

Guideline For Rafting/White Water Rafting

Water Based Adventure Tourism Activities

For Registration with Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

1. INTRODUCTION

Rafting/White water rafting are recreational outdoor activities which use an inflatable raft to navigate in a river or other water body. This is often done on white water or different degrees of rough water.

Since it is a dynamic sport, instructors/guides must be highly qualified and equipment used should be of the highest standard. Dealing with risk and the need for teamwork is often a part of the rafting experience.

2. BASIC OPERATING PROCEDURE / GUIDELINE

2.1. OPERATIONS

All rafting activities must begin with a DIRECT safety briefing. Operators must ensure that participants are briefed about the appropriate dress code, medical concerns the equipment used, do's and don'ts, falling out of rafts, rescue bags, flips and emergency procedures. The correct drill for rescue by a safety kayaker must also be demonstrated.

A liability waiver and medical form clearly highlighting the risk involved and participants are in good health, without any serious medical concerns, must be signed by all participants prior to the commencement of the activity. Participants with any medical condition must not be allowed to participate.

All rafts must have a rescue bag and should carry a First Aid kit, a repair equipment, and a pump.

2.2.STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

- a) All Rafting Operators must maintain and update a Standard Operating Procedure of the activity.
- b) Besides covering the methodologies that are adopted by the agency in operating the activity, procedure of conducting the activity, avoidance of injury, safety precautions, communication, casualty evacuation, accident reporting, assessing weather condition, communication procedure and feedback mechanism should be available.
- c) Safety Kayaks must be available in the immediate vicinity for prompt rescue with personnel duly qualified to operate/carry out rescue operations.
- d) Helmets are mandatory for instructors, guide, and participants of all rafting activities.

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- e) During cold weather operations, wet suits and spray jackets are recommended.

3. SAFETY & RISK MANAGEMENT

- a) No rafting activity should be undertaken without wearing a lifejacket throughout the activity. The life jacket must have adequate buoyancy and should be fastened properly and checked by the instructor prior to commencement of rafting. The lifejacket must be of the appropriate size for the participant.
- b) Helmets must be worn by all participants including guides during rafting.
- c) No rafting activity should be conducted without the presence of trained instructors' guides.
- d) At least one raft and one kayak must be in operation during the activity.
- e) Alcohol/drugs during the activity and at least six hours prior to the activity is strictly prohibited.
- f) Sign boards with rafting rules, medical concerns, age limit, dress code and safety precaution should be a prominently displayed at the base of operation.
- g) No rafting activity should be conducted in the dark.
- h) Minimum age limits for participant is 14 years on all sections of the river.

5.2. SAFETY BRIEFING

All instructors and guides should be able to give a detailed safety briefing with all safety aspects and rescue instructions.

- a) A proper First Aid kit must be available with the rafting operator.
- b) Evacuation routes must be identified and known to participants, guides, and instructors in advance.
- c) A detailed and documented Emergency Action Plan must be available at the base of operation.