

Guidelines for Girl Guides NSW & ACT

Checking Water Safety Compliance on Canoes, Kayaks and Dingys

The Assessor who checks for Water Safety Compliance is appointed by the Water Activities Consultant in consultation with the Outdoor Activities Consultant. These checks are to be conducted annually on all Guide owned, or operated craft.

Once a craft is identified as compliant, a certificate of Safety Compliance (sticker) is issued and must be displayed on the craft when in use. For easy recognition of this sticker, it is recommended that it is applied to the starboard bow of the craft.

All craft that are used and owned by Girl Guides NSW & ACT not only need to be approved for Safety Compliance but also must be registered with the State Office for insurance purposes.

When do I have to complete the Inspection?

As previously mentioned, the safety checks and certification must be completed annually. The forms are generally sent out from the State Office in September allowing through until the end of January the following year to have the forms completed and returned. This is to ensure that your craft are compliant for the ensuing year.

What does the Inspection involve?

When completing the Inspection you must note the following:

General: Perform a visual survey as to the general appearance and condition of the interior and exterior of the hull, including gunwale, and seats, ascertaining that there are no visible cracks or holes. There should be no rough edges on the gunwales that might cause splinters (fibreglass or wooden). There should be no cleats, screws, bolts or unrepaired damage that may catch on clothing.

Hull: Ensure that the craft is completely empty of water and dry on the inside. Float the craft on the water with the weight of 1 -2 adults (depending on the capacity of the craft) for 5 minutes, make sure it is still dry inside.

Buoyancy: Completely submerge the craft; it should float horizontally with some part above the water in both upright and upturned positions.

Hand holds: Hand holds should be fixed to the bow and stern of the craft to allow for easy carriage.

Painters: Painters (ropes) should be attached to the bow and stern of a kayak and at least one attached to the bow of a canoe. This allows for quick and easy towing if required.

Paddles: Blade should be free of cracks and firmly attached to shaft of paddle. Shaft should be smooth and free of splinters. Grip should be firmly attached to shaft and aligned with the blade. Paddle should float.

Bailers: Ideally a bailer should be attached to the inside of the craft.

Outboard Motors:

Propeller Guards: Ensure that every outboard motor used on boats has a propeller guard fitted to it. It is absolutely necessary that no outboard motors are used in any Guiding activity until a propeller guard has been properly fitted.

What else should I think about?

- Have you purchased any additional craft this year? Have I completed the Safety Inspection on this craft?
- Are the craft insured? Are they sufficiently insured? (Check with the State Office).
- Where there any ongoing maintenance concerns that should be noted?
- Do the instructors using this craft have up to date canoe qualifications?