



**BLDSA Event Health & Safety Policy 2024**

## **FOREWORD**

Although every care has been taken in the development of this document, The British Long Distance Swimming Association cannot accept responsibility for any inaccuracies, or negligence arising from the use of this guide by other persons.

The BLDSA insurance cover, is part of the BLDSA fee for affiliated clubs and their members, it includes civil liability and personal accident cover. To help our affiliated clubs and our BLDSA officials comply with the requirements of our insurers the BLDSA has produced this Health and Safety Policy and the accompanying Championship Guidelines that **must** be followed by all who wish to be covered by our insurance policy.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The BLDSA Executive Committee accepts responsibility for achieving and maintaining the highest standards of health and safety. The BLDSA recognises its duty of care under common law in respect of the health, safety and welfare of its members, volunteers and affiliated clubs. The BLDSA Executive Committee shall appoint a Safety sub-committee to update and review this policy annually. Any modifications shall be submitted to the BLDSA Executive Committee or the Emergency Committee if a decision is needed urgently.

This policy extends to a number of key activities, summarised below:

- To make available guidance to BLDSA officials and, on request, to members and affiliated clubs of their obligations, concerning health and safety.
- Identifying and assessing health and safety risks arising from BLDSA events and activities, providing adequate control measures and reviews to maintain a safe and healthy environment.
- To make available, upon request, a copy of the Championship Guidelines which includes health and safety rules and guidelines for the good governance of our sport.
- To provide support for the training and continuing development of the relevant volunteers.
- To record and investigate incidents and accidents and take appropriate action to prevent re-occurrence.

## **THE BLDSA APPROACH TO SAFETY**

The BLDSA has a pro-active approach to the safety of swimmers, of officials and affiliated clubs through the following initiatives:

- Championship Checklists
- Risk Assessment Guidelines
- Incident Recording Guidelines

### **Swim Secretaries**

All BLDSA Swim Secretaries shall receive an information pack which will include the BLDSA Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Transgender, Anti-Bullying policies and Championship Guidelines for running an event, conducting risk assessments, and recording and reporting incidents.

### **Affiliated Clubs**

For affiliated clubs to be covered by the BLDSA Insurance policy all events must be run under BLDSA rules, policies, and guidelines. The BLDSA Executive may call a Safety Symposium which requires a representative of each affiliated club to be in attendance to understand the important requirements and changes to our procedures for running events. The BLDSA Safety Officer may visit any affiliated club event to observe and check policy compliance.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

To discharge the duty of care to provide a safe environment it is necessary to identify hazards, assess the associated potential risks and act, if necessary, to eliminate the hazard or, if not practical, act to either eliminate the risks or reduce them to an acceptable level.

A risk assessment is a requirement for all events. As a minimum requirement for all Open Water Swimming Events, Indoor and Outdoor training sessions the championship safety audit **must** be completed and returned to the BLDSA Safety Officer no later than one calendar month before the event is due to take place. Training risk assessments must be checked before each training session and any amendments made and submitted to the BLDSA Safety Officer before the next session takes place (this must include time for any reviews to be made and verified). All training session risk assessments must be revisited, and a new submission made every 3 months.

## **INCIDENT REPORTING**

All persons are advised to report any incidents, including near misses, to a nominated person who shall be named at Championship briefing meetings and/or in club documentation. The nominated person shall be responsible for forwarding the report to the BLDSA Safety Officer.

We would recommend that a designated person within your organisation is made responsible to record any reported incident. Records must be kept for at least 3 years. Names and addresses of any possible witnesses should also be recorded. From 31st December 2003 a new style accident book that is compliant with data protection legislation is required to be used. It is available from HSE books.

Incident report forms are included in the safety pack and must be completed in full and returned to the BLDSA Safety Officer within 5 days for the accident occurrence.

All information collected and recorded shall be handled under the requirements of the data protection act.