



International Rafting Federation

Recommended Minimum Content for a Safety Craft Training Program

proposal, May 2009

1. Purpose

To provide safety craft trainers with a checklist of the essential skills and knowledge that a safety craft trainee must learn in order to be competent safety crafter.

2. Content (as stated in the Recommended Minimum Requirements for Safety Crafter)

A. Skills

- i) Specific whitewater craft techniques
- ii) Emergency and rescue techniques

B. Knowledge

- i) Equipment
- ii) Safety and emergency procedures
- iii) Rapid theory
- iv) Signals

A. Skills

- i) Specific whitewater craft techniques
 - a) Paddling strokes (if paddle craft)- forward, back, rudder, draw, forward and reverse sweep, pry and/or Rowing techniques - pulling, pushing, turning;
 - b) Ferry glides - forward and reverse;
 - c) Breaking in and out of eddies;
 - d) Rapid reading - identifying whitewater features from the boat and from shore (scouting);
 - e) Rapid running - choosing and running a line using appropriate angles and positioning in relation to currents, rocks, waves, holes and hazards;
 - f) Setting off/landing - in a controlled manner, securing a craft;
- ii) Emergency and rescue techniques
 - a) Specific skills - swimmer rescue, unconscious swimmer recovery, swimming in rapids, shallow water crossings, rope techniques including knots, use of throw bags, belaying, anchors, mechanical advantage systems, vector pulls, tag lines and tension diagonals, re-flipping a raft.

B. Knowledge

- i) Equipment
 - a) Craft - design, construction, materials.
 - b) Safety crafter - appropriate clothing and footwear, life jacket, helmet, (paddle), throwbag, knife, whistle, flip line;

- c) Client - appropriate clothing and footwear, life jacket, helmet, paddle;
- d) Rescue - use and storage of ropes, slings, prussiks, pulleys, carabiners, other hardware;
- e) First aid - use (to level specified in Recommended Minimum Requirements for Safety Crafters) and storage of kit;
- f) Repair - use and storage of kit;
- g) Rigging - safe and secure rigging of frames and any equipment carried in a boat;
- h) Maintenance/care - on and off the river especially during transport.

ii) Safety and emergency procedures

- a) General safety - factors contributing to accidents eg. alcohol/drugs, inappropriate/poorly maintained equipment, potential river hazards eg. strainers, high water, importance of maintaining visual contact with other boats;
- b) General emergency procedures - situation assessment, deciding on and conducting a rescue considering resources available, time limitations and safety priorities, informing and motivating a crew;
- c) Swimmers - recovery of unconscious swimmer and short swimmers by safety craft, long swimmer options include instructions to swim, paddle reach, chase, throw bag.
- d) Surfs - head count, communicate with other guide(s), craft rescue, rope rescues;
- e) Flips - get on boat, head count, communicate with other guide(s), reflip or pull up swimmers;
- f) Wraps - stabilise, head count, communicate with other guide(s), consider likely fate of boat if released by chosen method and take adequate precautions, release boat by upsetting balance/stability of wrap;
- g) Foot entrapment - options include shallow water crossing, tag line;
- h) Stranded crew - best method according to reach, throw, row, go, tow principle;

iii) Hypothermia/hyperthermia (if applicable) - avoidance and treatment.

- a) International grading system - know and be able to give local examples;
- b) River features - understand hydraulics and potential dangers (if applicable) of the following: pool, tongue/V channel, eddy, eddy line/fence, boil, whirlpool, standing wave, crashing wave, stopper, hole, pourover, wrap rock, undercut, strainer, sieve, ledge drop, drop/waterfall, constriction, chute, corner, cushion/pillow.

iv) Signals

- a) Visual - all clear (direction), eddy out, stop, emergency, first aid required, all OK, swimmer(s) (number and location), boat surfing, boat wrapped, boat flipped, cover required, lost paddle, need a pump, last boat, spread out, close gap, speed up;
- b) Whistle - 1 blast - Stop/Attention, 3 blasts - Emergency.