



Risk Assessment

Saturday 24th of October 2026 · O'Briensbridge to Castleconnell · read with the Safety Statement

Approved 19 October 2026. The ratings are judgements, agreed by the committee. The controls are the ones the Safety Statement already sets out, and each points to its section there (§). It follows the club's Boathouse & Water Safety Rules. It is published to entering clubs with the statement, reviewed before each Head and after any significant incident.

Each hazard is rated twice: **before** any control, and **after** the controls in the Safety Statement. A rating is likelihood × severity. Where a hazard could kill, the emergency procedure stays in place however unlikely it is, which is why several stay at medium even after control. **31 hazards.** Before control, 18 rate high and 13 medium. After the statement's controls, 16 are medium, 13 low and 2 high (L2, L4): those two carry further action the committee needs to decide.

Likelihood 1 rare · 2 unlikely · 3 possible · 4 likely · 5 almost certain

Severity 1 negligible · 2 minor (first aid) · 3 moderate (treatment) · 4 major (hospital, serious injury) · 5 catastrophic (death or life-changing injury)

Rating **1-4** low · **5-9** medium · **10-25** high, needs further action

#	HAZARD — WHAT COULD HAPPEN	WHO IS AT RISK	BEFORE L × S	CONTROLS (SAFETY STATEMENT §)	AFTER L × S	FURTHER ACTION	OWNER
ON THE WATER							
W1	The weir below the finish: a crew carried past the finish and over the hazard line, swept towards the weir or pinned against trees.	Every crew; singles, juniors, and crews still moving fast after the finish	3 × 5 15	- Buoyed hazard line below the finish; no boat crosses it §3 - Ease, keep steerage, turn early; reverse into the In Slip if needed §3 - Launch 6 holds the water between the finish and the hazard line all day §8 - Slip marshals watch the line from the bank §3 - No racing when the Parteen discharge is above the level judged unsafe §7 - Covered at the 07:30 briefing §1	1 × 5 5	Confirm the buoy line's position on Race's map, where it is marked TBC; Race draws it about 190 m below the finish line.	Safety Officer
W2	Capsize and cold-water immersion: cold shock, hypothermia, drowning.	Competitors, most of all juniors in singles and doubles	4 × 5 20	- Every competitor able to swim 50 m in light clothing §1 - Stay with the boat; do not swim for the bank §10 - Seven safety boats on station, a rescue RIB mid-course §8 - RESCUE call clears the radio and stops the start §9 - A rescued rower is taken straight off the river, warmed and checked, and does not race again §10 - Cold-weather clothing; dry bag with spare kit §1	3 × 3 9	Name a warm room in the clubhouse for anyone brought out of the water.	Safety Officer
W3	Collision between racing crews when overtaking: rigger and blade injuries, damaged boats.	Competitors	3 × 3 9	- One-way racing lane on the Clare bank §3 - The overtaking crew passes safely; the slower crew gives way §5 - Start funnel spaces the crews §5	2 × 3 6	Consider no-overtaking zones in the start funnel and on the approach to the finish.	Chief umpire

#	HAZARD — WHAT COULD HAPPEN	WHO IS AT RISK	BEFORE L x S	CONTROLS (SAFETY STATEMENT §)	AFTER L x S	FURTHER ACTION	OWNER
W4	Head-on collision between a racing crew and a crew rowing up to the start.	Competitors	3 x 4 12	- Crews go up on the Limerick bank and race on the Clare bank, buoys between §3 - Crews going up stop and let racing crews pass; no pacing §5 - Marshals' launches guide crews to the start §5	2 x 4 8	Say at the briefing that a traffic violation earns a starter's warning (RI rule 2.29).	Chief umpire
W5	Congestion in the holding area and start funnel: low-speed collisions, long waits in the cold.	Competitors	4 x 2 8	- Crews wait in the holding area until released §5 - One-way loop round the funnel buoys, when called §5 - Boat in start order, not long before you need to §5	2 x 2 4	—	Starter
W6	High river flow from ESB releases at Parteen Weir: stronger current, harder steering, more pull towards the weir.	Every crew	2 x 5 10	- Flow checked at the pre-race inspection §7 - Flow monitored; the Head Secretary and Safety Officer decide §7	1 x 5 5	Ask ESB for the planned discharge on the day.	Safety Officer
W7	Strong wind and rough water; south and south-westerly winds funnel down the river.	Every crew; small boats first	3 x 4 12	- Weather assessed on the day: wind speed, direction and gusts §7 - The risk assessment on the course on the day decides §7 - Any umpire or safety launch can stop racing on the spot §7	2 x 3 6	—	Head Secretary
W8	Lightning: a strike on open water.	Everyone on or near the water	1 x 5 5	- No racing while lightning is forecast §7 30-30 rule; every crew off at the nearest landing; shelter indoors or in a car §7 - Racing not considered again until 30 minutes after the last thunder §7	1 x 5 5	Name one official as weather watcher on the day.	Head Secretary
W9	Fog or poor visibility: collisions, a crew lost from view.	Every crew	2 x 4 8	- No racing with less than 500 m of visibility (to the first bend) §7 - Pre-race inspection §7	1 x 4 4	—	Safety Officer
W10	Cold while waiting, or after racing is stopped: hypothermia.	Juniors and coxswains most of all	3 x 3 9	- Layers, no cotton, hat and gloves, dry bag with spare kit §1 - Boat in start order and not too early §5 - A stopped race brings every crew to the nearest safe landing §10	2 x 3 6	Publish the start order early so clubs can time their launches.	Head Secretary
W11	Equipment failure: bow ball, heel restraints, hatch covers, steering.	Competitors	3 x 4 12	Rule 2.39 checks at the slips; heel restraints no more than 50 mm; a boat that fails does not go afloat §2	1 x 4 4	—	Control Commission
W12	A coxswain trapped in a capsized bow-loader.	Coxswains	2 x 5 10	- Lifejacket worn at all times afloat, never under clothing §2 - Manual gas lifejacket in a bow-loader; automatic ones not allowed §2 - An experienced coxswain in charge of an inexperienced crew §1	1 x 5 5	—	Control Commission
W13	A rower in the water from a boat that stays upright, with crews racing past.	Competitors	2 x 4 8	- Stop racing and help; following crews steer clear and alert an official §10 - RESCUE call stops the start §9	1 x 4 4	—	Chief umpire

