



2018 SLSGB NATIONAL SAFETY GUIDE

COACHING AND TRAINING

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1. The Fundamental Principles

1.1 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, skills and the required SLSGB (or SLSGB approved equivalent) qualifications to be able to organise and manage the session so that no harm comes to anyone involved.

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

All Coaches and Trainers are required to establish the safety of themselves and participants as the key priority when running training sessions and when coaching. Each Coach or Trainer conducting activities with groups or providing individual coaching or training should produce their own safety/risk assessments while taking these recommendations into account.

1.2 Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are the foundation for safety.

They should be in writing and all people assisting with the activity must be fully aware of how to implement, as necessary. Risk assessments must be undertaken only by those fully trained and competent.

2. Definitions

Competent Person	The person with the experience, skill, knowledge and appropriate qualification to be able to make the decision required relating to the circumstances. (Is the Person in Charge)
Coaching Activity and Training Sessions	Creating a structured, safe environment where participants can experiment and adapt techniques to suit their personal development goals. Leading and guiding to improve techniques and skills focusing on the needs of individuals. Planned activities to encourage the development of good habits.
Education Activity	Organisation and delivery of SLSGB Award learning
Level 1 Coach	Working under the direct supervision of (in attendance) and directed by a Level 2 Coach, they assist with coaching activities and training sessions. May be included in safety ratios if they have a suitable Lifesaving award. (Cannot be a Person in Charge)
Level 2 Coach	The Competent Person to lead coaching activities and training sessions. (Will be the Person in Charge)
Trainer Assessor	An educator with the necessary subject knowledge and skill base to instruct and teach candidates enrolled on SLSGB Awards. Creates an environment for trainees that is fair, consistent, reliable, current and authentic. Teaching to a strict set of criteria, usually within a limited time frame. Approved to deliver education activity and assess SLSGB awards. (Will be the Person in Charge)
Lifeguard/lifesaver	A holder of a current qualification in the 'Rescue, Lifeguard and First Aid' Pathway to include; Surf Lifeguard, National Vocational Beach Lifeguard (NVBLQ), Surf Life Saver, Beach Lifeguard Support, Surf Coach Safety and Rescue or the Tube Rescuer or Rescue Board Paddler awards. (Provides safety cover as determined by the risk assessment and in accordance with their capability – see 5.2).
Parent Helper	The term 'Parent Helper' describes a parent who is present as additional safety cover or support to the Coach or Trainer taking the session. Duties of a Parent Helper may include organisation of children at a session and setting up of equipment. A parent Helper can only be included in the safety ratios if they hold a suitable Lifesaving Award (see above). If asked to help in a safeguarding sensitive role they must have appropriate safeguarding clearance
Risk Assessment	Completion of an assessment of the risk factors that will guide the level of control to manage and reduce risk.
Trainee	Persons trained or participating in coaching will be referred to as trainees for the purpose of this document.

3. Acronyms

EAP	Emergency Action Plan
ILS	International Life Saving
IRB	Inshore Rescue Boat
NOP	Normal Operating Procedure
NGB	National Governing Body
PAR-Q	Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire
RA	Risk Assessment (including Generic)
ARA	Analytical Risk Assessment
DRA	Dynamic Risk Assessment
SLS	Surf Life Saving
SLSC	Surf Life Saving Club
SLSGB	Surf Life Saving GB

4. Trainee Ratios for Coaching and Training Activity

4.1 Trainee Ratios

The ratios shown in Table 4.4 below have been established to provide the Person in Charge with an indicative ratio to ensure a safe coaching or training session whilst allowing adequate Trainee development input from the coach or trainer. This is only a guide, and Coaches, Trainers should only coach or train the number of Trainees they feel comfortable with. This may vary depending on the level of competency of the group, the experience of the Trainer or Coach, the skill and experience of those providing the safety cover and the prevailing conditions and will require to be adjusted accordingly.

