

CLUB ACTIVITY NATIONAL SAFETY GUIDE FOR COACHING & TRAINING

**Version 4
08/02/2024**

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Revisions 02/03/2023:
 The Club Activity Safety Planning Process Map – Page 6 Young Person Guidance – Page 10
 Buddy System – Page 11 Duty of Care – Page 13

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 New guidance for groups over 10 – Page 9
 New task competency tables and guidance Pages 9,10,11
 Rescue Board Paddler and Tube Rescuer added to tables on page 9 & 10

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 Young Person guidance clarified 12 Page 12
 Buddy System clarified 13 Page 13
 New Guidance - Session Safety Briefing – Participants confirmation of physical readiness added 11 Page 11
 New Guidance on member insurance added to Member Protection 12a) Page 15
 New Guidance on Physical Readiness added to Member Protection 12c) Page 15

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 Session Safety Briefing – removal of Physical Readiness Page 11
 New Guidance on Physical Readiness added to Member Protection 12c) Page 15 – Removed

2. The Fundamental Principles

2.1 Competent Person in Charge

The fundamental safety and welfare principle for all activities is to have a “*Competent Person*” in charge.

“Competent” means that you have the relevant experience, skill and qualifications required for the role in relation to the activity.

If in any capacity, you are leading an activity then you are in charge and must be a Competent Person.

All Persons in charge are required to establish the safety of themselves, their teams and participants as their key priority. To achieve this, it is essential that all session plans are undertaken and followed as set out in this guide.

2.2 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are the foundation for all good safety practice.

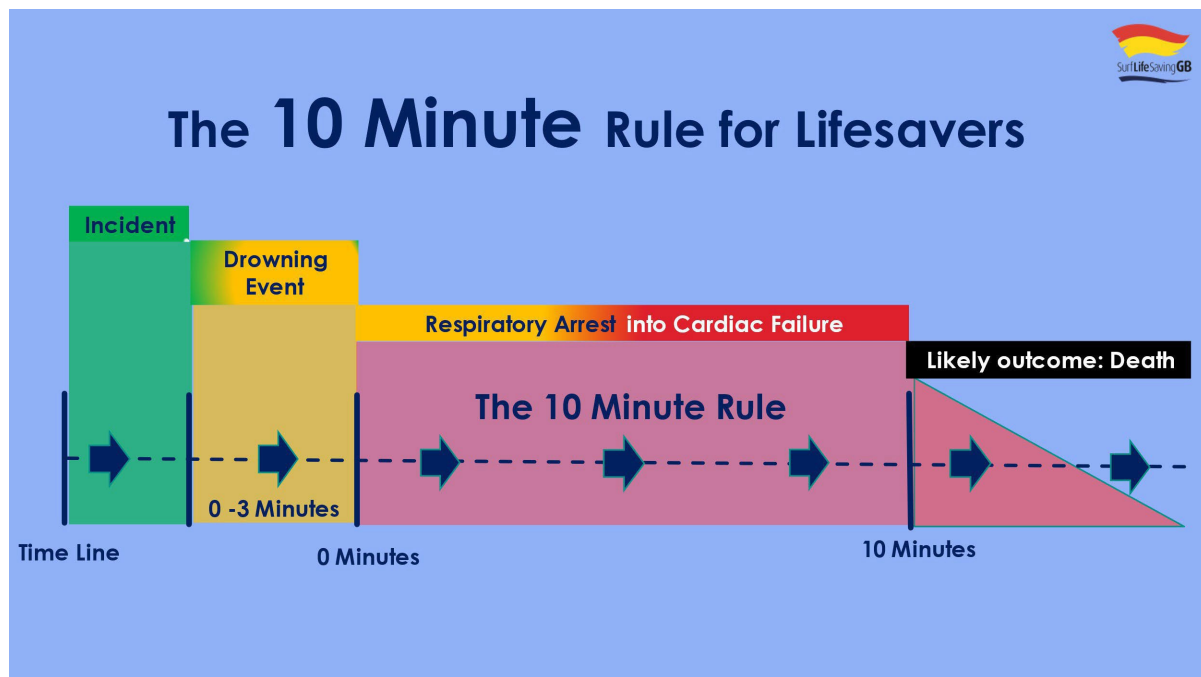
Risk Assessments must be undertaken only by those who are fully trained and competent to do so.

They should be in writing, signed by the person responsible for the assessment and retained as a document of record.

2.3 The Ten Minute Rule

This sets out the most important considerations for establishing the response task capability. It describes a process, if not interrupted, will end up with a likelihood of death. The interruption must be a timely intervention for the casualty to be seen in time, has assistance in time and can have appropriate medical assistance in time.

