



# **SUNCOAST SENIOR'S RECREATIONAL KAYAK CLUB (SSRKC)**

## **POLICY DOCUMENTS**

- 1. HEALTH AND SAFETY**
- 2. RISK MANAGEMENT**
- 3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PADDLE CO-ORDINATORS**
- 4. PARTICIPANTS RESPONSIBILITIES**
- 5. CLUB CAMPS**
- 6. VISITORS**

# 1. HEALTH & SAFETY

## Reason for Policy:

- To ensure high levels of safety knowledge & understanding within the Club.
- To ensure that members are prepared for unexpected circumstances

## Policy Guidelines:

### 1. Skills Development

- SSRKC is a Peer Group Activity and provides no qualified training or instruction.
- Experienced members will be on hand to assist new members with the sport.
- Members will be offered the opportunity to participate in 2 'SKILLS DAY' meetings each year, where they can practice their paddling knowledge and skills.
- When requested by members, the SSRKC can facilitate skills training with a qualified kayak instructor. This will (may) be at the members expense.

### 2. Minimum Safety Requirements

- A Personal Floatation Device ( PFD type 2 or 3 – approved for relevant water conditions) must be worn on all club paddles.
- All members should be able to swim at least 25m with a PDF and in their paddling clothing.
- A 'pealess' whistle should be carried at all times in case of an emergency
- Suitable aquatic footwear should be worn.
- Pumps, bailers and/or sponges should be carried in the kayak.
- All craft should be fitted with a painter - a rope tied to the kayak for towing or tying to the shoreline when stopped.
- Safety responsibilities as set out in this document should be adhered to on all outings.
- Members are required to self-assess their suitability and their craft's suitability for each outing based on a personal judgment about prevailing conditions, fitness and health levels.

### 3. Recommended Options for Personal Wellbeing

- Wear clothing appropriate to weather conditions.
- Carry adequate drink and food.
- Wear a hat and apply sunscreen.
- Have available a set of dry clothes in case of getting wet.

## 2. RISK MANAGEMENT

### Reason for Policy

- To acknowledge that kayaking by its very nature is a water sport that has inherent risks.
- To ensure that risk management is an integral part of Club decision making at all levels.
- To minimise any foreseeable risk to people, disruption to club activity; and damage to property.
- To focus club members on the risks inherent in kayaking and the minimisation strategies and policies that the Club has adopted.
- To remind members of their responsibility to self assess their suitability when embarking on a paddle.
- Whilst the club will endeavour to minimise risk, we stress that as non - professionals, we expect each member to make appropriate decisions with regards to their level of ability and experience.

### Policy Guidelines

The Club will use the following framework for the management of risk.

- Avoid risks, where possible by thorough planning, flexibility and adapting when necessary (including the possibility of cancelling or changing the venue to reduce unnecessary risks.
- Reinforce risk protection through skills practice and safety programs, encourage greater awareness and use of common sense.
- By having a Risk Management plan in place ( see attachment B).
- By signing the club indemnity/waiver form each member acknowledges that kayaking, in its very nature does have an element of risk attached to each paddle.
- By promoting individuals to self assess in respect of their kayak, paddling gear, own health and fitness for each trip.

### **3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PADDLE COORDINATORS**

#### **Reason for Policy**

- To ensure that outings are well coordinated and executed.
- To ensure consistency in the planning and conduct of outings.
- To provide information to assist paddlers to self assess their suitability for embarking on the paddle.
- To identify and advise of mitigation strategies for any foreseeable risks.

#### **Policy Guidelines**

##### **1. Prior to outings - identify potential risks and plan to eliminate or mitigate**

- Obtain the current weather forecast from the BOM.
- Complete the Coordinator's Checklist.
- Obtain the attendance sheet, First Aid Kit, emergency paddle, EPIRB & throw bag/ ropes from previous leader.
- Ensure that all participants complete and sign the attendance sheet.
- Pre plan what the club will be doing for the day. Consult with experienced members for advice on tides or maps; check tides and weather data.
- If necessary, visit the venue prior to the day.

##### **2. At Commencement of the Paddle**

- Have all paddlers group together near their craft and discuss the day's program ( stops, meals, time of return).
- Check that the club's safety and emergency gear is safely stowed on a kayak
- Nominate lead boat and 'tail end Charlie'.
- Nominate partners for inexperienced and new members
- Remind paddlers to stay behind the lead boat.
- Count the number of craft on the water.
- Remind paddlers of their self assessment responsibilities
- Give a weather/tide report and advise any potential risks regarding the paddle.

##### **3. During the Paddle**

- Check progress of all craft and paddlers and maintain the cohesiveness of the group Allow rest periods when required.
- Monitor weather conditions.

#### **4. At the end of the Paddle**

- Complete the Trip Report on the Co-ordinators checklist and either give it to the secretary or leave attached to folder .
- Pass the folder and safety gear to the next week's co-ordinator or a committee member.

