

# OUTRIGGER CALOUNDRA CANOE CLUB

## RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

June 2021 – This version was approved in June 2021 by the Management Committee and supersedes the February 2018 version.



## **INTRODUCTION**

This 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 /crew captain. Every paddler is responsible for their own safety at all times. To ensure that all paddlers are aware of their responsibilities, all club members are obliged to read, understand and acknowledge this risk assessment.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Outrigger Caloundra Canoe Club and AOCRA Membership**

Paddlers who have tried paddling three times must join as a member of the Club and AOCRA if they wish to continue paddling.

To join the club, paddlers must complete and sign an OCCC Membership form (which includes an acknowledgement of risk) and sign the OCCC Code of Conduct.

Insurance fees are governed by AOCRA and membership fees are governed by the OCCC Management 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](http://www.aocra.com.au)

It is the responsibility of members to pay fees when due. This can be done online in two steps:

- Log onto the AOCRA website and follow the links to pay AOCRA membership, this includes AOCRA paddler insurance.
- Transfer club fees into OCCC bank account

Paddlers shall NOT paddle if either AOCRA fees or Club fees have not been paid.

If the paddler has a medical condition or is over 55 and new to the sport, a medical certificate must be completed by the paddler's doctor and returned to the OCCC Committee if requested by the Committee. Furthermore, if the paddler has a medical condition, the paddler must disclose this to AOCRA at the time of application.

## **Visiting / New Paddlers**

Visiting or new paddlers will be under direct supervision of a Coach. Visiting and new paddlers will be advised of hazards on land, safe handling procedures and safety issues on the water prior to going on the water.

New Members will be assessed during 'Come and Try' sessions before progressing to regular club training sessions.

For a non-AOCRA member, an indemnity and release form will be completed. These forms can only be completed by people who have never been an AOCRA member or have not been an AOCRA member for over two years.

New paddlers are entitled to a maximum of 3 sessions only. After 3 sessions, the paddler must complete all club membership paperwork as listed above, pay AOCRA and pay Club membership fees.

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

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **1.1.1 AOCRA**

[www.aocra.com.au](http://www.aocra.com.au) is the website for AOCRA and all administrative documents, regatta schedules, sporting updates, latest news and regatta results are available on this site

### ***Incidents – Injuries and Equipment Damage***

An online incident report ([www.aocra.com.au](http://www.aocra.com.au)) must be completed as per AOCRA requirements (Regatta and Training Rules). Individual members must log into the AOCRA website to be able to lodge an incident report. Incidents must be reported within 7 days of the event. Any AOCRA member is able to do this; it is not just the responsibility of the club.

A copy of the report is automatically sent to the AOCRA Safety Officer and the zone and club secretaries.

An incident report must be completed to enable a paddler to make an insurance claim for medical or related expenses and for equipment damage claims.

An OCCC incident should also be reported to the coaches and the Management Committee for record keeping.

## **COACHING**

OCCC has a number of accredited coaches. All coaches are volunteers.

All coaches must be registered club members.

All coaches and volunteers must meet the requirements of AOCRA's Member Protection Policy (MPP) – Part C Screening Working with Children.

Coaches must meet the requirements outlined in the AOCRA MPP – Section 5.2 Coaching.

Coaching records are kept by all coaches and may be periodically reviewed by the coaches.

The details required are as per the AOCRA Coaching Manual.

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

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

## **GENERAL WATER SAFETY PREVENTATIVE MEASURES**

### **Caloundra Environment**

When paddling in the Pumicestone Passage and attempting to cross the bar, there are some unique risk management issues.

The primary risk whilst paddling in the passage is the potential for interactions between outrigger canoes and larger marine vessels including dredges, fishing boats, general marine pleasure craft and people carrying out varied recreational activities (e.g. stand up paddle board riders, kayakers and surf skis etc).

All preventative measures must be taken to avoid collisions including actions such as canoes giving way to larger craft and the use of lights outside daylight hours. Steerers should also consider paddling close to shore and keeping clear of the channel markers when paddling outside daylight hours.