4.2 Buddy System

A buddy system has been used successfully for many years in Surf lifesaving coaching and training sessions. This can improve safety and enhance the learning experience of the Trainee. Less experienced Trainees pair up with a more experienced Trainees. Pairing may occur with those who are SLSGB Level 2 surf competency qualified or above (SLSGB Rescue Board Paddler, Tube Rescuer, Surf Life Saver or Beach/surf lifeguard awards also allowed).

Use of a Buddy may add to the safety cover ratios for a session but it is important to note that unless the Buddy used can assess the environment, self-rescue, provide support for their buddy and communicate for further assistance in an emergency situation the safety ratios will not be improved.

If using the Buddy System, The Person in Charge must establish one to one with each Buddy that the conditions are deemed to be OK with them and if OK then add relevant notes into the ARA for the session.

It is important that buddy pairs remain vigilant and in close proximity of each other to be able to recognise and assist each other if a situation arises. The Person in Charge must make sure that Buddies are briefed before the session starts.

4.3 Other Factors to Consider

If a session has a floating rescue craft or the session in shallow water (waist depth for all Trainees) and the Trainees are in sufficiently close proximity to the coach/ trainer then higher ratios may be followed.

4.4 Ratios Table

The table below indicates the minimum ratios for the number of Trainees per Trainer or Coach (the Person in Charge) for training, coaching and examination sessions in an open water environment.

This is only a guide to be used as a starting point and will be varied in accordance with the ARA and the DRA for the session.

The ratios advised assume that safety cover as determined by the ARA and DRA is provided.

Example Situation	Indicative ratios of Coach/Trainer to Trainees	Further explanation
Coach/Trainer is not acting as qualified safety cover and safety cover is provided to meet ARA and DRA	1:10*	Prevailing conditions and physical capability of Trainees must be considered, and ratios may change to meet these factors
Coach/Trainer is not acting as qualified safety cover and separate cover is provided and a buddy system is utilised with participants with appropriate competency awards for the situation	Above 1:10*	Prevailing conditions and physical capability of Trainees and experience of Buddies must be considered, and ratios may change to meet these factors
Coach/Trainer is acting as qualified lifesaver cover in reasonable proximity to participants who are; A) with floating Craft or in Shallow Water or B) are Competency qualified and out of depth	1:8*	Prevailing conditions and physical capability of Trainees must be considered, and ratios may change to meet these factors
Coach/Trainer is acting as qualified lifesaver cover and in reasonable proximity to participants who are out of depth and non-competency qualified - subject to risk factors	1:6*	Prevailing conditions and physical capability of Trainees must be considered, and ratios may change to meet these factors

5. Safety Cover

The number and skill level of qualified persons providing the safety cover for a session will be based on the risk assessment (ARA) completed by the Competent Person immediately prior to the session commencing. If conditions change during the session then a Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) may determine more safety cover and appropriate decisions must be made at that time which may include stopping the session.

5.1 Who is in Charge?

It is the responsibility of the lead coach /trainer (Competent Person) to ensure that the safety cover for a session at all times meets the requirements of the session risk assessments. Safety cover resources should be used effectively and the lead coach/trainer will need to ensure that suitably qualified individuals are selected and are properly coordinated: Management of the Safety Cover Team may be delegated to another Competent Person (e.g. a Lifeguard) who may be a member of the Safety Cover Team but must in any event be in attendance at all times during the session.

- Ensure the risk assessment has been communicated to all members of the safety team;
- Ensure all parents with children under the age of 16 have been informed of the risk assessment;
- Ensure safety cover has adequate ratios of qualified surf lifesavers in attendance at all times during a session;
- Ensure that the proximity of the safety cover is considered. Typically, this can be stated as maximum distance that the safety cover will be from the Trainees;
- Ensure the equipment and the safety cover used is effective for the situation according to the sea state, beach state, other conditions and proximity (e.g. IRB covering larger area in shorter time than rescue tube, but tube can get into crowded areas and larger surf with more ease)
- Some individuals may have specific needs or disabilities that require greater level of safety cover;
- There should be a method in place for the coach or trainer to communicate with the safety cover, this may be in the form of ILS signalling, mobile phones, radio or other communications as specified and agreed prior to commencing the session;
- There must be a plan and procedure for access to additional emergency services either through direct communication or a recognised individual that will notify the emergency services;