It should form the basis of both the Risk Assessment and the safety cover and medical capabilities.



This is the Ten Minute Rule

This diagram illustrates the time taken to drown and the rapid change in the stages for somebody in difficulty to quickly become a casualty and the need for timely intervention.

The blue arrows going across from left to right is the timeline of the event.

We can see here in the green zone on the left-hand side where the incident starts. This is the point where somebody is in difficulty and starts to drown.

Here in the yellow zone, the situation has escalated. During this 3 minute a drowning event has started.

It may be less than 3 minutes or more, depending on the water conditions and the physical strength of the casualty.

We are now at the Zero minutes point (the pink zone) - after trying to survive unaided and to keep their head out of the water, this is when the person will have become lifeless in the water and face down.

Don't be surprised at how quickly this happens.

From this point, the critical 10 minutes has started. During this time respiratory arrest will turn into cardiac failure, followed by death.

The point to fully understand is that without a timely intervention starting in this 10 minute area, the likely outcome, as you can see from this descending zone starting at 10 minutes, is that life is starting to fall away, the chance of survival is greatly reduced with the likely outcome will be Death.

The intervention to save a life will be driven by three factors that you can influence: Seeing that the person needs help **IN TIME**

TIMELY intervention

TIMELY medical support

Getting the casualty to a place where medical support can be given in time to save that life relies on first seeing that the person needs help in time.

Only Ten Minutes to see the casualty, respond, and get the casualty to a place of medical support.

3. Who makes the Club Activity Safety Plan

The session activity safety plan must be undertaken by a Competent Person. This should be a qualified, experienced Lifeguard or equivalent who is fully familiar with the location being used, the LOP and the EAP and has undertaken and recorded the Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA) for the session. This does not need to be the person in charge of the session providing that the person in charge of the session is appropriately qualified and sufficiently experienced to understand and implement the Session Safety Plan.

The Safety Cover Team must only be used for safety cover. Members of the Safety Cover Team cannot be used for coaching activity.

The Session Safety Plan must include a qualified first aider who is in attendance or immediately available and identified in the ARA. There must be an identified person in the safety team who knows how to implement the EAP if needed.

The guidance provided in The Plan Process Map must be followed (overleaf).

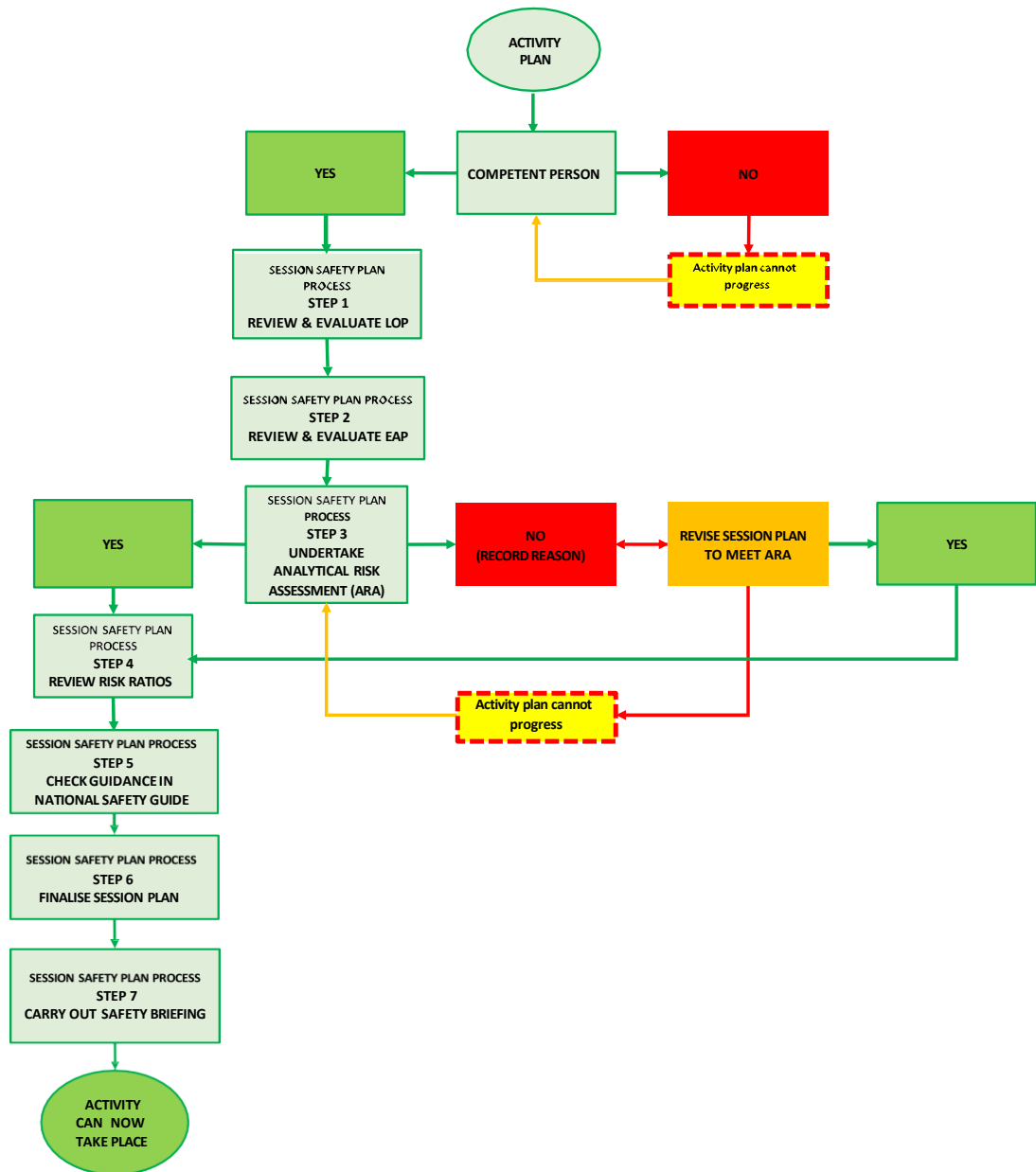
4. The Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA)