#	HAZARD — WHAT COULD HAPPEN	WHO IS AT RISK	BEFORE L x S	CONTROLS (SAFETY STATEMENT §)	AFTER L x S	FURTHER ACTION	OWNER
W14	Debris, submerged objects, shallows, and other river users (anglers, kayakers, motorboats).	Competitors	2 x 3 6	- Course inspected about an hour before racing §7 - Debris reported to Race Control; racing suspended while a launch clears it §10	1 x 3 3	—	Safety Officer
W15	Safety-launch operations: a propeller strikes someone in the water, a launch collides, or wash swamps a small boat.	Competitors and launch crews	2 x 5 10	- Kill cord at all times; two aboard; lifejackets worn §8 - Safety launches do safety and nothing else; crews briefed before racing §8	1 x 5 5	Brief drivers: engine off or in neutral when anyone is in the water alongside, recover over the stern, minimum wash past small boats.	Safety Officer
W16	Bulls and Bears: two eights racing side by side down the finish stretch, with head crews possibly still on the course.	The sixteen rowers and two coxswains; head crews	3 x 4 12	- Course cleared: 10-minute gap in starts once both eights are ready §6 - Sprint starts only when Race Control confirms the finish stretch is clear §6 - Experienced coxswains; crews briefed at 12:30 §6 - An umpire follows the race §6	1 x 4 4	The slowest head crews take more than 10 minutes over 3 km, so Race Control's 'clear' starts the sprint, not the clock.	Race Control
W17	Bulls and Bears: composite crews who have not rowed together; blade clash between eights racing side by side.	The two crews	3 x 3 9	- Experienced coxswains in both eights §6 - Briefing at assembly; an umpire follows the race §6	2 x 3 6	Tell each junior selected's club responsible adult, and have them at the 12:30 assembly.	Head Secretary
W18	Para rowers: specific recovery needs, prosthesis entrapment, getting a rower from the water into a launch.	Para rowers	2 x 5 10	- Clubs send each athlete's risk assessment and recovery needs in advance §1 - Prosthesis must release, or release from the boat §1 - A low-sided launch covers para races §8	1 x 5 5	Have the launch in place before para crews go afloat, with one crew member ready to enter the water.	Safety Officer
ON LAND							
L1	Slipways: slips and falls, crush injuries from boats and oars, congestion, the temporary slipway moving or failing.	Competitors, coaches, marshals	3 x 3 9	- Single-file queue point; slip marshals run the slips §4 - Footwear on the slipway; oar racks; banks kept clear §4 - Temporary slipway checked at the pre-race inspection §7	2 x 2 4	—	Slip marshals
L2	Vehicles and trailers: a pedestrian, often a child, struck by a reversing car or trailer; a narrow access road.	Everyone on site	3 x 5 15	- Car-park and traffic marshals direct parking §11 - Walk in the car and trailer parks; keep children clear of moving vehicles §11	2 x 5 10	A marshal guides every trailer movement; a one-way route through the trailer park; trailers parked before racing starts (the club's 2018 trailer plan).	Head Secretary
L3	Emergency access blocked on the narrow club road.	Anyone needing an ambulance	3 x 5 15	- Road kept clear from two hours before racing; blocking vehicles removed §11 - An official meets every emergency vehicle at the gate §10	1 x 5 5	—	Head Secretary
L4	Cardiac arrest or collapse, most likely in a masters crew, on the water or ashore.	Competitors, masters crews most of all; spectators	2 x 5 10	- Defibrillator at Race Control on race day §10 - Irish Red Cross crew and ambulance on site; call 112, start compressions, fetch the defibrillator §10 - A 112 ambulance met at the gate §10	2 x 5 10	The start is 3 km from the defibrillator and a second one there is not possible this year. Ask the Irish Red Cross whether its ambulance carries one and can be placed to reach the start; make sure Launch 1 knows the fastest route to the club.	Safety Officer

