

Windsurfing

(Guidelines on the issue of a District Commissioner's Authorisation)



INTRODUCTION

This is the third edition of the factsheet replacing that coded FS 120607 and dated March 96.

Further editions will be issued in the light of experience from this edition. Publication of future editions will be notified in SCOUTING Magazine, Talking Points and Activities Newsletter.

GENERAL

Windsurfing also known as Board Sailing is to be encouraged as a Scouting activity. It is a relatively cheap and safe way to encourage young people on to the water. Although it is by its nature a solo activity it should not be undertaken alone.

The activity is comparatively safe on inland waters because capsizing is not a problem, and collision damage is unlikely because boards are light and loss of control soon results in a rapid stop. However, drifting downwind is rapid and ideally beginners should use B1 waters with a lee shore within 0.25 miles.

Conversely windsurfing on sea can be more hazardous because of the instability of the board in waves, the inability to cope with strong winds by reefing, and the rapid downwind drift. On open sea the inexperienced should use a familiar board, sail with a safe lee shore, and choose a smaller sail initially.

AUTHORISATION

Every windsurfer should be authorised for the activity or under the direct control of a suitably authorised person. These authorisations are granted by the appropriate Commissioner (normally District but occasionally County or Area or National) on the advice of the appropriate County/Area Water Activity Assessor. The assessment for these

authorisations will be based on the following areas:

- a) The person applying for authorisation should fully understand the responsibilities of the authorisation and be aware of their limits of authority. They should be aware of the need and able to tailor the activity to the physical and mental needs of the young people concerned.

They should have read this factsheet and the factsheet "Water Safety (incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids)".

This is the first and most critical aspect of the authorisation procedure. Commissioners should consider every application thoroughly before adding their supporting signature.

- b) The person who wishes to be authorised should be in possession of the necessary technical skills and theoretical knowledge.
- c) The person applying for authorisation should have a good knowledge of the waters on which they intend to operate and should appreciate local hazards.

TECHNICAL

The guidance table below outlines the recommended minimum standards of technical ability in Windsurfing which should be achieved before any authorisation is granted. There may be occasions when the person can show considerable experience without necessarily holding a national qualification. In such cases there should be an assessment of the person's technical knowledge and experience against that needed for the national qualification. The person should be encouraged to take a direct assessment of their level of competence in order that the standard of instruction will enable young people to enter the national scheme of training. Only in very exceptional

circumstances should the authorisation granted be for other than participating in windsurfing on B1 or B2 waters.

Assessors should consider the technical competence, knowledge and experience of the applicant before making a recommendation to the appropriate Commissioner. It is perfectly acceptable for the recommendation to be restricted to local waters within the range of classification suggested in the table until further experience is gained.

Class of Water	Technical Level	Suggested Level of Authorisation
C	None required	Authorised to windsurf
B1 (inland)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 2 (inland)	Authorised to windsurf
B1 (tidal)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 2 (open sea)	Authorised to windsurf
B1 (inland and sea)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 1 Instructor	Authorised to supervise
B2 (inland)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 3 (inland)	Authorised to windsurf
B2 (inland)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 1 Instructor (inland)	Authorised to supervise
B2 (tidal)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 3 (open sea)	Authorised to windsurf
B2 (sea)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 2 Instructor (open sea)	Authorised to supervise
B3 (inland)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 4 (inland)	Authorised to windsurf
B3 (tidal)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 4 (open sea)	Authorised to windsurf
B3 (inland and tidal)	RYA National Windsurfing Scheme Level 3 Instructor	Authorised to supervise

Details of the RYA Windsurfing Scheme is outlined in the RYA booklets W5 and W6 available from the Royal Yachting Association, RYA House, Romsey Road, Eastleigh, Hampshire SO5 4YA.

Note 1:-Authorisation for Windsurfing on A Class waters should only be granted for activities where suitable rescue cover is available. Authorising Commissioners or Assessors should consider granting permission on a one-off basis.

Note 2:-A County/Area Commissioner may authorise the Principal of an RYA Windsurfing Teaching Centre to authorise windsurfing at a designated location without being present.