The ARA is the foundation of the Session Safety Plan. It is a reference starting point to enable during session re-assessment and any dynamic changes required and any post session reviews.

It must be undertaken by the Competent Person who is responsible for the Session Safety Plan.

It is essential that the completion of the ARA is undertaken rigorously and accurately to ensure that all decisions and outcomes are captured. It also creates a vital audit trail to ensure that proper procedures have been followed. [See Link](#) OR <https://www.slsqb.org.uk/home/safety/>

5. The Club Activity Safety Planning- Process Map



6. Safety Cover Ratios

Level of Risk will be determined by the Competent Person producing the Session Safety Plan and must be recorded on the ARA sheet using numbers 1 to 5 as set out in the table below.

THE SESSION SAFETY COVER RATIOS ARE DETERMINED BY APPLYING THE LEVEL OF RISK ESTABLISHED BY THE ARA TO THE TABLE BELOW.

The table sets out the minimum ratios for the number of participants per Trainer/Coach for Club activity in water training sessions.

If the risk indicates that a high level of safety cover is required resolve the risk by increasing the safety cover. If conditions change during a session, re assess the risks and if needed, adjust the safety cover or stop the session.

In determining the level of risk and the ratios, the Competent Person will consider the guidance notes below.

- Number, competency, and any special needs of the Participants.
- Trainer/coaches must not be part of safety cover (except for 1:1 activity)
- No duplication of safety cover permitted for same location simultaneous separate sessions.
- Competencies of the safety cover (when is a Lifeguard needed)
- Carefully consider the use for safety cover provided by those who have only limited competency. If in doubt only include them as supernumerary members of the safety team.
- Only use parent helpers for safety cover if they have a safety competency as set out in the Safety Tasks Competency Table in section 8.
- If parent/helpers are involved in a session and do not have a Safety Competency they must be treated as a participant when calculating the safety ratios.

7. Risk Rating Table

HIGH

**R
I
S
K**

LOW **HIGH**

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 5 | S | T | O | P | ! |
| 4 | MOST LIKELY RISK | | | | |
| 3 | HIGHLY LIKELY RISK | | | | |
| 2 | LIKELY RISK | | | | |
| 1 | LOW RISK | | | | |
| | 1 TO 1 | 1 TO 4 | 1 TO 6 | 1 TO 8 | 1 TO 10 |

How to use the Risk Rating Table

Risk 1 – Low Risk

Conditions pose low challenge to participants and safety cover.

Risk 2 – Likely Risk

Conditions pose some challenges to participants and safety cover. Review safety cover ratios.

Risk 3 – Highly Likely Risk

Conditions highly likely to challenge participants and safety cover team. Consider revisions to plan.

Risk 4 – Most Likely Risk

Conditions will challenge all participants, trainers/coaches and safety cover team. Revise plan to manage risks.

Risk 5 - Stop

STOP Conditions will endanger all participants, trainers/coaches and safety cover team.

