carrying equipment.
- h. Lightning.
- i. Equipment failure – in craft/equipment used by participants or safety craft operated by instructors.
- j. Injury from collision with equipment.
- k. Lost person/s and injures due to moving water, high winds, large waves, poor visibility.
- l. Paddle injuries, specifically to the head.
- m. Bites, stings, infections and allergic reactions from wildlife in and around the water.

Implementation of the following operating procedures reduces the residual risk to a level as low as reasonably practicable given the intended purpose of the activity.

### Control Measures

#### Deployment Requirements

Instructor Qualifications:	Boat based & Bank based; Trained and assessed by an approved competent member of staff.
Instructor – Participant ratio:	Isolated venue - 1:15 minimum of 2 instructors. Non isolated venue – 1:15 (16 if the 16 <sup>th</sup> is the accompanying adult).
Total group size:	15 (16)
Active participation:	1:15 (16)



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## **1. Equipment Requirements**

### **Per Instructor and Participant:**

- 1x Buoyancy aid
- 1x Helmet
- 1x Wetsuit (optional, depending on the weather)
- 1x Knife (instructor only)

### **Per Participant:**

- 1x Buoyancy aid
- 1x Helmet
- 1x Wetsuit (optional, depending on the weather)

### **Per off site group:**

- 1 x Offsite first aid kit
- 1 x Bivvy bag or foil blanket
- 1 x Whistle
- 1 x Emergency action plan and full names list of participants and staff
- 1x Clothing suitable for dealing with cold/immersion hazards for up to three participants

### **Per Activity Base:**

- Throw line
- Water based rescues, suitable floating rescue platform or powerboat for rescue craft powerboat equipment in line with powerboating NOP
- Access to a mobile phone or radio for isolated location
- An area used for secure storage of rafting equipment
- A clearly set aside area for damaged boats must be in place
- Minimum of 1 x barrel per 2 guests and an assortment of poles and ropes
- Access to a first aid kit

## **2. Specific Clothing Requirements**

### **Participant & Instructor:**

- Suitably closed toe footwear that stays on in water
- Clothing suitable for conditions (no denim)

## **3. Session Preparation**

- a. Assess general water quality and weather.
- b. Inspect venue for debris.
- c. Offsite venues must be checked against local operating procedures e.g. wind level cut offs by suitably qualified or experienced senior staff.
- d. Check equipment including PPE, raft building equipment & first aid kit.
- e. If offsite, follow all standard pre-departure procedures before leaving centre as detailed in the offsite management ACOP.
- f. On the water the operating area must be understood by all instructors.
- g. Check all participants are appropriately dressed for the activity.



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### 4. Session Instruction

- a. A purpose to float the raft should be emphasised. Session structure should follow the ACOP.
- b. Instruction on use of knots and design issues should be facilitated by the instructor and in line with the ACOP.
- c. Instructors must consider the wearing of helmets during the moving of equipment that could cause injuries. Eg. barrels & planks. Helmets can be removed during other parts of the 'construction' stage of the session.
- d. If using cam straps to secure loose barrels/knots, these should be only used by instructors, and be taken off before the guest dismantle the rafts.
- e. Care must be taken when moving the raft on land to reduce manual handling risk and when launching.
- f. Instructors should check raft to see it will float. Only safe & well-constructed rafts should be allowed to go on the water.
- g. Participants to wear BAs & helmets during the 'on or near water' stages of the session.
- h. Instructor to demonstrate and check the correct fitting of all PPE.
- i. The safety briefing given shortly before going afloat must include:
  - i. What to do in the event of a capsize (swim away from raft and signal to instructor that you are in the water).
  - ii. Rules on splashing with paddles.
  - iii. How to correctly get on the raft.
  - iv. Instructors to give a paddle talk.
- j. Staff to wear BA during the 'on or near water' stages of the session. Helmets may also be appropriate for staff depending on location/rescue craft.
- k. Participants must be supervised getting on and off the water.
- l. Instructor to be constantly aware of entrapment and hypothermia issues if guests are in the water for an extended period of time. Guidance in the ACOP on prevention and rescues should be followed.
- m. Care must be taken to minimise the risk of fingers, and other body parts, getting trapped in the ropes building & dismantling rafts. Instructors must brief the participant's and use improvised 'jacks' when appropriate.
- n. Instructors to be aware of other water users & take appropriate action/follow local procedures.
- o. Ensure that all rescue boats are secured at the end of every session.
- p. Swimming games used as time fillers are to operate within the guidance of the water safety management NOP.

### 5. Session Conclusion

- a. All rafting equipment should be dismantled and re-organised to allow that next group to run the activity without untying knots etc.
  - b. Ensure that all rescue boats are secured at the end of every session.
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