

GUIDELINES FOR RUNNING RCABC SANCTIONED TRIPS & EVENTS**SUB PART II – 32.1**

**MEMBERSHIP
REQUIREMENTS**

Clubs must have an RCABC club membership in good standing. Trip participants and trip leaders must be club members in good standing, and act in accordance with the RCABC “Trip Leader” and “Trip Participant” guidelines shown below.

Guests on a club trip must act in accordance with RCABC “Trip Participant” guidelines. Guests are not covered by the club insurance policy. RCABC recommends that guests sign a club waiver prior to the trip.

US citizens will not be covered by the insurance policy.

TRIP LOCATIONS

Only trips in Canada are sanctioned by RCABC and covered by the club insurance policy. Trips in the USA and other foreign countries are not covered, even if the trip started in Canadian waters.

**BASIC SAFETY
STANDARDS**

Club trips will be of at least 3 canoes, sea kayaks, whitewater kayaks or C1s, in any combination. Clubs using Big Boats, refer to the RCABC Big Boat Guidelines below for requirements regarding the number of canoes on a big boat trip.

Clubs will appoint a suitably skilled and experienced person as Trip Leader for all club trips. The club executive is responsible for determining the Trip Leader’s suitability.

All leaders, participants and guests must satisfy Canada Coast Guard regulations and any additional RCABC requirements listed below for their particular craft.

All club river trips must be restricted to Grade 3 rivers and Class 3 rapids or easier in order to be sanctioned. River grades are in accordance with local guidebooks.

Carrying or consuming alcohol on a trip voids your insurance coverage.

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**TRIP LEADER
GUIDELINES**

Before embarking, the Trip Leader should determine that appropriate safety equipment is present, where it is located and that it is properly stored. This includes suggested items such as:

- Communication, maps, signalling and navigation devices
- Emergency warmth and shelter
- Rescue equipment, basic tools and repair supplies; and mandatory items such as:
 - equipment required by Canada Coast Guard regulations
 - equipment required by RCABC guidelines
 - first aid supplies

Before embarking, the Trip Leader should also:

- Consider leaving a trip plan and details with a non-participant contact person, particularly for multiday trips.
- Determine the canoeing or kayaking ability and experience of the trip participants and whether they are adequate to meet the demands of the trip. When necessary, assign paddling positions within the boat or within the group.
- Hold a pre-trip meeting for the purpose of discussing:
 - Route, schedule, known hazards and objectives of the trip.
 - Accident prevention, signals, emergency and rescue procedures.
 - Paddling etiquette and environmental ethics including local concerns.

The Trip Leader(s) must also meet the guidelines for Trip Participants listed below.

If the trip leader feels an individual does not meet the requirements necessary for the trip, the leader has the right and responsibility to refuse to take that individual, or change the trip to meet the individual's abilities.

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**TRIP
PARTICIPANT
GUIDELINES**

Support and respect your trip leader(s).

WEAR a properly fitted Canada Coast Guard or DOT approved Personal Flotation Device or lifejacket, which is in good condition, at all times on or near the water.

Wear a whistle attached to your PFD.

Wear a helmet on all Grade 2 and 3 rivers, and fast flowing Grade1 rivers.

Wear clothing that is appropriate to the water temperature, weather, technical difficulty of the trip and environment. A dry-suit or wetsuit and paddling jacket is strongly recommended for most river and any exposed lake or ocean paddling, or when any other factors present an increased risk of hypothermia.

Advise the trip leader of all medical conditions that may impact the objectives or safety of the trip and its participants.

Carry a spare set of clothing in a waterproof container.

Carry necessary personal gear such as food, water, sun and rain protection, foot, hand and head wear, medications, etc.

