



International Rafting Federation

IRF Safety Document - Addendum 2 to the IRF Race Rules

Taking effect from 1 January 2016

A. Minimum IRF Safety Standards for A and B level events

This document is an aid for event organizers and also lays out the IRF minimum requirement for safety at A and B level events. Failure of any of the following points can result in the cancellation of the event at the entire responsibility of the organizer.

Introduction

- a. The Race Organizer together with the Safety Director is responsible for developing the Safety & Rescue Plan including the Risk Assessment.
- b. A short version of the risk assessment must be published as a part of the pre-event information for teams.
- c. In the development process of the Safety & Rescue Plan an IRF GT&E Instructor and 2 Trip Leaders (TL) ideally as part of the Rescue team – must be involved, and local emergency chain (ambulance/fire/helicopter) must be informed.
- d. It is important that the developing safety team is kept up to date with the development of the event by the Race Director for understanding of all angles of the race operations, such as: number of participants, number and types of disciplines, downriver starting structures, other disciplines, start intervals, expected number of rafts on water at same time etc.
- e. A draft of the Safety & Rescue Plan including the Risk Assessment should be delivered to the IRF 6 months prior to the event. The IRF will review and approve the draft plan by return email. The IRF can also suggest changes or disapprove the document, in which case, exact reasoning and action plans will be outlined and a new deadline for approval will be defined.
- f. The Safety & Rescue Plan becomes final only after it's tested and rehearsed at the Rescue Workshop and after changes have been implemented according to the Workshops outcomes. The Safety Director and the IRF appointed Safety Representative on site will sign off the final plan and hand it over to Race Director to call it active. This is to be done before the event starts. Any exceptions to this are to be approved by the IRF Safety Representative.
- g. The Safety Director is responsible for briefing the whole Rescue Team, including the on site Medical Team, about the final Safety & Rescue Plan before the 1st actions on water.

Safety & Rescue Plan - must include the following:

1. Risk Assessment
2. Chain of emergency procedures > clear workflow definitions
3. Incident Management and Continuity Plan
4. Chosen rescue techniques and ways of transport
5. Locations/working positions of safety personals and safety crafts, for training sessions as well as races.

6. Communication plan (spotters, flags, signals, call signs, codes, radio protocol, channels, flow of communication)
7. Water level analysis (min, max, procedures in case of change of water level)
8. List of equipment of the Rescue Team
9. Overview Map: race course overview plan including main organizational set ups, river sections defined on race course, marked working positions of all safety personals by sections, position of Medical Team, emergency accesses to river and evacuation points around race location.
10. Allocation of Medic Team
11. Detail of Rescue Team Workshop to be run – when, where, what to be covered.
12. List of Rescue Team members by roles and names and contact details, also including their level of training (held certificates) is to be sent one month before the event.

Explanations

1. Rescue Team

Rescue Team consists of Safety Personnel and Safety Crafters under the coordination of Section Leaders, local Medic Team – all under the supervision of the Safety Director.

Definitions of exact functions of the above roles are to be found in Safety and Rescue Plan*.

a. Safety Director (as defined by the race rules)

- i. He/she is in charge of safety during the competition.
- ii. He/she is able to call for an immediate stop to the competition if he/she considers that any dangerous or potentially dangerous situation.
- iii. He/she together with the organizing committee is responsible for the delivery of the Risk Assessment and the Safety & Rescue Plan* according to the IRF Safety Document (Addendum 1).
- iv. He/she has the right to check self-rescue abilities of any member of any participating teams and exclude those not complying with minimum expectations that are defined and can be reviewed in the Race Rules document.
- v. He/She may invite any particular team to show their skills, He/She may those which are not capable of the minimum skills needed, as stated in the race rules, expel from the race.
Is He or She not sure of the skills shown, then a second test is possible.
- vi. He/She together with the Race Director has right to change the Start and Finish positions due to safety reasons.
- vii. The Safety Director reports to the Race Director

b. Section Leader

- viii. He/she is responsible for coordinating Safety Personals in his/her race course section
- ix. He/she is responsible for maintaining communication with other Section Leaders and Safety Director
- x. He/she must hold a current and minimum of IRF Trip Leader Certification or equivalent
- xi. He/she has to participate at the Rescue Workshop** held prior to the race event
- xii. He/she has to have thorough knowledge of the overall Safety and Rescue Plan

c. Safety Personal

- xiii. He/she functions as member of the Rescue Team,
- xiv. He/she is certified and trained for whitewater rescue.
- xv. He/she has to participate at the Rescue Workshop** held prior to the race event

d. Medic Team

- xvi. Medic Team is assigned by Race Organizer and approved by Safety Director,
- xvii. Medic Team is on stand by, being the first medical response team during all race operations, including training days.

