

African Paddling Association SAFETY CODE

Adopted at a national meeting of river tour operators and guides at Hopetown, Cape, in January 1999, amended at the APA Council meeting Vaal River, Parys 10 January 2002.



1. Guides and participants will at all times act cautiously and responsibly.
2. All participants must be warned that no alcohol or intoxicants are to be taken during the eight hours preceding-, and during any paddling activities and it is the operator's responsibility to enforce this rule.
3. All participants will be correctly equipped and warned to wear a personal flotation device (pfd) at all times and a helmet in whitewater. Pfd's and helmet will be properly fitted and worn to manufacturers specifications.
4. No person may act in the capacity of a guide unless he or she is duly qualified and experienced in the particular paddling discipline.
5. On each trip a senior guide will be designated as Safety Officer in charge of scouting, safety and rescues.
6. All trips will begin with the APA Safety Talk appropriately modified for the particular paddling discipline.
7. Operators will provide group safety gear, and guides will check this gear daily.
8. Parties will be warned about known hazards and how to avoid them.
9. When faced with major water hazards, guides will remind participants that they have the option to walk.
10. A guide in the capacity of a Leader or Safety Officer has the discretion to order any person off the water or to alter or terminate a trip in the interests of safety.

CODE OF PRACTICE

Conservation Ethic

We are committed to minimum physical impact on the environment. Guides will set the example. We will not cut, burn, clear or damage banks or shores, and will leave no sign of our presence. We will protect animal and birdlife and leave wildlife habitats undisturbed. Where landings or established camps are constructed, they will harmonise with their surroundings; keep traffic, waste and noise to a minimum; and not pollute the area or water in any way.

Consideration Ethic

We are committed to considerate behaviour towards other water users, as well as towards farmers and local inhabitants. Access to water will be negotiated, and permits obtained where necessary. To maintain good relations we will provide employment for local people wherever possible. Operators will try to ensure that overcrowding does not occur on paddling routes. Guides will ensure that parties camp out of sight and hearing of each other wherever possible. Trips will not be run if there is insufficient water for enjoyable paddling.

- Issued by the APA National Office, 2002
- *All members of APA subscribe to these codes. Any member found to have transgressed the code may be disciplined, fined or expelled from the association and the judgement published in the media.*

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