



**DW2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames**



**Devizes to Westminster
International Canoe Race**

**2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames – Teddington Lock to Westminster Bridge**

Prepared by [REDACTED] DW Course Coordinator

Reviewed by [REDACTED], Safety Officer

Approved by the directors of the
Devizes to Westminster Organisation Ltd

[REDACTED]

Date: November 2022

Note: this Risk Assessment is subject to change depending on any UK Government alterations to Covid-19 regulations or recommendations. It will be updated accordingly at regular intervals up to the start date of the event

Canoeing and Kayaking are “Assumed risk”-“Water contact sports” that may carry attendant risks. Participants should be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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| Hazard | Capsize along the course |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Critical |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | High |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants are required to wear buoyancy aids that conform to DW rules stipulations • All boats will be fitted with attached airbags or buoyancy to a standard where they are buoyant and will support the competitors • Capsizes are accepted as a part of canoeing, all crews should be familiar with it and, therefore, should not be shocked in the event of it happening • All competitors are required to carry spare thermal clothing, whistle & thermal blanket • Competitors have support teams who are able to supply dry, warm clothing • Race control number (0207 620 0298) is on boat number sticker and permanently attached wristband fitted to competitors • All crews must carry a mobile phone to call for help via Emergency services - 999/112 • Safety boats at key points • Crews briefed to stay to Right hand half of river and to obey bridge signage. • Crews briefed on possibility of large vessels and significant washes. • VHF 14 used to request assistance by Westminster Control and or water based RIB teams. E.g. Met Police, PLA, Fire & rescue. |
| Severity after control | Medium |
| Probability after control measures | Occasional |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Paddling at night |
| Affected group | Competitors/other waterway user |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race participants should have trained on waterway and taken part in build-up races to familiarise themselves with the course • Participants must have front and rear facing white lights from sunset to sunrise • Participants are all required to have white light sticks attached to their buoyancy aids. These must be activated from sunset to sunrise. This is checked by checkpoints and umpires. • Race participants should have trained in the dark for the race • There are very small amounts of non-canoe/kayak traffic on the river after during the main hours the race is on the Tideway, except near Westminster bridge. • Crews briefed on other river traffic and navigation lights to expect. • All race staff will be alert to the possibility of concussion injuries |
| Severity after control | Serious |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | London Eye Boom |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Critical |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Critical |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• RIBs marshal competitors to steps to prevent them reaching the boom.• If there are competitors in the water the priority is to recover the people and not the boat. |
| Severity after control | Low |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Fall into River |
| Affected group | Support crews & spectators |
| Severity | Critical |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescue teams trained to assist. • Support crews marshalled by Westminster Bridge finish area to avoid crowding pushing others into river. • Safety RIBs on river • PLA available • MPS MSU available • Fire Service via 999/112 • VTS on VHF 14 • RLNI via Coastguard |
| Severity after control | Critical |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

| | |
|---|---|
| Hazard | Fall into River |
| Affected group | Steps crew |
| Severity | Critical |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All steps crew will wear Buoyancy Aids• Steps crew in radio contact to summon help• Safety RIBs on river• PLA available• MPS MSU available• Fire Service via 999/112• VTS on VHF 14• RLNI via Coastguard |
| Severity after control | Critical |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Fire |
| Affected group | Safety RIBs |
| Severity | Severe |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Low |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All RIBs must have dry powder fire extinguishers.• Fire Service via 999/112• Fire boats via VHF 14• VTS on VHF 14• RLNI via Coastguard |
| Severity after control | Low |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|---|
| Hazard | RIB Collision |
| Affected group | Safety teams on RIBs |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Medium |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All safety boat crew members will wear buoyancy aids or lifejackets• At night all safety boat crew members will have light sticks attached.• PLA available• MPS MSU available• Fire Service via 999/112• VTS on VHF 14• RLNI via Coastguard |
| Severity after control | Low |
| Probability after control measures | Medium |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|---|
| Hazard | Safety crew member Overboard |
| Affected group | Safety teams on RIBs |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All safety boat crew members will wear buoyancy aids or lifejackets• At night all safety boat crew members will have light sticks attached.• PLA available• MPS MSU available• Fire Service via 999/112• VTS on VHF 14• RLNI via Coastguard |
| Severity after control | Medium |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|---|
| Hazard | Collision |
| Affected group | Competitor/other waterway user (inc. motor boats, rowers, anglers, etc) |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitors are instructed to behave and share the spaces with other users. • All competitors mandated to stay right of river centreline. • Information issued regarding rowing “working the slacks”. • Crews are pointed to PLA guidance document on navigation signs/marks • During daylight hours possible hazards are clearly visible. • Senior Crews must display around white light or equivalent as per Thames Navigation & PLA Byelaws between dusk and dawn. • Competitors have white lightsticks attached to person in addition between dusk and dawn • All race staff will be alert to the possibility of concussion injuries |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Collision with bridge/barge |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors are advised to stay well clear of fixed infrastructure including moored barges.• During daylight hours possible hazards are clearly visible.• Crews are pointed to PLA guidance document on navigation signs/marks.• Any particular hazards are briefed to crews before starting (where possible) and on course as necessary.• All race staff will be alert to the possibility of concussion injuries. |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Electric Shock |
| Affected group | Westminster Control |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Low |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Located off river in St Thomas's grounds.• Approved electrical connections and equipment used• Adjacent A&E available. |
| Severity after control | Serious |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | County Hall Steps and environs |
| Affected group | Competitors, support crews, marshals, steps team, safety team |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | High |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Steps crew control access to steps area in conjunction with dedicated marshals• Gates at top of steps locked when not in use• Local lighting after dusk. |
| Severity after control | Medium |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Tunnel under Westminster Bridge |
| Affected group | All race personnel and general public |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marshal controls crews walking through tunnel.• Marshal will wear DW logo Hi-viz jacket• No boats allowed through – all directed in the opposite direction |
| Severity after control | Serious |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames

