

ECHO Quick Reference Guide

1. Score the incident across Entry, Class, Hazards and Outlook (ECHO)
2. Calculate ECHO incident colour and transmit/share.

Entry

The degree of difficulty for a swiftwater rescuer to enter the water flow (hot zone) is scored (table 3). The degree of difficulty to egress/exit the flow is considered next in the remaining ECHO components as limitations in self-rescue and flow speed for example factor into this.

0	Easy to enter, with little to no effort
1	Able to enter, may require effort
2	Able to enter, may require simple assistance
3	Able to enter, only with simple assistance
4	Difficult to enter, requires technical assistance
5	Very difficult to enter, even with technical assistance
6	Unable to gain entry

Table 3: ECHO Entry score



Class

Based on the hydrological features, the flow is assessed in accordance with the ISRD or this simplified table (table 4).

0	No flow (stationery water)
1	Fast moving, ripples often present
2	Straight forward hydraulics or waves
3	Moderate, irregular waves or hydraulics
4	Intense but predictable waves or hydraulics
5	Obstructed or very violent rapids or hydraulics
6	Extreme or non-navigable

Table 4: ECHO simplified classification of river



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ECHO course



Hazards

Score	Self Rescue (Responder Level) Assessment	Flow Speed	Depth	Contamination	Wildlife	Water Temperature	Imminent Hazards to rescuer if exposed
0	Self rescue not needed	No flow speed (static)	Less than ankle	Water safe to drink		Above 20°C (68°F) but not hot enough to cause discomfort, or has low thermal demand	No other hazards identified
1	Self rescue easy	Less than walking speed (5kmph or 3mph)	Shin to thigh height	Water safe to bathe	Nuisance wildlife not posing threat to safety	Between 12°C (43°F) and 20°C (68°F), or moderate thermal demand	
2	Self rescue may require effort	In between walking and running speed	Above thigh up to chest	Biosecurity hazard not directly affecting human safety (ie. didymo)		Between 6°C (43°F) and 12°C (54°F), or high thermal demand	Hazards that may hinder rescue (i.e. turbidity) or damage property
3	Self rescue difficult, may need help	Running speed (12.5kph/7mph)	Above chest but less than 2m (6ft)	Contaminants under their PEL		Between 0°C (32°F) and 6°C (43°F)	Hazards that may cause minor injury
4	Self rescue limited, help required	Sprinting speed (25 kph/15mph)	2-3 metres deep (6-9ft)	Contaminants exceeding their PEL or known water-borne diseases present	Animals present that may threaten safety or carry vector causing illness	Below 0°C (32°F)	Hazards that may cause moderate injury
5	Expert assistance often required	25-50 kph (15-30mph)	Over 3 metres deep (9ft)				Hazards that may cause major injuries or death
6	Rescue may be impossible or death imminent	Greater than 50kph (>30mph)		Contaminants IDLH	Large predatory animals likely to attack		Imminent hazards highly likely to cause death or serious injury

Outlook

The outlook provides an indication whether the swiftwater rescue risk, based on any of the three primary ECHO components, is likely to increase in risk (escalate) or is likely to decrease in risk (de-escalate) in the window of time to carry out the rescue. The outlook uses the up and down arrow symbols respectively, and where the incident is deemed stable (unlikely to change), no symbol is used.

ECHO Colour

The ECHO colour allows any SRIRAC combination to be easily translated into an overall risk colour. Using a simple five colour approach:

- Green** Low No component exceeds a score of 1
- Yellow** Medium Any component scored as 2
- Orange** Medium Plus Any component scored as 3-4
- Red** High Any component scored as 5
- Purple** Extreme Any component scored as 6

