Risk Management Policy

Pupose

Scottish Rowing is committed to managing risk in a way that supports safe, effective and sustainable delivery of our work.
Good risk management helps protect participants, staff and volunteers, supports sound decision-making and strengthens confidence among members, funders and partners.
This policy sets out the standards we expect across Scottish Rowing in identifying, assessing and managing risk. It supports the delivery of Scottish Rowing: Strategic Plan 2026 and Beyond and underpins good governance and organisational resilience.

Policy Context and Legal Framework

This policy is informed by recognised good practice in governance and risk management, including the principles reflected in ISO 31000 and sportscotland expectations of Scottish Governing Bodies.

Scottish Rowing will manage risk in line with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Equality Act 2010
- safeguarding, wellbeing and protection legislation and guidance in Scotland, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- relevant safeguarding and wellbeing guidance issued by Children First

As a national governing body in receipt of public funding, Scottish Rowing is expected to demonstrate strong governance, effective internal control and appropriate management of risk across all of its activities.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals and organisations involved in, or connected to, Scottish Rowing, including:

- Board members

- employees and volunteers
- members, participants, coaches and officials
- affiliated clubs and event organisers acting on behalf of Scottish Rowing
- partners, contractors and suppliers

It applies to all Scottish Rowing activity, including governance, operations, events, programmes, communications, facilities and digital activity.

Our Approach to Risk

Risk is a normal and necessary part of delivering sport and developing the organisation.

Scottish Rowing's approach is to understand risk, manage it proportionately and use it to support informed decision-making.

We expect risk management to be part of everyday practice, not a separate process. That means:
- identifying risks early
- being clear about ownership
- putting appropriate controls in place
- escalating concerns where required

Our Principles

Our approach to risk management is guided by the following principles:
- Proportionate – our response reflects the level of risk and potential impact
- Accountable – risks have clear ownership and oversight
- Open – concerns and incidents are raised early and handled transparently
- Preventative – we aim to identify and reduce risks before harm occurs
- Informed – decisions take account of risk and available evidence
- Learning-focused – we learn from incidents, reviews and experience to improve

Our Principles

Scottish Rowing's approach is guided by its Risk Appetite Statement, which forms a key part of the organisation's governance framework and is reviewed annually.

The Risk Appetite Statement:

- sets out how we balance risk and opportunity
- supports decision-making at Board and executive level
- informs how risks are managed and escalated

Scottish Rowing defines its risk appetite using the following categories:

- Avoid – the level of risk is unacceptable
- ALARP – risks reduced as low as reasonably practicable
- Mitigate – risks accepted with appropriate controls
- Seek – risk may be pursued where it supports development and impact

Scottish Rowing has a low tolerance for risks relating to:

- wellbeing and protection
- health and safety
- legal and regulatory compliance
- financial control
- data security
- reputation

We are more open to managed risk where this supports:

- innovation and development
- participation growth
- partnerships and income generation
- strategic delivery

All significant decisions should be considered in the context of the Risk Appetite Statement.

What This Means in Practice

In practice, Scottish Rowing will:

- consider risk as part of planning, delivery and decision-making
- maintain a Strategic Risk Register
- carry out risk assessments for programmes, events, facilities and other activity
- ensure significant risks are owned and reviewed regularly
- put proportionate controls in place
- escalate risks where they exceed agreed tolerance
- learn from incidents, complaints and near misses
- use risk information to support governance and improvement

Risk management should support good judgement and practical delivery.

What This Means for Clubs and Members

Affiliated clubs and members play an important role in managing risk across the sport. They are expected to:

- identify and manage risks appropriately within their activities
- follow relevant Scottish Rowing policies, procedures and guidance
- carry out suitable risk assessments where required
- report incidents and near misses through the Scottish Rowing Incident Reporting System, supporting an open and no-blame approach to learning and improving safety
- escalate other concerns or significant risks that may affect the safety, wellbeing, reputation or activities of Scottish Rowing

Risk should be managed proportionately, taking account of the nature of the activity and the potential impact on participants and others.

How We Manage Risk

Scottish Rowing manages risk through a consistent cycle:

Identify
Risks are identified through planning, delivery, review and reporting processes.

Assess
Risks are assessed using an agreed approach based on likelihood and impact.

Manage
Appropriate action is taken to avoid, reduce or control risk in line with the Risk Appetite Statement.