The canoe launch point is up river of most of the major marine traffic and is relatively protected. All paddlers must be aware of the other craft and people in the area and alert their steerer when required.

### **Crossing The Caloundra Bar**

Caloundra is a designated coastal bar. Even on a good day, conditions on a bar can change quickly and without warning. Local knowledge, experience and the type of canoe and crew make up are critical factors when attempting bar crossings. If the weather looks adverse, don't risk a bar crossing. Never underestimate a coastal bar.

Even small waves can capsize or swamp and sink a boat.

Steerers are considered “Masters” of the craft and have the final say on whether a bar crossing will be attempted, if a steerer deems the conditions unsafe then the decision must be accepted as final for that day.

OCCC must adhere to the following when crossing the bar:

- If the weather looks adverse, don't risk a bar crossing.
- Only experienced steerers should attempt to cross the bar, and only after a thorough assessment of conditions has been completed.
- The following factors must be taken into account: state of tide and current flow in the bar channel; sea conditions including ground swell size and wave period and shape of breaking waves; wind strength; and wind direction
- All steerers must hold position inside the bar in order to observe wave patterns and conditions prior to crossing
- The steerer must ensure the outrigger is seaworthy and carrying all required equipment (See OC6 Canoe Equipment Checklist below).
- Crossing a bar on a run-out tide when the most dangerous wave conditions usually occur increases the potential risks and should only be considered when the bar conditions are favourable in regard to swell size and wind strength.
- Be prepared to cancel or delay the crossing when the tide is ebbing and wind strength and wave conditions are unfavourable
- Crew set up for a bar crossing is to be set by the steerer taking into account experience and strength of individuals. Paddlers in seat 1-2 must be aware of risks and indicate consent to sit in the seat to steerer /coach and be aware of impact minimising procedures (i.e. duck and tuck).
- Covers to be placed on canoes at the Steerers discretion.
- Any time a crossing is attempted (in or out) patience by paddlers is required, and only the steerers directions are to be followed and carried out as promptly as possible.
- All paddlers in the canoe shall be given the opportunity to express any misgivings about crossing the bar before any attempts begin.

For the purpose of bar crossings, paddlers can be divided into 4 main groups including:

**Experienced:** paddlers who have at least 2 years of outrigger experience, have a broad range of outrigger skills and are reliable crew members

**Novice Paddler:** 1st and 2nd year paddlers who need to work on their technique, skill, strength and/or attendance to be considered experienced

**Social Paddler:** paddlers who are one or more of the following: not interested in racing; train irregularly; not interested in being coached; and/or just want to enjoy a light paddle for social interaction and light exercise.

**Restricted:** paddlers who have failed one or more parts of the safety test or have proven to be a risk to the safety of others in the past.

The table below is a guide for when these paddlers can and can't cross the bar in various conditions. This is a guide only and any steerer or paddler at any time can refuse to paddle across the bar due to safety concerns.

	Dead Flat	Mild	Medium	Rough	Wild
Non AOCRA member <b>OR</b> member who hasn't done huli drill	X	X	X	X	X
Restricted	X	X	X	X	X
Social	Yes	Yes	X	X	X
Novice	Yes	Yes	X/Yes <i>If with experienced paddlers</i>	X	X
Experienced	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	X

*Definitions:*

**Dead Flat:** flat as a tack, across the width and breadth of the bar. Can cross with solo OC6

**Mild:** while there may be swell in some areas of the bar, there is a clear, wide and safe pathway to the ocean. Can cross with solo OC6

**Medium:** seats 1 and 2 may be air-swinging on 1 or 2 waves at the back of the bar but no crashing waves on chosen path. Covers not essential but recommended. Coaches, steerers and paddlers discretion to go over bar on an outgoing tide. Need to consider wind and likelihood of conditions changing. Cross with at least 2 OC6s.