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**CANADA COAST
GUARD
REGULATIONS**

Canoes and kayaks are classified under the small craft laws (Canoes, kayaks, rowboats and rowing shells less than 6 m (19'8") in length) and are subject to Canada Coast Guard regulations. The following equipment must be on board EACH canoe or kayak as required by law:

- A PFD or life jacket for each person [**RCABC requires that it is worn!**]
- A “manual propelling device” [**a paddle**]
- One buoyant heaving line no less than 15 m (49'3") in length
- A bailer or manual pumping device [**see kayak and C1 requirements**]
- A sound signalling device (whistle, air horn, etc)
- Regulation navigation lights if travelling at night or in limited visibility
- [**See special requirements for big boats over 6m in length.**]

In addition Canada Coast Guard advises:

“Make sure you are seen on the water. Even in bright, calm conditions a kayak can be nearly invisible. It is especially difficult for power-driven vessel and large vessel operators riding high in the water to see kayaks. Choose bright colours such as red, yellow or orange for your flotation device and kayak. Also, remember to keep signalling devices within hand’s reach in case of emergency.”

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**RCABC CANOE
GUIDELINES**

Each canoe must be equipped with:

- Equipment as required by Canada Coast Guard
- a spare paddle
- well secured bow and stern lines made of polypropylene (3 – 8 metres of 9 –12 mm is recommended)

The trip leader or club may determine that additional gear may be required.

**RCABC SEA
KAYAK
GUIDELINES**

Each sea kayak must be equipped with:

- Kayaks must be outfitted in a way that does not impede exit or create an unnecessary risk of entrapment, including the spray skirt.
- Equipment as required by Canada Coast Guard
- a spare paddle
- a paddle float
- a bilge pump or bailer

The trip leader or club may determine that additional gear may be required.

**RCABC
WHITEWATER
KAYAK OR C1
GUIDELINES**

Each whitewater kayak or C1 must meet the following requirements:

- Kayaks or C1s must be outfitted in a way that does not impede exit or create an unnecessary risk of entrapment, including the spray skirt.
- We recommend that at least one member of your group should carry a spare paddle.
- Kayaks or C1s must be outfitted with grab loops and floatation to facilitate easier rescues.
- Equipment as required by Canada Coast Guard

Canada Coast Guard regulations, although not specific to whitewater boats, still apply to kayaks and C1s. However there is an exception for bailers and manual bilge pumps:

“A bailer or manual bilge pump is not required for a boat that cannot hold enough water to make it capsize or a boat that has watertight compartments that are sealed and not readily accessible.”

The trip leader or club may determine that additional gear may be required.

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**CANADA COAST
GUARD BIG
BOAT OR
“VOYAGEUR
CANOE”
GUIDELINES**

In addition to standard Canada Coast Guard regulations, the following Canada Coast Guard regulations apply, or may apply to big boats:

If the canoe is over 6 m:

One (1) watertight flashlight

Six flares of type A,B or C

Note: There are exceptions to the Canada Coast Guard regulations for carrying flares, however RCABC recommends having flares aboard when conducting a trip on any larger body of water where visibility, rescue time and distance are a concern.

You may also be required to carry the following:

- **One (1) Reboarding Device**

Only required if the vertical height that must be climbed to reboard the boat from the water (freeboard) is over 0.5 m (1'8").

- **One (1) magnetic compass**

Not required if the boat is 8 m (26'3") or less and operated within sight of navigation marks.

- **One (1) radar reflector**

Radar reflectors are required for boats under 20 m (65'7") and boats that are built of mostly non-metallic materials.

A radar reflector is not required if:

- the boat operates in limited traffic conditions, daylight and favourable environmental conditions, and where having a radar reflector is not essential to the boat's safety;
- or the small size of the boat or its operation away from radar navigation makes having a radar reflector impracticable.

**RCABC Big Boat
Guidelines**

There is no "minimum of 3 boats" requirement for club trips with big boats participating. The executive of the club, and the club's big boat Trip Leader(s) are responsible for determining the risk level of the trip and determining how many boats are needed in order to run the trip safely. Contact RCABC if you need assistance.