

RUNNING OCSG EVENTS – AN ORGANISER’S GUIDE

There are a number of things that must happen for any event to remain within the auspices of the OCSG and therefore be covered by the BCU insurance provided as part of club affiliation. The fact that these procedures also demonstrate good practice and risk management is no coincidence and all those involved should be guided and reassured by them, rather than feeling restricted.

In general terms the more planning and anticipation of issues you can do, the more straightforward it will be to run a good meet. Neither is it being suggested that events should be so organised that flexibility is not possible.

Timescale	What to do
2 months before event	Notify the editor of Gossip of any event details that will be useful for participants, such as location, if booking is necessary, campsite arrangements, launch fees etc.
6 weeks before event	Have a chat with the campsite/venue to check how busy it might be, if it's possible to set aside an area for us and about any special situations on /off the water.
	Work out how you will provide things (or if they are needed) like signage/ a group shelter/ marker buoys/ notice-board/ OCSG banner/ meet forms/ clipboard/ marker pens/ sound signal etc (meet forms are available from the website)
3 weeks before event	Find out as much as possible about the venue eg local hazards/rules/markers. Get a map and consider how you will let people know about the area, its opportunities and challenges. This could be simply pinning/writing it up on the notice board at the event or providing a handout/map. Also start thinking about possible suggestions for cruise destinations/bad weather alternatives. Try to plan how to get a decent weather and wind forecast during the weekend (local radio/internet etc).
Friday pm of event	Do your best to arrive in good time (preferably by late afternoon) to smooth the way with the campsite and place the signs for people to get to the venue easily; with complex approach routes consider getting someone to try out whether they can follow the signing.
Friday evening	Greet those arriving especially newcomers and let them know about any special details, especially the 10am meeting. Firm up your ideas on cruise destination suggestions and other plans, possibly in discussion with other group members who also know the venue. Try to

	post some suggested ideas on the notice board (including times) for people to see before they turn in for the night so they can be ready to get the most from the weekend.
Saturday 10 am	Call a welcome meeting/briefing and let everyone know what's going on. Particularly the need for any one going on the water to complete the sign-on/off sheet and that they should team up with one or two other boats for mutual support. Remind them that there are no officially organised cruises and that canoe-sailors must take responsibility for their own actions / conduct on the water. Encourage experienced sailors to team up with the less experienced. Go sailing! If there is someone remaining at the campsite/launch-beach ask them to welcome any latecomers and point out the signing out procedure.
Saturday am & pm	Greet any latecomers and let them know what's going on. Go sailing! Check the sign-out sheets are being used properly and that everyone is back or accounted for by early evening. If any one is missing panic quietly and do whatever is required.
Saturday evening	Decide any timetable of events for Sunday such as if there is demand for a race. If there is then start to decide the race course(s) bearing in mind the forecast weather and wind direction/ strength. Try to keep an eye (or maybe an ear is more appropriate) on the group's noise/disturbance level in relation to others nearby and if necessary "have a word."
Sunday morning	As for Saturday. Get your own boat sorted out in good time if you're planning to race. Then make sure you have a good idea of how you are going to put across the planned course(s) and start procedures - could be a map or diagram or just a spoken briefing. If you are racing find someone to act as starter /recorder/ timekeeper. Enjoy your sailing.
Sunday lunchtime	Keep people informed of the planned events. Seek out volunteers to take any group kit to the next event and someone to write up the meet for Gossip.
Sunday afternoon	[as for the morning]
Sunday late afternoon	Check the sign-out sheets and that everyone is back or accounted for. Distribute the group items to those willing to transport them (signs/buoys/tent etc).
Make your way home happy that you did your best to run a good event!	