**Rough:** crashing waves across the bar with multiple sets of waves to punch through. Requires covers and timing the sets. Paddlers may cross the bar on an incoming tide only. Cross with at least 2 OC6s.

*Wild: crashing waves across the bar that can be heard and seen from Golden Beach. Freak wave central.*

## **Swim Tests and Huli / Tipping Drills**

Safety tests must be conducted in accordance with the AOCRA Member Protection Policy – section 5.3 Paddler suitability (Swim, tread water and Huli).

The policy is in place to ensure that paddlers are able to support themselves in the water, right and reboard a canoe in the event of a huli or other incident.

The coach will explain the tipping drill prior to the canoe entering the water and then a practical “tip” is carried out. The drill participants and date are logged by the coach.

The minimum safety requirements for all AOCRA members are to undertake the following on an annual basis:

- swim 400m unassisted (150m for juniors)
- tread water for 5 minutes (3 minutes for juniors)
- complete a huli drill and reboard the canoe independently.

If anyone fails these tests, that member must wear an approved PFD at all times. It is also the coaches discretion to place restrictions on those members who fail (eg. limiting the conditions the person is able to paddle in, limiting the number of novice persons to be in the same canoe, ensuring an extra safety rope is onboard like a rope ladder).

See OCCC Code of Conduct for further details.

## **Hygiene & personal health**

Outrigger Caloundra introduced a COVID-19 Safety Plan in June 2020 in response to the pandemic and desire to resume sanctioned training. Specific controls include: sanitising canoes after training; regularly cleaning surfaces around the clubhouse, restricting the use of shared equipment; strict personal hygiene measures; keeping a record of attendance at club training and events; restricting paddlers from training who are unwell and/or displaying COVID-19 symptoms. See OCCC COVID-19 Safety Plan for further details.

## **Sun Protection**

AOCRA have a sun protection policy within the MPP. Paddling involves long periods of time exposed to the elements and appropriate sun protection should be used including, hats, sun cream, long sleeved sun shirts and sun glasses.

## **Foot Protection**

The boat ramp at Short Street is full of hazards, particularly at low tide. The ramp is slippery, oyster shells are sharp, there is a crack in the lower end of the ramp and shellfish can be found off to the side of the ramp. Footwear should be worn to protect paddlers from these hazards.

## **Hydration**

Another part of being in the sun for long periods is the risk of dehydration from over exposure. Suitable water bottles or back packs should be taken and used during long paddles. Frequent stops should also be built into the training session by the coach for new paddlers.

## **Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs)**

The club supplies paddlers with basic/standard PFDs for OC6 club training sessions and races. These PFDs are stored in bags that are placed in the canoe. The club also has six Vaikobi life jackets that are suitable for wearing while paddling. However, most of PFDs are only appropriate for emergency situations and not comfortable or practical to wear while paddling. Paddlers are encouraged to purchase their own PFDs that are designed to be worn while paddling if they would like to take extra safety precautions and enhance their visibility on the water.

AOCRA is expected to introduce new safety regulations in the coming years that will make it mandatory for all paddlers to wear a PFD while training and racing. Given the financial cost of these PFDs, it is expected that individuals in the club will be responsible for purchasing their own PFDs when this time comes.

## **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 into the water during a gale force warning.

A strong wind warning is 26 to 33 knots as set down by Bureau of Meteorology.

If a strong wind warning is issued then canoes must only be used within the Passage. Under no circumstances are canoes to be taken across the bar while a strong wind warning is current.

## **OTHER SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

- If training at or near dark paddlers must wear a light attached to their person or canoe – As a minimum requirement an all round white light must be attached to the ama, the stern or other vantage point where the light can be seen from all directions of the canoe.
- All OC6 and OC3 sessions must be logged on Teamer.
- Storm covers are to be put on canoes in the event of rough conditions. This is at the discretion of the team Coach and steerers.
- Canoe rigging must be checked prior to every session and re-rigged where necessary.

