



United States Lifesaving Association

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Guideline: Personal Rescue Watercraft Agency Certification

Number: 007

Approved: November 3, 2018

Last Revised: November 4, 2021

Introduction

Personal rescue watercraft (PRWC) are employed by professional aquatic rescuers in a wide variety of environments. Their cost, size, speed, power, maneuverability, and relative ease of handling all contribute to their value in rescue. Like all motorboats however, personal rescue watercraft can pose hazards to the operator, crewperson, passenger(s), and others, unless the operator and crewperson are properly trained, and equipment is adequate. This is especially true if the operator is assigned to patrol and rescue in challenging aquatic conditions.

Due to the lack of established nationally recognized guidelines for the use of PRWC as a rescue tool, the United States Lifesaving Association convened experts in this field from organizations with extensive experience in use of personal rescue watercraft. Their professional knowledge of the subject ranged from large surf to relatively calm conditions; warm water to relatively cold; and a wide variety of aquatic areas of the United States.

These guidelines represent USLA recommended minimum standards for training and equipping operators to use personal rescue watercraft (PRWC). The USLA encourages agencies to exceed these standards, particularly in areas where challenges of environment or frequency of rescue exceed the norm. Adaptation to local circumstances is essential to the success of any open water rescue training program. Therefore, within these guidelines, training should be adapted to local conditions. Those trained under the guidelines are be considered fully qualified only in the local environments where training was conducted.

The USLA does not “certify” PRWC operators or crewpersons. Instead, the USLA certifies open water rescue agencies whose training standards follow USLA guidelines. The USLA certification system is therefore, in effect, an accreditation system for PRWC training and deployment programs.

Guidelines

Introductory Note: Training conducted under the USLA Personal Rescue Watercraft Agency Certification must be conducted on the coastline of the agency where operators and crewpersons will be employed or nearby areas with comparable conditions and geographic features.

Chair National Certification Committee: If you have questions not answered by this document, you may email the National Certification Committee Chair at certification@usla.org.

1. Steps to Certification

- 1.1. Agencies applying for certification must first be certified under the USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification program or Aquatic Rescue Response Team program.
- 1.2. Read the personnel standards and ensure that your agency is in compliance.
- 1.3. Read the *Minimum Equipment Standards* section of this guideline and ensure that your agency is in compliance.
- 1.4. Read the *Required Course Curriculum* of this guideline and ensure that your agency's basic training course includes all elements listed. A current copy of the most recent edition of *Open Water Lifesaving – The United States Lifesaving Association Manual* must be available to each trainee. In developing course curriculum, the *Resource Material* section of this guideline may be of assistance.
- 1.5. An agency wishing to have its personal rescue watercraft training program nationally certified submits a completed application (available in the Certification section of www.usla.org), along with appropriate payment.
- 1.6. The USLA will review the application for completeness and, once found to be complete, forward a copy to a Certification Officer from the USLA region in which the agency lies. The USLA will attempt to choose a Certification Officer who is geographically close to the applicant.
- 1.7. Within thirty (30) days of receiving an application, the Certification Officer is responsible for conducting a thorough review and submitting written findings. The review must include, at a minimum, checking all documents submitted and ensuring that they show the agency to be in compliance with the current guidelines of USLA for Personal Rescue Watercraft training and standards. An on-site visit is required for agencies not previously certified.
- 1.8. Upon receiving the written findings of a Certification Officer, the USLA will file a copy of the findings and forward a copy to the Certification Committee Chair for review by the

National Certification Committee. This committee, which normally meets in April and November in conjunction with the Board of Directors, is responsible for recommending approval or disapproval to the Board, with final approval requiring a majority vote of the full Board.

