

## **Whitehorse Canoe Club Guidelines for Trip Coordinators and Trips**

### **Introduction**

These guidelines are intended to assist the running of peer trips by Whitehorse Canoe Club members. The Australian Canoeing Safety Guidelines define a peer activity as ‘A paddling activity where no instructional or guiding structure exists and it is the responsibility of each member of the group to ensure the suitability of their equipment and themselves for the activity’. The guidelines include a ‘peer leader’ in the definition of a leader and responsibilities of the leader include:

- Research likely hazards
- Confirm group experience/capabilities (where possible)
- Ensure that participants have the knowledge, ability, skill and equipment to participate safely
- Ensure a full briefing of participants is clearly carried out and understood
- Check environmental conditions (i.e. river levels, weather reports, weather forecast)
- Confirm head count before departure, throughout trip and after trip
- Be alert for physical and psychological condition of the group
- Control the pace of the group
- Rest group if necessary
- Ensure, to the best of their ability, that participants do not get into situations beyond their capabilities
- Designate responsibility to other leaders

Any club instructional trip will comply with the Australian Canoeing Safety Guidelines.

### **Trip Coordinator**

A Trip Coordinator is designated for every club trip. The trip coordinator is responsible for ensuring the trip is run in line with these guidelines. The trip coordinator is not responsible for performing all the activities or having the skills required on a trip but for ensuring that the various activities are done and that paddlers with the necessary skills are on the trip. In the spirit of a peer trip the trip coordinator should encourage participants to be involved in organising and running the trip.

### **Trip Preparation**

#### *Trip Research*

Research the proposed river trip, looking at access, possible hazards, emergency access, rapid features, trip length, relative river levels, grading, shuttle information, water quality etc. Sources of information include:

- Whitehorse River Maps
- Whitehorse river level table
- Whitehorse Trips Log
- Paddle Australia website
- Guidebooks
- Previous trips – trip reports
- Other experienced club members
- Bureau of Meteorology website re river levels

### *Communication*

Advise club members of information about the trip including information such as:

- Date of the trip
- River and section to be paddled
- River grading
- Skill level required
- Length of the paddle
- Whether lunch or other meals need to be taken
- Whether the trip is an instructional trip or a peer trip
- Travel distance to the river
- Any proposed transport arrangements i.e. car sharing
- Any particular information relevant to the trip i.e. large portage required; 4 wheel drive access etc

Note when finalising the details with participants ensure that they are advised of:

- Meeting time and place
- Contact number in case of emergency

### *Paddlers*

In general a minimum of four paddlers is required for a trip. There is no maximum number however if the river is narrow it may be advisable to divide a larger group into small groups.

Consider the following in relation to the trip participants:

- Check that interested paddlers have the skill level for the proposed trip – consider other rivers they have paddled, whether other experienced club members know their paddling level or check out their skills on an easier river first
- Are there sufficient rescue and paddle skills amongst the group for the proposed trip?
- Are participants familiar with the proposed trip?
- Are the interested paddlers club members (and have insurance with Canoeing Victoria or similar)? If not an Event permit will be required to ensure they are covered for insurance. (see Appendix 1 for further information)

### *Equipment*

All paddlers are required to have the minimum equipment for a trip including:

- Kayak
- Paddle
- Spray deck
- Buoyancy vest with pea less whistle
- Helmet

The equipment must be serviceable and meet appropriate regulatory standards. Other personal equipment such as food, dry bags, dry clothes, water bottles should be taken by each paddler.

Equipment required amongst the group for a basic trip includes:

- First Aid kit
- Throw ropes
- Knife
- Carabiners
- Prusic loops and climbing slings

- Matches and firelighters
- Map and compass
- Split paddle(s)
- Gaffa Tape/duct tape
- Torch
- Space blanket or similar
- Spare thermals

Other equipment which may be considered includes:

- EPIRB
- Pulleys
- GPS
- Mobile phone/satellite phone
- UHF radio
- Paddle clamp
- Tow rope with quick release
- Folding saw

Note the club has equipment which can be used for trips, including EPIRB, UHF radio, split paddle.

#### *Weather*

Monitor the weather forecast for the period of the trip from the Bureau of Meteorology website. Rain/storms may make access difficult or prevent access. A major rain event may result in the river flooding and being too dangerous to paddle.

