



Safety is the key issue and should be borne in mind at all times. Safety is all about avoiding the need for rescues. Accidents and injuries nearly always occur from a sequence of factors and can be prevented by action during the sequence. Early action has a greater “avoidance” factor and ensuring that paddlers are properly equipped, on appropriate water for their skill in a mutually supportive team achieves a great deal.

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## **C**ommunication

Signals, instructions and briefings must be simple, clear and concise. Do not make assumptions. If necessary, question to check understanding. When using signals:

- **Point at where to go, rather than at the hazard.**
- **Confirm understanding by repeating the same signal**

## **L**ine of Sight

**Never run anything blind:**

- Paddlers can only choose a line and assess the level of risk if they are in a position to see what is coming
- All members of the group should remain in the line of sight of at least one other member of the group
- Try to keep two eddies between lead paddler and where the river disappears

## **A**voidance

**Avoidance is better than cure:**

- Paddle as a mutually supportive team – choose rivers on the basis of what the least able paddler can manage
- Preparation and planning prevent poor performance

## **P**ositioning

**Position of maximum utility: being in the right place at the right time**

- Balance maintaining line of sight and being in position to sort out incidents
- Could be on the bank with a throwline