

# Water Awareness and Charge Certificate Manual

## Module 08: Boating Safety

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## Revision History

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## Outcomes

After completing this module, the certificate holder will:

- Be able to manage their personal safety
- Take measures to ensure crew safety
- Conduct boating activities safely and according to the values of Scouts South Africa

## 1 Boating Safety

Safety can be divided into two categories:

- a) Personal and Crew Safety
- b) Boat Safety.

Both these aspects have been amply covered in the Safe Scouting Policy and it is up to the Charge Certificate holder to make himself / herself familiar with the contents of this policy.

A Charge Certificate is issued to a person not only on the grounds of knowledge of the type of boating, but on that person's ability to "TAKE CHARGE" of the activity of which the MAJOR ASPECT is safety.

No distinction can be made with regard to safety categories as mentioned above, as both are so closely related that no distinction can be made between the two.

### **Limitations**

Know and realise your own limitations, so that you do not place anybody else in jeopardy.

### **Decision Making**

As a Charge Certificate holder you will be called upon to make some very important decisions. Never allow your popularity to influence your decisions but rather allow common sense and safety to be the deciding factors.

Note: Where the term "Scout(s)" appears, it refers to members of any section of the movement, including Scouters.

The term "Holder" refers to the Charge Certificate holder who is the person responsible for the water activity.

## 2 Holder Responsibility

It is not always possible to lay down a standard set of rules for boating that will apply sensibly to all types of waters and boats. The guiding factor must be that Holders should act as reasonable and prudent parents allowing no Scouts to undertake any boating that they would refuse to their own sons of a similar age and capability. There are, however, certain basic rules that apply to all waters and all types of boats.

Note should be taken of the fact that water activities are far more dangerous than land based activities. Not only do humans drown in water, but water makes any craft unstable and this causes accidents which also lead to injuries and death

Note: The term "boats" and "boating" include the use of canoes. These rules also apply when rafting.

### **3 Swimming requirements**

No Scout may undertake any boating activities unless he can swim 50m in shirt, shorts and socks and thereafter remain afloat for two minutes. The Holder may, at his discretion, relax this rule provided the scout concerned is wearing a life jacket and is in the charge of a Scouter or other responsible adult authorised by the person in charge.

### **4 Lifejackets**

Suitable lifejackets must be worn at all times by Scouts sailing or canoeing. When rowing a lifejacket must accompany each Scout on the water. These need only be worn in low visibility, stormy rough or broken waters. In motor boats, the Holder will decide whether or not lifejackets are to be worn. This will be dependent on the size of the boat and the condition of the water.

Generally, however, all Scouts under the age of 16 will wear lifejackets when in a powerboat on the water.

### **5 Charge Certificates**

When required by the rules, Charge Certificates, in the form provided by HQ must be issued (and endorsed, if necessary) and must be valid for the type of boat and water in question. A Scouter may, at any time, restrict the area of operation of a Scout's Charge Certificate, until he feels that the Scout has the necessary experience and self-confidence to operate throughout the area in all weathers.

The Chairman of the Gauteng Water Activities Council will be responsible for deciding which stretches of water are governed by which endorsement.

The holder of a Charge Certificate must be aware of the limitations of that Charge. The holder of a Basic Charge Certificate may not take any Scouts canoeing, sailing or power boating or run any boating on special inland waters or coastal waters.

### **6 Seaworthiness**

Holder must satisfy himself that any boat to be used in an activity is seaworthy for the purpose for which it is to be used. In all cases, the Holder must make certain that the boat carries all the necessary equipment, that it is not overloaded and not so stowed to hinder its free working, and that its appearance will not bring discredit to the movement.

### **7 Qualified Person in Charge**

Where a craft is in the charge of a person, not a member of the Scout movement, who is either the owner or authorised by the owner of the craft and who the Holder has reasonable grounds to believe has the necessary knowledge, skill and experience, a specialised Charge Certificate will not be required. This does not imply that no Charge Certificate is necessary but simply that under the authority of your limited charge, specialised boating may take place if a qualified instructor is running the activity.

## **8 Pulling and Sailing Boats**

Except on inland waters, no boat may go under oars or sail unless one member of the crew holds the appropriate Charge Certificate. The Holder may, at his discretion, relax the rule for training or competitive purposes, provided he, a competent Scouter or an instructor is in effective control of the activities.