- When training sessions will travel over 400m from the starting point on the shore it is good practice to notify shoreside representatives the course to be taken and duration of the session so that appropriate alarms can be activated and acted upon if not meeting designated checkpoints in a given time frame;
- Ensure that crews of any craft operating more than 400m offshore are wearing suitable PPE;

5.2 Who can make up the Safety Cover Team?

A safety cover team will be made up from of a number of competent persons to provide the required functions and level of safety cover identified by the risk assessment. Those recognised as competent to be selected are:

Lifeguard Roles

- SLSGB Surf Lifeguard
- SLSGB National Vocational Beach Lifeguard
- SLSGB Inland Waters Lifeguard

Water Safety Functions

- SLSGB Beach Lifeguard Support
- SLSGB Surf Life Saver
- SLSGB First Responder
- SLSGB First Aider
- SLSGB Tube Rescuer
- SLSGB Rescue Board Paddler
- SLSGB Competency Award Level 2 or above for surf
- SLSGB Competency award level 1 or above for flat conditions

Powercraft Functions

- SLSGB Inshore Rescue and Inshore Safety Boat Crew
- SLSGB Inshore Rescue and Inshore Safety Boat Driver
- SLSGB Inshore Water Safety
- SLSGB Rescue Water Craft Driver

For details of all SLSGB qualifications and awards go to www.sls.gb.org.uk/education/qualifications

When the Coach/Trainer that is not a Lifeguard, there must be a minimum of one dedicated (not committed to other patrol activity) Lifeguard present for the duration of a session. Once the analytical risk assessment (ARA) has been completed it may identify the need for more than one lifeguard to be at that particular session. You should plan for this eventuality.

5.3 Competency Considerations for the Water Safety Cover Team Members

All members of the water safety team must be able to evidence appropriate:

- Fitness and skill requirements for the safety cover function and the equipment used in the prevailing conditions
- Knowledge and understanding of the environment in which the event is taking place.

Knowledge of the sport for which they are providing a service:

- Monitor situations and make appropriate changes to optimise safety
- Report and record incidents
- Ability to recognise potential problems and act pro-actively
- Use of appropriate equipment and clothing
- Ability to undertake equipment checks and handling
- Self-rescue in the prevailing conditions
- Communication for assistance required

The water safety team must be able to provide suitable and sufficient competence to:

- Identify signs of those in difficulty or requiring first aid and medical assistance
- Communicate appropriately using agreed methods
- Follow an agreed safety plan and emergency action plan
- Releases and/or avoiding dangerous situations with a panicking casualty/casualties
- Able to surface dive to investigate a submerged object or casualty
- Safely support a conscious casualty
- Safely support an unconscious casualty, using appropriate equipment
- Ability to rescue unconscious casualties to safety/shore
- Ability to undertake deep-water expired air ventilation (EAV)

- Undertaking first aid and resuscitation skills
- Carry/transport a casualty for further attention
- Co-ordinate water safety team and transfer to emergency services

5.4 Other considerations

- If operating in estuaries or lakes it is highly recommended for Coaches and Trainers to undertake the SLSGB Inland Safety Water Awareness course.
- When a session is performed in waist depth water or with competency qualified persons using flotation devices such as a paddle board, surf board or rescue tube, then it is permissible for the coach/trainer to be included as part of safety cover. This is provided all other risks are considered and the Coach/Trainer is considered able to provide swift, suitable and sufficient safety cover to all participants under their care without increasing the potential risk.
- When Trainees are swimming out of depth without flotation devices, at least 1 qualified person providing safety cover must be used exclusively for that purpose and not for other tasks.
- Where examinations are taking place a lifeguard/lifesaver dedicated to the event must be present in accordance with the ratio and risk assessment.
- An individual within the water safety team should have the competence for their safety function according to the specifications established in the SLSGB Qualifications and awards guide and must have a current and valid award for the function

5.5 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 risk assessment.

Owners, operators and occupiers of swimming pools must follow the general duties and responsibilities in the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety in the Workplace regulations (1992).

