

Hautbois Activity Centre Risk Assessment		
BRIDGE BUILDING		
Assessment Code: RA-BRB25	SOP Code: SOP-BRB25	Lesson Plan Code: LP-BRB25
Review Date: March 2026	Assessor: Rory Howard	Tech Advisor: Phil Hadley



Description: : Bridge building takes place over the cut near the Archery shed, during sessions participants focus on team working to make and cross a pioneering style bridge. Ratio of 1:16


SR= Severity Rating; 5 (Catastrophic) 4 (Major) 3 (Moderate) 2 (Minor) 1 (None)

LH=Likelihood Rating 5 (Almost certain) 4 (Likely) 3 (Possible) 2 (Unlikely) 1 (Insignificant)

RR= Risk Rating; A (Acceptable Risk) RR (Residual Risk remains despite controls- 'occupational hazard') U (Unacceptable Risk, action to be taken immediately)

Significant Hazard	Persons at Risk	How	Controls	Severity	Likelihood	Risk Rating
Drowning & Drowning as a result of injury.	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Falling into water from the bridge or bank. Being knocked unconscious and falling into the water.	Instructor to hold minimum qualification; in house trained and competency assessed under the supervision of the Paddlesport technical advisor. All to wear CE EN393 approved Buoyancy Aids. And CE EN1385 approved helmets. Fitted and checked by a competent instructor. Participants briefed on safe behaviour and good manual handling when operating around the river bank. Instructors to carry personal kit- throwline, and knife.	5	2	RR
Entrapment & Rope Injuries.	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Becoming trapped by loops underwater. whipping, minor injuries.	Instructor to carry knife in buoyancy aid and be prepared to enter water to free client. Clients to be briefed about what to do if they fall in the cut. Instructor to check the bridge before entering the water that ropes are tight and that any loops are too small for hands/feet to fit through. Clients briefed correctly on use of rope, knots and hazards. Unsuitable ropes removed from use by instructors at weekly activity checks. Ropes replaced regularly.	4	1	A
Hypo/hyperthermia	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Entering cold water not being appropriately dressed, or for an extended period of time.	Clients briefed to be dressed appropriately to weather conditions. Due to the nature of the client base activity to be suspended November to March. Participants encouraged to have a warm shower after activities.	4	1	A
Equipment Failure	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Splinters from spars, minor personal injury, buoyancy aid failure, potential drowning.	Weekly/monthly inspections recorded in the form of activity checks. All equipment to be correctly stored and checked on a session and periodical basis. BA PPE checks quarterly Instructors trained in proper storage of equipment during induction.	2	2	A
Equipment Handling	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Muscle injuries from bad lifting practice. Minor injuries, bumps & bruises	Clients taught good manual handling techniques, share lifting of all equipment. Heavy equipment such as the poles are set up by instructing team prior to session start and are stored as close as practicable to activity base.	2	2	A
Infection from water/ river bank	Participants, leaders & Instructors	leptospirosis and similar from contaminated water	Participant and clients briefed on washing hands with warm soapy water and showering after activity, and washing clothing worn. Hazard information available to all participants on website and sent out in pre booking information as requested.	5	2	RR
Unsupervised use	Participants, leaders	Any group or individual staying on site using the slacklines and falling causing injury.	Group information pack informs group leaders that all activities are out of bounds unless on a pre-booked supervised session. Clear signage displayed not to use unless supervised and the slacklines ratchets should be released when session not in use.	2	1	A

This Risk Assessment should work in conjunction with the generic risk assessment (RA-GEN) and relevant activity's Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-).

Hautbois Activity Centre Safe Operating Procedure			
Bridge Building SOP-BRB25			
Location: 3D Map ref. - D	RA-BRB25	LP-BRB25	
Review Date: March 2026			
Must be used in conjunction with Generic Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-GEN)			

Qualifications Required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instructor must be at least 18 years old • The instructor must have a valid First Aid certificate - minimum 1 day • The instructor must have attended the 1 day in house bridge build training
Activity Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure there are no obstacles in the water that could pose a danger to any persons in the water. • A review of the river should be made before any groups are taken out. This should include consideration of the weather for the day. The Activities Manager's word is final. • Make sure the banks are clear of debris and are stable. • Check nearby trees for any hanging branches which may fall.
Equipment: Visual checks of all equipment must be done before each session.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All wooden poles, wires, slacklines, ratchets and ropes being used need to be checked for cracks, wear and damage. • Visual checks of Buoyancy Aids must occur before use. • Checks on wire need to be completed before use. (condition of wire and attachment points to poles need checking). • Centre buoyancy aids must be presentable, clean and ready for use. • Bridge building helmets must be presentable, clean and ready for use. • Instructors must always have the following equipment; buoyancy aid, radio, waterproof radio bag, safety whistle, throw line, safety knife, floating tow rope and waterproof first aid kit. • Safety knives must only be removed from buoyancy aids if they need to be used • All instructor equipment must be returned to the instructor shed after each session and the shed must be locked
Session Management:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buoyancy aids and helmets should be explained and fitted/ sized correctly and must remain on throughout the session • Participants to be reminded to walk when near the water. • Equipment should be explained and demonstrated how to tie knots correctly. • Safe manual handling must be demonstrated and explained. • Explanation of safe practise around the wire and bridge must be demonstrated and explained. • Before testing completed bridge, ensure all knots are to a suitable standard. • Dry land brief on crossing safely - 1 person at a time on the bridge, other participants must stand well clear. • Check participants Buoyancy Aid, and helmet before testing the bridge or going near the water's edge. • Brief group on correct technique to ensure no entrapment can take place. • The following Safety Rules must be highlighted to all participants (confirming their understanding) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No participant should go near the water without a buoyancy aid on. ○ Safe entry into the water should be explained and demonstrated (No Jumping) ○ Walking when near water's edge and on pontoons at all times. • No one is to enter the water without an instructor saying it's OK to do so. • All of the session will operate on the Hautbois side of the cut outlined in the attached map. • Bridge building participants must stay at the end of the cut away from the raft building pontoon. • Only one participant can cross the bridge at a time and all other participants need to stand away from the bridge. • Once all Participants are off the water the instructors will demonstrate how to take the bridge apart and get the group to help do so. • On completion of the session participants assist in returning all the equipment safely and appropriately. Instructors must check all equipment is returned to the correct place. • Once clients have finished the instructor must request, they clean their hands and face with warm soapy water. • Following the final session of the day all equipment must be returned to store and any faults/defects reported and recorded • In the event of an emergency Instructors to follow the Staff accident and incident emergency procedure located in the first aid kit.

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