- 1.9. In any case of a finding by the Certification Committee and concurrence by the USLA Board of Directors, at any time, that an applying agency provided information in the application that was materially false or misleading, the application and agency certification shall be deemed void, the application fee shall be retained by USLA, and the agency shall be advised of the reason. A subsequent application by the agency shall not be accepted for a period of one year from action by the USLA Board of Directors and shall require documentation of full resolution of the issues which caused revocation.
 - 1.10. Upon a favorable decision by the Board of Directors, a certificate so stating and signed by the President and Certification Committee Chair, will be issued and valid for a period of three (3) years. The agency must then reapply, again submitting the current fee.
 - 1.11. Any changes to the recommended guidelines and standards which may be made by the Board of Directors after an agency has been certified become effective for future applications and renewals, but create no mandate for currently certified agencies. However, all certified agencies are strongly encouraged to adhere to the most current recommended guidelines.
 - 1.12. By applying for and accepting certification, the certified agency agrees to maintain all standards asserted in the application during the application and certification period. Certification is valid only so long as the certified agency continues to maintain these standards. In any case in which the USLA Certification Committee Chair determines that a certified agency's program fails to meet these standards, the Certification Committee Chair may suspend certification of the agency, which suspension is effected via written notice to an appropriate agency representative. A letter of suspension shall include details of the reasons and an explanation of how the suspension may be appealed, which shall be via a written letter to the USLA President, with copy to the Certification Committee Chair. This suspension shall be effective for 30 days, during which the National Certification Committee shall be consulted. With concurrence of the National Certification Committee, suspension may be extended an additional 60 days (for a total of 90 days). Within 90 days of suspension, the USLA Board of Directors or, between regular meetings of the Board of Directors, the USLA Executive Board shall review information provided by the Certification Committee Chair, the agency, and any other appropriate sources, and shall render a decision to revoke certification, to reinstate certification, or to take any other appropriate action. A letter of suspension shall include the following language: "As of the date of this letter, you are no longer operating as a USLA certified Personal Rescue Watercraft Agency. All rights and privileges accompanying USLA certification have been suspended until further notice."
2. USLA Certification Officer
- 2.1. Certification Officers are the persons primarily responsible for evaluating whether an applying agency adheres to the recommended guidelines of USLA. The standards for Certification officers are detailed in USLA Guideline 001.

3. Personal Rescue Watercraft Instructor

The following are standards for instructors of personal rescue watercraft training programs. These are the standards for lead instructors. This does not preclude the use of assistants, field training officers, or others who do not meet these standards. Personal Rescue Watercraft Instructors are directly responsible for ensuring that standards are met and that all training modules are taught by persons with proper credentials.

3.1. Prerequisite Qualifications

- 3.1.1. Work Experience – Must have worked a minimum cumulative total of 2,000 hours of employment compiled in no fewer than five seasons as a seasonal open water lifeguard or a full time open water lifeguard at a lifeguard agency certified under the USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program.
- 3.1.2. Education – Must possess a high school diploma or equivalency certificate.
- 3.1.3. PRWC Operator Experience – Must have at least 1,500 hours experience assigned as a Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator at a lifeguard agency certified under the USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program.

3.2. Standards to be Met and Maintained

- 3.2.1. Must be currently employed by an agency certified under the USLA Lifeguard Agency Certification Program and meet all required standards for open water rescuers.

4. Personal Rescue Watercraft Crewperson (PRWCC)

A Personal Rescue Watercraft Crewperson (PRWCC) is an integral component of any Personal Watercraft Rescue Unit and qualification as a PRWC is required prior to acting as a Personal Watercraft Rescue Operator (PRWCO). The primary function of the PRWCC is to retrieve victims, load them onto the rescue sled, and to provide them immediate basic life support and care. A PRWCC should be thoroughly familiar with all basic and intermediate functions of day-to-day maintenance and operations of the rescue craft.

4.1. Prerequisite Qualifications

- 4.1.1. Successful completion of a course meeting all curriculum elements recommended by USLA for open water rescuers. (See USLA Guidelines for Open Water Lifeguard Agency Certification and Aquatic Rescue Response Team – www.usla.org)
- 4.1.2. Minimum Experience and Training: 1,500 hours assigned as a lifeguard at a USLA certified lifeguard agency or a cumulative total of no less than 200 hours of documented ARRT training and response to aquatic rescue incidents while assigned to a USLA certified Aquatic Rescue Response Team. In cases where a PRWCC moves from the agency where the initial training took place to another, it shall be the obligation and discretion of the new agency to ensure thorough familiarity in local agency operations with regard to PRWCC as well as familiarization and knowledge of local areas prior to assignment as a PRWCC.