They are obliged to take all reasonable and practical measures to ensure that all activities are conducted safely and can follow the HSE (1992) guidelines.

6. How to Conduct a Risk Assessment

6.1 Introduction

Only those who are appropriately qualified should undertake risk assessments

Risk Assessments are required by Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1999.

Every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of:

- a. the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst they are at work; and
- b. the risks to the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking

Unless you directly employ someone, this is not a statutory requirement for a club using only volunteers but is still a best practice to follow and why we use risk assessments for all Lifesaving activities.

One of the important things to remember about Risk Assessments is that they must be appropriate; i.e. 'suitable and sufficient' with regards to the nature and scale of the task or location; the likelihood of hazards; the extent and severity of the risks; and be understandable and repeatable.

6.2 The 3 Part Process for Session Risk Management:

Firstly The generic risk assessment is an overarching guide to ensure thoughts, observations, known risks and incidents relating to the location are recorded in a chart such as fig 1. This type of risk assessment (RA) is annually reviewed and updated and signed off by the declared person, usually the Club Safety Officer. It is always used as the starting point as an essential safety reference for all sessions;

At the point at the coach/trainer arrives to manage the session there must be an on the spot, on the day observed check of hazards and risks to ensure it is safe to conduct the planned activity on that day. This is then recorded on an Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA)

Finally During the session the coach/trainer and others in the Safety Team will monitor and consistently be aware of the environment and any new risks and adjust the session safety cover plan and make the Team members aware verbally; this is a dynamic risk assessment (DRA). These changes must be recorded as soon as possible. DRA's should be reviewed by the Club Safety Officer and if they impact the RA, appropriate action taken to ensure that the RA is current and valid as the master safety guide

Three important points to note:

1. Keeping records of risk assessments is a key part of the history of an activity or incident – don't forget that what you do could be subject to scrutiny. Take notes or voice recordings and keep records.
2. Activity/Incident reports are the only way to share the lessons learned and to improve the process of safety management. Submit Incident Reports to SLSGB so that we have the information to review and ensure that our Strategic policy is to a current best practice level.
3. After an incident it is strongly recommend that the relevant reports and other documents are completed as soon as possible. When available they should 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.

6.3 What are Hazards and Risks?

A Hazard is something with the potential to cause harm. This can include (but is not limited to) weather, tides, rips, shipping movements, other activity in the location of the session, substances, equipment and engines, methods of the activity, the environment where the activity will take place and other aspects of activity organisation.

A Risk is the likelihood of potential harm from that hazard being realised. The extent of the risk will depend on:

- The likelihood of that harm occurring;
- The potential severity of that harm, i.e. of any resultant injury or adverse health effect; and
- Those who might be affected by the hazard, i.e. the number of people who might be exposed.

A risk assessment will involve identifying the hazards present in an environment or arising out of activities, evaluating the extent of the risks involved taking into account existing control measures or precautions and their effectiveness.

It should identify how the risks arise and how they impact on those affected. This information is needed to make decisions on how to manage those risks in an informed, rational and structured manner and action taken is proportionate.

6.4 Five Steps to Risk Assessment

1. Look for and identify the hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the level of risk(s) arising from the hazards and decide whether the existing precautions are sufficient or whether more should be done.
4. Record your findings.
5. Review your assessment and revise it if needed.

Fig 1

Risk Assessment

Reference No.



Section 1 – Initial Risk Assessment

Activity				Location	
Having referred to the SLSGB Safety Guide and evaluated the overall level of risk, please tick the appropriate box below:				Organisation/Centre	
High	Medium	Low	Minimal	Beach/Building	
				Room /Location	
Hazards and Harm		Who is at Risk	How are risks currently controlled	Level of risk (high, medium, low)	Are additional control measures needed (Y or N) and comments
↑		↑	↑	↑	
1. Look for the hazard		3. Evaluate the level of risk(s) arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or more should be done		4. Record your findings	
2. Decide who might be harmed					
5. Review findings annually. Keep records for up to 7 years.					