#### *Risk Assessment*

A risk assessment should be conducted for the trip. A copy of the risk assessment matrix is in Appendix 2. Examples of previous risk assessments are in Appendix 3. Involve the trip participants in the risk assessment and circulate the assessment prior to the trip to ensure everyone is aware of the risks, the controls and their responsibilities. For an impromptu trip organized at short notice a verbal risk assessment by trip participants at the river may be more practical.

#### *Intention Forms*

If the proposed trip is in a remote area or involves overnight stay on the river consider completing the trip intention forms.

- Individual intention form – is in Appendix 4 and should be completed by each person on the trip
- Group intention form – is in Appendix 5 and is completed for the whole group

The intention forms should be given to a ‘responsible’ person who will be able to contact the police or appropriate person in line with the agreed time lines.

#### *Transport*

Liaise with the trip participants to coordinate transport for the trip. Identifying who wants to share transport and the location they are coming from will assist coordinating transport. The number and type of vehicles (i.e. four wheel drive) involved in transport may need to be

considered in relation to the car shuttle. Note the club trailer may be a good option to consider. Also it may be very advantageous to utilize the services of a shuttle bunny.

## **On the Day of the Trip**

### *Meeting Point*

Attempt to contact anyone who fails to turn up at the meeting point. Bakeries are a popular place to meet so that participants can pick up lunch etc

### *Car Shuttle*

Coordinate the car shuttle. Consider:

- Number of vehicles required at the end to transport people and kayaks
- Whether it is better to meet at the get out point, consolidate people and kayaks into vehicles and drive to the get in point. This is the preferred option if the car shuttle is long.
- Whether it is easier to meet at the get in and organise the drivers to drop sufficient vehicles at the get out. This is the preferred option if the car shuttle is short and there are lots of people.
- Whether particular vehicles are needed i.e. four wheel drive and where it might be best to have them
- Whether to place a vehicle at an access point during the trip. This may give weaker paddlers the option of pulling out during the trip.
- Encouraging or organizing a shuttle bunny. Remember that shuttle bunnies are gifts from God/s and should be treated accordingly.

### *Trip Briefing/Equipment Check*

A Trip Briefing outline is included in Appendix 6 Basically the briefing should include:

- Ensure all participants have basic paddling equipment in a serviceable condition
- A description of the river trip, the general nature of the river, the get out point and any particular points of interest i.e. major rapids, compulsory portages, bridges etc
- The hazards that are likely, i.e. trees, logs, farmer's fences, hunters etc
- Ensure participants are known to each other
- Participants experience on that river and paddling in general
- Equipment being carried by each participants and ensure that the equipment required for the trip is being carried
- Any particular considerations i.e. cold re hyperthermia, poor water quality etc
- How the trip will be run:
  - Lead paddler – appoint lead paddler (needs to be an experienced paddler)
  - Sweep paddler – appoint sweep paddler (needs to be an experienced paddler)
  - Plan for scouting rapids
  - Plan re paddling rapids i.e. one at a time
  - Keeping in sight of each other
  - Plan for lunch
- Consider appointing a 'buddy' to less experienced paddlers
- Going over paddle, hand and whistle signals (see link for demonstrations <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xd1XqkAFwfo> )
- Consider other hazards identified in the risk assessment and make sure that participants are aware of the controls and their responsibilities

### *During the Trip*

Monitor the participants during the trip in relation to:

- Number of participants (make sure everyone is accounted for at all times)
- Paddling ability
- Physical and psychological condition

Consider, together with participants, breaks and meal breaks, safety considerations re particular rapids, rescue plans, recovery plans and any contingency plans required. This is a peer trip so participants should all be taking responsibility for their own decisions and work together to get safely down the river.

### *End of the Trip*

Ensure that everyone is off the river and that everyone is accounted for. Organise the car shuttle to collect any vehicles at the get in point.

Complete the trip information on the club's trip log. Access is given to the Trip Log so contact Anthony to obtain access. Information required for the log includes:

- River and section paddled
- Number of participants
- Date of trip
- River level
- Any information which may assist other trips i.e. hazards etc

Consider preparing a trip report and photographs/video for the club's website. Also consider using the club's Facebook page to post trip photos etc.