- xviii. Medic Team is not only to cover race participants, but the whole organizing team as well as visitors and crowd in case of need.
- xix. Medic Team consists of minimum 3 emergency first responder with a mobile emergency unit / ambulance car. PHTLS trained (or equivalent) personal are required if the local emergency response time is over 15 minutes.

2. **Sections**

- a. The race course of Sprint, H2H and Slalom should be split in Sections.
- b. Sections need to be controlled by a Section Leaders.
- c. Last section needs to be after the finish line for recovery.
- d. Section Leaders need to have communication with each other and the Safety Director.

3. **Downriver Race**

- a. Downriver race should be covered at each key rapid (defined as sections) with the Section Leaders and their teams,
- b. Each starting racing group must be followed by minimum of 1 Safety Craft (exception to this rule is on artificial courses only)
- c. Put-In, Start, Finish and Take-Out must be covered as well (defined also as sections).

4. **Communication**

- a. It is highly recommended to have Radio Communication among Section leaders and Safety Director. Codes, call signs and protocol needs to be laid in the Safety and Rescue Plan.
- b. All Safety Team members have to know and be able to use IRF River Signals.
- c. Safety Director needs to have constant communication with Race Director and first response Medic Team.

5. **Safety Crafts**

- a. Safety Crafters must be certified by the IRF, this certification can be gained at the workshop prior to the event.
- b. Minimum of 2 safety crafts needs to be used at each discipline.
- c. The exact number, type and location of Safety crafts need to be defined by the Safety Director in the safety plan.

6. **Incident Management and Continuity Plan**

- a. In case of a major incident Race needs to be stopped until all of the Rescue Team is back in position.
- b. The call to stop and continue the race will be made by the Safety Director.
- c. In the case of a serious accident, 30 minutes after it happened the Safety Director makes an announcement for the Media and all Teams at a designated area by the Safety and Rescue Plan.
- d. Under no circumstances should the Race continue without a Basic Medic Team on the scene. The Organizer could consider having a larger Medic team within the infrastructure so as to be able to fulfil 2 parallel treatments on sight.

7. ****Rescue Workshop**

- a. The S&C Com, based on the assessment and recommendation of the Safety Plan by the Head of GT&E, will decide what form the Rescue Team Workshop shall be. This can range from a 1 day workshop prior to the event, to a 3-day long IRF rescue workshop which must be run by an IRF GT&E Assessor at the location of the racecourse. This workshop has two objectives:
 - i. to `test and rehearse` the overall functioning ability of the Safety Plan* - where communication, management of process, rescue techniques and emergency procedures are to be tested and adjusted. During the workshop, the assessor reviews the Rescue Team through standard scenarios, unexpected actions and worst-case scenarios.

- ii. to offer "IRF Safety Personal" and "IRF Safety Crafter" certifications.
- b. The decision re the length of the Rescue Workshop will be based on the experience and qualifications of the Rescue Team and their experience of running safety in general and of running safety at the specific race courses during races.
- c. All members of the Rescue Team must have passed the IRF certification process or Rescue 3 certification, Those who do not must apply to the IRF for acceptance on the Rescue Team for the actual race. (Previously gained Safety Crafter-, Guide and Trip Leader certificates are also accepted).

B. Minimum Requirements for specific C level events

- i. C-level events should aspire to the same level of safety as is required at A and B level events.
- ii. Events such as the Euro Cup and World Cup, which are known IRF promoted events, require a minimum of safety standards which is that the Safety is to be run by an IRF certified Instructor or Assessor or Event Safety Director (new certification) or Rescue 3 instructor.
- iii. Events that do not have the above minimum will be listed on the IRF Race Calendar but will not be able to receive the full support of the IRF.

*Created by: Gaspar Goncz, IRF Head of GT&E Committee, June 2010
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