



Sandgate Canoe Club (SCC)
Recreational Creek Paddling: Safety Guidelines
Approved by Committee: 26 July 2016

The purpose of these guidelines is to promote safe, well-coordinated and enjoyable paddling activity for members of the Sandgate Canoe Club (1).

SCC Recreational Creek Paddling is a “Peer Activity” defined in the Australian Canoeing Safety Guidelines as:

“A paddling activity where no formal instructional or guiding structure exists. It is the responsibility of each paddler to ensure the suitability of their equipment and themselves for the activity.” (2)

In effect this means that if you are on the water, or preparing to get on the water, you personally assess:

1. Your competency and skill level to undertake the paddle activity.
2. The craft you are paddling is seaworthy.
3. The tide and weather conditions on the day – e.g. forecast wind, storm.
4. How communication in an emergency will be achieved.

Once on the water, you will be prepared to actively contribute to the safety of the paddle trip and to the decision-making within the paddle group related to safety on the water.

Guidelines

- [1] These guidelines relate to Recreational Creek Paddling on Nundah Creek and Cabbage Tree Creek by members of the Sandgate Canoe Club.
- [2] All paddlers will have completed the Australian Canoeing Basic Skills Award requirements - The Basic Skills represents the base standard of training within the Club (3).
- [3] Members will paddle in a group with a minimum of two persons. A larger group may split up into subgroups to accommodate different distances or travel speeds, but each subgroup must maintain this minimum.
- [4] Within a group, no paddler is to be left alone or isolated to paddle by him or herself. This means that each paddler must always be visible to, or within earshot of another paddler.
- [5] If a paddler is unable to complete the paddle (unwell, fatigued, injured etc.), as far as practicable, they will be escorted back to the launch area or to a disembarkation site until support can be arranged.
- [6] In the event of a paddler capsizing, as far as practicable:
 - the paddler will be helped to re-enter their craft and resume the paddle; or
 - if re-entry is not possible they will be escorted to shore.

- [7] All members are expected to carry sufficient drinking water to maintain hydration.
- [8] All members are expected to wear clothing suitable for paddling. This includes a hat, sun protection and footwear suitable for paddling, swimming and walking.
- [9] All members are required to be able to swim confidently in paddling clothing. Use of an approved PFD is strongly encouraged for all paddlers for this activity.
- [10] Every 12 months all members are strongly encouraged to participate in one of the Club's Safety and Rescue Practice (SARP) training days (4).
- [11] All members should self assess their capability against the SCC Grading System for Paddle activity (5). An expectation of at least Grade 0 or Grade 1 would be the requirement for Creek paddles.

Notes

- (1) Sandgate Canoe club Policies and Procedures and Grading System Paddling Operations By-Law version 4: March 2016: (Introduction, p3- "We strive to be a congenial Club conducting out outings in a safe and enjoyable environment"). Club Values, p3- "The Club seeks to promote the following values amongst its membership: Respect, Friendship, Support, Safety, Leadership, Enjoyment, fitness, Competition, Sharing and Caring."
- (2) Australian Canoeing Safety Guidelines January 2015 p8
- (3) Sandgate Canoe Club Policies and Procedures and Grading System Paddling Operations By-Law Version 4: March 2016: (Membership, p4).
- (4) Sandgate Canoe Club Policies and Procedures and Grading System Paddling Operations By-Law Version 4: March 2016: (Training, p 5).
- (5) Sandgate Canoe Club Policies and Procedures and Grading System Paddling Operations By-Law Version 4: March 2016: (Skills and Qualifications required At Each Grade, p11).

(SCC Recreational Creek Paddlers Safety Code 05: 26.7.16)