**Canoeing Victoria – Event Licence**

- Organise for non members (of Canoeing Victoria) to complete an Event Licence form and pay the \$10 fee
- Note there is a limit of 3 event licences per person
- The form must be sent to Canoeing Victoria
- The money is banked into Whitehorse's account
- For a copy of the form click on the link below to the Canoeing Victoria website and go to the 'membership' page

Canoeing Victoria: <http://www.vic.canoe.org.au/>

## Risk Assessment Matrix

### Risk Rating Matrix (Likelihood x Consequence = Risk Rating)

LIKELIHOOD		CONSEQUENCE				
		(Minor) 1	(Important) 2	(Serious) 3	(Major) 4	(Catastrophic) 5
Eliminated	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unlikely	1	1	2	3	4	5
Possible	2	2	4	6	8	10
Likely	3	3	6	9	12	15
Almost Certain	4	4	8	12	16	20
Certain	5	5	10	15	20	25

### Legend

Score	Assessment of Risk	Priority of Action
1-2	LOW	Address or repair if low cost. Schedule for action after other risks have been controlled.
3-7	MEDIUM	Further improvements required: assess feasibility for risk controls; management sign-off required if the risk/s are to be accepted
8-12	HIGH	Risk controls required as soon as possible.
+13	EXTREME	Immediate attention required. Consider shutdown or cessation of process until additional risk controls are implemented.

### RISK RATING MATRIX (Qualitative)

#### 1. Likelihood (Probability and indicative frequency of exposure)

Descriptor	Rating	Description
Eliminated	0	Risk eliminated.
Unlikely	1	May occur, but only in exceptional circumstances.
Possible	2	Might occur at some time.
Likely	3	Will probably occur in most circumstances.
Almost certain	4	Is expected to occur in most circumstances.
Certain	5	Is expected to occur in all circumstances.

#### 2. Consequence (Likely outcome of exposure)

Descriptor	Rating	Description
Minor	1	No injuries, bruising, temporary rash/irritation, low financial loss. Dealt with by people on site, no environmental damage.
Important	2	First aid treatment, outside assistance considered and possible, irritation, cuts and bruises, minor burns, fractures, discomfort, nausea, on-site release immediately contained and minor financial loss.
Serious	3	Medical treatment and evacuation required, unconsciousness, medium financial loss, some environmental damage.
Major	4	Extensive injuries, permanent disability, major financial loss.
Catastrophic	5	Death, huge financial loss.

Hazard Description (Without Risk Control)	Likelihood Loss / Injury Before Controls	Consequence of Severity Before Controls	Risk Rating Before Controls	Controls that will be evident on this program to reduce the risk as far as is practical	Likelihood Loss / Injury After Controls	Consequence of Severity After Controls	Risk Rating After Controls	Who is responsible	Initial and Date

## Risk Assessment – Examples

## Whitewater example

Hazard Description (Without Risk Control)	Likelihood Loss / Injury Before Controls	Consequence of Severity Before	Risk Rating Before Controls	Controls that will be evident on this program to reduce the risk as far as is practical	Likelihood Loss / Injury After Controls	Consequence of Severity After	Risk Rating After Controls	Who is responsible	Initial and Date
<b>Cold temperature weather and water</b>	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring weather prior to trip</li> <li>Group and person equipment</li> <li>Briefing prior to departure going through equipment</li> <li>Water shedding clothes/ Insulating clothes such as thermals &amp; spares, gloves, skull cap, beanies, space blankets (bag), fire starters and ignition source</li> <li>Food</li> <li>Spare dry clothes</li> <li>Food placed in car left at destination point.</li> <li>Communication devices mobile phones</li> <li>EPIRB</li> </ul>	2	2	4	All	
<b>Log Jam Strainers/Sieves Rocky Outcrop</b>	3	5	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scout river</li> <li>Have lead person</li> <li>Appropriate distance between paddlers</li> <li>Understanding of signals</li> <li>Group to stay within eyesight of each other</li> <li>Set upstream and downstream safety's</li> <li>All members of trip to have whistle.</li> </ul>	2	1	2	All	
<b>Lack of available natural light</b>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor the weather</li> <li>Know daylight hours</li> <li>Research Trip Times</li> <li>Monitor progress</li> <li>Know paddlers capabilities and fitness levels</li> <li>Have light source</li> <li>Have alternate pull out points and communication with ground crew</li> <li>Have river maps</li> </ul>	1	1	1	All	
<b>Group geographically challenged</b>	1	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maps</li> <li>GPS</li> <li>Compass</li> <li>Research trip</li> </ul>	0	1	0	Trip Coordinator	