Note 3:-On B1 waters when windsurfing is carried out within 0.25 miles of the shore, an authorised person may closely monitor up to two other unauthorised windsurfers. On other waters the authorised person may closely monitor one other less qualified windsurfer.

Note 4:-Windsurfing Activity Assessors should take into account RYA guidelines on the number of novice windsurfers that should be in the charge of an RYA Windsurfing Instructor.

Note 5:-A person authorised to supervise should select the most appropriate means of supervision dependant on location.

SAFETY

The following points are a summary of the key points in "Water Safety (incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids)".

Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids

When windsurfing the minimum requirements are as follows:

C, B1 or B2 waters - buoyancy aid to be worn (CE 50 Newton)

B3 waters -a lifejacket to be worn (CE 150 Newton) with inherent buoyancy capable of inflation to full buoyancy, or buoyancy aid (CE 50 Newton) with lifejacket of the type with no inherent buoyancy capable of inflation to 150 Newton capacity

A Class waters - requirements to be considered in the light of special authorisation granted for this activity.

Any lifejacket or buoyancy aid used for windsurfing should be of the type designed for the sport and conform to BMIF, BCU, BS or EEC standard and be marked accordingly. A whistle should be attached to the shoulder of the buoyancy aid.

Swimming

Members of the Association taking part in a water activity must be able to demonstrate to a suitable person (such as a Scouter) their ability to swim 50 metres in ordinary clothes and keep afloat for five minutes.

Other Hazards

Leaders and practitioners should be aware of the range of waterborne hazards such as Blue Green Algae, Weil's Disease, etc. Details of the dangers and symptoms are contained in the factsheet.

Hypothermia

Due to the possibility of multiple immersions followed by periods of standing in the wind, hypothermia is an identified problem which must be addressed. Except in very exceptional circumstances, a wet suit is essential. A winter steamer (or dry suit), boots, gloves and balaclava should be available in cold conditions.

Winter Conditions

Winter conditions can bring added problems. Windsurfing should only be carried out by experienced practitioners with suitable clothing, technical skills and rescue cover. The need for facilities with warm, dry changing rooms should be considered.

THE CRAFT

Instructors are reminded of the need to tailor equipment to the individual physical and mental needs of the young people in their charge. The RYA Junior Windsurfing Scheme contains much excellent advice.

In basic terms beginners over 14 years of age should be able to handle a long board (about 365 centimetres) while young or lighter beginners should be directed to a shorter board (325 centimetres) with a small skeg. The use of board without daggers or shorter than 300 centimetres requires advanced skills and should not be contemplated for beginners.

All craft and associated safety equipment should be maintained in a serviceable condition, they should be checked independently each year under arrangements made by the County or District.

Every Scout Group must maintain an adequate insurance cover, to be reviewed each year in respect of marine and boating risks. Headquarters can arrange insurance cover.

- All boards should have a rope loop at the front for attaching a towing line.
- There must be a safety leash to attach the mast to the board.
- The mast foot universal joint should be in good condition and on open sea waters this should have a strap round it to allow sailing to continue if the universal joint breaks.
- All ropes should be maintained in a good condition.
- Small sails and light rigs should be available for beginners, booms should not be overlong for the sails available.
- An RYA type Dayglo flag and pencil flares should be available if open sea windsurfing is contemplated.
- In open waters a rope (4 metres minimum) should be carried for repair or towing.
- Harnesses should be available for all intending to plane on B2 and B3 class waters.

PUBLICATIONS CROSS REFERENCE

The Policy, Organisation and Rules of The Scout Association Current Edition

The current editions of:

Authorisation for Water Activities	FS120601
Water Activity Assessment and Advice	FS120602
Water Safety (incorporating Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids)	FS120603
Windsurfing Log Book - W3 Royal Yachting Association	
Windsurfing Handbook Level 1-3 - W5 - Royal Yachting Association	
Windsurfing Handbook Level 4-5 - W6 - Royal Yachting Association	