4.2. Training

- 4.2.1. Certified as successfully completing a course consisting of a total of not less than four (4) hours in a course which meets the curriculum requirements of the United States Lifesaving Association for Personal Rescue Watercraft Crewperson.

4.3. Standards to be Met and Maintained

- 4.3.1. Must be currently employed by a USLA certified agency (LACP or ARRT) and meet all required standards for open water rescuers.

5. Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator (PRWCO)

A Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator (PRWCO) is a rescuer appointed the responsibility of operating and supervising an agency's assigned rescue craft unit for the purpose of regular patrol and rescue operations. A PRWCO oversees, maintains, and is responsible for the rescue craft unit, including the rescue vehicle, trailer, and rescue craft. After successfully meeting all standards and obtaining a PRWCO certification, the PRWCO must successfully meet all annual requirements set forth by USLA for open water rescuers as well as any and all annual requirements set by the employing agency to maintain PRWCO status.

5.1. Prerequisite Qualifications

- 5.1.1. Minimum Age: 18 years
- 5.1.2. Successful completion of a course meeting all curriculum elements recommended by USLA for open water rescuers. (See USLA Guidelines for Open Water Lifeguard Agency Certification and Aquatic Rescue Response Team – www.usla.org)
- 5.1.3. Minimum Experience and Training: 1,500 hours assigned as a lifeguard at a USLA certified lifeguard agency or a cumulative total of no less than 200 hours of documented ARRT training and response to aquatic rescue incidents while assigned to a USLA certified Aquatic Rescue Response Team. In cases where a PRWCO moves from the agency where the initial training took place to another, it shall be the obligation and discretion of the new agency to ensure thorough familiarity in local agency operations with regard to PRWCO as well as familiarization and knowledge of local areas prior to assignment as a PRWCO.
- 5.1.4. Successful completion of a USLA certified course for Personal Rescue Watercraft Crewperson.
- 5.1.5. Successful completion of a course in Boating Skills and Seamanship (U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary), or State or Federal approved equivalent.

5.2. Training

- 5.2.1. Certified as successfully completing a course consisting of a total of not less than thirty-six (36) hours in a course which meets the curriculum requirements of the United States Lifesaving Association for Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator.

5.3. Standards to be Met and Maintained

- 5.3.1. Must be currently employed by a USLA certified agency (LACP or ARRT) and meet all required standards for open water rescuers.

- 5.3.2. Successful completion of twenty-four (24) hours of annual refresher training conducted by a Personal Rescue Watercraft Instructor as defined in this guideline.

6. Minimum Equipment Standards

NOTE: These are requirements in addition to minimum equipment requirements for all agencies under the USLA certification programs (LACP or ARRT).

6.1. Rescue

- 6.1.1. Federal and state (in state of use) equipment requirements.
- 6.1.2. Whistle for each operator.
- 6.1.3. Rescue tube for each PRWC.
- 6.1.4. Life jackets, U.S. Coast Guard approved Type II or Type III, in good and serviceable condition, appropriately sized for the intended user, and worn by the operator at all times. (Agencies may make temporary exceptions in specific circumstances due to usual conditions or assignments.)
- 6.1.5. Swim fins for rescue purposes readily accessible to personal rescue watercraft operators and crewperson(s).
- 6.1.6. Helmet, to be worn by the operator at all times, and recommended for the crewperson. (Agencies may make temporary exceptions in specific circumstances due to usual conditions or assignments.)
- 6.1.7. Tow/throw rope (rescue line) meeting specifications of the agency.
- 6.1.8. Knife, appropriate for use in the aquatic environment for cutting lines and related uses.
- 6.1.9. Rescue sled capable of supporting a rescuer and victim(s).
- 6.1.10. Protective footwear appropriate to the aquatic environment (strongly recommended).
- 6.1.11. Four stroke engine (strongly recommended).
- 6.1.12. Personal rescue watercraft with reversing capabilities (strongly recommended) for increased maneuverability.

