

## **Aquatics Supervision: Swimming & Water Rescue and Paddle Craft Safety Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. The Aquatics Supervision text only lists course requirements. Where can I find information on instructor qualifications, course outlines, and exams?**

An instructor guide, recommended presentation material, and sample exams for each course may be downloaded from the BSA professional intranet site, ScoutNET, by council personnel. Those items will also be distributed to aquatics section attendees at National Camp School. Answers to most frequently asked questions are found in the instructor guides.

### **2. Is course material restricted, that is, only available from the council office to select individuals?**

No. All of the material, including the sample exams, may be freely distributed and copied. However, modification of the material is not authorized.

### **3. Why not place course material on a public Internet site for easier access?**

The material will be placed in public files on scouting.org. However, that site is being revamped and the transfer date is unknown. Distribution via ScoutNET was the easiest way to distribute instructor material following publication of the text. Also note that course offerings must have council approval.

### **4. Are the instructor materials really necessary since the requirements are straightforward enough for an experienced instructor to design a course syllabus from scratch?**

Yes. There are distinct instructor qualifications and each instructor is expected to conduct the course as directed in the instructor guides. Such standardization is needed to maintain a consistent, quality program throughout Scouting.

### **4. The answer key provided with the sample exams is not an exact match. Is that an error?**

No. Rather than try to maintain confidentiality of limited sets of exam questions, different exams for each course offering should be constructed from the bank of review questions in the Aquatics Supervision text, as explained in the instructor guides. The sample exam questions allow for over 200 combinations of questions. Therefore the answer key provides the proper response for all of the review questions in the text, which are numbered consistently on the sample exams for easy reference by the instructor to the corresponding answer on the answer key.

### **5. Are Boy Scout resident summer camps operated by councils required to offer Swimming & Water Rescue (SWR) and/or Paddle Craft Safety (PCS) courses to adults accompanying their troops?**

Not for 2009. However, such opportunities are encouraged. National standards do require that camps offer instruction in Safe Swim Defense (SSD) and Safety Afloat (SA). Since those programs are included in the syllabuses for SWR and PCS, camps may meet that obligation by combining the programs in joint sessions. Those wishing to complete SSD and SA need only attend the lecture/discussion sessions. Those wishing the entire training also attend the skill sessions. Programs and standards undergo regular review, so requirements may change in the future.

### **6. We plan to offer the new courses at summer camp. Since the programs are similar, should we optimize time and resources by dropping BSA Lifeguard training?**

Aquatics programming, subject to national camp standards, is at the discretion of the local council and is ideally coordinated with year-round training through an active council aquatics committee. The new programs, directed mainly at adults, and BSA LG, directed mainly at older youth on camp staffs, serve different purposes. BSA LG provides the professional lifeguard training needed for camp aquatics staff: Swimming & Water Rescue does not. Either or both programs may be offered prior to camp, during each camp session, or during a special week of aquatics camp.

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### **7. Should Boy Scout youth (16 and older as per the requirements) be encouraged to attend the Aquatics Supervision training sessions?**

Offering the training programs to older youth meets the objective of preparing the unit to safely conduct its own aquatics activities and is therefore appropriate. However, Boy Scouts should be encouraged to earn the Lifesaving merit badge prior to Swimming & Water Rescue, and to obtain the Canoeing merit badge and/or Kayaking BSA prior to Paddle Craft Safety. All youth with an active interest in lifeguarding and/or future positions as summer camp aquatics staff should be encouraged to attend a BSA Lifeguard program that may be offered prior to camp, during each camp session, or during a special week of aquatics camp.

### **8. Where can I offer suggestions to improve the courses?**

Contact your local council about instructor performance, equipment, and facilities. Contact Outdoor Programs at the national office about requirements and the instructor materials.