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COCONUTS OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB
RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club Inc is a non-profit organisation whose safety and operation is managed by volunteer members. Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club Inc adheres to the guidelines of the national governing body – Australian Outrigger Canoe Racing Association (AOCRA).

The club is made up of a Committee and members. The committee members are as follows: President, Secretary, Vice President, Treasurer, Registrar, and various other committee members.

The Secretary is the primary point of contact for club members and is also the person who makes direct contact with AOCRA. At the commencement of each season, following the AGM, the Secretary issues AOCRA with a list of contact personnel for the Club, including all committee members' contact details and conducts activities as outlined in the Secretaries Handbook.

The Committee meets on a monthly basis (and sometimes more frequently) to discuss current and new business, including new guidelines and directives as issued by AOCRA from time to time.

All paddlers are made aware of current and future requirements and their obligations as paddlers in relation to safety and conduct when representing the club at regattas and other paddling related functions and fundraisers.

The risk assessment outlines the process required to ensure training sessions are conducted in a safe manner. The risk assessment process is every individual paddler's responsibility not just that of the coach/steerer. Every paddler is responsible for their safety at all times. To ensure that all paddlers are aware of their responsibilities, all club members receive a copy of our Risk Management Policy when they join the club.

ADMINISTRATION

Club and AOCRA Membership

New paddlers have six weeks from the date of their first paddling before they must join as a member of the club and of AOCRA to be able to continue paddling.

Insurance fees are governed by AOCRA and membership fees are governed by the Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club committee, and are reviewed at the club AGM each year. AOCRA membership and insurance involves renewing or registering for membership at www.aocra.com.au.

Club paper work completed includes the following:

- Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club Inc Membership form
- Acknowledgement of risk assessment understanding
- Any other club specific requirements

If a medical condition is advised by a paddler, then a Doctor's Certificate is required prior to that person being permitted to paddle. The Certificate must advise that the person is deemed "fit to paddle" and must be sighted by the head coaches and a copy sent to AOCRA.

If a female paddler informs the club that she is pregnant a doctor's certificate must also be provided and retained with the paddler's paperwork. This must be done on a frequency in accordance with AOCRA requirements (i.e. monthly).

Visiting / New Members

Visiting or new paddlers will be under direct supervision of the Coach or Captain.

Visiting paddlers who are current AORCA members will be allowed to paddle at the Coaches discretion

For new paddlers, an indemnity and release form will be completed. A brief rundown of the sport will be discussed prior to entering the water.

New paddlers are entitled to six weeks of paddling from the date of their first paddle. After six weeks, the paddler **MUST** complete all club membership paperwork as listed above and pay AOCRA insurance money and Club membership fees.

New paddlers are not permitted to paddle for any further sessions until completed paperwork and monies are received by the club registrar.

REPORTING PROCEDURES

AOCRA

www.aocra.com.au is the website for AOCRA and all administrative forms are readily available on this site.

Injuries / Incidents

An Incident Report must be completed when an incident occurs and/or a paddler is injured. The form must be completed within seven (7) days of the incident occurring. Incident Report forms are completed online at www.aocra.com.au. A copy is automatically forwarded to the club secretary, who must retain a copy, the AOCRA Safety Officer, and AOCRA Secretary.

Canoe Damage

Any damage to the club equipment must be reported to either a member of the committee or the club maintenance officer immediately after the incident.

To make an insurance claim on a canoe following serious canoe damage, an Incident Report must be completed online at www.aocra.com.au.

Coaching Records

Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club Inc has a head coach and a list of registered assistant coaches.

All coaches MUST be registered club members.

All junior coaches must hold a 'Blue Card'.

Head coaches must have completed the Outrigger Specific Level 1 coaching course and have three years paddling experience.

Assistant coach should hold as a minimum, the "Basic Principles of Coaching Level 1"

Swim and tread water tests are logged by the head coach and records given to the club secretary.

Canoe huli / flipping drills (with and without covers for OC6) are logged by the head coach and records given to the club secretary.

GENERAL WATER SAFETY PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

Johnstone River

There are some unique risk management issues when paddling in the Johnstone River. The primary risk is the potential for interactions between outrigger canoes and marine vessels including fishing boats and general marine pleasure craft. All preventative measures must be taken to avoid collisions, including actions such as canoes giving way to larger craft and the use of lights when paddling at night. The canoe launch point is in off the beach at the Coconuts. All paddlers must be aware of the other craft in the area and alert their steerer when required.

Swim Tests

Each paddler must show that they are able to support themselves in the water. A swim test is conducted annually for all paddlers – new and old members. This test is logged with the registered Club Coach. The test is as follows:

Senior Paddlers

- Swim for 400m with no stopping – any stroke
- Tread water for 5 minutes

Junior Paddlers

- Swim for 150m with no stopping - any stroke
- Tread water for 3 minutes

This ensures a proficiency in water in case of canoe flipping and ensures safety for all paddlers.

