

SAFETY ALERT

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Subject	Quick release leash systems in a white water environment
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British Canoeing recently commissioned research into the use of quick release leash systems in a white water environment.

This research into waist-worn leash systems in a white water environment found that 42% of 130 test releases did not release as expected. Previous research into chest-mounted leashes highlighted the importance of the leash being an appropriate size and properly fitted to the individual. Further testing found that performance improved when the waist-worn leash was the appropriate size and properly fitted. These adjustments addressed some of the inherent issues associated with quick-release mechanisms, however, over 10% of test releases still encountered issues.

In addition, a range of factors may compromise body-worn systems even when appropriately sized and properly fitted. For example, the release buckle may be compromised or lost around the waist as the system may move on the wearer. The leash may become snagged resulting in instability for the wearer and further disorientation when attempting to use the quick release system.

As the National Governing Body for Stand Up Paddleboarding in the UK, informed by recent research and insight into the inherent danger of using leashes and pending further research, British Canoeing strongly recommend that SUP paddlers **DO NOT** use any leash system while paddling on whitewater.

Therefore after careful consideration and pending further research British Canoeing Awarding Body (BCAB) is changing previous advice and content within all BCAB SUP white water qualifications, awards or other related training courses to the following guidance:

During the delivery of BCAB courses, **use of any SUP leash system within a whitewater environment is NOT permitted.**

This new guidance comes into force with **immediate effect.**