Monitor
Risks and controls are reviewed regularly and updated where required.

Report and escalate
Significant risks are escalated through management and governance structures.

Risk Categories

To support oversight and management, risks are grouped into broad categories, including:

- Strategic
- Operational
- People, wellbeing and protection
- Health and safety
- Financial
- Governance and compliance
- Data and technology
- Reputational

These categories will be reflected in the Strategic Risk Register and may be refined over time.

Monitoring, Assurance and Learning

Scottish Rowing will maintain:

- a Strategic Risk Register, reviewed quarterly by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), scrutinised by the Finance and Risk Committee and overseen by the Board of Directors
- risk assessments for programmes, events, facilities and other areas of activity

Risks identified through these assessments will be:

- managed at the appropriate level
- monitored locally
- escalated where they represent a significant, cross-cutting or emerging organisational risk

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) will:

- review the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis
- consider emerging risks and changes in risk exposure
- ensure risks arising from across the organisation are identified and captured

support escalation of significant risks

The Finance and Risk Committee will:

- provide detailed scrutiny and challenge
- review alignment with the Risk Appetite Statement
- provide assurance and escalate key issues to the Board

The Board of Directors will receive regular assurance on key risks, emerging issues and any matters requiring decision or escalation.

Scottish Rowing will learn from incidents, reviews, complaints and feedback to strengthen its approach over time.

For the purposes of this policy, a risk event is defined as an event occurring outside Scottish Rowing's agreed risk appetite that could materially impact reputation, strategic delivery or financial viability.

The Finance and Risk Committee will receive a report on any risk event, setting out the nature of the event, its root cause, actions taken in response, current status, and any proposed changes to controls or risk management arrangements.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors

- Holds ultimate responsibility for oversight of risk and internal control
- Approves this policy and the Risk Appetite Statement
- Oversees the Strategic Risk Register
- Receives assurance from the Finance and Risk Committee

Finance and Risk Committee

- Maintains oversight of the risk management framework and Strategic Risk Register
- Reviews the Strategic Risk Register in detail
- Monitors alignment with the Risk Appetite Statement
- Scrutinises significant risks, controls and mitigation plans
- Reviews emerging risks and changes in risk exposure
- Provides assurance and escalates key issues to the Board

Chief Executive Officer

- Leads implementation of this policy
- Ensures risk is considered in decision-making and planning
- Oversees organisational risk management
- Receives escalated risks from the Senior Leadership Team and ensures appropriate reporting to the Finance and Risk Committee and Board

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) / senior staff and operational leads

- Provide collective oversight of operational and emerging risks across the organisation
- Review the Strategic Risk Register on a quarterly basis and consider changes in risk exposure

- Ensure risks arising from programmes, events, facilities and organisational activity are identified and appropriately assessed
- Take ownership of risks within their areas and ensure appropriate controls are in place
- Escalate significant or cross-cutting risks to the Chief Executive Officer for consideration and onward reporting to the Finance and Risk Committee
- Support the ongoing maintenance and development of the Strategic Risk Register, with the Head of Operations responsible for day-to-day coordination, updating and administration of the register

Staff, volunteers and members acting on behalf of Scottish Rowing

- Identify and manage risks in their activity
- follow agreed procedures and controls
- report incidents or concerns promptly

Affiliated clubs and event organisers

- Manage risk appropriately within their activities and environments
- Promote timely reporting of incidents and near misses

Escalate significant risks or concerns to Scottish Rowing

Reporting and Escalation

Concerns about risk, incidents or control weaknesses should be raised as early as possible. Where matters meet the definition of a risk event (as set out in Section 10), they will also be reported to the Finance and Risk Committee in line with this policy.

Where there is an immediate risk to safety or wellbeing, appropriate emergency or safeguarding action must be taken.

Concerns relating to:

- children or adults at risk
- serious incidents
- data breaches must be reported through the relevant procedures without delay.

Scottish Rowing will support an open culture where concerns can be raised and addressed properly.

Related Policies and Guidance

- This policy should be read alongside (but not limited to):
- Risk Appetite Statement
- Health and Safety Policy
- Crisis Management Policy
- Wellbeing & Protection policies and procedures
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures
- Data Protection Policy

Review

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or sooner in response to changes in legislation, governance requirements or organisational learning.

Approval

This policy was approved by the Scottish Rowing Board in:
June 2026

Next review due:
June 2029