



# **SAFETY BRIEFING**

# **2023**



Every 2023 participant must read and understand this safety briefing prior to participating in the Avon Descent to ensure safety for all.

# INTRO

The Directors and Management Crew of this year's Avon Descent wish all participants and their support crews the very best and hope safety will be high on everyone's priority list.

It is expected that the river level will provide the usual challenges and it should not be taken for granted that it will always be a safe journey down river. River levels change rapidly and can provide unexpected hazards that are to be approached with caution and it should not be assumed that they are the same as previously experienced.

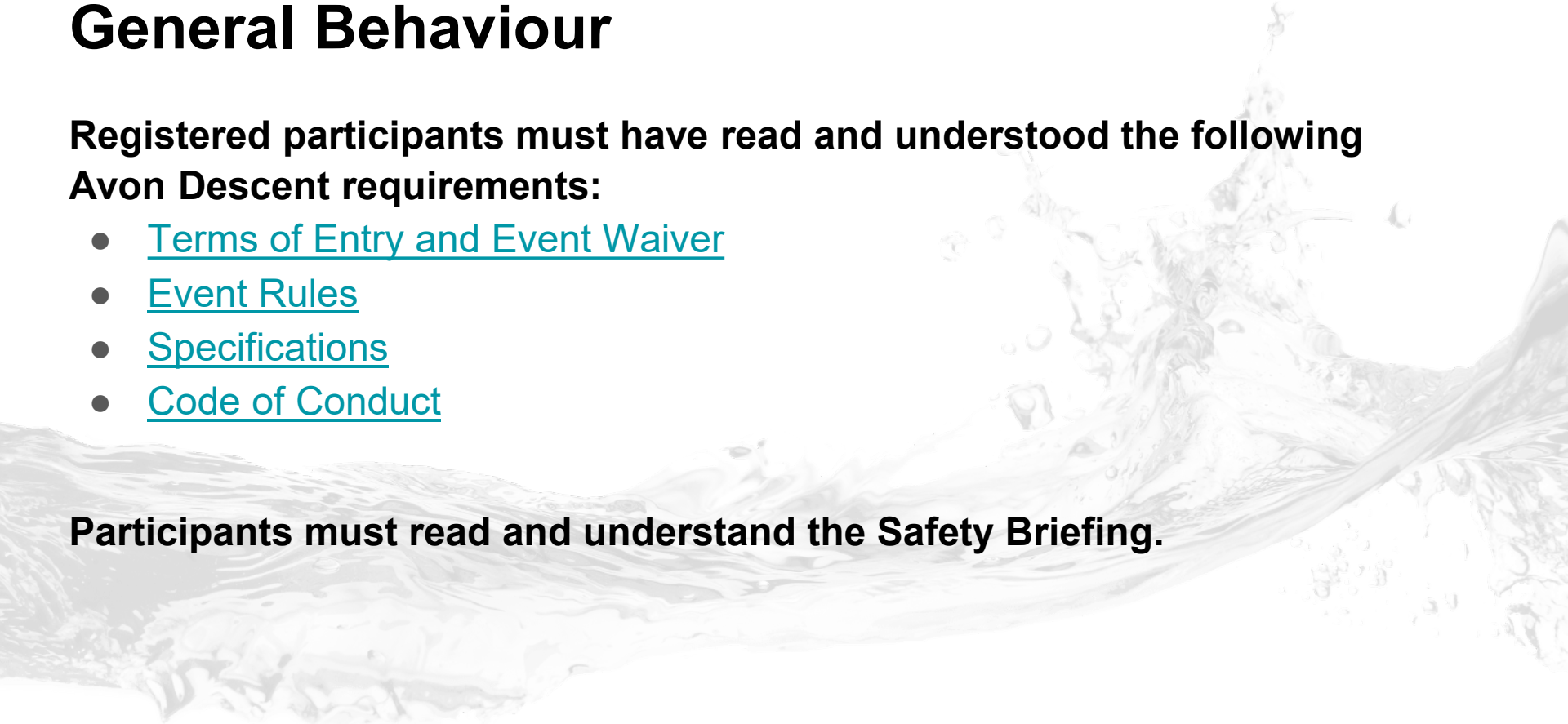
**Safety instructions may be adjusted to accommodate for changes in conditions on event weekend.**

# General Behaviour

Registered participants must have read and understood the following Avon Descent requirements:

- [Terms of Entry and Event Waiver](#)
- [Event Rules](#)
- [Specifications](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)

Participants must read and understand the Safety Briefing.



