

Water Awareness and Charge Certificate Manual

Module 02: Responsibilities and Limits of the Water Charge Certificate Holder

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Module Contents

1	The Charge Certificate	3
1.1	Definition	3
1.2	Privileges	3
1.3	Age Limits.....	3
1.4	Responsibilities of a Charge Certificate Holder	4
1.5	Consent Forms	4
1.6	The Charge Certificate	4

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Outcomes

After completing this module, the certificate holder will:

- Be able to explain the purpose and use of a charge certificate
- Have identified the responsibilities of a charge certificate holder.

1 The Charge Certificate

1.1 Definition

The Charge Certificate is a Certificate issued to a Member of the Scout Movement being either a Scout, Scouter or Lay Member who has been examined by an examiner appointed by THE LOCAL AREA WATER ACTIVITIES COUNCIL, and who has been found competent to hold the Charge Certificate for the type and class of boating as endorsed on the Charge Certificate.

NOTE: A Charge Certificate will not be issued to anybody purely on his/her ability to handle a class of craft irrespective of previous experience but will be issued on the person's ability to take **CHARGE** of boating for the type and class of boating as endorsed.

1.2 Privileges

It is a privilege and not a right to hold a Charge Certificate. The Charge Certificate remains the property of the Scouts South Africa and may be withdrawn at any time if it is found that the Certificate is being abused. The Charge Certificate is not transferable (ie. the holder of a Charge Certificate may not hand it over to any other person to accept the responsibility in his/her absence).

1.3 Age Limits

Any scout who has the necessary experience and is not younger than 14½ years of age may apply to attend a Charge Certificate Course. Such Courses will be advertised through their Local Area Headquarters.

1.4 Responsibilities of a Charge Certificate Holder

As a Charge Certificate holder you are responsible for the following:

- To ensure that the type of craft being used is in a seaworthy condition prior to that craft being launched or being used by the scouts.
- Ensure that the scout either holds a swimmers badge or is able to swim 100 meters in wet clothing.
- Ensure that all members of the crew are fully aware of the procedures adopted for the various craft being used.
- Ensure that life jackets are worn by all members while participating as member of a crew or passenger irrespective of age. The following relaxation of the rule is permitted:
- Life jackets need not be worn on gigs, keel yachts and rigid motorboats during fair weather in daylight hours, but must be available in the vessel. This applies only on inland waters.
- Proper protective clothing is worn at all times:
- This includes proper lace up "tackies" or rubber boating shoes and not "Slip on Sandals".
- Adequate clothing dependent on weather conditions and type of boating to eliminate hypothermia.
- Ensure that the weather conditions are suitable and safe for the operation of craft and that the crews are suitably qualified and experienced to operate the craft under those weather conditions.
- Ensure that rescue facilities are readily available in the event of their being necessary.
- Ensure that all the Municipal / National regulations with respect of the operation of craft for the said waters are adhered to.

1.5 Consent Forms

Over and above the abovementioned responsibilities the Charge Certificate holder is to ensure that the required Parent's Consent Form is obtained before boating activities may commence. Failure to ensure that these forms are available and correctly completed makes the Charge Certificate holder and not the Scout Movement liable for any loss damage or injury that may occur.

1.6 The Charge Certificate

The rules for the issuing and control of Charge Certificates are set out section 9 of the Scouts South Africa – Safe Scouting Policy. The relevant pages have been included in this hand-out. Please ensure that you take the time to read through these, as this section will only highlight the necessary points that relate to this course.

Charge Certificates are essential to control and regulate who has the authority to take charge of scouts doing boating. Without this control it would not be possible to protect the interests of the Scout Movement and this could lead to dangerous and fatal situations which are not in the best interests of the boys or the Movement.

Charge Certificates are issued by the regional Water Activities Council (WAC).

Charge Certificates are divided into different types, each of these types also has different endorsements. There are four types of Charge Certificate: -

- (a) open boats under Oars
- (b) open and decked boats under Sail
- (c) power boats

Gauteng Region also issues Charge Certificates for Canoes and Kayaks.

A Charge Certificate must be endorsed for one or more of the following:-

- (i) Inland waters
- (ii) Special inland waters
- (iii) Coastal waters

In the Gauteng Region, the following endorsements also apply for canoes and kayaks:

- (i) Inland waters
- (ii) River Proficiency
- (iii) White Water

All Charge Certificate courses cover the following five aspects, each related to the type of Charge Certificate and the endorsement:-

- (1) Parts of the boat
- (2) Safety precautions
- (3) Boat orders
- (4) Emergency drills
- (5) "Rules of the Road"

There are a number of different Charge Certificate courses that are run each year in the Gauteng Region, namely:-

- (1) Boats under Oars
- (2) Boats under Sail
- (4) Paddling on flat waters
- (3) Paddling on rivers
- (5) Special Inland Waters (This covers Oars, Sail and Power Boats)

It is vitally important that you, the holder of a Charge Certificate, are aware of the limitations of the Charge Certificate. Using your Charge Certificate to do boating on water beyond your endorsement is a far greater offence than not even having a Charge Certificate.