



Safety Plan

Committee Contact	Role	Cell phone #
Brian Smith	Brigade Organizer	902-527-8195
John Nisbet	Safety Chair	902-220-6946
Wayne Gillis	Route Planner	902-899-5840
Sandra Phinney	Marketing	902-648-0462
Debbie Smith	Registrar	902-225-5199

Purpose of the Safety Plan:

To help make the Brigade safe for all and be prepared for as many eventualities as possible. We must do everything in our power to ensure that there are no incidents, and if these do occur, we must be prepared to deal with them.

- Everyone is reminded that safety is everyone's concern.
- Each of us is to take responsibility for our own safety and that of those around us.
- This reflects the idea that safety is not just the responsibility of someone in charge.
- If you see something that is unsafe, or that concerns you, raise your concern as soon as practicable.
- Sometimes you will need to address your concern and seek help IMMEDIATELY!
- Sometimes, a short delay might be appropriate. If in doubt, do not wait!
- Discuss your concern with others as appropriate: fellow crew members, your boat's captain, other participants, a first aider, and or the Brigade Organizers including the Safety Chair.
- If all of us develop and practice a proactive attitude towards safety, we will all be safer.

In the event of an incident where legal action is taken, our best defense is to demonstrate that we have exercised "due diligence". Due diligence is "...the level of judgement, care, prudence, determination, and activity that a person would reasonably be expected to do under particular circumstances." A judge or jury would consider whether the incident was foreseeable (could a reasonable person have foreseen that something could go wrong?); preventable (was there an opportunity to prevent the incident?); and controllable (who was the responsible person and what could they have done to prevent the incident or successfully recover without injury or death?).

On Site and En Route Responsibilities:

Role	Individual Assigned	Overall Responsibility
Brigade Organizer	Brian Smith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All communication with press and family in the event of an incident, accident, or emergency. • Each day the Brigade Organizer or his/her designate leads a daily Captains' Meeting to determine Brigade Leaders for the day. • Provide a copy of the Safety Plan, route maps, camp site directions, and any other information required by participating teams.
Safety Chair	John Nisbet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the Safety Plan. • At daily Captain's Meetings, reviews potential hazards and provides direction for the following day's paddle. • Ensure that canoes meet Paddle Canada/CVBS and Canadian Coast Guard safety requirements.
Canoe Captains	1 per canoe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit IN WRITING their paddling crew shift assignments for each day (Appendix B).8

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relay safety information outlined in this document to their crew. • Attend (or provide designate) daily Captains' Meetings. • Ensure that their canoe is properly equipped to Coast Guard/CVBS regulations. • Ensure that the canoe is equipped with Safety and First Aid equipment. • Responsible for navigation. • All canoes complete each day's paddle. Should a canoe depart the route during the day's paddle, the Captain will communicate this information to the Brigade Organizer and the Daily Brigade Leader before departing.
Daily Brigade Leaders	Will volunteer daily from the various experienced Canoe Captains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The brigade travels in a group, with a designated lead canoe and sweep canoe. These are the Brigade Leaders for the day. Canoe Captains rotate in this role and are determined by the Brigade Organizer.

Note: All of the above should retain a copy of the Safety Plan during each day of the Brigade.

Event Overview and Procedures:

The Lake Bras d'Or/Pitupaq Brigade will take place over the course of 11 days, August 11- August 19, 2024. The brigade will consist of 6 -12 big canoes each paddled by 6-10 paddlers, that will travel almost 200 kilometers of the Lake Bras d'Or/Pitupaq. In addition, there will be opportunities for smaller craft to informally participate in the event for limited distances and times.

Each evening the Brigade Organizer, Canoe Captains, Safety Chair and ground crews shall meet to discuss the next day's planned paddle, weather conditions and route. Canoe Crew captains will be responsible for notifying their crews of any discussion hazards, Brigade Lead and Sweep assignments.

As needed, each morning the Brigade Organizer, Canoe Captains and Safety Chair shall review the route and weather conditions for safe paddling. Canoe Captains will be responsible for notifying their crews of any change of plans. Canoe Captains will submit their crew assignments (Appendix B) to Brigade Organizer or Safety Chair.

At all times during the brigade, canoes will paddle as a group. **At NO time should a canoe be traveling alone.** If one canoe stops, all canoes in the group stop. At no time should canoes be ahead of the designated 'lead' canoe, or behind the designated 'sweep' canoe.

Brigade Organizer, Safety Chair, Daily Brigade Leaders, and Canoe Captains shall communicate by cell phone while on the water. For additional on-the-water contact, it is recommended that the Brigade Organizer, Safety Chair and Daily Brigade Leaders carry GMRS radios. It is prudent that a test of the appropriate radios and phones be done each morning before, or as part of the brigade departure.