- The steerer (or master) 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 steerers directions.
- 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.
- All paddlers must ensure that the canoe is equipped for the training session and meets the club safety requirements.

OCCC require all canoes carry the following safety equipment during each training session.

#### OC6

- Minimum of 2 Bailers
- Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs) for each paddler (6)
- A spare paddle
- Spare rubbers
- Duct tape if going over the bar
- Tow rope if going over the bar
- Lights (if necessary)
- Storm covers are to be put on canoes in the event of rough conditions. This is at the discretion of the team Coach and Captains.
- One person must carry a mobile phone
- Walkie talkies can be used to enhance communication between steerers and coaches, particularly in the open ocean.

#### OC1/2

- A Type 1, 2 or 3 PFD MUST be carried on board each canoe - one for each paddler – every time the canoe is put on the water.
- A Leg rope is a mandatory safety feature and must be attached to OC1/OC2 canoes. It is recommended that paddlers use them to ensure their own personal safety especially when offshore and/ or in conditions where the paddler/s may become separated from their canoe.

Paddlers training or paddling outside club approval / guidelines do so at their own risk and responsibility.

Paddlers on club-owned OC1, V1 or OC2 or V3 craft training outside of formal club training sessions, need to:

- ensure the Committee and a coach is aware of and has supported extra training with use of Club equipment
- the session is noted on Teamer; and
- has logged the session on at least the white board, indicating the time of departure and expected time of return

## **ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

All paddlers should be made aware of preventative measures and how to deal with a situation on the water. If they are unsure of any procedures outlined below please advise a coach.

The steerer is the master of the outrigger and their instructions are to be followed.

The international distress signal in an outrigger is the waving of the paddle over your head.

Coaches or crew captains are to ensure all crew members are familiar with the following measures:

- Use of PFD's
- Bailing techniques
- Understanding the ocean / waterways
- How to rig a canoe
- How to huli and recover a canoe
- How to exit and reboard a canoe
- Managing a canoe in the surf
- Attaching storm covers
- Use of a tow rope
- Radio signals and use

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Where there are major incidences involving other craft, danger to people or personal injury, damage to vessels or property – the Maritime Safety Qld needs to be contacted within 48 hours. Incident report forms are online at [www.msq.qld.gov.au](http://www.msq.qld.gov.au).

An EPIRB (Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon) needs to be carried on all vessels in open water when more than two (2) nautical miles from land.

Where there are many craft on the water, canoes should be navigated on the starboard side (right side) of a river or water body.

Where two craft are bearing toward each other the vessel approaching from the starboard (right) has right of way. If a collision is imminent all craft shall take evasive action to avoid collision.

Always give way to keep well clear of any commercial vessels carrying out operations.

Power craft will have to give way to all non-powered craft (i.e. canoes).

If participating in a race with support boats, be aware of the following:

- Don't seek assistance from a support boat unless absolutely necessary. Support boat drivers have varying levels of experience from complete rookie with no prior experience or training to experienced operators with backgrounds in one or more of the following: VMR, Surf Life Saving, the maritime industry, the Defence force, emergency response fields, supporting outrigger regattas etc. If you require their assistance, determine their level of experience and negotiate who is in command.
- Be prepared to be your own hero! Be Macgyver if safe to do so! In addition to a tow rope, bailers, life jacket and a spare blade, you should also carry duct tape, spare rubbers, ratchet straps, a whistle, a stanley knife and a mobile phone.
- If a member of your crew needs assistance from a support boat due to medical reasons, seek assistance from a boat with prop guards.
- Be prepared to abandon your canoe and board a support boat (with prop guards) in rough conditions. Towing can be dangerous for the steerer in the canoe and can only be conducted by experienced support boat operators. Support boats are not responsible for saving canoes. They are responsible for saving lives.
- If you do not want the assistance of a support boat, you have the right to say no. If you believe your crew are safer to look after themselves, this is your choice.

