

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY CRUISING CLUB

SAFETY POLICY

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1 INTRODUCTION

This policy describes the system by which the important matter of health and safety is to be addressed by the Cambridge University Cruising Club (CUCrC) as a whole, including all the sections, their associated committees and all ordinary members (hereafter referred to as members) as defined in the club's constitution and regulations.

This policy applies to and shall be binding on all members of the CUCrC.

Before a new member joins the club or participates in any club activity they **must** agree to be bound by this policy and all the rules and regulations specific to any section who's activities they later participate in.

Health and safety documents exist to make accidents, injury and death less likely. All members should read them carefully and treat them seriously.

2 WHY IS HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPORTANT?

CUCrC is involved in organising a large number of activities that have the potential to be as safe or as dangerous as we make them. The worst possible eventuality would be an accident on a CUCrC activity that resulted in death or serious injury. The only thing that could make this worse is if it came about as a result of a CUCrC member doing something that they should not have done, or not doing something that they should have done. When considering health and safety (both in policy and in practise) we should always keep in the back of our minds the fact that the club or ourselves could be liable in the event of an accident and how it would feel to know that we could have prevented such an accident.

By considering the threat posed by risks present in all of our club activities, looking at how these can be minimised/avoided and by circulating health and safety information as freely as possible we can reduce the likelihood of an accident happening.

Producing well-written documents makes all our lives easier as it ensures that everyone is aware of how to reduce the risks inherent in the club's activities. It also reduces the consequences of accidents (by ensuring that people know what to do) and demonstrates that the club takes this matter seriously.

3 POLICY OUTLINE

The activities undertaken by members are extremely varied. This is one of the great strengths of the club, but makes the central administration of health and safety policy difficult.

The fundamental aim of this policy is to ensure that the people who know most about a particular club activity take responsibility for ensuring that health and safety documentation regarding the activity is accurate, up to date, relevant and more importantly, consulted on a regular basis.

A successful health and safety policy will ensure an atmosphere throughout the whole club in which health and safety is regarded as the important issue that it is.

4 POLICY DETAIL

4.1 RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1.1 Central Club Committee

It is important that the club committee keeps aware of what is happening in the sections, and ultimately ensures that the sections are managing health and safety effectively. It is also important that health and safety information is distributed as freely as possible to members and prospective members.

It is the responsibility of the club committee to ensure that it is aware of what is happening in the sections and that sectional health and safety policy is widely available. The sections must cooperate with this.*

*For example linking to the section's website from the CUCrC website (see below).

4.1.2 Sectional Committees

In order to ensure that health and safety policy is managed properly, it is imperative to ensure that someone on each sectional committee has responsibility for it. This person should make sure that:

1. Documents (see 4.2) are produced and maintained
2. Documents are accessible to members (for example on the sectional website)
3. Club members are adhering to the provisions of safety documents

It is the responsibility of the HoS to ensure that someone on the committee is managing the section's health and safety policy effectively, to inform the central committee of any updates or changes to it and ensure it is widely available. This person should have read "Health and Safety Guidance for Sports Clubs" (available from the web - see section 5) and **understood its recommendations**.*

*For example on the section's website.

4.1.3 Trip Organisers

Trip organisers should make sure that the people who are on a trip with them have read the relevant club and sectional health and safety documents **and should take a copy with them for reference**.

It should be pointed out to trip organisers that whilst everyone wants to make club events fun, the most important part of their job is to ensure that club events are safe. **HoS must appoint trip organisers**.

*It is the responsibility of the section's health and safety officer to ensure that trip organisers are adhering to the club (and section's) health and safety policy. Trip organisers **must** ensure that people with responsibility for the safety of members (hereafter called leaders*) **are properly qualified and competent***

*For example a group leader on trips where the group breaks down into smaller groups, or a skipper.

4.1.4 Members

Members who are on the trips may be inexperienced, but they still have a responsibility to care for those around them. This will usually involve using their common sense and following instructions.

It is the responsibility of members to ensure they listen to and follow instructions from trip organisers and leaders as well as they can and ask if they are unsure. Members must be made aware of this obligation.

4.2 DOCUMENTS

As stated before, well-written documents make everyone's lives easier. Poorly written documents are worse than useless – they lull people into a false sense of security without achieving anything.