6.2. Medical

- 6.2.1. A first aid kit adequate to treat minor injuries.
- 6.2.2. Barrier device for incidents involving resuscitation in rescue craft and accessible when conducting rescue in an open water environment.

6.3. Communications

- 6.3.1. Whistle.
- 6.3.2. Ship-to-shore radio for rescuer-to-rescuer communication and to immediately activate local emergency medical services (EMS).

6.4. Uniform

- 6.4.1. Rescuers are required to wear an easily identifiable uniform, denoting the wearer as a trained rescuer (e.g.: "Lifeguard," "Beach Patrol," "Marine Safety", "Rescue") and denoting the employing agency.

Resource Material

Required for All Students:

- **Open Water Lifesaving – The United States Lifesaving Association Manual (3rd Edition)**, *United States Lifesaving Association, B. Chris Brewster - Editor*

Recommended:

- **Personal rescue watercrafts Rescue Training Manual (Instructor Edition) – The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association**, *Randy Honebrink – Editor*
- **Personal rescue watercrafts Rescue Training Manual (Student Edition) – The Hawaiian Lifeguard Association**, *Randy Honebrink - Editor*
- **The Incident Command System (NFA-ICS-SM)**, *National Emergency Training Center, FEMA*

Personal Rescue Watercraft Curriculum

Terms

Demonstrate: means the instructor shows the candidate how to perform a skill the proper way so that the candidates may adequately perform it themselves.

Identify: means the instructor provides a full explanation to candidates and takes steps to validate their comprehension and retention.

Personal Flotation Device: means a flotation device manufactured in accordance with U.S. Coast Guard specifications that provides supplemental flotation for persons in the water.

Signaling Device: refers to any device that provides a distinct and predictable display, noise, or sensation that can be used to communicate a predetermined message or to attract the attention of other persons as desired by the initiator of the signal.

Watercraft: means a vessel that is propelled across the surface of a body of water by means of oars, paddles, water jets, propellers, towlines, or air cushions and is used to transport personnel and equipment while keeping their occupants out of the water.

Conveyance: means a device intended for the purpose of transporting, moving, lifting, or lowering watercraft that may be required to be operated prior to and at the conclusion of every watercraft deployment.

Hydrology: means the study of the properties, distribution, and effects of water in the atmosphere and on the earth's surfaces, specifically in reference to waves, effects of movement and/or currents.

Risk Management: means the system and process that provides a practical method to reduce injuries, loss of property, and loss of life while training for and in the operational application of rescue watercraft missions.

Unconscious Patient Pick Up: means rescuing a person from the open water who is unconscious.

Conscious Patient Pick Up: means rescuing a person from the open water who is conscious.

Single-Handed Pick Up: means rescuing a person from the open water using one hand.

Active Rider (Operator) Position: means the personal rescue watercraft operator positions their body to absorb any turbulence in open water. This is accomplished by the operator placing their feet in the gunnels slightly behind their shoulders (leaning forward). The operator is in a semi-standing position with knees slightly bent. This position allows for increased maneuverability and ability to handle rough water.

Point of No Return: means the point beyond which one must continue on one's current course of action because turning back is physically impossible or dangerous. A particular irreversible action can be a point of no return, but the point of no return can also be a calculated point during a continuous action.

Quartering, means the practice of aiming the boat's bow at a 45-degree angle to oncoming waves.

Emergency Counter Measure: means any time the PRWCO leaves the crewmember with the victim due to hazardous conditions.

Safe Zone: means a portion of the open water that is familiar, where the personal rescue watercraft operator has control of what happens to the craft.