#### **5. Cancellation or relocation of the Program**

- If conditions are inclement or otherwise unsafe it may be prudent to cancel on the previous day or on the day – even after arriving at the venue. If appropriate, look for close, safe alternative venues.
- If conditions deteriorate during a paddle consult with Management Committee members or in their absence other experienced paddlers about altering the plan or returning to home.

#### **6. Heavy or Difficult Conditions.**

If the group finds itself in challenging conditions, for example crossing Lake Cootharaba with strong winds.

- Assemble the group for a briefing.
- Initiate the buddy system.
- Regroup, if possible, and check numbers and if everyone is okay.
- Deploy at least two Tail End Charlies.

## **4. PARTICIPANTS RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Reason for Policy**

- To ensure that paddlers take responsibility for their own actions by self assessing their paddling capabilities, the suitability of their equipment and their levels of health and fitness for each paddle
- To ensure that outings are well coordinated and executed.
- To ensure a consistent approach by all who attend
- To ensure the safety of the whole group.
- To ensure that each paddle is an enjoyable experience for all members.

### **Policy Guidelines**

#### **1. Prior to outing**

- Pre check weather conditions
- Be punctual – arrive 30 minutes prior to the trip departure time
- Advise the coordinator of any medical condition that may affect your paddling ability.
- Carry adequate water and food and any personnel gear required
- Self- assess your suitability and your craft's suitability for the Peer Activity outing in light of prevailing conditions. Withdraw if necessary and advise the leader.

#### **2. At Commencement of the Paddle**

- Assemble, as a group, for the co-ordinator to give specific details of the trip, introduce new members, note areas to watch out for and any other house keeping issues.
- Make final safety gear check
- Identify the forward leader and tail end Charlie

#### **3. During the Paddle**

- Comply with all club policies and all maritime waterway rules & regulations
- Advise the coordinator if you are feeling unsafe, unwell or fatigued at any time or if noticing distress in another paddlers
- Assist any paddlers who are requiring support.
- Join in supporting all paddlers to enjoy the outing

#### **4. At the End of the Day's Paddle**

- Assist others with disembarking, carrying kayaks and equipment and lifting them onto car roof racks.

## **5. CLUB CAMPS**

### **Reason for Policy**

- To ensure club camps are well organised and enjoyable to attend
- To maintain a high level of safety.

### **Policy Guidelines:**

#### **1. Who may participate**

- Financial club members and invited guests who have been endorsed by the committee may participate

#### **2. Camp Organisation**

- All club policies apply to members and guests attending camps.
- Club members will, on occasions be expected to share the camp organisational duties, which may include - co-ordinating a camp, arranging suitable daily paddles, organising social activities and special events and being available to support each and every participant if a need arises
- Members will be responsible for making their own arrangements for bookings.

**NOTE CLUB CAMPS ARE DEEMED “PEER ACTIVITIES”**

## 6. VISITORS

### Reason for Policy

- To document SSRKC requirements allowing quests/visitors paddling with the SSRKC

### Scope:

- This policy caters for quests and visitors attending SSRKC club paddle events. On occasion members of other kayak clubs may elect to paddle alongside SSRKC members. Such occasions are not covered under this policy as those paddlers would paddle under the auspices and rules of their own club.

### Policy Guidelines

#### Categories of visitors

- a. Potential new club members.
- b. Friends/relatives of current SSRKC members.
- c. Members of other Kayak Clubs.
- d. Experienced paddlers not affiliated with another Kayak Club but able to demonstrate or have references supporting that they have adequate paddling skills.

#### Categories of Club Paddles

1. Monday Paddle - generally a Grade 1 paddle conducted over 2 hours.
2. Thursday Paddle - up to Grade 2.5 conducted over a 4 hour period with a break.
3. Away Camp Paddle - conducted quarterly up to Grade 2.5.

#### Visitor participation requirements.

Participation as a visitor in ALL club events is subject to endorsement by the club, which can be obtained from a member of the management committee. This endorsement should be gained prior to the paddle day.

#### 1. Monday Paddles

- Are open to all categories of visitors.
- Visitors are required to sign the Guest Paddle Idemnity Form and trip sign on sheet.
- New potential club members are welcome to paddle with the club for up to 3 Monday paddle before making formal application to join the club.

#### 2. Thursday Paddles

- Are restricted to members.
- The Committee may give special exemption.
- Visitors will need to show they meet the skill and equipment requirements for a Thursday paddle.
- All visitors are required to sign the Guest Paddle Idemnity Form and trip sign on sheet.



### 3. Away Camps

- Are restricted to categories b,c, and d and only once per annum.
- Visitors are required to sign the Guest Paddle Idemnity Form and trip sign on sheet.
- Caegory b visitors must be supported by a current SSRKC member who can confirm their skill level is appropriate for the away camp paddles.