VETERAN FOURS HEAD

RISK ASSESSMENT 2026

ITEM	HAZARD	S	F	R	CONTROL	RRR	MONITOR
					1 **COLLISION**		
A	River traffic	3	2	6	Ensure circulation pattern followed. See Safety and Marshalling Instructions Steamers sounding a siren/horn 4 times then once or twice are turning (4:1 to Starboard) or (4:2 to Port). Note river/race traffic should not be turning under bridges	4	PLA, Chief Umpire, Rescue Personnel, Safety Advisor
B	Between crews	3	3	9	Experience of competitors as included in Safety and Marshalling Instructions, heeding all warnings, compliance with circulation pattern, race rules	6	Chief Umpire, Marshals, Safety Advisor
C	Collisions with stationary objects / obstructions	3	2	6	Follow circulation pattern; note positioning of bridges, buoys and boats attached to the bank. Position craft to warn of obstructions with clear mention of the large green buoy on the Middlesex bank upstream of Hammersmith Bridge. Safety boat and marshal launches located at upstream end of Dove Pier and on the Black Buoy at Putney.	4	Chief Umpire, Marshals, Rescue Personnel, Safety Advisor
D	Collision with other craft during marshalling	2	3	6	Instructions issued with race numbers. Stay close to bank whilst moving to start. Follow all instructions given by marshals	4	Competitors, Marshals
E	Collision with debris	3	1	3	Check course prior to start. Observation and reporting via safety net	3	All
F	Collision with moored boats at Putney	3	2	6	Position marshal launch at top of boats, the Black Buoy at Putney	3	Marshals, Rescue Personnel
G	Grounding of crews at low tide	2	1	2	Race start time is 75 minutes after high tide at Kew and event running within the early stages of an ebb tide	2	Competitors, Marshals

2 **CAPSIZE / SINKING**							
A	From wake of other craft	3	1	3	Keep boat / cruiser speeds down during event High speed only in emergency situations	3	All support staff Notice for river users
B	From collision with other river users	3	2	6	Ensure motor boats turn off engines if person near propellers	4	Rescue Personnel, All
C	During retrieval of persons from water	3	2	6	Rescue craft to have enough freeboard/buoyancy and capacity to prevent swamping/overturning during rescue. Prescribed rescue/retrieval techniques Minimum 2 rescue personnel per craft and careful management of sight lines so that all elements of course are covered	4	Rescue Personnel, Marshals and Umpires
3 **DROWNING**							
A	Unintended immersion in river	3	3	9	Personnel involved with water elements of event must be able to swim, and wear a buoyancy aid, excluding competitors, but not coxes Sufficient rescue craft to provide cover in event of waterborne incident. Rescue craft to hold a least 5 casualties Careful management of sight lines so that all elements of course are covered	6	All personnel
4 **HYPOTHERMIA**							
A	Immersion	3	3	9	All craft where practicable to carry thermal/foil blankets. Minimise time immersed / in transit. Land cover prepared for wet/cold casualties	6	Rescue Personnel, marshal launches
B	Cold weather	2	3	6	All personnel to wear/carry adequate layered clothing, specified in Safety and Marshalling Instructions	4	All personnel

5 **INJURIES/MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**							
A	Accidents resulting in injuries to competitors, support personnel and spectators	3	2	6	Adequate life saver support provided over the course to reach a casualty within 8 minutes. Ensure all support personnel are aware of the locations of the para medics and landing sites Ensure the communications net is operational and manned during the event. Means carried by all support personnel to attract safety launch, e.g. klaxons First aid, bruises, minor cuts etc, which is not life threatening provided at host clubs	4	All Support Personnel, Para-Medic, Safety Advisor
B	Medical emergencies while afloat	3	2	6	As above	4	As above
6 **BLOCKED ACCESS ROUTES**							
A	Delay for emergency service/first aid reaching casualty	3	3	9	Position para medics to reach a life threatened casualty with 8 minutes Issue of location postcodes Issue W3W locations	6	Safety Advisor
7 **ADVERSE WEATHER**							
A	Wind against tide. High winds. Poor visibility	3	3	9	Delay start, shorten course, cancel event New instructions issued to all crews	6	PLA, Chief Umpire, Safety Advisor, Chief Marshal
B	Fork and sheet lightning	3	3	9	Abandon depending upon severity and proximity. Monitor forecast for three days prior to event	6	Safety Advisor, Chief Marshal and Race Control
C	Vulnerable groups in poor weather	3	1	3	Make clear in instructions to clubs, send off last or scratch if necessary	3	Marshals