<b>Equipment malfunction/breakage</b>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check gear prior to trip for weakness</li> <li>• Training in how to use gear</li> <li>• Assign responsibility for communal gear</li> <li>• Spares taken where practical</li> <li>• Equipment repair kit</li> </ul>	2	2	4	All	
<b>Paddler without skills for river level</b>	2	4	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All paddlers vetted prior to trip</li> <li>• Monitoring of paddlers during trip</li> <li>• Paddler skills to be matched to river level</li> <li>• Trip Coordinator has final say on who goes on a trip</li> </ul>	2	2	4	Trip Coordinator	
<b>Lost Participant / Group</b>	1	3	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants should remain within visual or audible contact with each other.</li> <li>• Trip Coordinator will ensure that a lead and a sweep group management system will be designated for all relevant activities.</li> <li>• River maps will be provided</li> </ul>	1	2	2	All	
<b>Serious Medical Issue</b>	2	5	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants to advised of any potential medical issues</li> </ul>	1	3	3	All	
<b>Severe Weather</b>	1	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trip Coordinator will check the weather forecast prior to the trip</li> <li>• If severe weather warning is current group discussion will take place on action required, if any.</li> <li>• If weather is a cause for concern, a plan of action will be discussed.</li> <li>• Group will have mobile phone.</li> </ul>	1	2	2	Trip Coordinator	
<b>Heavy rains cause localized flooding</b>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trip Coordinator will monitor prior to trip to assess likelihood of heavy rains.</li> <li>• Should the forecasted rain make it likely that the river will flood, an alternative venue or plan will be discussed.</li> </ul>	2	2	4	Trip Coordinator	
<b>Bushwalking /Walkouts</b>	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trip coordinator will have river map highlighting the terrain to be travelled through.</li> <li>• Equipment carried includes GPS and compass</li> </ul>	1	2	2	Trip Coordinator	

**Flatwater example**

Hazard Description (Without Risk Control)	Likelihood Loss / Injury Before Controls	Consequence of Severity Before Controls	Risk Rating Before Controls	Controls that will be evident on this program to reduce the risk as far as is practical	Likelihood Loss / Injury After Controls	Consequence of Severity After Controls	Risk Rating After Controls	Who is responsible	Initial and Date
<b>Equipment malfunction/breakage</b>	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check gear prior to trip for weakness</li> <li>Training in how to use gear</li> <li>Spares taken where practical</li> </ul>	0	1	0	All	
<b>Children without floatation device</b>	2	3	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Every paddler/participant must wear buoyancy vest when on the water</li> <li>Buoyancy vest appropriate for the age of the child must be worn</li> <li>All parents must supervise their children at all times</li> </ul>	0	3	0	Parents	
<b>Paddler affected by alcohol</b>	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paddlers to be advised of consequence of alcohol consumption and water activities</li> <li>All paddlers to ensure behave responsibly re consumption of alcohol</li> </ul>	0	2	0	All	
<b>Lack of available natural light</b>	1	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trip coordinator to monitor progress during the day and ensure group meeting time</li> <li>Lines</li> <li>Trip coordinator to be aware of time of sun set</li> </ul>	0	1	0	Trip coordinator	
<b>Paddler without skills for river level</b>	1	1	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paddlers without basic skills to be monitored by experienced paddlers during trip</li> </ul>	0	1	0	Trip Coordinator	
<b>Driving Accident</b>	1	5	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All drivers will follow traffic rules and regulations, regarding the vehicle they are operating.</li> <li>Individuals will only drive vehicles that they are licensed to operate.</li> <li>Participants will be instructed to use seatbelts provided.</li> <li>Breaks after certain uninterrupted periods of driving time (in accordance with legislated timeframes), or switch drivers.</li> </ul>	1	5	5	Individuals	
<b>Lost Participant / Group</b>	1	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants should remain within visual or audible contact with each other.</li> <li>Trip Coordinator will ensure that a lead and a sweep group management system will be designated for all relevant activities.</li> <li>Maps will be provided within group</li> </ul>	1	1	1	Trip Coordinator	
<b>Serious Medical Issue</b>	1	5	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants to advised of any potential medical issues (within group)</li> </ul>	1	3	3	All	
<b>Severe Weather</b>	1	2	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trip Coordinator will check the weather forecast prior to the program on the BOM site and will inform participants of the anticipated forecast.</li> <li>If severe weather warning is current group discussion will take place on action required, if any.</li> <li>If weather is a cause for concern, a plan of action will be discussed.</li> <li>Group will have mobile phone.</li> </ul>	0	1	1	Trip Coordinator	