Risk Rating	Rating Action Bands		
To establish Residual Risk Rating multiply "Likelihood" by the "Severity"			
Likelihood	Severity	Band	Action Required
1 Most Unlikely	1 Trivial Injury	1 & 2 Minimal/Trivial risk	No further action. Monitor situation.
2 Unlikely	2 Slight Injury	2, 3 & 4 Low risk	Monitor control measures for continued effectiveness.
3 Likely	3 Serious. Chronic injury	6 & 8 Medium risk	Improve or increase control measures.
4 Most Likely	4 Major injury/Death	9, 12 & 16 High risk	Stop the activity. Improve or increase controls immediately.

The risk assessments in this example are based around a 4 x 4 matrix –
Likelihood x Severity= Risk –

- GREEN** No further action required or monitor
- ORANGE** Improve the safety or control measures
- RED** Stop the activity; improve or increase control measures

1. Look for and identify the hazards

In the worked example we can see the hazards are listed as -

Trips and falls: Fire: Collision with moving vehicles or craft: impact

2. Decide who might be harmed and how

- a. Those who may be affected by these hazards are the club members, public or even contractors working on a club building.
- b. Then in column 4 we list how they may be affected, in this case, there is a ripped carpet that has already caused people to trip; IRB engine on the floor not properly mounted; craft paddles not secured and could fall into oncoming persons.

3. Evaluate the level of risk(s) arising from the hazards and decide whether the existing precautions are sufficient or whether more should be done

- a. In the column marked 'Existing Controls' you will put whatever measures you already have in place. In this case there are no measures to manage the ripped carpet or the manoeuvring vehicles; there is a fire door separating the club garage from the entry area and there are serviced extinguishers to hand.
- b. Are these sufficient? Obviously not, so you would input the extra measures into the final column – Further Controls/Action.
- c. The trip hazards would need to have the carpet replaced as soon as possible but in the short term putting up warning signage would help.
- d. Has a Fire Risk Assessment been carried out? You would need to check and arrange for that.
- e. The paddles would need fixed securing systems to be completely safe, but if that is not practicable, the minimum you would need to do is have clearways painted onto the ground to show pedestrian walkways and then install signage to show everyone where they can go.

4. Record your findings

- a. It is vital to remember that a risk assessment is not a stand-alone tool. It is only the first step in reducing the level of risk. Once you have carried out your risk assessments you need to transfer your further controls information to your Action Plan such as updating your NOP.
- b. In the Action Plan you need to show who is to be responsible for making sure tasks are done, so you put in what work is needed, who will organise/do it, how important it is – by using the Priority key at the bottom of the sheet you can decide if something needs to be done immediately or can be delayed for a month or two, or more if necessary.

The important thing to remember is an acronym – SMART. In health, safety and welfare terms this stands for:

- S** Specific
- M** Manageable or measurable
- A** Achievable
- R** Relevant or Realistic
- T** Time tabled/ time specific

All the 'further controls' in the right hand column meet the SMART requirements.

5. Review your assessment and revise it if needed

- a. Finally, remember that carrying out a Risk Assessment is not a one off exercise. Activity environments change, people's skill levels change - both up and down, machines and tools, and materials change.
- b. You should revisit your Risk Assessments once you have completed your remedial works on the action plan and regularly to make sure that you remain aware of the hazards

SLSGB provides Risk Assessment forms to support, record, and communicate findings. These are available through the SLSGB website.

www.sls.gb.org.uk/home/safety

6.5 Updating risk assessments

Coaching and Training is generally undertaken in an open environment, meaning that hazards can continually change. Before every coaching or training session the risk assessment must be checked and updated to ensure optimal safety standards.

Established best practice states that every year you should formally review your risk management to make sure you are still improving, or at least not sliding back. Look at your risk assessments again. Have there been any changes? Are there improvements you still need to make? Have your colleagues spotted a problem? Have you learnt anything from accidents or near misses? Make sure your risk assessment stays up to date.

During the year, if there is a significant change, don't wait - check your risk assessment and where necessary, amend it. If possible, it is best to think about the risk assessment when you're planning your change – that way you leave yourself more flexibility.

