

Guideline for Rowing -Water Based Adventure Tourism Activities

For Registration with Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority

1. INTRODUCTION

The disciplines under The International Rowing Federation (French: Federation Internationale des Soda& d'Aviron, abbreviated FISA), responsible for international governance of rowing, was founded in 1892 to provide regulation when the sport was gaining popularity. Across six continents, 150 countries now have rowing federations that participate in the sport. All water sports activities using fixed single ended double paddles to propel and steer the water craft in inland waterways, lakes, lagoons, estuaries or ocean / open waters for competition or recreation.

Rowing is one of the oldest Olympic sports, introduced on the programme in 1896, games, Male rowers have competed since the 1900 Summer Olympics and women's rowing was added to the Olympic programme in 1976.

There is no age barrier, as the water craft or boat can be selected depending on the level of skill and fitness of the person. Since water sports is dependent on the weather, swell, tide and wind conditions, the location should have the right conditions for rowing. With precaution, awareness & strong safety standards we can maintain minimum accidents. As there is a danger of capsizing due to various reasons in certain types of boats, any dangers related to the water way such as eddies (a circular movement of water causing a small whirlpool), currents, white water, crocodiles, jelly fish, sea urchins etc. should be briefed in advance.

2. BASIC OPERATING PROCEDURES / GUIDELINE

2.1. OPERATIONS

- a) A detailed weather check for must be conducted & displayed before commencing any activity.
- b) All activities must begin with a detailed safety briefing. The briefing must highlight the equipment used, do's and don'ts, demarcation of the boundary for the activity, rescue, and emergency procedures & current weather conditions. All participants must sign a liability waiver form, clearly highlighting the risk involved, and prior to the commencement of the activity. Participants with any medical condition making them unfit for participation in the activity must be informed prior to the commencement of the activity and should not allowed to participate.

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- c) Boat rentals should be done only to experienced independent paddlers who can paddle with a liability waiver signed.
- d) The minimum age for most paddle sports is 8 years of age. Depending on the ocean condition, and the type of boat, this limit could be 12 years of age. In this event, the parent or guardian must sign a liability waiver form, clearly highlighting the risk involved, prior to the commencement of the activity.

2.2. STANDARDS OPERATION PROCEDURE (SOP) AND OPERATING INSTRUCTIONS

All Operators must maintain and update a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for their operations.

- a) Besides covering the methodologies that are adopted by the agency in organizing the activity, should cover assessing of members medical condition and experience, avoidance of injury, safety precautions, procedure for emergencies, casualty evacuation, incident and accident reporting, communication procedure, assessment of weather condition and feedback mechanism.
- b) The following must be included in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOPs):
 - i. An Emergency Action Plan should be in position and advance arrangements must be aware for medical help and evacuation assistance in case of an emergency.
 - ii. Staff/ guides must be trained in all aspects of the Emergency Action Plan in every 03 months as a safety drill.

2.3. INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

- a) As a minimum the inspector must be a qualified guide/instructor. Basic inspections must be carried out before every use and detailed inspections carried out on a regular basis in accordance with their operational procedures and risk assessments by a qualified guide/instructions, the drain plugs, hull damage, PfD straps, buckle and belts, paddle condition should be checked daily.
- b) Communication devices must be always carried by Instructors and as the rescue boat.

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3. MINIMUM STANDARDS TO RECOGNITION OF OPERATORS

- a) Operators must be an entity club or a branch registered and recognized by a National Association. The owner or employees must be experienced & certified in the relevant sport activity.
- b) The following essential points to be considered for recognition.
 - a. Certified Instructors & Guides
 - i. Qualification from a Recognized National or International body for the specific paddle sport and a certificate from the operator that the individual "has minimum of 02 years' experience in assisting in the particular activity and is independently capable of teaching, assisting, leading trips and carrying out rescue operations".
 - ii. A valid first aid/ Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certificate provided by a recognized and qualified organization.
 - iii. A powerboat license certificate provided by a recognized and qualified organization.
 - iv. An open water lifeguard certificate provided by a recognized and qualified organization.
- c) Location Map & Briefing
 - i. The location map should be clearly displayed to all participants indicating the "safe and zones" & "hazard zones".
 - ii. A detailed safety briefing must be given to all participants and key points displayed at the operation base.
- d) Operations & Maintenance Manual
 - i. A copy of the manual must include details of Standard Operating Procedures, Emergency Action Plan & Equipment Checklists should be maintained with adequate records
- e) The company must follow a strict 'leave no trace' policy and conform to high sustainability standards.

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4. MANDATORY EQUIPMENT

4.1.

- a) Standard boats for different class or category of boats for the activity, as per the regulation of International Rowing Federation (FISA).
- b) Life jackets or Personal Floatation Devices (PFD's) with the minimum buoyancy requirement, and appropriate for the intended activity,
- c) During cold weather operations, wet suits and spray jackets are recommended.

5. SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1. RISK MITIGATION

- a) Water sports activity should be conducted with the presence of trained instructors and lifeguards.
- b) Alcohol/drugs during the activity and at least six hours prior to the activity is strictly prohibited.
- c) Sign boards clearly mentioning operational rules must be available
- d) No water sports activity to be undertaken unless supervised.
- e) No water sports activity should be conducted in the dark.

5.2. SAFETY BRIEFING

- a) A clear documented safety briefing must be given to participant including:
 - i. Equipment Safety Systems.
 - ii. Surrounding Environmental Awareness.
 - iii. Probable Hazards at location.
 - iv. Minimum fitness requirement for the sport.
- b) Instructor should collect information about the participants during the safety briefing.

5.3. EMERGENCIES AND RESCUES

- a) Adequate first aid medical equipment must be available with the instructors/guiders.
- b) Evacuation routes must be identified and briefed to participants, guides, and instructors.
- c) A detailed documented evacuation/ Emergency Action Plan must be available with the participants along with closest available emergency services, which can be called upon as required.

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6. GENERAL INFORMATION

6.1. TRAINED MANPOWER

It is imperative that instructors conducting different paddle activities are certified Instructors with a high level in conducting lessons/activities, rescue and life saving techniques, powerboat handling and First Aid and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR).

6.2. GUIDES/INSTRUCTORS

Instructors should, hold the following minimum Qualification from a Recognized National Rowing Association of Sri Lanka (ARASL) or international body of International Rowing Federation (FISA) under.

- i. Single and double scull
 - ii. Coxed quadruple and octuple
 - iii. Coxless or coxed pair
 - iv. Coxless or coxed colour
 - v. Coxed eight
- a) A certificate from the operator that the individual "has minimum of 02-year experience independently capable of teaching, assisting, leading trips and carrying out rescue operations".
 - b) A valid first aid/CPR certificate provided by a recognized and qualified organization.
 - c) An open water lifeguard certificate provided by a recognized organization.

6.3. MEDICAL CONCERNS

- a) A signed declaration from the participant is essential if there is any suspicion of prior injuries or medical concerns.
- b) Those with a weak heart condition, epilepsy, spinal issues, recent surgery, or any other medical condition of concern should not participate in paddling.

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- c) Instructor must ensure that the participant is medically fit to participate in an activity.
- d) Instructor must ensure that the participant can swim at least 30m comfortably.

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