For participant groups higher than 10, the safety cover ratios should be applied in a continuing scale proportionate to the increase or resolved by reducing the number of the participants into smaller groups, each with their own safety cover.

Consideration should also be made to take account of Prevailing conditions, physical capability of trainees and experience of buddies and ratios adjusted to meet these factors.

8. Who Can Be Used to Make Up the Club Water Safety Team (CWST)

The CWST will be determined by the Competent Person to resolve the ARA.

Those recognised as competent to be part of a CWST are shown in Table 1 below. All should be holders of a current and valid award for the role they are being asked to fill. **Table 1**

| |
|--|
| Lifeguard Roles |
| SLSGB Surf Lifeguard |
| SLSGB Beach Lifeguard (NVBLQ) |
| SLSGB Inland Waters Lifeguard |
| Club Activity Water Safety Functions (limited competency) |
| SLSGB Surf Lifesaver |
| Level 2 Swim Surf Competency Award |
| Level 2 Board Surf Competency Award |
| Rescue Board Paddler |
| Tube Rescuer |
| Club Safety Tube Swimmer |
| Club Safety Board Paddler |
| Power Craft Functions |
| SLSGB Inshore Rescue Boat |
| SLSGB Inshore Safety Boat |
| SLSGB Rescue Water Craft |
| First Aid Functions |
| SLSGB First Responder |
| SLSGB First Aider |
| Beach Lifeguard Support |

Their respective Task Competencies are shown in Table 2 and 3 below.

All the Task Competencies are based on or extrapolated from tests established either in a pool or in flat water conditions (e.g. The Lifeguard swim times)

When considering the Task Competency distances for conditions that will make swimming and board paddling more challenging and the task slower to complete, reduce the rescue/safety cover area and distances or increase the safety cover.

Table 2

| Award | Competency Test | Task Competency |
|----------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1. Surf Lifeguard | 400m – 7:30 mins Board | 300m out & back Tube 150m out & back |
| 2. Beach Lifeguard | 400m – 8:00 mins Board | 250m out & back Tube 150m out & back |
| 3. Inland Waters Lifeguard | 400m – 8:00 mins | Board 250m out & back Tube 150m out & back |
| 4. Surf Lifesaver | 400m – 9:30 mins | Board 200m out & back Tube 100m out & back |

For Awards numbered 1 – 4 the task competency is based on recovering an **unconscious casualty** from a point of departure, to a safe point where medical support can be provided within the 10 Minute Rule. In the case of an unconscious casualty rescue, this is time sensitive and speed is of the essence.

Table 3

| Award | Competency Test | Task Competency |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 5. L2 Board Competency | L2 Swim Competency 400m 15:00 mins | Board 100m out & back (Total 200m) |
| 6. L2 Swim Competency | 400m 15:00 mins | Tube 50m out & back (Total 100M) |
| 7. Rescue Board Paddler | Club Tube Swimmer 100m Board (no time) | Board 50m out & back (Total 100M) |
| 8. Club Board Paddler | Club Tube Swimmer 100m Board (no time) | Board 50m out & back (Total 100M) |
| 9. Tube Rescuer | 100m 40 sec run 50m Swim (no time) | 25m from waist deep water (Total 50M) |
| 10. Club Tube Swimmer | 100m 40 sec run 50m Swim (no time) | 25m from waist deep water (Total 50M) |

For Awards numbered 5 – 10 the task competency is based on recovering **a conscious casualty requiring assistance only** from a point of departure, to a safe point where they are in wading depth water and can support themselves. In the case of assisting a conscious casualty, time is not so sensitive and the task distance not as critical.

The “point of departure” is where the responder starts from. If this already in the water this can be taken into consideration so that the task out and back journey remains within the task competency overall distance.

e.g. Club Board Paddler – Total Distance Competency 100M - Point of Departure - 50m out from safe point wading depth water – can be deployed a further 50m out.

11. Session Safety Briefing

The contents of the session safety briefing must be established by the Competent Person undertaking the session plan who must ensure that the safety briefing fully covers the activities to be undertaken. Prior to the commencement of every training session, a safety briefing should be given to all participants. This briefing should include;

- The purpose aims and intended outcomes of the session.
- Explanation of specific safety issues/hazards that are applicable to the session and have been identified.
- Allocation and understanding of support for those in the session with special needs.
- Detailed allocations of tasks for all members of the CWST
- Guidance to participants on how to safely undertake activities for session.
- Reminder of relevant rally points, EAPs and identity of first aider.

The Competent Person should also consider as part of the safety briefing checking that:

- All participants have been recorded on the session register.
- All the equipment being used in the session is fit for purpose.

