

Hautbois Activity Centre Risk Assessment		
RAFT BUILDING		
Assessment Code: RA-RAB25	SOP Code: SOP-RAB25	Lesson Plan Code: LP-RAB25
Review Date: March 2026	Assessor: Rory Howard	Tech Advisor: Phil Hadley



**Description:** Raft Building takes place on The Cut and involves the participants building a raft before testing it on the water. 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	Entrapment from capsized raft, non-swimmers, incorrectly fitted buoyancy aids, being hit by a paddle, unconscious casualty in the water, panicking in cold water.	Minimum Instructor qualification 1 day in house Raft Building & 1 day first aid. All to wear CE EN393 approved Buoyancy Aids. Follow SOP, all equipment fitted and checked by qualified Instructor Instructor's to carry safety knives in BAs in case of participant entrapment. Leaders to make instructors aware of non-swimmers and nervous participants. Full capsize drill and paddle safety talk carried out before each raft is launched. Only 1 raft built per instructor in attendance.	5	2	RR
Hypo/hyperthermia	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Entering cold water not being appropriately dressed, or for an extended period of time.	Clients to be dressed appropriately for weather conditions. Temperature and conditions assessed by Manager before session to go ahead. Changes in conditions and group to be monitored 'as you go' and appropriate changes to be made. Instructors to ensure they have spare clothing and are suitably dressed.	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. 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
Infection from water/ riverbank	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
Rope Injury	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Whipping injury or rope burn through misuse of equipment.	Full briefing with all participants as part of demonstration. Participants monitored and supervised whilst on session. Ropes replaced regularly and condition monitored during activity checks by Hautbois staff.	2	1	A
Head Injury	Participants	Being struck by a pole or barrel during construction or on the water.	All participants to wear helmets once the raft is launched. Full briefing with all participants as part of demonstration. Participants monitored and supervised whilst on session.	2	2	A
Manual Handling	Participants, leaders & Instructors	Muscle injuries from bad lifting practise.	Clients taught good manual handling techniques, share lifting of all equipment. 2 people per pole All able groups members to lift raft together. Use beach to launch the raft only.	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-).

<b>Hautbois Activity Centre Safe Operating Procedure</b>			
Raft Building SOP-RAB25			
Location: 3D Map ref. - D	RA-RAB25	LP-RAB25	
<b>Review Date:</b> March 2026			
<b>Must be used in conjunction with Generic Safe Operating Procedure (SOP-GEN)</b>			

<b>Qualifications Required</b>
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- The instructor must be at least 17 years old
- The instructor must have a valid First Aid certificate - minimum 1 day
- The instructor must have attended the 1 day in house Raft build training

<b>Activity Area</b>
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- 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.

<b>Equipment:</b> Visual checks of all equipment must be done before each session.
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- All wooden poles, barrels and ropes being used need to be checked for cracks, wear and damage.
- Visual checks of Buoyancy Aids must occur before use.
- Centre buoyancy aids must be presentable, clean and ready for use.
- Raft 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

<b>Session Management:</b>
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- 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 raft and beach must be demonstrated and explained.
- Before testing completed bridge, ensure all knots are to a suitable standard.
- Dry land brief on safe paddle use and how to sit on the raft.
- Check participants Buoyancy Aid, and helmet before testing the raft 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)
  - 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.
- Raft building participants must stay at the end of the cut away from the bridge building wire.
- Once all Participants are off the water the instructors will demonstrate how to take the raft 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.