All records through the generic risk assessment process should be kept for up to 7 years; this then acts as evidence of the activity being looked at constantly. Within the SLSGB Risk Assessment documents there is a review sheet; this allows the competent person to sign off each year if no changes are required.

7. Session Safety Briefing & NOPS & EAPs

7.1 Session Safety Briefing

Prior to entering a body of water or beginning a land training session, a safety briefing should be given to all Trainees. This briefing should include;

1. Explanation of specific safety issues/hazards of the environment that were identified in the risk assessment
2. Explanation of specific safety requirements associated with the planned activities/ session, including swim and equipment specific safety, signal flags (Refer to Appendices Resource – Equipment: Specific Safety Considerations). You may also provide written information to be available for participants.
3. The purpose of the session
4. How to safely undertake techniques for session
5. Reminder of rules, codes of conduct
6. Reminder of relevant rally points, EAPs and location of first aid kit/ required medication and first aid/safety cover

7.2 Normal Operating Procedure's (NOPs) and Emergency Action Plan's (EAPs)

Basic safety considerations will be covered in the initial Safety Briefing. However, in addition to this trainers/ coaches are required to also inform Trainees of relevant information in the NOPs and EAPs at the beginning of each session.

The surf life saving club safety officer and/or session safety lead (Competent Person) should have a copy of the club NOPs and EAPs. Lead Coach/trainers (Person in Charge) are required to familiarise themselves with these procedures and plans so that they can act upon them accordingly. In the event that a coaching session is undertaken at a location where NOPs and EAPs do not exist, the coach should work with the Club Lead Safety Cover Officer to devise an NOP and an EAP for potential emergency situations that may occur.

The NOP should contain a minimum of the following:

1. Information regarding the physical layout of the coaching environment hazards:
 - Activities
 - Trainee/Participant Considerations
 - Beach and Ocean Environment Considerations
 - Club and Welfare facilities
 - Policies and procedures
2. The way equipment is operated on a day to day basis
3. Conditions of use of equipment and facility
4. The permitted number of Trainees to safety cover
5. The role of the Lifeguard/life saving team
6. Reference to the Club and NGB rules, regulations, codes of conduct and procedures
7. First Aid provision

The EAP should succinctly identify a plan of action for any accident that may occur from the hazards identified in NOP and Risk assessment.

7.3 Dealing with incident/ injury and EAP's

Example - In the event of an incident/injury occurring in the Coach/Trainer should:

- Remain calm and objective
- Cease the coaching or training activity and ensure all Trainees are safe from harm and will remain safe at the designated meeting point (i.e. on dry land/the centre/club house).
- Alert the designated life saver
- Activate the EAP
- Provide comfort and reassurance
- Adhere to surf life saving life guard procedures for the injury/incident in question and assist the surf lifesaver/Lifeguard where directed.
- Record the incident injury in the Incident report book (Refer to the Incident Report template). The incident must be recorded accurately. After the incident has occurred and been recorded it is the Lead Coach's/ Trainer's (Person in Charge) responsibility to make suggestions for future alterations to be made to prevent recurrence and pass the forms onto the relevant safety committee.
- All incidents must be reported to SLSGB using the appropriate report pro-forma which can be found using the following link www.slsgb.org.uk/home/safety
- If major incident (hospitalised) then YOU MUST inform SLSGB within a 24hr period through the Safety Officer or by email using the address below.

It is good practice to offer post incident support to Coaches, Trainers and all involved in the incident

Inform SLSGB: mail@slsgb.org.uk

Our post incident support leaflet can be found using the following link
www.slsgb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Post-Incident-Support-Leaflet-2016.pdf

8. Member Protection

Insurance

Clubs should make sure that all activities are covered by appropriate insurance. For full details of SLSGB members insurance go to <http://www.sls.gb.org.uk/clubs/>

Young Persons Policy

This guide should be used in conjunction with our Young Persons Policy which can be found following this link <http://www.sls.gb.org.uk/clubs/>

Safeguarding

The SLSGB safeguarding policy can be found following this link <http://www.sls.gb.org.uk/home/safeguarding/>