



BRIDGETOWN DISTRICT SCOUT COMMITTEE

SCOUT LEADERS' ROUNDTABLE

TRAINING SHEET

WATER ACTIVITIES

Any Troop conducting a water activity **must** ensure that the activity is well planned and that the necessary safety precautions are taken. Water activities should not be approached lightly regardless of how often a Troop conducts a particular activity. In addition to complying with the Regulations for Activities (Rule 37 of the P.O.&R.), water activities planned by any Troop must comply with the Regulations for Water Activities (Rule 42).

If you have any queries about any of the regulations for any water activity, be sure to consult your Assistant District Commissioner or District Scouter. They will be able to direct your query to the appropriate authority.

CLASSIFICATION OF WATERS

For the purpose of the majority of Water Activities undertaken as Scouting activities, waters are classified as C, B1, B2, B3 and A, under arrangements made by the District Commissioner. The classifications used are:

- Class C Waters** - 'Safe' inland waters.
- Class B1 Waters** - Sheltered water where currents and tides create no real danger.
- Class B2 Waters** - The sea up to one mile from the shore, but excluding more dangerous waters close inshore.
- Class B3 Waters** - The sea up to three miles from the shore, but excluding more dangerous waters close inshore; busy commercial ports.
- Class A Waters** - Open sea more than three miles from the shore, and other dangerous waters close inshore.

At present there is no official classification of waters published by the Association. In absence of such a list, the Leader responsible for the activity should assess and classify the waters in accordance with the guidance given in the class definitions above. When doing so, no waters other than shallow still water may be classified as C and no tidal waters may be classified as C or B1.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Members of the Movement taking part in any water activity should be able to demonstrate their ability to swim 50 metres in ordinary clothes and keep afloat for five minutes. However, a non-swimmer may take part in some water activities, at the discretion of the person in charge, only if the necessary precautions are taken. These include:

- » There must be no more than one non-swimmer in any craft.
- » In the case of single-handed craft, this should only be on C or B1 Waters with supervision on a one-to-one basis.
- » The non-swimmer must wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid of approved design and be in the charge of an adult.

Lifejackets or buoyancy aids must be provided for all Members of the Movement forming the crew of a vessel. Lifejackets and buoyancy aids must be inspected and tested independently every year. Further information on the types of lifejackets and buoyance aids that should be used can be found in the Fact Sheet "**Water Safety (incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids)**".

AUTHORISATION

The person in charge of any water activity must be authorised to conduct such an activity by the District Commissioner. All Water Activities on Class B1, B2, B3 and A Waters and also Powerboating on Class C Waters must be under the direct control of, or supervised by, a person authorised by the District Commissioner. All other Water Activities on Class C Waters are approved by a Leader provided that the standards contained in the Fact Sheet '**Class C Waters**' are followed.

Authorisation by the District Commissioner must be renewed and becomes invalid automatically if not renewed. The renewal interval is determined by the District Commissioner but will not be more than five years. There is no age limitation for an authorised person. A Scout or Venture Scout with suitable experience could be authorised. However, Members of the Movement under the age of 18 years must obtain the permission of their Leader on each occasion the authorisation is used.

BOATS

The authorised person in charge of any water activity involving a boat must ensure that the craft is seaworthy and suitable for the activity on each occasion that it is used. In addition the Leaders must ensure that all craft are maintained in a serviceable condition and inspected and tested independently every year. All boats should have adequate marine insurance cover.

CHARTER VESSELS

When vessels are hired or chartered the Activity Rules of the Association related to the activity apply. However, where the vessel is chartered to be under the command of professional staff, the Rules relating to authorisation do not apply. Before entering into a hire agreement which includes an indemnity clause (i.e. where it is assumed that the hirer will be responsible for damage, injury or loss), the Leaders must refer the agreement to Headquarters via the District Commissioner.

When taking Members of the Movement as passengers on hired sailing or powered craft, the Leader responsible must have reasonable grounds to believe the person in charge of the craft, who must be either the owner or authorised by the owner, has the necessary knowledge, skill and experience required. Also the Leader must ensure that the party understands the discipline necessary for safety including any local regulations which may apply.

REFERENCES

1. **The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.** 1995 Edition with Revisions (October 2000). The Scout Association, Baden-Powell House, Queens Gate, London, England.