All sections should *maintain* a manual for use by trip organisers and leaders. These people should all have a copy of the manual, which they should refer to and keep safe. The manual should contain four parts:

1. **Safety Statement.** This states the section's determination to maintain high safety standards and reasons for the existence of the manual. Reference should be made to this document.
2. **Safety Rules and Regulations** containing:
 1. A statement of the responsibility of safety officers, organisers and members for health and safety.
 2. A statement saying what the club and members are and are not liable for.
 3. A list of the section's *rules and regulations* (including, but not limited to: procedures to be followed in the event of a serious accident or fatality, procedures to be followed in the event of a less serious accident (see also section 4.4), rules for calling ambulances or other outside help, procedures to be followed in the event of a head injury (i.e. take-home-note/hospital trip), rules regarding appropriate buoyancy for member's activity/swimming capability, use of lifelines (if used), ratios of trip organisers/leaders to members, qualification/experience levels of trip organisers and leaders, "all participants must have completed a membership form and signed a statement saying that they accept the club/section's health and safety policy", alcohol policy).
 4. An explanation of action that will be taken against a member who is in breach of the safety rules and regulations (including, but not limited to: expulsion from the club and being personally liable for any penalty imposed as a result of their actions). *See also CUCrC Code of Conduct.*
3. **Risk Assessment**, which must include proper risk assessment for *every single activity that the section engages in, at every type of site at which these activities occur* (i.e. Grafham specific, inland lakes in general, beaches and coastal/offshore waters as appropriate to the section's activities). Risk assessments are more important than most people think – they allow us to do things that are not totally safe (i.e. sail) responsibly. See section 4.3 for further detail.
4. **Information Pack** contains practical information to help members on club activities, including:
 1. Health and safety information specific to the section's activities (for example: the location of hospitals local to Grafham, location of first aid equipment and help, advice on avoiding hypothermia (and other illnesses as required), details of safety briefings, the meaning of the flags at Grafham). Elaborate on the rules and regulations if required.
 2. Guidance for trip leaders appropriate to the section's activities (for example: explanation of safety duties, administration reminders, check lists for what to do in certain situations, how to deal with finances and bullying/other antisocial conduct, SOLAS/IRPCS, maintenance information).
 3. Any other information that the section feels trip organisers should be aware and reminded of.

All section manuals must be presented to the General Committee for review at the start of Michaelmas term every year.

4.3 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Although these seem daunting, they are nothing more than a careful examination of what could damage a person or equipment. There are two main arguments for risk assessments. These are:

1. They encourage members to think about the risks in what they do and, more importantly, encourage them to think about how dangers posed by such risks can be avoided to the greatest extent. They stop members becoming complacent/forgetting about safety, reducing the likelihood of accidents occurring.
2. If the club or a club member does face a court case following an accident, it is likely that the claimant will attempt to show that the club or club member was negligent and did not consider a) what risks/level of risk was being faced and b) how the activity could be made as safe as possible. A *good* risk assessment shows that this is not the case and strengthens the defence's position.

Having produced one, it is clearly important that everyone responsible for making decisions that impact on safety (i.e. trip organisers) is aware of its contents. Although this may seem a pain, it is nothing compared to the stress that is caused by accidents or court cases.

There are five steps for creating a good risk assessment:

1. Make a list of activities that happen in every area in which the section operates (note that this includes in club transport and in dinghy parks etc) and the hazards associated with them (see section 6 for help)
2. Decide who may be harmed (members, members of the public etc)
3. Evaluate hazards. A risk/consequence scale is useful here – for example a car crash on a trip might score 1 out of 5 for risk (not very likely), but 4 out of 4 for consequences (if it did happen it could result in death or serious injury). Add these two numbers together to get a feel for which activities could cause the most problems. See references for further helpful guidance.
4. Decide how to avoid accidents and reduce impact should any accident occur. State procedures clearly and regularly assess whether current safeguards are ok or whether more could be done to make the activity safer – these are called 'control measures'.
 - Eliminate the hazard if practicable
 - Try a less risky option or prevent access to the hazard (e.g. by limiting sailing area)
 - Organise activity to reduce exposure to the hazard
 - Issue personal protective equipment and/or provide welfare facilities (e.g. first aid)
5. The sectional committee should review the assessment, and the HoS and safety officer should sign it. Review again *at least* annually. If no changes are deemed necessary, it can be signed as it is. However, after three years, *a completely new assessment should be carried out.*

As well as being presented to the General Committee in the manual prescribed above, the most up to date copy of each section's risk assessment must be signed and dated by the section head and section safety officer and given to the CUCrC Senior Treasurer at the start of every Michaelmas term. The Senior Treasurer must keep the risk assessment for the rest of the year. If the risk assessment is altered, then the newest issue must be forwarded to the Senior Treasurer.

4.4 ACCIDENT AND NEAR MISS REPORTING

Reporting accidents and near misses is not a way of apportioning blame. It ensures that lessons are learnt and prevents similar accidents happening again. These lessons can be shared throughout the club to help everyone. Reporting near misses (events in which, in the opinion of the trip leader(s) there was a potential for harm to be caused to a vessel or person) is as important as reporting accidents.

It is therefore important that each section **ensures that accident books are used properly and that the central club committee is kept informed**. In some cases, accidents have to be reported to University authorities, and the central club committee is best placed to do this. Beyond this, the general committee should be informed if external organisations are called to assist club member(s).