## **9 Power Craft**

When power boating with members of the movement the Scout in charge of a power craft must be at least 16 years of age and hold the appropriate Charge Certificate. Since January 2009, the skipper of any power boat which has a motor exceeding 15 HP must be in possession of a SAMSA Category R Certificate of Competence as a minimum. This rule may not be relaxed for any purposes.

## **10 All Craft**

The Holder, must consider with particular care the age, experience and reliability of the Scouts concerned and the age ability and experience of himself or of any other person who will be in charge of any part of the proposed activity.

## **11 Rafts**

When building and manning rafts on the water care must be taken to observe a level of control to ensure the safety of the scouts. Five important points must be considered when rafting:

- a) The floats or barrels used must be able to support the weight of the raft and its crew. These barrels must be sealed and securely fastened to the raft.
- b) Due to the unstable nature of rafts on the water, no dangerous items should be left on deck, neither should the construction provide dangerous places on the raft that the crew could walk into, trip over or fall onto.
- c) There should always be provision on a raft for adequate shelter. Even if the raft is not intended for overnight use some form of shelter or covering should be available to protect the crew from storms and winds.
- d) The raft should be able to be manoeuvred by the crew. A raft should be built to facilitate easy manoeuvrability and never be built so large or be manned by a crew that is incapable of propelling the raft.
- e) The raft should have sufficient anchors to secure it from drifting. The size of the raft and the weather conditions will determine the size and number of anchors required.

## 12 Reputation

Because of the impression created and since most boating is done in the eyes of the critical public, the strictest discipline and standards of smartness will prevail at all times and the appearance of boats will not bring discredit to the Movement.

Scouts will not ram or deliberately rock boats.

Generally, water is the best medium for giving Scouts the opportunity to have the most fun. It should also be the best opportunity to train Scouts in discipline, leadership and respect for authority and rules.

Disciplined boating is safe boating, safe boating is fun for all!

## 13 Personal and Crew Safety

- a) It is important that the coxswain interrogates all crew and passengers to ensure that they are all able to look after themselves in the event of a capsize. All members should at least be able to swim or should be made to wear a buoyancy aid if not able to do so.
- b) Buoyancy aids should be carried in sufficient numbers to match the number of people in the boat and be carried in a place which is accessible to enable them to be issued rapidly if needed. A gig is one of the few boats where it is not compulsory to leave the shore wearing a buoyancy aid but these should be carried in a place of ready accessibility.
- c) Before leaving the shore it is also necessary to set up a buddy system among all members aboard the vessel. Crew and passengers should be briefed as to how to behave in an emergency and how to follow the buddy system for their own safety.
- d) The coxswain must be in absolute control at all times and must be aware of the "weak link" in the system and make arrangements to cater for passengers in this category.
- e) At all times the coxswain must maintain correct seamanship standards and all members should be controlled to ensure their own safety and should not be allowed to fool around or to jeopardize the safety of others. This also means the involvement of people in the vessel and their actions should be strictly controlled.
- f) Capsize drill should be explained to every member aboard and crew should be made to stick together and stay with the upturned vessel.
- g) Ensure that you and your crew are properly dressed for the type of boating that you are taking part in and that as a Scout / Scouter lace-up footwear is worn (NO slip-ons) on ALL boating activities.

## 14 Boat Safety

- a) Every time a boat leaves the shore it should be under the control of a suitably qualified person who knows the local regulations regarding

boating on the piece of water in question. This person should be fully aware of all danger areas, currents or under water hazards etc. as well as no-go areas or other restrictions which might apply. This is especially important where waters have a multiple use or are shared with other users such as sailing clubs or power boat clubs who expect the waters to be restricted for their own use and therefore do not expect other vessels to be in their way.

- b) It is important that the boat has permission and/or a license to be launched on the waters where the activity is to take place and follows all restrictions on areas or activities or times of usage of the waters concerned.
- c) The vessel should have sufficient buoyancy to support itself as well as all crew and equipment while capsized or swamped.
- d) The boat must carry some means of signaling for help in a crises and this should be available for use by more than just one person aboard.
- e) Boating at night should be restricted unless the person in control understands and uses the correct navigation lights.
- f) The weather must be closely watched to avoid possible dangers and activities should be stopped if bad weather threatens, especially lightning.
- g) Power boats or sailing vessels should carry paddles or oars and all vessels should carry some means of anchoring and tow ropes for emergencies.
- h) All vessels should have some means of bailing out any water which may come on board.
- i) Vessels should never be overloaded and care must be taken to ensure that good balance is maintained at all times.
- j) There is no substitute for plain common sense.