8 **ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**							
A	Pollution/sewage spill in river	2	2	4	Monitor CSO Status | Port of London Authority.	1	PLA, Safety Advisor, Chief Marshal
B	River speed for marshalling of boats	2	1	2	Cancel event if too dangerous	1	Marshals, Race Control
9 **LAND BASED RISKS**							
A	Person/vehicle collision	3	3	9	Boats/crews travelling from boathouses/parking to river and back Traffic going along road beside Putney Hard.	3	Marshals, officials at reporting area, Safety Advisor
B	Spectators falling in river	3	1	3	Adult should be able to climb out Child may need assistance	2	All support personnel
10 **ROWING EVENT**							
A	Mixed boat speeds	1	1	1	The race is sent off in relative speed of crews by divisions, which should minimise issues over mixed boat speeds	1	Entries Secretary, Committee
B	Competitors' experience	1	1	1	There is a note about required competence on the website, that it is the responsibility of individual clubs.	1	Entries Secretary, Race Control
C	Equipment failure	3	1	3	Radios and megaphones arrive charged and checked on day of race. All umpires, marshals, safety launches and medics to provide their mobile phone numbers to control.	2	Race Control, Marshals, Safety Advisor

D	Failure of radio cover	3	1	3	If the radio system should go down we have a back-up system and also have mobile phone numbers of all marshals, umpires and safety boats	3	Chief Umpire, Marshals, Rescue Personnel, Safety Advisor
E	Failure of safety boats	3	1	3	Safety boats: 8 boats booked to ensure line of sight over full length of course. Failure of up to 3 boats can be managed by redeploying intended positions and reallocating marshalling launches to higher risk areas eg Dove Pier – noting that one of our paramedics is based on water.	3	Safety Advisor, Chief Umpire, Chief Marshal, Race Control and Marshals
F	Failure of marshalling launches	2	2	4	Marshalling launches: a spare launch is kept at Chiswick pier house and can be deployed in event of a single failure. In the event of multiple failures then 4 launches can be redeployed from the marshalling area (meaning 2 launches per division rather than 3) to higher risk locations. 2 marshalling launches being used in umpiring positions further down the course between Hammersmith Bridge and Barn Elms can be redeployed from their positions to higher risk positions.	3	Safety Advisor, Chief Umpire, Chief Marshal, Race Control and Marshals
G	Buoyancy aid requirement	3	2	6	All coxes have to wear a lifejacket. With the safety cover in place and the line of sight plan no rower, who goes into the water, would be there for more than a few minutes, and as such we believe that the need for rowers to wear lifejackets is mitigated	3	Chief Umpire, Marshals, Rescue Personnel, Safety Advisor
H	Use of launches leading to person in water, or incident caused by launch	2	1	2	All launches will have a kill cords; all launch drivers and passengers will have lifejackets. Only competent drivers are used, and wherever possible RYA qualified drivers will be used. All launches supplied with a radio, and will have sufficient crew to keep a watch out	1	Chief Umpire, Marshals, Rescue Personnel, Safety Advisor

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CHANGES TO NAVIGATION HAMMERSMITH AND PUTNEY BRIDGES

A	Hammersmith Bridge has a restricted area to navigation on the Middlesex part of the fairway.	2	2	4	The restricted area is marked by red and white diamond shaped signs with red indicating the restricted side not to be encroached. There will be a marshalling boat positioned to ensure that racing crew do not enter the restricted area.	2	Safety Advisor, Chief Marshal, Marshals, Rescue personnel
B	There may be construction work taking place in the area of Putney pier	2	2	4	The events running over the Fours Heads weekend have been advised that construction work may be taking place near Putney Pier. If this is the case then Arch 5 should not be used and the route on the inside of Putney Pier should not be used. The instructions to crews indicate that Arch 5 and the inside of Putney Pier are a no go area. The area will be under the control of a marshal	1	Safety advisor, Chief Marshal, Marshals, Rescue personnel

This risk assessment forms part of the Veteran Fours Head safety documentation. It is a planning tool which helps to identify hazards (potential for harm) and risk (likelihood of occurrence).

A simple 3x3 matrix has been used. S = Severity (max score 3). F = Frequency of occurrence (max score 3). R = Risk Rating = SxF.
Levels > 6 are unacceptable and must have some controls placed on them, resulting in a (subjectively assessed) RRR = Resultant Risk Rating.

An RRR of 6 will need strict compliance and monitoring of the safety plan by those identified.
An RRR of 4 or less will be seen as adequately controlled if the safety plan is complied with.