Huli / Flipping Drills

Canoes do flip over both in races and training sessions. Every season club members must undergo a “flipping drill” during a training session. The coach will explain the flipping drill prior to the canoe entering the water and then a practical “flip” is carried out. The drill participants and date are logged by the coach. The drill is conducted each season to ensure that each paddler understands their role in the case of a real “flip”.

Sun Protection

Paddling involves long periods of time exposed to heat and the sun. Paddlers should manage their exposure to the sun. Appropriate sun protection should be used including, hats, sun cream, long sleeved sun shirts and sunglasses.

Hydration

Another part of being in the sun for long periods is the risk of dehydration. Suitable water bottles or hydration packs should be taken and used during long paddles. For new paddlers, frequent stops should be built into the training session by the coach.

Stinger Season

There is an array of marine stingers in North Queensland waters. They are of **particular concern** in waters **between November and May**. The most dangerous species are the Box Jellyfish (*Chironex fleckeri*) and those species that cause Irukandji syndrome particularly *Carukia barnesi*. A sting from these species can in rare circumstances be fatal. The painful reaction to a sting from *Carukia barnesi* may take up to 40 minutes to develop and may require hospitalisation.

All paddlers will be advised to wear appropriate stinger protection during stinger season. This can include any or all of the following: long tights on the legs, long sleeve rash shirts, gloves and/or shoes.

Saltwater Crocodiles

Saltwater crocodiles inhabit the waters of the Johnstone River and adjacent coastline.

Croc awareness is necessary when launching and beaching canoes. This includes:

- Scanning the beach and water for signs that a croc may be near (slide marks, ominous logs floating nearby)
- Minimising time spent in the water

In the event of a flip, paddlers must right the canoe as quickly as possible and make every attempt to get out of the water as soon as possible.

If a crocodile is sighted, there is to be no paddling until consent is given by the President. At this point, only OC6 craft are allowed on the water. OC1/OC2/V1/Skis may resume one week after this consent is given.

Strong Wind Warning

AOCRA has a strict policy on the use of canoes during strong and gale force wind warnings. Under no circumstances are canoes to be put in to the water during a gale force warning.

Paddling in the Johnstone River is permitted in a strong wind warning at the coaches' discretion. If any member of the team feels they are at risk the whole team is to return to shore.

CANOE SAFETY

All canoes are manufactured by AOCRA approved manufacturers; this ensures that all canoes comply with AOCRA safety standards.

OC6 Safety

Flotation

OC6 canoes must contain positive flotation devices in the front and back bulk heads (normally in the form of closed plastic bottles).

These areas are sealed with a water tight inspection port that can be removed for inspection purposes.

Bailers

All canoes carry a minimum of two (2) buckets (bailers) in order to bail water out of the canoe .

Training

Storm covers are to be put on canoes in the event of rough conditions. This is at the discretion of the team Coach and canoe steerers.

The canoe rigging must be checked prior to every session and re-rigged where necessary.

The steerer of the canoe is legally responsible for the navigation and direction of the canoe and the paddlers in the canoe. All paddlers must follow the steerer's directions.

Vinegar will be carried on board each canoe in case of Jellyfish stings.

PFDs **MUST** be carried on board each canoe – one for each paddler – every time the canoe is put on the water.

For sessions that start or finish in the hours of darkness, torches and/or navigation lights are fixed to the canoes. These sessions are not to be carried out in areas of major boat traffic.

There are no more than 6 paddlers in each canoe for any session.

Any person showing signs of alcohol consumption or other erratic/unsafe behaviours will not be allowed in the canoe.

The steerer of the canoe is legally responsible for the navigation and direction of the canoe and the paddlers in the canoe. The steerer of each canoe for that session ensures that their canoe is equipped for the training session as follows:

- Canoe is rigged correctly and safely
- Spare paddle is in the canoe if necessary
- Canoe has enough PFDs for each person paddling (may be secured under seat or under spreaders)
- Canoe has 2 bailers securely attached to the canoe
- In hours of darkness, torches/navigation lights are fixed to the canoe
- All junior paddlers are wearing a PFD
- There are no more than 6 paddlers in each canoe

OC1/OC2/V1 Safety

Each OC1 and OC2 canoe owned by the club must have been scrutineered and approved by an AOCRA approved scrutineer and have an AOCRA scrutineering tag and registration number.

All OC1s and OC2s must have leg ropes attached to the canoe and the paddler's leg.

If training at or near dark, paddlers must wear a light attached to their person or canoe – e.g. head light.

Canoes must be fitted with a type 1 or 2 PFD for each paddler.

All sessions must be logged with an on shore person and include an expected return time.

Use of club canoes for individual sessions is prohibited. There must be more than one of these craft on the water at any one time.