<p><b>Collision/swamping from motor boats</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No ski/motor boat events on during trip</li> <li>• All paddlers to keep a look out for motor boats</li> <li>• All paddlers to keep to right side of river</li> <li>• Paddlers to be advised of ski zone</li> <li>• All paddlers to angle craft at right angles to waves</li> </ul>	<p>1</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>All</p>	
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## Individual Intention Form

**WHCC Trip Intention Form - Personal****My name is:****Address:****Home phone:****Mobile phone:****Car rego number****DOB.****Weight****Height****Hair Colour****Medical conditions:**

(This is an opportunity to provide information that might assist medical personal in the event of an emergency. Any information provided will be appropriately destroyed after the trip and not kept in any form)

**Next of Kin** – (to be contacted if over due or in an emergency)**Name****Relationship****Address:****Home phone:****Mobile phone:****Indicate the supplies that you carry**

<b>Food for ___ days or ___ meals</b>	<b>First aid kit- Basic or Comprehensive</b>
<b>Water Filter / Pump</b>	<b>Boat and spray deck repair kit</b>
<b>Spare Thermal clothes</b>	<b>Throw rope</b>
<b>Sleeping bag</b>	<b>Boat Rescue kit</b>
<b>Tent</b>	<b>Rope knife</b>
<b>Tarpaulin</b>	<b>Repair tape</b>
<b>Matches or lighter</b>	<b>Aquaseal</b>
<b>Torch</b>	<b>Stove</b>
<b>Whistle</b>	<b>Fuel for ___ days or ___ meals</b>
<b>Compass</b>	<b>Spare paddle</b>
<b>Map(s)</b>	<b>GPS</b>
<b>Cag\Jacket colour</b>	<b>Satellite Phone: (#)</b>
<b>Boat Colour</b>	<b>Mobile Phone: (#)</b>
<b>Buoyancy vest colour</b>	<b>EPIRB</b>
<b>I have first aid training, Yes / No level =</b>	
<b>Other</b>	

**Please note that you are responsible for your own actions during the trip.**

**Group Intention Form**

**WHCC Trip Intention Form - Group**

This form should be filled out completely and left with a reliable contact person (a friend, family member or the police) before you commence your Kayaking Trip. A Trip Intention – Personal form for each paddler should also be provided to the contact person.

**River to be paddled**

**Put in point**

**Date** .....

**Car rego's**

**Take out point**

**Date** .....

**Car rego's**

**If placement of cars is not known at this stage list all rego numbers of group.**

**Walk out / Emergency access routes**

**Members of the group**

**Summary of trip** (experience of team, knowledge of this river)

**Document risks and mitigation steps** (cold, time/distance, remote, paddling standard, blockages, high or low river level, large or small group)

**Group equipment**

- Sat. phone number .....
- EPIRB
- Map
- Compass
- GPS
- Split Paddle
- Other .....

**Other relevant details** (possible changes to route)

**INFORMATION FOR CONTACT PERSON**

**If no one from the paddling group has contacted you by**

**day/date ..... time ..... attempt to contact the group by all available**

**means. If that fails phone Police Search and Rescue on “000”.**

### **Trip Briefing**

#### Type of Trip

- Peer trip or instructional trip and implications

#### The Trip

- Description of the river, general nature of the river, the get out point and any particular points of interest i.e. major rapids, compulsory portages, bridges etc
- The hazards that are likely, i.e. trees, logs, farmer's fences, hunters etc
- Any particular considerations i.e. cold re hyperthermia, poor water quality etc

#### The Paddlers

- Ensure participants are known to each other
- Participants experience on that river and paddling in general

#### Equipment/Gear

- Ensure all participants have basic paddling equipment in a serviceable condition
- Equipment being carried by each participants and ensure that the equipment required for the trip is being carried

#### How the trip will be run

- Lead paddler – appoint lead paddler (needs to be an experienced paddler)
- Sweep paddler – appoint sweep paddler (needs to be an experienced paddler)
- Plan for scouting rapids
- Plan re paddling rapids i.e. one at a time
- Keeping insight of each other
- Consider appointing a 'buddy' to less experienced paddlers

#### Paddle, Hand & Whistle Signals

- Going over paddle, hand and whistle signals