



Safety Operating Plan

The aim of the club and this policy is to ensure that members and other paddlers, can paddle in a safe environment, and that clear guidelines exist to ensure steerers and club members operate in a way that maximises; the wellbeing of individuals, the club's position and the sport in general.

Contents

Equipment and gear	2
Weather conditions	2
Paddling locations.....	2
Swampings and capsizes	3
Towing.....	3
Emergencies	4
Incidents	4

Equipment and gear

Please treat the waka and equipment with extreme care at all times.

The minimum gear used for paddling at anytime is:

- a lifejacket for each crew member (recommended to be worn by youth, novice paddlers, instructional steerers and in times of adverse sea conditions)
- a paddle for each crew member and one spare paddle
- a club emergency kit
- appropriate clothing and sun protection (NB - no street shoes or jeans)

Additional gear carried during darkness is:

- a waka night light - fixed on the kiato (NB - each crew to be responsible for providing their own batteries)
- extra warm clothing during winter paddling sessions

Weather conditions

Don't paddle in any winds above 25 knots (ie extensive whitecaps on the surface of the water) and in breaking waves.

In other conditions, it is ultimately up to the steerer to decide if it is OK to paddle, but the crew is encouraged to question the decision if they feel uncomfortable. Steerers must be aware of tides, weather forecast and crew's experience when making their decision. It is recommended that the crew paddle to the level of the least experienced member.

Extra care must be taken in conditions where the wind opposes the tide causing proportionally rough conditions, in particular near the Cut.

Paddling locations

- Nelson Haven/Tahunanui Beach area and outside of the Boulder Bank
- Exiting the Cut should only be done in ideal weather conditions and with an experienced steerer/crew. Exit on the side that the crew intends to paddle

- No surfing on the sandbar off Tahunanui (Back Beach), unless it is a specific surf training session, the steerer and crew are suitably experienced in surf or permission has been obtained from the safety officer
- Keep within 300m off-shore, unless permission has been obtained from safety officer

(NB - It is recommended that crews avoid paddling in the ships' fairway, which is the channel marked from the wharves to the sea)

Permitted during darkness are:

- Confined to the Nelson Haven as far south as Haulashore Island, **but** no paddling in the shipping channel or through the Cut
- Extreme care is to be taken when crossing shipping lanes to get from one side of the Haven to the other

Swampings and capsizes

In a swamping situation all crew:

- are to stay in their seats
- keep their weight centred
- wait for the steerer's instructions to bail water out

In a capsize situation check all crew:

- are out of waka and accounted for
- hold on to the waka for buoyancy, until ready to right it
- hold on to their paddle until directed otherwise
- wait for steerer's instructions for re-righting and bailing

Towing

Tow is only done when absolutely necessary - it doesn't reflect well on the club if we have to get rescued.

If a tow is necessary, the tow rope should either be held by hand (by at least three people - seats 1, 3 and 6, to distribute the weight) or attached to the nose of the waka like a girdle with at least 5 half hitches. Under **NO** circumstances attach the rope to the seats, kiato or ama.

Emergencies

In the event of an emergency the safety officer is to be advised, as soon as possible, so he/she can liaise with the coastguard or police. The safety officer is to maintain a current list of coastguard and police contacts.

Further information on safety guidelines can be found on the websites www.msa.govt.nz and nzwaka.wellington.net.nz.

Incidents

In order to monitor and improve our safety, any 'Incidents', are to be reported to the safety officer. Incidents are defined as: collisions, near collisions, groundings, scraping of rocks, capsizes, swampings, gear loss or breakage and crew injuries. The report is to include: the date, time of incident and what happened - this will also help ensure that equipment damage is fixed promptly.

(NB any damage incurred through negligence will be the responsibility of the crew to repair)