## **CONCLUSION**

OCCC complies with all AOCRA policies, rules, regulations, requirements and guidelines. All members are made aware of their membership obligations and requirements for training.

If a member decides to train or paddle using club equipment outside club approval / guidelines they do so at their own risk and responsibility.

## ATTACHMENT 1 : Club Risk Management Plan

(Source: Adapted from the Noosa Outrigger Canoe Club RMP -2017)

#	Element	Description	Potential Hazards	Consequence	Likelihood	Risk	Control measures / Management Strategies	Residual Risk
1	Canoe Management	<p>Lifting/ Launching canoes from grass area to the water</p> <p>Getting in and out of the canoe in shallow water or on the ramp</p> <p>Lifting/ launching/ loading at events</p>	<p>Sprains, strains/back/neck shoulder injuries lifting canoe.</p> <p>Cuts to feet on the ramp due to cracks, oyster shells</p> <p>Stepping on a shellfish</p> <p>Damage to Canoes</p>	Major	Likely	High	<p>Always use trolleys to manoeuvre canoes. When lifting on/off a trolley always use a min of 5 people. 3-4 to lift, 1 to place trolley under canoe. When pushing up the ramp ensure at least one person is on the trolley and others take load evenly.</p> <p>Wear appropriate footwear and walk slowly down slippery boat ramps.</p> <p>Avoid walking in</p>	Low Unlikely / minor

							merky water	
2	Paddler Safety	All Club Members and Come and try paddlers	Weak swimmer	Major	Possible	High	All new paddlers & Visitors must sign the AOCRA waiver form and be checked for paddler suitability by coach or steerer. Members must complete swim/huli tests as per AOCRA rulings in that all paddlers complete an open canoe huli training each year and race paddlers undertake a huli with covers. Weak swimmers to purchase a PFD to be worn while paddling.	Medium Rare/ Major
	Junior safety	Adult coaches & volunteers	Inappropriate interactions	Major	Possible	High	All adults must have blue card when working with juniors	Medium Rare / Major
3	Coaches	Training qualifications	Not trained, liable for damage, may damage paddlers	Minor	Likely	Medium	All coaches must be accredited or work under an	Low Unlikely / Minor

							accredited coach as per the AOCRA MPP 5.2	
4	Crossing Caloundra Bar	<p>Crew members get hit by dumping waves</p> <p>Crew getting slammed backwards by waves on to canoe parts/other crew</p> <p>Canoe fills with water and needs retrieval measures</p> <p>Full Huli of canoe</p>	<p>Broken bones (including back, ribs) and knocks to the head from the aku</p> <p>Bruising of varying degrees from minor to significant</p> <p>Torn muscles and ligaments (as thrown backwards)</p> <p>Drift to sea on outgoing tide requiring emergency service assistance for crew and canoe retrieval</p> <p>Crew member panic</p> <p>Being trapped in</p>	Major	Possible	High	<p>Assessment of bar crossing condition by experienced coach/s and steerers only.</p> <p>Steerers have FINAL word as to crew set up and capacity for the session.</p> <p>Covers to be used at the discretion of the Coach and Steerer.</p> <p>Steerer experience and capacity to get crew/canoe through bar safely; to be assessed in line with conditions on the day.</p> <p>Placement of most experienced and strongest paddlers</p>	<p><b>Medium</b> - Likely / Major (Even if all precautions taken it is likely that some of these risks will still occur more than once a year)</p>

		<p>the covers underwater</p> <p>loss an/or damage of equipment (paddles, lifejackets, canoes cracks and twisting)</p> <p>Broken bones, bruising and cuts and/or damage to canoe and equipment</p>				<p>in seats 1-2 (may be male or female).</p> <p>Paddlers in seat 1-2 MUST be aware of risks and indicate consent to sit in the seat to steerer /coach and be aware of impact minimising procedures (i.e. duck and tuck).</p> <p>All paddlers must be made aware of potential bar crossing risks and given the option to decline WITHOUT duress by any club member.</p> <p>Canoes to be inspected for seaworthiness and contain all required safety gear as per AOCRA and state maritime services legislation.</p>	
	<p>Dragging of canoe and crew out to sea on outgoing tide</p> <p>Dragging of canoe and/or crew on to rocks.</p>						

