

SAFETY & PREVENTION GUIDE — INDIVIDUAL & INFORMAL OPEN WATER

Practical, Administrative, and Safety Guide for Independent Swimmers (Non-Structured Practice)

Main Swimmer / Contact:

Emergency Contact (Close):

Zone / Site:

Free / Informal Practice Status: During outings with friends, in pairs, or solo (without a club or company), everyone is legally responsible for their own safety. In an informal group, the concepts of "factual responsibility" or "failure to assist a person in danger" apply between participants.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE VOID, MEDICAL MONITORING & INTERPERSONAL PREVENTION

Domain	Actual Framework (Free Practice)	Operational Recommendations
Medical / CACI	No legal CACI required. You swim under your own medical responsibility.	Perform an annual health check-up on your own initiative. Strict self-assessment before entering the water (fatigue, pathology).
Personal Insurance	MANDATORY DE FACTO Private Life Civil Liability (Golden Rule).	Verify that your personal Civil Liability includes nautical leisure in natural environments (and Individual Accident / GAV coverage).
Notice to a Third Party	Inform a contact ashore systematically.	Always notify someone ashore (departure time, planned route, estimated return limit).

Individual Checklist Before Departure:

- ☐ **Swim Plan Shared with Third Party:** Indicate immersion point, direction, and estimated duration.
- ☐ **Waterproof Contact / ICE Form (In Case of Emergency):** Place in buoy or shore bag: Name, first name, emergency contacts, medical history/allergies.
- ☐ **Weather & Tide Verification:** Check specialized apps (Windy, SHOM data, Météo-France) for wind force, swell, and current.

2. INDIVIDUAL & COLLECTIVE INFORMAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Minimum Mandatory Equipment (Each Swimmer)

- **Inflatable safety buoy (High Visibility):** Bright color (Orange/Yellow/Pink) — mandatory to be seen and provide support.
- **Fluorescent swim cap:** Facilitates spotting from shore or boats.
- **Marine whistle (pealess):** Attached to the buoy for distance signaling.
- **Adapted wetsuit:** Isothermal as soon as water temperature drops below 18°C.

Informal Group / Buddy Safety

- **Buddy System:** Start together, swim together, return together. Swim within vocal range.
- **Smartphones in waterproof pouch:** Carry a charged phone inside the waterproof buoy (Emergency 112/196).
- **Lighting device (Night/Dusk):** Flash lamp or chemical light stick inserted into the buoy.

3. EMERGENCY NUMBERS & INCIDENT ACTION PLAN

Channel / Number	Target Service	Role & Application
196	CROSS (Sea Rescue)	Direct alert for sea/coastal rescue from a mobile phone.
112	European Emergency (Land / Lake)	Firefighters / SAMU for rivers, lakes, and inland water bodies.
VHF Channel 16	International Distress Frequency	If carrying a waterproof VHF radio aboard the buoy or support.

Self-Rescue & Buddy Assistance Procedure

- **In case of fatigue / cramp / malaise:** Stop swimming immediately, roll onto your back, hold onto your safety buoy, signal your position with the whistle (3 short repetitive blasts).
- **In case of current drift:** Never swim directly against the current. Swim parallel to the shoreline to exit the current channel before reaching the shore.
- **In case of hypothermia (uncontrollable shivering, loss of coordination):** Interrupt the session without waiting, exit the water, dry off, put on warm clothes, cover the head, and consume a hot sweet drink.