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|---|---|
| Hazard | Press/Film crew trailing cables |
| Affected group | All personnel and general Public |
| Severity | Minor |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Low |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Press will wear DW logo Blue Hi-viz press jackets• Dedicated marshal for film crews• DW Press Officer in attendance when possible |
| Severity after control | Minor |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|---|
| Hazard | Red Flag |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | High |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess flow and hazard presented by river• Seek advice from Gold Command, Safety team• Consider delay of crews entering Tideway |
| Severity after control | Serious |
| Probability after control measures | Occasional |
| Final risk level | Medium |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

| | |
|---|---|
| Hazard | Yellow Flag |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Serious |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess flow and hazard presented by river• Seek advice from Gold Command, Safety team• Consider delay of crews entering Tideway |
| Severity after control | Medium |
| Probability after control measures | Occasional |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

| | |
|---|---|
| Hazard | Medical Emergency |
| Affected group | Competitors, support crews, spectators, marshals |
| Severity | Critical |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Aid at Westminster Control point. • At least one Safety boat will carry a first aider and is designated as Medical RIB. • Westminster Control team to make use of St Thomas' Hospital A&E. • VTS on VHF 14 or 999/112. • Crews carry mobile phone to call for help if required. |
| Severity after control | Critical |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Medium |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Portage of canoe/kayaks |
| Affected group | Competitors/ other towpath users |
| Severity | Severe |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors train in portaging, learn to handle the boat safely and securely• If a crew is walking the Tideway they are likely to be accompanied by their Support crew.• Road crossings mostly have traffic lights or crossings. |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Severe |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors are reminded of the particular hazards and to be aware of including Weil's Disease including information on the symptoms that may arise if they are infected along with advice to contact their GP immediately if they are in doubt as to whether they are infected• Showers provided at Westminster finish |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment
Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Extreme weather conditions |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Severe |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Medium |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Race State indicating level of hazard or potential hazard declared before paddling commences and updated as required.• Support crews carry a wide range of spare clothing for competitors to cope with all weather conditions• Competitors must carry a dry thermal layer (top and bottom), hat, approved survival bag, emergency food and drink• Boats are checked before starting and may be rechecked at any time by marshals/umpires along the course• Additional briefings will be given as required. |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

| | |
|---|---|
| Hazard | Injury from wildlife |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Medium |
| Probability | Remote |
| Risk level before control measures | Low |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors are advised to portage around any aggressive wildlife (eg swans)• Any known issues will be advised to competitors• Members of the public are expected to control their dogs |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

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|---|--|
| Hazard | Changes to Course Conditions |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Moderate |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Acceptable |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors are briefed on any last minute changes to the course conditions.• May be repeated along course if necessary or the course changes.• Course Coordinator ensures this happens. |
| Severity after control | Low |
| Probability after control measures | Occasional |
| Final risk level | Low |



DW2023 Risk Assessment Tidal River Thames

| | |
|---|--|
| Hazard | Lightning |
| Affected group | Competitors |
| Severity | Severe- critical |
| Probability | Occasional |
| Risk level before control measures | Critical/acceptable |
| Control measures | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitors must evaluate proximity and lightening type• The event can be suspended and crews stopped from paddling if necessary• Safety Officer is responsible for making the decision to suspend paddling. |
| Severity after control | Severe |
| Probability after control measures | Remote |
| Final risk level | Low |