If paddling more than 250 meters from any shoreline, a marine radio or mobile phone (per paddling group) must be carried. Ensure the mobile phone is placed in a waterproof pouch.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURES

All paddlers are aware of preventative measures and how to deal with a situation on the following:

- Understanding of relevant risks
- Swimming proficiency tests
- Flipping drills
- Steerer of crew taking charge of any situation
- Supply of PFD's

All incidents will be reported immediately to the club secretary or president. No one else is suitable and one of these two people MUST be contacted immediately.

Report the Incident online at www.aocra.com.au within 7 days of the incident.

The Incident Report generated is sent automatically to:

- AOCRA Secretary
- Zone Secretary
- Club Secretary

CONCLUSION

Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club Inc. complies with all AOCRA regulations, requirements and guidelines. All members are made aware of their membership obligations and requirements for training.

Attachment 1: Risk Management Strategies

#	ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	RISK	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	RESIDUAL RISK
1	Canoe Management	Launching canoe from the beach	Sprains, strains from lifting canoe	Moderate	Possible	High	Training in correct lifting technique. Only lift with 5 people or more present and use beach trolley	Low
2	Junior Safety	Adult coaches and volunteers	Inappropriate Interactions	Major	Rare	Low	All adults working with juniors must have blue card when	Low
3	Coaches	Training qualifications	Not trained, liable for damage, may harm paddlers	Minor	Likely	Medium	All coaches must be accredited or work under an accredited coach	Low
4	Hot Weather	Sun Stroke / Dehydration	Death	Critical	Possible	High	Slip Slop Slap and Hydration	Medium
5	Beach Launch	Launching and returning to shore	Shallow Water Capsize Crocodile	Moderate	Unlikely	Medium	Awareness of surroundings, conditions & signs of wildlife. Follow steerer's instructions	Low
6	Boating traffic	Fishing, personal, pleasure craft	Damage to outrigger and injury to paddlers	Critical	Possible	High	Awareness of surroundings, give way to power craft	Medium
7	Flipping	Outrigger Capsize	Canoe full of water, injury to paddler	Major	Possible	High	Dry beach drills, listen to steerer's instructions & follow procedures	Medium
8	Strong Wind Warning	White caps at sea or waves	Capsize or swamping of canoe	Moderate	Possible	High	Paddle in the river only	Low
9	Lack of Light	Reduced Visibility	Collision, loss of direction	Major	Possible	High	If likely to be out after dark, carry lights and stay close to shore	Low
10	Public - Beach goers, fishermen	People on beach or in water	Collision with swimmers, beach goers or fishermen's lines	Moderate	Possible	High	Controlled movement with beach trolley when moving canoe. Awareness of surroundings. Keep distance from public users	Low

#	ELEMENT	DESCRIPTION	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	CONSEQUENCE	LIKELIHOOD	RISK	MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	RESIDUAL RISK
11	Transport of canoes	Trailer Loading	Sprains, strains from lifting canoe	Minor	Likely	Medium	Lift with at least 6 people. Use trolley when possible. Slow controlled movements	Low
12	Cross Training	Away from outrigger paddling	Running - Sprains, Strains, traffic. Swimming - drowning. Cycling - traffic	Major	Possible	High	Be aware of conditions, report any injuries to coach	Medium
13	Paddling Direction	Etty Bay, Ella Bay,	Fishing boats, recreational craft, weather conditions, tides, currents, collision, capsize	Major	Possible	High	Night paddling requires lights, crew to alert steerer to any craft on water, give way to power craft, weather at discretion of coach / steerer,	Low
14	Paddling Direction	Johnstone River	Fishing boats, recreational craft, weather conditions, tides, currents, collision	Major	Possible	High	Night paddling requires lights, crew to alert steerer to any craft on water, give way to power craft, awareness of water conditions	Low
15	Wildlife	Crocodiles	Injury/Death	Major	Possible	High	Croc awareness (scan beach, minimise time in water), no paddling if there is a sighting until consent given by President. OC1/OC2/V1 training sessions require more than one canoe on the water.	Low
16	Wildlife	Stingers	Death	Major	Likely	High	Wear protective clothing	Medium
17	Medical	Emergency	Varying from sprain to death	Major	Possible	High	First Aid Kit in shed. Emergency contact numbers on whiteboard	Low

18	Medical Conditions	Various, e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes	Death	Critical	Possible	High	Paddlers to make any pre-existing conditions known to coaches and treatment in case of episode	Medium
19	Canoe Failure	Damaged canoe Ill or injured paddler	Inability to paddle canoe back to shore	Moderate	Possible	Medium	OC1/OC2 canoes stay within river mouth	Low

Attachment 2

Paddlers' Acknowledgement

As a member of Coconuts Outrigger Canoe Club, I have been made aware of the Risk Assessment document for the Club. I have read the document. I understand my obligations as a member of the Club to adhere to all the safety requirements as per this Risk Assessment.

Name

Phone

Email

Signature

Date