

Management of public swimming pools — General management — Code of practice

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Foreword

This Publicly Available Specification, PAS 65, was sponsored by The Institute of Sport and Recreation Management (ISRM) and developed through the British Standards Institution.

Swimming in public pools in the United Kingdom is one of the most popular recreational activities with millions of swims sold each month. The prevention of injuries or fatalities requires proactive management of the service. This Publicly Available Specification provides the pool operator with an assessable code of practice, which can be used to improve safety standards, reduce risk and demonstrate to the users of the pool that high standards of health and safety are in place.

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Royal Life Saving Society UK

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Summary of pages

This document comprises a front cover, an inside front cover, pages i and ii, pages 1 to 25 and a back cover.

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1 Scope

This Publicly Available Specification (PAS) gives recommendations for the general management of public swimming pools including:

- a) safety documentation and systems;
- b) physical environment;
- c) lifeguarding;
- d) pool supervision;
- e) user groups;
- f) pool activities;
- g) management of features;
- h) training.

NOTE 1 Water treatment systems, water treatment plants and heating, and ventilation systems are covered in PAS 39.

NOTE 2 Attention is drawn to the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 [1] and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 [2].

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this Code of Practice. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

PAS 39, *Management of public swimming pools — Water treatment systems, water treatment plant and heating and ventilation systems — Code of practice.*

BS 5395-1, *Stairs, ladders and walkways — Part 1: Code of practice for the design, construction and maintenance of straight stairs and winders.*

BS 5499-5, *Graphical symbols and signs — Safety signs, including fire safety signs — Part 5: Signs with specific safety meanings.*

BS 6180, *Barriers in and about buildings — Code of practice.*

BS 7671, *Requirements for electrical installations — IEE Wiring regulations — Sixteenth edition.*

BS 8403, *Specification for aquatic spineboards for recovering casualties in controlled aquatic conditions.*

BS EN 1069-1, *Water slides over 2 m height — Part 1: Safety requirements and test methods.*

BS EN 13451-1, *Swimming pool equipment — Part 1: General safety requirements and test methods.*

BS EN 13451-2, *Swimming pool equipment — Part 2: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for ladders, stepladders and handle bends.*

BS EN 13451-4, *Swimming pool equipment — Part 4: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for starting platforms.*

BS EN 13451-8, *Swimming pool equipment — Part 8: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for leisure water features.*

BS EN 13451-11, *Swimming pool equipment — Part 11: Additional specific safety requirements and test methods for moveable pool floors and moveable bulkheads.*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this PAS, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1

canoeing

organized activity in the pool using canoes, kayaks etc.

3.2

competent individual

individual with the necessary skills, experience and/or qualifications to perform a required task

3.3

diving boards

fixed platforms or springboards used by pool users to enter the water from a height above the pool surface greater than 0.38 m

3.4

deep water

water of 1.5 m depth or greater

3.5

drowning alarm system

device or series of devices installed in order to alert employees in the pool hall and elsewhere in the premises to a possible emergency in the pool hall

3.6

fittings

equipment installed in the pool tank or hall, that is integral to the service

NOTE Examples of fittings include access steps and underwater lights.

3.7

freeboard

height of pool edge above the water level

3.8

inflatable equipment

large or small inflated play structures capable of supporting one or more individuals above the surface of the pool water

NOTE Inflatable equipment may be sealed or constant blow units.

3.9

lifeguard

individual responsible for the monitoring of pool users, preventing accidents and responding to emergencies

3.10

mat session

activity where foam mats or other forms of buoyant rigid structures are provided, which are capable of supporting one or more individuals above the surface of the pool water

3.11

organization

company, establishment, or other body responsible for the control and operation of the swimming pool

3.12

pool hall

area that surrounds the pool tank

3.13**pool operator**

individual(s) managing the delivery of the service at the pool on behalf of the organization

3.14**pool surround**

walkway immediately surrounding the pool tank

3.15**pool tank**

structure containing the pool water

3.16**programmed swimming**

swimming sessions with a formal structure which are supervised or controlled and continuously monitored from poolside

NOTE Examples of programmed swimming include tuition, club training and lane fitness swimming.

3.17**proprietary design**

equipment that has been tested and verified to be of sound design and construction and fit for the purpose it was intended

3.18**public pool**

non-domestic pool intended for specific use by members of the public engaged in water based recreational activities

NOTE For example, local authority pool, community pool, school pool, hotel pool, club pool etc.