1. Personal Rescue Watercraft Crewmember (PRWCC) Curriculum

1.1 Responsibilities and Operational Duties

Knowledge Objectives

- ☐ Identify departmental policies, procedures, and standard operating guidelines for rescue craft operations

1.2 Introduction to Personal Rescue Water Craft

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ All parts of the personal rescue watercraft including the launch trailer.
- ☐ Proper uses and applications of available craft.
- ☐ Proper driving and maritime etiquette applicable to available craft.
- ☐ Motor vehicle laws and operational protocols for support vehicles with watercraft conveyances.
- ☐ Identify the intermediate and basic operations of the rescue craft to a point where the candidate can retrieve and adequately operate the rescue craft safely and effectively should the operator become separated from the rescue craft

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate the intermediate operation of the rescue craft so that the operator can be retrieved in the event of separation from the rescue craft

1.3 Personal Protective Equipment

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Classes and selection of life jackets and water rescue helmets.
- ☐ Donning and doffing of life jackets and water rescue helmets.
- ☐ Selection criteria and donning of in-water insulating garments.
- ☐ Equipment and procedures for communicating rescue and distress signals.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Verbalize selection criteria for, and don and doff life jackets and water rescue helmet.
- ☐ Verbalize, and don and doff in-water insulating garments.
- ☐ Demonstrate proficiency in communicating distress via hand signals upon random selection of instructor(s).

1.4 Sled Rigging

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Components required in rigging sled to craft.
- ☐ Proper rigging of sled to craft.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate proper rigging of a sled to a craft while verbalizing each step to the instructor(s).

1.5 Rescue Craft Pick-Ups

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Identify drop-off and pick-up techniques applicable while acting as a PRWCC
- ☐ Identify conscious victim pick-up techniques applicable while acting as a PRWCC
- ☐ Identify floating unconscious victim pick-up techniques applicable while acting as a PRWCC
- ☐ Identify submerged unconscious victim pick-up techniques applicable while acting as a PRWCC
- ☐ Identify multiple victim pick-up techniques applicable while acting as a PRWCC

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate proper techniques of dismounting the sled during crewperson drop-offs and pick-ups (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location)
- ☐ Demonstrate proper crewperson techniques and responsibilities in a conscious victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location)
- ☐ Demonstrate proper crewperson techniques and responsibilities in an unconscious victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location)
- ☐ Demonstrate proper techniques and responsibilities in a two and/or multiple victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location)

1.6 Rider-Active Tandem and Sled Riding Techniques

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Identify safe and effective crewperson technique and positioning when riding tandem, “side-by-side”, on the rescue craft
- ☐ Identify sled-riding techniques to assist the Personal Watercraft Rescue Operator in turning the craft in open water, in a confined area such as docks or pilings, and around objects and/or other vessels
- ☐ Identify sled-riding techniques in and around a surf zone, including proper positioning during quartering, returning through surf, and impact zones in which the rescue craft begins to cavitate (if agency serves at a surf location)

Skill Objective

- ☐ Demonstrate safe and effective crewperson technique and positioning when riding tandem, “side-by-side”, on the rescue craft
- ☐ Demonstrate sled-riding techniques to assist the Personal Watercraft Rescue Operator in turning the craft in open water, in a confined area such as docks or pilings, and around objects and/or other vessels
- ☐ Identify sled-riding techniques in and around a surf zone including proper positioning during quartering, returning through surf, and impact zones in which the rescue craft begins to cavitate (if agency serves at a surf location)

1.7 Basic Life Support Techniques

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Identify techniques to administer basic life support to a victim on the sled
 - Bleeding control
 - Airway management

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate techniques to administer basic life support to a victim on the sled
 - Bleeding control
 - Airway management

2. Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator (PRWCO) Curriculum

2.1 Boating Rules and Regulations

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Federal boating rules and regulations.
- ☐ State boating laws.
- ☐ Local ordinances.
- ☐ Departmental policies, procedures, and standard operating guidelines.

2.2 Daily Post/Pre-Shift Maintenance and Dry/Wet Troubleshooting of Craft

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Mechanical components and functions of craft.
- ☐ Basic maintenance.
 - Oil
 - Gas
 - Plugs
 - Hoses
 - Impeller
 - Hull
- ☐ Pre and post-shift maintenance and checklists.
- ☐ Troubleshooting: Dry.
- ☐ Troubleshooting: Wet.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Define and explain the function and operations of a mechanical component of the craft randomly chosen by instructor(s).
- ☐ Define and explain all components of pre/post-shift maintenance.
- ☐ Troubleshoot and fix a dry craft altered randomly by instructor(s) given the tools and components available during regular daily operations.
- ☐ Troubleshoot and fix a wet craft altered randomly by instructor(s) given the tools and components available during regular daily operations.