Safe, regular breaks will occur on water and/or shore.

At times of greater risk or difficulty, paddlers MUST follow the instructions of the Safety Chair, who at times:

- will attempt to balance canoes for physical ability and experience.
- may direct the order of canoes for approaching landings and portages.
- may direct rescue attempts.

Canoe Requirements:

Big Canoes for this event are to be of the Mi'Kmaq ocean design, North Canoe and larger, with five or more seating benches. Canoes deviating from this standard must be approved by the Safety Chair.

These canoes should be rendered unsinkable in calm water, AND it must be the practice of all paddlers to load gear into the boats in waterproof packs (garbage bags and other innovative waterproofing techniques are acceptable) and these packs should be secured to the canoe in such a way as to add to the overall floatation of the canoe and gear in case of upset. Such gear must be secured such that it cannot come loose and hinder rescue (i.e. tied tightly or stuffed under seats). It is recommended that a swamped big canoe have enough floatation so that its gunwales are 5" above the water surface. Many older models do not have this much floatation, but this must be tested and floatability of your canoe confirmed before the brigade. It must have positive buoyancy when swamped.

Canoe Captains are responsible to always have the following items on board:

- Spare paddles – minimum 2
- Approved PFD for each paddler. **Paddlers are required to wear their PFDs at all times when on the water.**
- A sound making device, commercial air horn preferred.
- A minimum of two manual bailing devices – buckets or hand pumps. Two 10-20 litre buckets and a hand pump are recommended.
- An approved first aid kit.
- GMRS radio with a minimum capability of 10 km, or a working cell phone.
- A minimum of two 15 m throw bags of floating 10 mm line. Normally one bag shall be secured at one end to a grab loop, and the second shall be immediately available mid-canoe for rescue work.
- Four locking carabiners, two with each throw-bag.
- A repair kit of materials appropriate to the construction of the canoe. (i.e. duct tape, wire, spare nuts & bolts of sizes similar to those in the canoe, silicone repair caulk/adhesive, etc.) Brigade organizers will ensure that there are appropriate materials for significant hull repairs.
- Flashlight and spare batteries.
- Optional but strongly recommended "grab loops" near each end of the canoe for attaching rescue lines. These grab loops must be strongly secured and capable of taking the full weight of the canoe when swamped.
- Reboarding devices - two stirrups for each boat, able to slide across the width of the canoe in order to assist reentry on port and starboard. Stirrups can be rope or webbing and must be able to take the weight of paddlers upon reentry.

Potential Hazards:

Potential Hazard	Control Measures	Person(s) Responsible
<p>Weather Conditions: exposure, sun, rain, hail, wind, severe winds, lightning, thunder, big waves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proper clothing, food, water. ● Daily access to appropriate weather forecasts. ● Postponement or leg cancellation <p>Threshold (no-go or pull off the water) criteria:</p> <p>Lightening:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get off the water (preferably under shelter) after first lighting seen; wait 30 minutes after the last lightning seen. <p>Thunderstorms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● forecast w/n 3 hours. <p>Heavy rain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● less than 1km visibility when paddling w/n 1km of shore; ● less than 2km visibility when paddling w/n 2km of shore. <p>Following seas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1m swells or 1m breaking waves. <p>Following winds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● greater than 20km/hr. <p>Other seas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1.5 m head on seas, or 0.75m beam on seas. <p>Other winds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greater than 30km/hr. 	<p>Safety Chair – in consultation with Brigade Organizer.</p> <p>Prior to scheduled departure, the Brigade Organizer and Safety Chair shall meet and determine if weather and water conditions are conducive to safe paddling. If necessary, the decision to cancel will be made and communicated through the Canoe Captains.</p> <p>En route decisions will be made by the Brigade Organizer and/or Safety Chair in consultation with the Canoe Captains.</p>
<p>Water Hazards: rocks, shoals, current</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appropriate route selection. ● Knowledge of navigation markers (e.g. Red buoys on right.) ● Knowledge of tide tables 	<p>Safety Chair – in consultation with Brigade Organizer.</p>
<p>Locks: turbulent water, upsetting, collision with other boats in locks, person overboard in steep sided locks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Paddler must follow Lock Master's instructions. ● Canoes should raft up, cables may be present to hold onto, gloves may be an asset. ● No ties to other canoes or lock lines, only loops so you can escape quickly inside the locks. 	<p>Canoe Captains, Individual Paddlers</p>