12. Club Young Person Guidance for Club Activity

Common sense needs to be applied but not at the risk of putting young people in a situation beyond their capability or likely to cause them or those who may be relying on them any harm.

It is therefore recommended that: -

A young person **under the age of 14** is never asked to undertake safety cover or to take a role in session delivery in any capacity.

Those who are 14 and under 16

Although some of the SLSGB Awards have an assessment age under the age of 16, special care must be taken to ensure that in any club volunteer activity they are not asked to do anything which is likely to be harmful to their safety, health or physical development. Particular attention must be given to age, physical development and lack of experience.

They should only be asked to undertake low risk safety cover or to take part in session delivery if they hold a relevant award competency, are required to only provide assistance and at all times directly supervised by a competent adult.

Special care must be taken not to expose this age group to incidents likely to cause distress or threaten their health and welfare or that could lead to emotional, mental or psychological harm.

All under 18

All under the age of 18 are Young People subject to the SLSGB Safeguarding Guidance. For all Club activities, Parent/Guardian permission must be obtained.

If there are potential personal risks to the safety or welfare of the Young Person, these should be explained to both the Young Person and the Parent/Guardian before the activity takes place. They should only undertake activity where there is personal physical and/or psychological risks when an experienced adult is supervising and where any risk is reduced to the lowest possible level.

When acting as a Lifesaver or Lifeguard they must always be directly supervised by a competent adult

13. Buddy System

A Buddy system has been used successfully for many years in SLS coaching and training sessions. They can enhance the learning experience when less experienced participants pair up with more experienced participants.

However, great care needs to be taken not to dilute water safety cover ratios.

The Competent Person must carefully consider the following points:

- If the Buddy is providing safety cover for the person they are working with the Buddy must have a competency listed in section 8.
- If the Buddy is committed to the 1:1 coaching **and the safety cover role** for the person they are working with, use of Buddies must not dilute the water safety cover for others involved in the group activity.
- Use of Buddies must be separately recorded in the ARA.

The Competent Person must also make sure that Buddies are appropriately briefed before the session starts.

14. Inland Considerations

If operating in inland water, it is highly recommended for Coaches and Trainers to undertake the SLSGB Inland Waters Safety Awareness course.

15. Pool Activities

For all aspects of training, coaching or competition activity in a pool environment, safety cover must be in accordance with the pool operator's minimum standard as determined by their Standard Operating Procedures and Risk Assessments.

However, for a Club managed pool activity there is a duty of care to ensure that all involved are safe and that full and proper safeguarding is in place. Club activity organisers should also remember that it is their entire responsibility to ensure that all club members involve follow appropriate codes of practice.

In situations where the club provides suitably qualified lifeguards, they must only undertake lifeguard duties and cannot take part in coaching.

16. Incidents

When things go wrong it is important that records can be accessed. This can demonstrate both best practice and areas of potential improvement from learned experience.

Keeping at least 7 years records of risk assessments and attendance is a key part of the history of an activity or incident.

When there is an incident you can access appropriate report form [See Link](#) OR www.sls.gb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Accident-Incident-Investigation-and-Reporting.pdf

After an incident it is strongly recommended that the relevant reports and other documents are completed as soon as possible. When available they should be communicated to SLSGB HQ and the Club Committee as potential feedback for use in developing operational requirements and other purposes. This will then act as a cycle for constant improvement to drive 'best practice' and possible dissemination within the organisation.

17. Member Protection & Physical Readiness

a. Insurance

Clubs should make sure that all club activities are covered by appropriate insurance. For full details of the SLSGB members insurance go to:

<https://www.sls.gb.org.uk/document/sls.gb-members-club-insurance-explained/>

It is also essential that ALL members are made aware of the SLSGB Insurance cover so that they understand what is and what is not covered and can make their own decisions about taking out personal insurance for activities not covered by the SLSGB insurance.

b. Safeguarding

The SLSGB safeguarding guidance can be found following this link:

[Safeguarding-Guidance.pdf \(sls.gb.org.uk\)](#)

18. Duty of Care

Duty of Care Duty of care is a legal obligation that is imposed on an individual, requiring adherence to a standard of reasonable care while performing any acts that could foreseeably harm others. It is a fundamental obligation and should be carefully considered as part the core values of all Club activities.

By implication, an organisation that is involved in life saving, trains lifeguards and undertakes aquatic sports has a higher understanding of the risks associated with the activity so that “reasonable care” would need to reflect the level of knowledge skill and expertise inherent within the organisation.

In practical terms this means that all Club activities should be risk assessed and only proceed if the risks have been resolved. It also requires that all who lead activities should be properly trained to be in charge of the activity.