#	HAZARD — WHAT COULD HAPPEN	WHO IS AT RISK	BEFORE L x S	CONTROLS (SAFETY STATEMENT §)	AFTER L x S	FURTHER ACTION	OWNER
L5	Head injury and concussion: from a handle, a rigger, a collision or a fall on the slip.	Competitors	2 x 4 8	If in doubt, sit them out: stop for the day, first-aid check, not left alone, no driving §10	2 x 3 6	—	First aid
L6	A lost or missing child, or a child near the water unsupervised.	Children on site	3 x 5 15	- A named responsible adult for every junior crew §1 - Each club responsible for its own juniors §12 - Lost-child procedure: Race Control as meeting point, slips and bank searched first, CODE RED if a child might be in the water, Gardaí called §12	1 x 5 5	—	Race Control
L7	Safeguarding: unsupervised changing rooms, unwanted photography, juniors and adults from different clubs together.	Children on site	2 x 4 8	- The club's Child Protection Officer through Race Control §12 - Filming and photography notice §12	1 x 4 4	Make sure the club's Child Safeguarding Statement risk assessment covers hosting the Head (Children First Act 2015 s.11).	Child Protection Officer
L8	Fire in the clubhouse or at the catering.	Everyone on site	2 x 4 8	- Raise the alarm; extinguishers at the tea station, gym and club room §10 - Officials organise any evacuation §10	1 x 4 4	—	Head Secretary
L9	Water-borne infection through cuts or hands.	Competitors	2 x 3 6	Cover cuts; wash hands before eating or drinking §3	1 x 3 3	—	Clubs
ORGANISATION							
O1	Radio or communications failure: an emergency not heard, a slow response.	Everyone on the water	3 x 4 12	- Radio checks before racing; course location names §9 - Channel numbers posted at Race Control on the day §9 - Phones and loudhailers; racing stops until contact is restored §9	1 x 4 4	—	Head Secretary
O2	A crew left on the water and not missed.	Competitors	2 x 5 10	- Marshals keep every part of the course in view §10 - Bow numbers collected at the In Slip §10 - Safety launches stand down only when every crew is off the water §10	1 x 5 5	—	Race Control
O3	Too few people in too many roles, so decisions or responses are delayed.	Everyone	3 x 4 12	- Head Secretary and Safety Officer are two people and decide together §7 - Any umpire or safety launch can stop racing §7	1 x 4 4	Name a deputy for each, and a medical lead who is not the Head Secretary.	Committee
O4	Medical cover not on site or not enough for the numbers.	Everyone on site	3 x 4 12	- Irish Red Cross crew and ambulance on site 08:30 to 15:30, confirmed 8 October 2026 §10 - First-aid post at the main gate §10	1 x 4 4	Keep every crew afloat within the cover: no boat on the water before 08:30 or after 15:30. Tell the Red Cross of any late change on its out-of-hours number.	Head Secretary

On the day: the check before racing starts

The Safety Officer and the Head Secretary carry this out about an hour before the first start, as the Safety Statement (§7) sets out. Racing does not start until every line is ticked or the Head Secretary and the Safety Officer have agreed a change and recorded it.

- ☐ Weather suitable to race: wind speed, direction and gusts assessed
- ☐ River flow checked and acceptable (Parteen discharge _____ m³/s)
- ☐ Water temperature recorded: _____ °C
- ☐ Temporary slipway secure; out and in slips marshalled
- ☐ Radio check done with every station
- ☐ Club road clear; official at the main gate
- ☐ No lightning forecast
- ☐ At least 500 m of visibility (to the first bend)
- ☐ Course clear of debris; hazard line and buoys in place
- ☐ Launches 1–6 and the rescue RIB on station, crewed, kill cords on
- ☐ First aid on site; defibrillator at Race Control
- ☐ Briefing held at 07:30; every club signed the attendance sheet

Conditions are **acceptable** / **not acceptable** for racing. Time: _____

Safety Officer

Head Secretary