Covering up after an accident must never happen. Reporting near misses is just as important – just because someone wasn't injured badly doesn't mean that someone else will be so lucky next time!

It is the responsibility of the trip organisers and leaders to fill in the accident book and inform the section's health and safety officer. The safety officer must then give a copy of the accident report form to the CUCrC Senior Treasurer. If the safety officer is not available, the trip organiser should give the form direct to the Senior Treasurer.

The Senior Treasurer will draw the attention of the senior committee to the accident, and either pass the form to the Secretary for filing, or if it is 'reportable' (see appendix one) fill in a 'University of Cambridge Accident, Dangerous Occurrence and Incident Report Form' (download from the web) and send it to the University Health and Safety Division after e-mailing safety.officer@sport.cam.ac.uk.

5 END NOTE

It is in everyone's interest to make sure our health and safety documents are up to date, relevant and used. According to the P.E department: "Every single club member has a responsibility for health and safety. Failure to implement codes of conduct, rules and regulations may be construed as negligence. Clubs may find themselves facing fines, or even disciplinary procedures".

If anything is not clear or if you would like help with anything, please contact the senior committee via the Junior Secretary, the Vice President or the Senior Treasurer. They will be pleased to help or raise the matter for further discussion/action as appropriate.

This policy was created by the General CUCrC Committee (2004 – 2005) with help from George Harston and the Cambridge University documents listed in section 6.

6 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, guidance and advice about what and what not to do visit www.sport.cam.ac.uk and go to the Physical Education Department's health and safety page. The document "Health and Safety Guidance for Clubs and Societies" (available for download) is especially useful. The appendices will be useful for risk assessment.

APPENDIX ONE – REPORTABLE INCIDENTS

(Taken from University Health and Safety Division Information)

- **A death or major injury**
- **Hospital stay of 24 hours or more**
- **Non-member taken to hospital**
- **An 'over three day' injury**
- **Activity related disease**
- **Certain dangerous occurrences**

What is a major injury?

- Fracture but not fingers, thumbs or toes
- Amputation
- Dislocation of shoulder, hip, knee or spine
- Loss of sight
- Chemical or hot metal burn or penetrating injury to eye
- Electric shock/burn where there is unconsciousness, resuscitation or admittance to hospital for >24 hours
- Any other injury or circumstance leading to hypothermia, heat induced illness or unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or requiring admittance to hospital for >24 hours
- Unconsciousness caused by asphyxia or exposure to a harmful substance or biological agent
- Acute illness requiring medical treatment or loss of consciousness arising from absorption of any substance by inhalation, ingestion or through skin
- Acute illness requiring medical treatment where there is reason to believe that this has resulted from exposure to a biological agent or its toxins or infected material

What are the reportable diseases?

They include, but are not limited to: (ask University for guidance)

- Certain poisonings
- Some skin diseases
- Some lung diseases
- Infections such as leptospirosis (Weil's disease)
- Conditions such as hand-arm vibration syndrome and work related upper limb disorder

The University Occupational Health Service reports these to the Health and Safety Executive, as a medical diagnosis is required.

What are the reportable dangerous occurrences?

- Collapse, overturning or failure of load bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment e.g. cranes/ window cleaning cradles
- Explosion, collapse or bursting of any closed vessel or associated pipe work e.g. pressure vessels/systems/autoclaves
- Plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines
- Electrical short circuit or overload causing fire or explosion
- Any unintentional explosion, misfire, failure of demolition to cause the intended collapse, projection of material beyond a site boundary, injury caused by an explosion
- Accidental release of a biological agent likely to cause severe human illness
- Failure of industrial radiography or irradiation equipment to de-energize or return to its safe position after the intended exposure period
- Malfunctioning of breathing apparatus while in use or during testing immediately before use
- Failure of diving equipment, the trapping of a diver, an explosion near a diver, or uncontrolled ascent
- Collapse/ partial collapse of scaffold over 5m, or erected near water where drowning risk after a fall
- Unintended collapse of: building/structure under construction, alteration or demolition when over 5 tonnes of material falls; wall/ floor in workplace; any false work
- Explosion/ fire suspending normal work for >24 h
- Sudden uncontrolled release in a building of 100kg or more of flammable liquid, 10kg or more of flammable liquid above its boiling point, 10kg or more of flammable gas or 500 kg of these substances if the release is in the open air
- Accidental release of any substance which may damage health e.g. asbestos

There are a number of others such as unintended collision of a train with any vehicle but these are unlikely to be encountered in the University.

Obviously not all the above are unlikely to occur on CUCrC activities, but it is best to be safe in these matters. The University puts it thus: “It is sometimes hard to know whether an accident fits into any of the above categories but if you are in doubt, we advise you to speak to us straight away and send the accident report to us as soon as possible with as much relevant information as you can give”. If in doubt, follow the correct channels.