

- ☐ An adult/child suffers a minor injury (e.g. cut, bruise, strain)
- ☐ An adult/child suffers a major incident (e.g. broken bone, concussion, asthma attack)
- ☐ An adult/child becomes ill (e.g. vomiting, headache, sore throat, dizziness)

There is a series of actions that we should take in order to deal with each of these events:

- ☐ Conduct an assessment of the situation
- ☐ Protect the participant and others from further injury (get off the water)
- ☐ Provide reassurance and comfort
- ☐ Remain calm and follow organisational procedures
- ☐ Assess the extent of the injury
- ☐ Administer first aid to your level of qualification
- ☐ Contact qualified assistance, if required
- ☐ Contact emergency services, if necessary
- ☐ Contact parents/carers with information
- ☐ Advise the participant to seek medical attention if required
- ☐ Record/report the incident to the appropriate person / authority

Following emergency procedures

Should you find yourself in an emergency situation in your coaching, it is important that you stay calm and act effectively to solve the problem. An emergency could be; a missing person, a near miss, a security incident, etc.

When responding to any emergency you should consider the following;

- ☐ Stay calm
- ☐ Clearly inform participants and others involved of the correct emergency/evacuation procedures
- ☐ Ensure the appropriate behaviour of participants during the procedure
- ☐ Maintain participants' safety
- ☐ Report the incident to the appropriate persons

Reporting accidents

Reporting an accident is a legal requirement. You should be fully conversant with reporting procedures and be able to produce an accident report form legibly and containing all the relevant information. If possible, a witness should be obtained to validate the incident. If you are working as a freelance Coach or independently of an organisation that has a procedure for recording accidents, you will need to report the incident to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) by downloading a RIDDOR form or by contacting the HSE directly. You should also record an account of the incident with as much information in as possible and keep a copy in your own files should you ever need to justify your actions.

Journey Management

As a Level 2 Coach working on sheltered water it is reasonable

to assume that you could be in charge of short trips on grade 1 rivers, canals or lakes. Journeys provide a good opportunity to coach in an applied environment. But be careful to manage the role of a Leader and a Coach effectively. Too much leading can be at the detriment of coaching and vice versa.

When leading groups it is important to remember some key principles. One of the most effective and usable models of leadership is the **CLAP** model:

C Communication

L Line of sight

A Avoidance is better than cure

P Position of maximal usefulness

Communication - Communication is an important part of journey leadership. Not only will you communicate with your group verbally but also in the way in which you speak and use body language. We will discuss communication in more depth in part 6. Other forms of communication include hand and paddle signals (for a good guide to signals see White Water Safety and Rescue by Franco Ferrero). We also need to consider communication between the group and others that are on hand for support - this may be a centre, minibus pick-up or even the emergency services. Mobile phones offer an excellent means of communication by which we can summon assistance relatively easily and are almost an essential piece of equipment when leading a journey. In areas where signal is limited the leader should consider other means of communication-these could be flares, pay phones or other water users.

Line of Sight - Keeping the entire group within our line of sight is an essential part of journeying. If we can't see members of the group then we will not know what they are doing or what is happening. Maintaining line of sight is good for group control as it keeps members reasonably close together. Many water features can obstruct line of sight; bends in rivers, moored boats, jetties, banks, etc. Where we position ourselves and our briefings help us to maintain visual contact.

Avoidance is better than cure - This goes without saying but is often overlooked. An ability to foresee what might happen and taking steps to ensure that it doesn't is an important skill for the Coach. This could be something as simple as applying sun cream on a hot day to prevent participants getting sunburn.

Position of maximal usefulness (PMU) - Your position within the group depends on a number of factors; you may decide to lead from the front, middle or back depending on the circumstances. Placing yourself between the group and a potential danger as a buffer is a good example of useful positioning. For a more detailed look at positioning you should refer to the Safety and Leadership chapter of the BCU Handbook.

Using a combination of the CLAP model and filling in journey planners provided in your logbook is a good basis for managing journeys. Proper planning is the key as it gives you a chance to consider any potential problems before they arise.