# Private Property

Participants and their support crews must respect the Private Property of others and in particular, the property owners of the land we will pass through.

Support crews are advised that they will be trespassing if they access the river by travelling through storm water drains under the rail lines or crossing over rail lines and paddocks from River Road or Cobbler Pool Road.

The Deepdale Property is extensive and is a no-go area.

The actions of support crews that conflict with the above may jeopardise future Avon Descent events.

# Craft overtaking

Craft executing an overtaking manoeuvre are to make their presence known, take as wide a path as practical and do so in a safe manner.

Craft being overtaken should be made aware of this and hold their line while continuing to travel downstream.

Collision is to be avoided, but participants that are involved in a collision must stop and check to see if assistance is required to any other participant.

**It is essential that paddlers hold their line if being overtaken by powercraft.**

Powercraft need to maintain some speed to remain in control of their craft and may not be able react quickly if the craft in front of them changes course unexpectedly.

# Care for Fellow Participants

Participants who come across a fellow participant in trouble, in a life-threatening situation, struggling in water or on the riverbank without a craft, they must ask if assistance is required.

If assistance is required, then that assistance must be provided. If it is possible, engage others to also assist if required.

Assistance does not extend to the recovery or repair of damaged craft.

If the situation is not considered critical, continue on and report the incident to the next checkpoint downstream with the troubled participant's Race ID.

**Be aware – ADSU Volunteers cannot be at all hazardous locations.**

# Safety Flags

Make yourself familiar with the different safety flags. Failure to adhere to course officials and directive flags could result in an event penalty.

## WARNING

FLAGS WILL BE DISPLAYED  
ALONG THE LENGTH  
OF THE RIVER.  
DUE TO CHANGES IN  
WATER LEVEL, LOCATIONS  
OF VARIOUS FLAGS MAY  
CHANGE ON THE DAY.  
IT IS IN THE PARTICIPANT'S  
INTEREST TO BE FULLY  
AWARE OF FLAG COLOURS  
AND MEANINGS.



**RED**

**STOP**  
Do not proceed beyond  
this point



**BLACK**

**DISQUALIFICATION**  
Leave the water immediately



**ORANGE  
WHITE**

**CAUTION**  
Obstruction ahead.  
Caution to be used in area.



# Valley Road Access

**Only participants in relay teams will have access to the Valley road.**

- Valley Access event stickers are to be clearly displayed on your vehicle windscreen at all times.
- Access for all other vehicles will be terminated at Posselt's Ford.
- Recommended route for non-relay participants is to turn left from Cobblers Pool and progress to Toodyay road/Lover's Lane.

**No Sticker = Strictly No Access**



# Railway Safety

Participants and Support Crew travelling on the Valley Road must ensure they are familiar with the safety expectations of our railway partner, Arc Infrastructure.

- ❑ Obey **all** stop signs.
- ❑ Follow instructions from Arc Infrastructure employees.
- ❑ Between Lookout Rapids and Bells Rapids, participants may **ONLY** exit from the Walyunga National Park (right-hand) side of the river.
- ❑ Rail Access Road is **one-way** with a speed limit of 20 km/h and **no overtaking is permitted** (except in emergency).
- ❑ Vehicles are not to be stationary on Rail Access Road.

**Valley Access event stickers are to be clearly displayed on your vehicle windscreen at all times.**

# Be safe around the railway this Avon Descent



With our freight rail network running through the heart of the Avon Valley, Arc Infrastructure has been a proud partner and supporter of the Avon Descent for more than 30 years.