2.3 Risk Management Practices for Routine and Emergency Operations

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Scene safety considerations.
- ☐ Contents of a site survey: types and accessible resources.
- ☐ Hydrology and influences of hydrology on rescues.
- ☐ Natural hazards associated with water rescue practices.
- ☐ Risk vs. benefit analysis.
- ☐ Hazard specific personal protective equipment.
- ☐ Factors influencing access and egress routes.
- ☐ Behavioral patterns of patient(s) in distress.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate ability to access and interpret reference materials.
- ☐ Demonstrate an ability to evaluate scene safety, identify, and address hazards, request additional resources (agencies) specific to hazards identified.
- ☐ Demonstrate anticipation, selection, and donning of personal protective equipment specific to hazards identified.

- ☐ Demonstrate an ability to predict patient behavior and movement.
- ☐ Demonstrate selection, proper access and egress routes for safe entry and exit to patient(s) position.

2.4 Launching and Recovering Craft

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Launching, docking, and recovery in harbors and marinas.
- ☐ Effective risk assessment of terrain for remote site launching and recovering using a beach or road trailer.
- ☐ Launching, beaching, and recovery of craft at a beach site with surf (If agency operates rescue craft in a surf environment).

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate proper launching and recovering of craft from a recreational boat ramp.
- ☐ Demonstrate proper launching and recovering of craft from a remote site chosen at the instructor(s) discretion.
- ☐ Demonstrate proper driving, launching and recovering of craft from a beach site with surf chosen at the instructor(s) discretion (If agency serves at a surf location).

2.5 Precision Operating and Righting

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Limitations and use of available personal rescue watercrafts.
- ☐ Dynamics of hydrology and wave action on watercraft handling.
- ☐ Conditional hazards of daily operations, of operator duties and crewperson assignments to effectively and safely maneuver craft during any operation in which conditional hazards are factors.
- ☐ Reversing controls, reversing maneuvers, and quick stopping.
- ☐ Turning skills.
- ☐ Approach driving.
- ☐ Righting a capsized craft.

Skill Objectives – Reversing

- ☐ Demonstrate, using a buoy as a reference point, stopping of craft as close as possible from a forward motion (upwind/downwind) using the reverse mechanism as a quick stop feature.
- ☐ Demonstrate a scenario in which the candidate will overrun a buoy by 5-10 feet and reverse back in straight line (repeat with crewperson on sled).
- ☐ Demonstrate a scenario in which, while reversing, the candidate will use the controls and create drag with their leg to execute a controlled turn to the left, then to the right hand side.

Skill Objectives – Turning

- ☐ Demonstrate, using two buoys as a reference point, riding in a figure eight (8) pattern at various speeds as instructed while controlling tendency of craft to “spin out”.
- ☐ Demonstrate approaching a line of five buoys and effectively “slalom” through the buoys while controlling speed, body weight, and body positioning.

Skill Objectives – Precision Approach Driving

- ☐ Demonstrate pulling alongside a pier or stopping next to a pre-selected point.
- ☐ Demonstrate pulling alongside a craft that is a) anchored, b) drifting and c) underway.
- ☐ Demonstrate approach and effective pick-up a small light object (e.g. tennis ball, plastic bottle, and floating stick) with minimal delay and time spent in a stationary position.
- ☐ Demonstrate approaching a patient in the water so that he/she can effectively mount the sled with minimal effort.
- ☐ Demonstrate approaching a buoy from at least 50 meters away and perform an accurate stop to simulate contact with a patient to make a quick pick-up.

2.6 Wave Judgment (if agency operates a personal rescue watercraft in a surf environment)

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Hydrology and hazard assessment of surf zones.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of making way through surf.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of returning through surf zones.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of entering and exiting surf zones.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of going over broken waves - “quartering”.
- ☐ The “Point of No Return”.
- ☐ Separation from craft.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of holding position in surf zone.
- ☐ Appropriate methods of turns in surf zone.
- ☐ Identify appropriate methods of righting a capsized craft in surf zone.
- ☐ No launch conditions.