<p>Risks from Other Boaters: collisions, swamping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Following the “rules of the road” ● Advising other users of Brigade Plans ● Anticipating bottlenecks at locks. 	<p>Safety Chair – in consultation with Brigade Organizer and Canoe Captains.</p>
<p>Injury: sprained ankles, blisters, overuse injuries, camp mishaps (cooking burns etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Clothing, first aid supplies, whistles. ● Communications device (e.g. radio or cell phone) 	<p>Canoe Captains</p>
<p>Hypo/Hyperthermia:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● During this Brigade all paddlers will wear an approved PFD when at, on or near the water. ● Appropriate clothing ● Appropriate hydration 	<p>Canoe Captains, Individual Paddlers</p>
<p>Person Overboard:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Each PFD will be equipped with a whistle and all canoes will be equipped with throw line(s) and a reboarding device 	<p>Canoe Captains, Individual Paddlers</p>
<p>Lost Canoes or Crew:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At all times during the brigade, canoes will paddle as a group. At NO time should a canoe be traveling alone 	<p>Daily Brigade Leaders</p>
<p>Wildlife: Ticks and other insects, racoons, skunks, bears, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Proper clothing and/or bug spray ● Proper food management (no food in tents or unsecured overnight.) ● Leave No Trace principles 	<p>Canoe Captains, Individual Paddlers</p>
<p>Noxious Weeds: poison ivy, poison sumac, poison oak, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness and recognition 	<p>Canoe Captains, Individual Paddlers</p>

Emergencies:

In an emergency, the Canadian Coast Guard Marine Communications and Traffic Services can be contacted directly, by dialing *16 on a cell phone.

It is recommended that the Brigade Organizer or Safety Chair have access to a VHF radio. Marine VHF radio is the recommended means of issuing a distress alert. Know where you are at all times and be prepared to describe your location accurately. In case of grave and imminent danger (for example, your boat is taking on water and you are in danger of sinking or capsizing) use channel 16 and repeat "MAYDAY" three times. Then give the name of your vessel and its position, the nature of your problem and the type of assistance needed. **Remember:** Channel 16 is used for EMERGENCY and CALLING purposes only. Anyone who uses a VHF radio must follow the procedures described in the VHF Radiotelephone Practices and Procedures Regulations. Currently, all VHF radio operators are required to have a Restricted Operator's Certificate (ROC) with maritime qualifications. Canada recognizes the American Certificate.

Capsized Boat

After capsizing, holding a discussion between 6 to 10 people in cold water during a stressful and likely life-threatening time is very dangerous. Group discussions do not work under these conditions. In the event of capsizing, all crew should remain quiet and await instructions from the Canoe Captain.

The Canoe Captain will determine the sequence of reentry. The following are suggestions:

- The captain is the first to board the capsized canoe and then direct the rescue from inside the canoe. The second person into the canoe should be strong enough to help less capable persons reenter the boat.
- The most agile paddler is the first to board the capsized canoe and begin bailing. As the gunwales lift, additional paddlers will climb in and help with the bailing.

Flatwater or Ocean Rescue

On-the-water rescue can be problematic if conditions (wind and waves usually) are harsh. Paddlers of a swamped canoe must remain with their boat. The canoe is the most visible item for rescuers to locate.

Under most mild conditions the quickest rescue is for the rescue canoe(s) or motorized boat to help stabilize the upset canoe, and one or two paddlers clamber in and begin to bail the canoe dry.

Overdue Canoes or Missing Crew Members

At all times during the brigade, canoes will paddle as a group. **At NO time should a canoe be traveling alone.** There may, however, be occasions where the best efforts to prevent an overdue crew may fail (e.g. due to injury, medical emergency, or weather conditions).

Prior to Conducting Search – Determining if a Search is Necessary

- The Safety Chair or Brigade Organizer will attempt to contact by radio or phone any/all missing crew(s).
- The Safety Chair or Brigade Organizer will contact by radio or phone all other canoe crews still on the water and attempt to determine the location and status of the missing crew.
- The Brigade Organizer will deal with friends and relatives, informing them of the situation and the procedures being undertaken. The purpose is to reassure them and prevent them from rushing out to search for the overdue participant(s).
- The Safety Chair will check Brigade Records to see if the overdue crew or participants with the crew are on the list of people who have provided information on pre-existing medical conditions.