							No one to cross the bar unless they have completed a huli drill	
5	Noise Nuisance	Loud calling in canal areas	Noise complaints to club and council. Possibility of not being allowed to paddle near residential areas	Major	Possible	Low	Relay calls from steerers. Keep calls to a minimum. Call quiet huts.	Low Unlikely
6	Extreme weather conditions	Strong wind warnings Lightning & Storms/Hail	Possibility of huli and not being bail to right the canoe, canoe damage, struck by lightning or hail	Major	Possible	Low	Assess access to protected waters. Refer to AOCRA MPP rulings 5.4 & 5.5 and current safety alerts issued by AOCRA	Low Unlikely
7	Sunburn / Heat	High UV levels and high temps & humidity	Possibility of sunburn and dehydration	High	Likely	Medium	Refer to AOCRA MPP 5.9 Paddlers advised to carry wear and sunscreen	Low
8	Collision with swimmers and other water craft e.g. SUPs	Swimmers /craft near the canoe launch zone and access	Running over a swimmer/craft knocking them out and potentially drowning	High	Possible	Major	Steerers to assess risk prior to taking off, Let swimmers/ craft know where they	Low Unlikely

		points to waterways					intend going. Seat 1 to keep look out	
9	Financial	Not meeting financial Obligations	Not enough funds to cover expenses	High	Likely	Medium	All expenses to be approved in first instance by MC. Email to be sent via Secretary/Treasure. Larger expenses 3 quotes to be sought then approved by MC. Email Secretary/Treasurer  Membership Fees to be paid.	Low Unlikely
10	Towing trailer	Traffic incident while towing trailer.  Over loading of Trailer – too many canoes and gear on trailer	Death/injury to any parties involved in incidents - both club members, supporters or other road users  Trailer unsafe to tow – weaving and hard to manoeuvre  Equipment falls of	High	Possible	Major	ONLY Licensed competent drivers with sufficient capacity vehicles to tow trailer. Trailer and vehicle to be road worthy.  Annual service of trailer  Allocated Driver to inspect trailer prior to leaving on trip.	Low

		Loose equipment on trailer	trailer and causes accidents for other motorists				Trailer to carry max 6 canoes and gear	
		Travelling over speed limit	Increase of chance of accident and traffic offence				Canoe to be placed in cradles provided. Driver to set placement of all canoes	
		Lack of lights	Increase of chance of accident and traffic offence				All canoes to be tied on front and back with ratchet tie downs, nets placed over equipment on trailer bed, box secured.	
		Insufficient braking capacity for load	Increase of chance of accident and traffic offence				Follow speed limits and road rules. Drivers to accept any speed violations received from traffic department	
							Ensure light check before leaving parking area	
							Braking mechanism to meet	

							requirements of all drivers and vehicles towing trailer	
11	Medical Emergency	Medical incident in canoe while on water.	Distance from communication devices	Major	Likely	Major	Coaches to have current first aid qualification.  Be aware of paddlers' medical conditions  Paddle close to shore in the absence of a support boat  Carry a mobile phone	<b>Medium</b> - Likely / Major
12	COVID-19	Members attend training with COVID-19 who are unaware they are carrying the virus (ie. they are not displaying any	This could lead to the spread of COVID-19 during training.	Major	Low – Australia has strict quarantine measures and strong community adherence to	Moderate – while there are few cases in Qld, the risk can escalate daily	Implement and abide by the OCCC COVID-19 Safety Plan	Medium / Major

		symptoms and have not been to a hot spot).			lockdown measures as required			
		Insufficient coaches and steerers to supervise and conduct training due to self-isolation, lockdowns and/or catching COVID-19	Training is suspended for all members	Medium	Low	Moderate		