Skill Objectives

Given proper personal protection equipment, with the proper safety measures in place, and a qualified instructor as a crewperson the candidate shall:

- ☐ Verbalize a quick and accurate assessment of all hazards and potential hazards in the surf zone prior to continuing with the next skill.
- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of making headway through surf without “quartering” craft.
- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of returning through surf without “quartering” craft.

- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of entering and exiting surf zone.
- ☐ Demonstrate proper approach from inside and outside the surf zone.
- ☐ Demonstrate a “quartering” maneuver while maintaining proper body positioning, speed, and positioning of craft without flipping the craft or compromising the safety of the operator or crewperson.
- ☐ Verbalize a “point of no return” scenario to the instructor.
- ☐ Demonstrate a simulated separation, remounting, and starting of craft under instructor(s) supervision and with safety crew in place.
- ☐ Demonstrate holding position in the surf zone; chosen and for a time designated by the instructor(s).
- ☐ Demonstrate proper turning of craft in surf zone, being mindful of the “Point of No Return” and avoiding being caught sideways by whitewater.
- ☐ Demonstrate in flat water, and with the aid of an instructor as a crewperson, the proper procedure for righting a capsized craft.

2.7 Personal Rescue Watercraft Pick-Up

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Crew drop-off and pick-up.
- ☐ Conscious victim pick-up.
- ☐ Floating unconscious victim pick-up.
- ☐ Submerged unconscious victim pick-up.
- ☐ Multiple victim pick-up.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of crew drop-off and pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location).
- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of conscious victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location).
- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of unconscious victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location).
- ☐ Demonstrate proper method of two and multiple victim pick-up (flat water and in surf conditions if agency serves at a surf location).

2.8 Search and Rescue Operations Utilizing a Personal Rescue Watercraft

Knowledge Objectives

- ☐ Topographical map components, hydrological factors, and methods to determine high probability of detection areas.
- ☐ Critical interview questions and practices.
- ☐ Personnel availability and effects on the search parameters.
- ☐ Search strategies and methods utilizing rescue craft.

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate, in a controlled environment best simulating a search and rescue incident, the proper method of conducting interviews, determining scene safety

and hydrology, correlating personnel availability and implementing a search strategy best suiting the parameters.

2.9 Specialized Ancillary Rescue and Support Equipment

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Applications, limitations, and use of throw bags.
- ☐ Applications, limitations, and use of rescue buoys.
- ☐ Applications, limitations, and use of all-terrain vehicles as a function for launching and recovery operations (If applicable to agency).

Skill Objectives

- ☐ Demonstrate the proper applications and use of throw bags as instructed.
Demonstrate the proper applications and use of rescue buoys as instructed.
- ☐ Demonstrate the applications and proper use of all-terrain vehicles as a function for launching the craft (If applicable to agency).

2.10 Aircraft Support (if applicable to agency)

Demonstrate, Identify, and Discuss

- ☐ Local aircraft capabilities and limitations.
- ☐ Landing zone requirements.
- ☐ Hazards to aircraft.
- ☐ Local aircraft protocols.
- ☐ Procedures for operating around aircraft on land.
- ☐ Dynamics of rescue operations with regard to water rescue operations utilizing rescue craft around the aircraft.
- ☐ Crash survival principles.
- ☐ Personal protection equipment limitations and selection criteria.
- ☐ Ancillary helicopter rescue equipment and potential hazards such equipment may pose during water rescue operations when utilizing a rescue craft.

2.11 Certification Skills Testing

- ☐ Candidate is required to pass each task step. Candidate is only allowed one opportunity for remediation.
- ☐ If annual refresher training hours specified in the guidelines are not maintained, the person is required to retake the Personal Rescue Watercraft Operator course.
- ☐ Candidates can only pass or fail a specific skill.
- ☐ Skills testing can be “not applicable” based on agency specific conditions.