

Standards in Paddlesport

Developing the Standards for Deployment Journey

A UK-Wide Initiative for safety, governance, and supporting communities to thrive

Risk Perception vs Legal Reality

Paddlesport is often viewed as a **low-risk activity**, yet when failures occur, they are catastrophic.

Lyme Bay: Led to the introduction of AALA licensing to protect youths.

Haverfordwest: A sobering reminder resulting in significant legal consequences.

Other incidents in our sector:

Great Orme - Wales

Wheelyboat - North Devon

Snowdome - Tamworth

Keelboat - Isle of Wight

River boarding - Scotland



Commitment to Safety

10.5
YEARS PRISON SENTENCE

Accountability at Every Level

Recent legal precedents have shifted the responsibility onto those who offer and provide activities.

Standards for Deployment (SfD) we believe is a reasonable and responsible approach to protect participants and clubs alike.

The National Landscape

Workforce Governance

The DCMS has commissioned Sport England and CIMSPA to lead a workforce governance project across the sector.

This initiative encompasses universal deployment standards for those providing physical activity, ensuring a high-quality and safe experience for all participants.



Department for
Digital, Culture
Media & Sport



**SPORT
ENGLAND**



CIMSPA®

Engagement and Consultation

UK-Wide Collaboration

A joint project involving Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, and England to create a unified framework.

Volunteer Balance

Strategic focus on avoiding additional administrative burdens while maintaining assurances.

We explored how systems and processes can be managed to support—not hinder—the vital volunteer workforce.

A Systemic Approach to Roles



Comprehensive Governance

We recognised early on that all roles—not just those delivering on water—require specific training and support to prevent systemic failures.

- ✓ Committee Members
- ✓ Safety Officers
- ✓ Designated Safeguarding Leads

Phased Implementation Plan

Phase 1	12 Months	Ensuring all roles requiring Safeguarding hold the appropriate training
Phase 2	24 Months	Full suite of standards (First Aid, CPD, Qualifications).
Completion	31 Dec 2026	Across all affiliated UK clubs and commercial providers.

Investing in Our Workforce



Free Training

No-cost access to Safeguarding and Safety Officer modules.



Bursaries

Dedicated funding for those needing coaching or leadership qualifications.



Digital Support Hub

Club dashboards & Hub for accessible guidance for internal club processes.

Learning

-  **Vital Engagement:** Consultation and communication are the lifeblood of sector adoption.
-  **Mutual Protection:** Standards protect those delivering activity just as much as those participating.
-  **Shifting Mindsets:** Embracing the new reality of what is "acceptable" in modern sport governance.
-  **Hyper-Local Support:** Providing targeted guidance to communities with the greatest needs.

Roadmap



We are still on the journey—building a safer sport together.