3.19**rescue equipment**

equipment available to assist lifeguards in the rescue or removal of a pool user in distress from the pool

3.20**responsible individual**

competent and trustworthy individual of 16 years and over who is responsible for a child under 16 years of age

3.21**river rapids/lazy rivers**

flowing water that transports pool users along a defined route

3.22**shallow water**

water less than 1.5 m in depth

3.23**sub-aqua**

organized underwater swimming activity using breathing apparatus

3.24**unprogrammed swimming**

swimming sessions without a formal structure, where bathers are able to play within the confines of the rules laid down by the pool operator

3.25**waterslide**

piece of equipment with an inclined surface, down which the user descends by sliding usually under the influence of gravity, and with water as the friction-reducing medium either freely or with the use of ride enhancement devices, if so designed

3.26

wave machine

mechanical device that generates a wave configuration of water

3.27

weak swimmer

an individual unable to tread water for 1 minute and swim 50 m unaided in 2 minutes

4 Abbreviations

For the purposes of this PAS, the following abbreviations apply.

4.1

CPR

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

4.2

EAP

Emergency Action Plan

4.3

FINA

Federation Internationale de Natation

4.4

NOP

Normal Operating Plan

4.5

PSOP

Pool Safety Operating Procedure

5 Safety documentation and systems

5.1 Safety management system

5.1.1 General requirements

In order to manage health and safety effectively, the organization should plan and coordinate its approach. The cornerstone of this approach is the health and safety management system.

The health and safety management system should include:

- a) a safety policy;
- b) training and competency requirements (see Clause 12);
- c) procedures for dealing with non-conformances and corrective actions;
- d) risk assessment;
- e) Pool Safety Operating Procedures (PSOPs) consisting of normal operating plans (NOPs) and emergency action plans (EAPs);
- f) maintenance of records and processes to monitor, measure, review and improve the health and safety management policy.

5.1.2 *Safety policy*

The organization should define and document a policy for the general operation and safety of the swimming pool. This is often referred to as the Normal Operating Plan (NOP).

The organization should ensure that this policy is communicated, implemented and maintained throughout the relevant parts of the organization.

NOTE The NOP may be integrated with other aspects of the organization's business in order to demonstrate an integrated approach to health and safety management.

5.1.3 *Non-conformance and corrective and preventive action*

The organization should establish and maintain procedures for defining responsibility and authority in order to deal with non-conformances and potential non-conformances in a timely and appropriate fashion. This should include:

- a) handling and investigating non-conformances;
- b) taking action to mitigate any impacts from non-conformances;
- c) initiating and completing corrective and preventive action.

Any corrective or preventive action taken to eliminate the causes of actual or potential non-conformances should be appropriate to the magnitude of the problem and commensurate to the risk.

Records should be maintained of significant non-conformances and corrective or preventive action taken.

5.1.4 *Monitoring, measurement and analysis, review and improvement*

5.1.4.1 *Monitoring*

The organization should define the routine performance monitoring requirements for the operation of the pool. These requirements should be suitable and sufficient to provide useful data on compliance to required standards. This might include routine patrols of the pools and ancillary areas to monitor for hygiene, housekeeping, user behaviour and lifeguard performance.

5.1.4.2 *Measurement and analysis*

Measuring the adequacy of the operating system and the degree of compliance to established operating standards is crucial and this should include:

- a) assessment of individual (e.g. lifeguard) and overall operational performance;
- b) compliance to operational plans, procedures and performance requirements;
- c) the success (or otherwise) of corrective and preventive actions;
- d) the management of incidents and emergencies;
- e) feedback from users of the pool and other stakeholders on pool safety issues.

5.1.4.3 *Review*

The organization should formally review the operation of the health and safety management system to ensure it is achieving the defined safety policy objectives. This review should be carried out at planned intervals of normally no less than one year.

NOTE Evidence can be provided of pool safety performance from the measurement process.

5.1.4.4 *Improvement*

The review should include assessing opportunities for improvement and the need for changes to the pool health and safety management system to ensure it remains suitable, adequate and effective.

NOTE This might include updating NOPs in response to new industry guidance or revised training programmes or improved record keeping.