Decision to Initiate Search

- The decision to initiate a search, after the above attempts to find the crew, should be made by the Brigade Organizer, Safety Chair, and a local authority.
- Such a decision should be first considered 2 hours after the estimated arrival (eta) time of the missing person or crew. The actual decision as to how and when to start a search will depend upon circumstances. It is difficult to give precise directions, since there are many factors, such as the age, health and experience of the participant(s); weather conditions; length of time the participants are overdue; amount of daylight left; nature of the terrain and water conditions, etc.
- A decision to call in other agencies (e.g. the police) for assistance will be made once again by the above three officials.

Dealing with the Media

- The LB/P Brigade Organizer shall be responsible for all communication with any media or responding to any media inquiries. Brigade participants will be expected to forward all media enquiries to the LB/P Brigade chair.

Medical Emergencies:

9-1-1 is the emergency phone number for the region.

8-1-1 can also be called for non-emergency medical advice. Please know that calling this service quite often results in having to leave a message and receiving a call back hours later.

Distance to Hospital	Location of Hospital
10 km from Baddeck Cabot Trail Campground	Victoria County Memorial Hospital , 30 Margaree Road, Baddeck
32 km from Battery Provincial Park Campground	Strait Richmond Hospital , 138 Hospital Road, Cleveland

Prior to the Brigade:

- The Route and Safety Chairs will coordinate the efforts related to providing first aid and medical support during the events.
- Provision of and the contents of the first aid kit will be determined and set by the LB/P Brigade Safety Chair.
- A Senior First Aider should be designated “Lead” Aider for each event, with the responsibility to help coordinate and assign other volunteer first aiders to their respective posts, ensure relief when required, and supervise the first aiders as required.
- The Senior First Aider shall coordinate required medical activities, and calls for transport (local ambulance, STARS, Armed Forces Search & Rescue) with the Safety Chair.
- A First Aid base station may be established for each event/camp site. This may be a tent, St. John’s Van, Brigade Headquarters (HQ) or similar facility. First aid volunteers will be headquartered in this location.

During the Brigade:

- It will be the responsibility of the first aid volunteers to deal with all first aid issues. First Aid volunteers are to work within their training, and in any serious incident that exceeds their training “hand-off” the patient to a more senior medic at the first opportunity.
- It will be the responsibility of the Senior First Aider and the Ambulance Crew to determine whether and when additional medical help is needed (e.g., if and when to call an air ambulance). The decision should be made in conjunction with the Safety Chair.
- Campsite Point Contact shall designate an “Emergency Muster Point”. This will be identified with a “Sandwich Board” sign, near the entrance to each campsite.
- In the event of a campsite disaster (major storm event, forest fire, public disturbance, etc.) all Canoe Captains or their assistants shall confirm the location and status of their crew members and report such status to the Brigade Organizer.
- When safe to do so all Brigade participants and organizers are to report to the designated Emergency Muster Point.

Post Brigade:

- Safety Chair, Canoe Captains, and Brigade Organizer must ensure that for each safety incident where more than minor treatment is required an accident/first-aid report shall be completed, and a copy is filed by the Safety Chair. (See Appendix A)

APPENDIX A: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

INJURED PERSON'S NAME: _____
 INJURED PERSON'S CREW NAME: _____

DATE OF INCIDENT: _____

TIME OF INCIDENT: _____

LOCATION OF INCIDENT: _____

INITIAL RESPONSE BY: _____

RESULT OF ACCIDENT / INCIDENT				
HEAD			LEFT	RIGHT
FACE		SHOULDER		
NECK		ARM PIT		
UPPER BACK		UPPER ARM		
LOWER BACK		LOWER ARM		
CHEST		ELBOW		
ABDOMEN		WRIST		
PELVIS / GROIN		HAND		
LIPS		BUTTOCKS		
TEETH		HIP		
TONGUE		THIGH		
NOSE		LOWER LEG		
FINGERS		KNEE		
TOES		ANKLE		
OTHER:		EYES		
OTHER:		EARS		

INCIDENT INFORMATION	
INCIDENT DESCRIPTION	
CAUSE LEADING TO INCIDENT	
ACTIONS TAKEN	
WITNESS NAMES AND CONTACT	

VERIFICATION

COMPLETED BY: _____

EMAIL: _____

DATE OF REPORT: _____

BRIGADE TITLE: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

APPENDIX B: DAILY CREW SHIFT ASSIGNMENTS

For each day (the evening prior ideally, but certainly prior to departure), crews are to submit IN WRITING their paddling crew shift assignments. For safety reasons, Brigade organizers must be aware of who is in each canoe, at all times.

CREW NAME: _____

CREW CAPTAIN: _____

DATE: _____

Crew members paddling (Please print legibly)

MORNING SHIFT	AFTERNOON SHIFT
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.
9.	9.
10.	10.
11.	11.
12.	12.

COMMENTS: _____