Trains continue to operate as normal over the Avon Descent weekend; please be extra vigilant around the railway. Whether in a vehicle or on foot, only cross the railway line at designated crossings.

- Obey stop signs at level crossings
- Follow instructions from Arc Infrastructure employees
- Between Lookout Rapids and Bells Rapids section of the course, competitors may ONLY exit from the Walyunga National Park (right-hand) side of the river
- Speed limit on Rail Access Road is 20km/h
- Rail Access Road is one way ONLY (except emergency & Arc Infrastructure vehicles)
- Overtaking on Rail Access Road is NOT permitted
- Vehicles are NOT to be stationary in middle of Rail Access Road
- Display Valley Event Sticker clearly on windscreen.

[www.arcinfra.com](http://www.arcinfra.com)



# Withdrawing from the Race

**You must let us know if you are withdrawing from the race**

**Phone or SMS with race number stating a withdrawal – 0419944286**

- Competitors who have been withdrawn from the event between Cobblers Pool and Emu Falls will be transported back to Cobblers Pool.
- Those withdrawing downstream of Emu Falls will be transported to Brigadoon Fire Station.
- Be aware of cut off times on each day and comply with instruction if those times are exceeded.

**Participants requiring assistance are to exit river left for support and recovery at all times except for Syd's Rapid (exit river right).**

# Cut off times

## Day 1 : Power Craft Cut Off Times

Northam Weir	Start + 1hr 45min
Katrine Bridge Checkpoint	Start + 3hrs 45min
Toodyay Checkpoint	Start + 5hrs 40min
Wetherall Reserve Checkpoint	When first paddle craft reaches checkpoint

## Day 2 : Power Craft Cut Off Times

Emu Falls Checkpoint	Start + 1hr 45min
Stronghills Farm Checkpoint	Start + 2hrs 30min
Bells Rapid Checkpoint	Start + 3hrs 30min
Upper Swan Checkpoint	Start + 4hrs
Middle Swan Checkpoint	Start + 4hrs 30min
Bayswater Finish Line	5:00pm

## Day 1 : Paddle Craft Cut Off Times

Northam Weir	Start + 1hr 45min
Katrine Bridge Checkpoint	Start + 3hr 45min
Toodyay Checkpoint	Start + 5hr 40min
Wetherall Reserve Checkpoint	Start + 6hr 30min
Ti Trees Checkpoint	3:45pm
Cobbler Pool	5:00pm

## Day 2 : Paddle Craft Cut Off Times

Emu Falls Checkpoint	11:00am
Stronghills Farm Checkpoint	12:00pm
Bells Rapid Checkpoint	1:30pm
Upper Swan Checkpoint	2:30pm
Middle Swan Checkpoint	Between 3:30 – subject to DoT Marine Safety instructions/current weather conditions
Bayswater Finish Line	5:00pm

Finish line cut off time of 5.00pm takes into account diminished light and allows for an appropriate sweep of the river.

# Emergency, rescue & recovery

The Avon Descent Support Unit (ADSU) may be situated at high priority locations such as:

- Northam Weir
- Extracts Weir
- Emu Falls Rapids
- Katrine Bridge
- Avon Valley
- Syds Rapid
- Glen Avon Rapid
- Super Shoot
- Bells Rapids

**Be aware – ADSU Volunteers can not be at all hazardous locations.**

**All participants are encouraged to self-recover where possible.**

# Be aware of your emergency signals



## Whistle signals

One whistle: All clear (ok)

Three whistles: Emergency

<https://paddle.org.au/education/safety-guidelines-v2/#Appendix-A>



# No unauthorised people on the river

During the Avon Descent, no person is permitted to get on the water unless they are registered in the event and are actively participating in day 1 or day 2.

This includes:

- Support crew members.
- Families or friends of participants.
- Participants reviewing the river before or after Avon Descent activities.

Emergency Services don't need the distraction!





**Enjoy the race and stay safe!**