



BARBADOS BOY SCOUTS ASSOCIATION

INFORMATION 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. Water activities planned by any Troop must comply with the Regulations for Water Activities (Rule 9.42 - 9.54 of the P.O.&R.).

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

All waters used for Scouting activities must be classified as C, B1, B2, B3 or A in accordance Rule 9.44b. of the P.O.&R. The classifications are:

- Class C Waters** - Swimming pools; and safe inland waters (including inland lakes, lochs, rivers, canals or other stretches of placid water) which are less than 100 metres wide throughout the region being used where surface turbulence is limited to the regular waves produced by wind action (this includes slow flowing water such as rivers and canals where the flow causes little effect);
- Class B1 Waters** - Sheltered inland waters and other 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; more sheltered parts of estuaries; large inland lakes and lochs;
- Class B3 Waters** - The sea up to three miles from the shore, but excluding more dangerous waters close inshore; busy commercial ports, exposed parts of estuaries;
- 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. If you unsure of the classification to assign to the waters to be used during your activity, be sure to consult your Assistant District Commissioner or District Scouter. They will be able to direct your query to the appropriate authority.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Members of the Association taking part in any water activity (whether taking place on or in the water) must be able to demonstrate their ability to swim 50 metres in clothing and equipment appropriate to the activity (where a buoyancy aid or life jacket is worn for the activity this may be used for the demonstration) and keep afloat for five minutes. Anyone unable to meet these requirements is classified as a non-swimmer.

A non-swimmer may take part in water activities, at the discretion of the person in charge, only if the necessary precautions are taken. These include:

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- » The non-swimmer must wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid of approved design and be in the charge of an adult (this does not apply for swimming, paddling or activities near water).
- » There must be no more than one non-swimmer in any craft unless a one-to-one ratio is maintained (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).
- » In the case of single-handed craft, this should only be on C or B1 Waters with supervision on a one-to-one basis (one competent adult to one non-swimmer).
- » Where non-swimmers are taking part in swimming activities (as defined in Rule 9.50) they must be under the direct supervision of an adult in the water. This must not exceed two non-swimmers to one adult.

The above conditions do not apply when below decks, protected in larger vessels or when using recognised forms of public transport.

LIFE JACKETS AND BUOYANCY AIDS

Lifejackets or buoyancy aids must be provided for all Members of the Association forming the crew of a vessel and worn as specified in the Factsheet *FS120603 Water Safety (incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids)*. Lifejackets and buoyancy aids must be inspected and tested independently every year. Further information on the types of lifejackets and buoyancy aids that should be used can be found in the Factsheet *FS120603 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 Factsheet *FS120623 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 one year. There is no age limitation for an authorised person. A Scout or Venture Scout with suitable experience could be authorised. However, Members of the Association under the age of 18 years must obtain the permission of their Leader on each occasion the authorisation is used.

BOATS

All boats owned by or on long term loan to a Member or unit of the Association should be registered as required by the Laws of Barbados, and should have adequate marine insurance cover. In addition the Leaders must ensure that all craft are maintained in a serviceable condition, inspected and tested independently every three years and self assessed every year.

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.

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 the qualifications of the Leader-in-charge 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 the Chief Commissioner via the District Commissioner.

When taking Members of the Association 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.

PADDLING

When conducting an activity in water that is, for the individual taking part, below waist height (or knee height in moving water) when standing, leaders must conduct a risk assessment of the activity. They must provide appropriate individual(s) as safety cover and equipment as identified by the risk assessment and ensure that the individual(s) are appropriately positioned to provide effective cover. They must also ensure that the participants are clearly visible above the water level at all times.

SWIMMING

When conducting an activity in water that is, for the individual taking part, above waist height (or knee height in moving water) when standing, leaders must follow the rules on swimming (Rule 9.51 and 9.52) except where:

- » Taking part in scuba diving or snorkelling;
- » It is a river crossing during hillwalking under the leadership of someone authorised to conduct such an activity;
- » It is underground during caving or mine exploration under the leadership of someone authorised to conduct such an activity.

SWIMMING ACTIVITIES IN CLASS C WATERS (INCLUDING SWIMMING POOLS)

When Members of the Association take part in a swimming activity in Class C waters there must be one responsible person in overall control. This person must meet the requirements of any written operating procedure and carry out a risk assessment for the location and activity. Where there are no operating procedures, the leader must ensure that:

- » Sufficient people are present to provide safety cover to those in the water as identified in the risk assessment.
- » The safety cover meet the requirements for providing safety cover for swimming activities as detailed in BBSA Information Sheet *Swimming*.

SWIMMING ACTIVITIES – ALL OTHER OPEN WATERS

When Members of the Association take part in a swimming activity in open waters of Class B1 or higher, there must be one responsible person in overall control. This person must meet the requirements of any written operating procedure and carry out a risk assessment for the location and activity. Where an attendant lifeguard is provided they must follow the direction of the lifeguard on duty. Where an attendant lifeguard is not provided, leaders must ensure appropriate safety cover is present. The safety cover must either:

- » Hold at least, the National Lifeguard Certificate, or equivalent qualification;
- or:
- » Hold a water activity permit (leadership or supervisory); operate within the remit of their permit (i.e. class of waters, group size etc) and meet the requirements for providing safety cover for swimming activities as detailed in BBSA Information Sheet *Swimming*.

TOWING OF INFLATABLES BEHIND POWERED WATERCRAFT

The activity of being towed on an inflatable behind powered watercraft is specifically forbidden.

REFERENCES

1. **The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association.** January 2013 Edition.
The Scout Association, Baden-Powell House, Queens Gate, London, England.