

WSPC: Risk Assessment Guidelines for Boating

It is the responsibility of anyone boating unsupervised or anyone supervising crews to perform a Risk Assessment (RA) in line with the criteria below. Crews going afloat must “sign” out using the ‘Pegboard’ or whiteboard in the boathouse. There must be at least one operational mobile phone in each boat for emergency purposes. All boat damage is to be reported / logged on the white board inside the club bay.

The guidelines define maximum limits and do not imply it is safe for members to boat in conditions close to the stipulated limits. The pre-outing RA should take into account various factors, including: Environment Agency (EA) boards, flow rate, (upstream & downstream), river level, boat type /size, experience and strength of those boating, local activity on the stretch including but not exclusive to paddleboarders, pleasure cruisers, open water swimmers and release of sewage by Thames Water

Wind speeds and direction, air and water temperatures, weather generally (including likelihood of lightning), and visibility.

Fixed white lights stern and bow are compulsory in poor light or when boating under cover of darkness.

CHECK STATUS AND FLOW AT <http://wspc.org.uk/river-conditions/> REMEMBER, IF IN DOUBT, DONT GO OUT

E.A. RIVER STATUS	HOW TO DECIDE: CONDITIONS / KEY INDICATORS (Where two of the three 'condition' columns are valid)		In addition to the 'condition' columns (left), CHECK CRITERIA BELOW	CAN BE SUPERSEDED BY (THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA APPLY IN ALL BOATING CONDITIONS)	PRINCIPAL RISKS / RISK FACTORS CLARIFICATIONS / RESTRICTIONS	
	EA River State Boards	River Level at Windsor Park Flow Rate ⁽¹⁾ Av between Windsor Park and Staines				
Normal Rowing (White)	No Stream Warning	Water height equal to or below 4.00m Below 85 m ³ /s (subject to RA criteria)	Boat type Boat size Experience & strength of crew Racing status in relation to boat format Paddleboarders Pleasure cruisers Open Water swimmers (with fluoro buoy /hat or otherwise)	WIND - 25+ mph (40+ km/h) with gusts 40+ mph (64+ km/h) means River status is lifted by one , e.g. 28 mph (45 km/h) with gusts 42 mph (68 km/h) in WHITE conditions = YELLOW Winds of 35+ mph (56 km/h) are RED, regardless of EA board state.	• Collision: Fog, Wind speed & direction, other traffic, experience of crew	No restrictions assuming crew & cox are competent
					• Capsize: Fog, Wind speed & direction, other traffic, Boat type & size, Experience of crew	RA of hazards to have been undertaken. Steers competency. Skills competency in changing position in boat and embarking / disembarking
					• Hypothermia: Temperature (air & water), Clothing, Weather	Clothing to be appropriate to weather - layers, waterproof, hat and gloves. Outing to be adjusted to meet weather conditions.
					• Sunstroke: Clothing, Weather	Hat, sunscreen and appropriate clothing. Outing to be adjusted to meet weather conditions.
					• Drowning: Proficiency / competency skills and swimming	All to sign swimming 50m competency and health notifications disclaimer
(Yellow)	Stream increasing OR Stream Decreasing	Water height equal to or below 4.25m Over 85 m ³ /s & below 130m ³ /s (subject to RA criteria)	Release of sewage by Thames Water (primarily in sudden heavy rain when stream increasing or above)	FOG - If it is not possible to see the last house on opposing bank from end of Pontoon OR	AS ABOVE, PLUS: • Collision: Stream flow rate average from Windsor park & Staines	No novice only double or single crews in any circumstances: - 1xSnr in each double of any discipline - Intermediate singles only afloat Monitor stream in and out of bends, be aware of eddies, undercurrents and debris Single sculls should buddy up ie no solo paddling When moving off pontoon all crews are to move quickly across the stream to the far side of the river to make any emergency adjustments at an angle of 45 degrees.

				<p>If there is any likelihood of LIGHTNING</p> <p>In either circumstance RED Boards level 2 Apply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capsize: 	<p>No crew swaps without moving into the bank & only when bows are pointing upstream Maintain a safe distance from other moored boats (moorings may be loose) No downstream activity beyond the end of the boatyard i.e. not near weir No turning through island at little weir Maintain a distance of at least 250 m from the Big Weir at the top of the stretch</p>
Red Level 1	EA displaying 'RED' boards	Water height equal to or below 4.25m	Over 130m ³ /s & below 160m ³ /s (subject to RA criteria)		<p>AS ABOVE, PLUS: Collision / Capsize : Appreciable drift when turning</p>	<p>Senior status crews only to go afloat in clear visibility if judged safe to do so and permission given from a named senior member of the committee. On red boards it is not permissible to take a single out whatsoever.</p>
					<p>Collision / Capsize : Eddies around islands</p>	<p>No crew is to go further than half way up the old regatta course where the river is sufficiently wide to turn in these conditions.</p>
					<p>Collision / Capsize : Power cruisers unaware of river conditions</p>	<p>Maintain vigilance. Call out and attract attention to ensure cruiser aware. If necessary move safely into the side.</p>
Red Level 2	EA displaying 'RED' boards	Water height over 4.25 m	Over 160m ³ /s ⁽¹⁾		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risks no longer tolerable • No-one may go afloat 	