



Essentials of River Safety and Rescue Instructor Performance Objectives

Venue: ERSR instructor courses are taught on class I to II rapids.

Course Objectives:

- Promote proactive prevention of river accidents and injuries.
- Develop and practice key self-rescue skills.
- Identify and avoid river hazards by understanding hydrology, hazards, and river features.
- Focus on fast, low-risk strategies for early management of river accidents
- Practice methods for recovering swimmers, and loose boats and equipment

General Instructor Objectives:

- Focus on course objectives above and overall participant safety
- Effectively and accurately demonstrate and teach all skills addressed in the skills course. Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of all topics
- Use a wide variety of teaching styles and techniques in response to participant needs and logistic constraints. Demonstrate an effective knowledge of learning styles.
- Develop a “critical eye” to help identify and solve common participant errors
- Develop multiple techniques to help correct participant errors/inefficiencies
- Manage each course module and the overall course according to ACA instructional best practices, and with strong attention to site- and course-specific logistics.
- Choose appropriate sites for courses and specific drills.

Course Specific Instructor Objectives:

1. Class Management

- 1.1. Collect and administer all appropriate course paperwork
- 1.2. Establish an appropriate learning environment

2. Rescue Philosophy

- 2.1. Focus on prevention and preparation as the keys to managing river accidents
- 2.2. Establish rescue priorities and apply them throughout the course
- 2.3. Focus on simpler, safer, faster techniques as highest priority

3. Scene Management

- 3.1. Describe common roles in the incident command system (ICS). Understand the differences between formal (ICS) used by professional rescuers and the informal system used by recreational boaters.
- 3.2. Appropriately apply formal and informal incident command systems to course evolutions and scenarios
- 3.3. Establish / review appropriate communication techniques

4. Medical Issues

- 4.1. Appropriately manage medical events during courses
- 4.2. Encourage participants to further their medical training

- 4.3. Understand how to obtain more advanced medical and rescue care at the teaching site, and recognize challenges associated with medical care in remote / aquatic environments.

5. Equipment

- 5.1. Focus on how to choose appropriate gear, instead of focusing on what the instructor
- 5.2. personally prefers
- 5.3. Emphasize prior planning and practice when using rescue equipment
- 5.4. Understand the strengths and limitations of personal gear and rescue equipment

6. Throw Ropes

- 6.1. Discuss rope construction and characteristics desired in a river rescue rope
- 6.2. Discuss and demonstrate appropriate rope care
- 6.3. Explain advantages and disadvantages of all throwing techniques
- 6.4. Discuss and demonstrate appropriate belay techniques
- 6.5. Discuss and demonstrate proper rope receiving techniques
- 6.6. Discuss and demonstrate multiple techniques for restuffing bags
- 6.7. Discuss and demonstrate multiple techniques for recoiling ropes
- 6.8. Demonstrate a vector pull and discuss its applications to rope rescue
- 6.9. Consistently throw a bag at least 30 feet to a swimmer in a rapid, using multiple techniques, including a coil.
- 6.10. Coil and make a second accurate throw, to a victim in a rapid at least 25 feet away, within 30 seconds.
- 6.11. Consistently throw a bag at least 30 feet and cross a stationary, on-land, 4 foot wide target, using multiple techniques, including a coil

7. Water Hazards and Hydrology

- 7.1. Create effective teaching modules using blackboards, handouts, sand tables, video, etc., as well as using natural features while alongside a river
- 7.2. Appropriately apply hydrology to site selection and to all in-water modules

8. Swimming

- 8.1. Choose appropriate swimming venues, with lower risk to students
- 8.2. Discuss and demonstrate appropriate techniques for entering rivers
- 8.3. Discuss and demonstrate defensive and aggressive swimming techniques
- 8.4. Effectively and repeatedly peel out, catch eddies and ferry. Effectively swim through waves and hydraulics
- 8.5. Aggressively swim a downstream class I or higher whitewater course at least 75 yards long, with multiple ferries and eddy moves
- 8.6. Discuss appropriate techniques for managing strainer, holes and drops

9. Wading

- 9.1. Discuss and demonstrate multiple wading techniques
- 9.2. Choose appropriate techniques for application in other skill modules
- 9.3. Discuss and demonstrate practical applications of wading solo with a paddle and wading with a partner

10. Boat-based rescue

- 10.1. Paddle candidate's craft of choice effectively and comfortably in class I+ whitewater
- 10.2. Demonstrate a working knowledge of all types of boat-based rescue, for all paddle craft
- 10.3. Emphasize the importance of paddling skill for effective boat-based rescues
- 10.4. Discuss the rationale for boat-based rescue over potentially lower risk techniques

11. Pins

- 11.1. Focus on avoiding pins and early self rescue
- 11.2. Understand rescuer hazards associated with pin release
- 11.3. Focus on rescue priorities – people over equipment

11.4. Use multiple techniques to effectively release pinned craft and equipment

12. Entrapments

- 12.1. Focus on avoiding entrapments and maintaining rescue safety
- 12.2. Identify common causes of entrapment
- 12.3. Use appropriate skills to contact the victim and release the entrapment
- 12.4. Discuss and demonstrate use of stabilization and snag lines

13. Scenarios

- 13.1. Create scenarios appropriate for specific sites and participants
- 13.2. Effectively manage scenarios
- 13.3. Provide effective feedback to scenario participants
- 13.4. Effectively participate in appropriately challenging scenarios

14. Closing

- 14.1. Guide participants to appropriate further training opportunities
- 14.2. Emphasize the need for ongoing practice and education