

**BSA Leader Training for Youth Boating  
Between United States Coast Guard  
And the Boy Scouts of America**

**Agreement No. 1002.10**

**Final Report – Ending December 31, 2011**

**Prepared January 31, 2012**

Submitted by Keith Christopher

**Executive Summary**

Our main objective of the *Safety Afloat and Paddle Craft Safety* project was to ‘Maintain/Improve the safety record of BSA youth boating programs’. To help accomplish this objective we planned on developing 1) an online training module for BSA *Safety Afloat* and 2) a digital presentation for BSA *Paddle Craft Safety* training. This was accomplished through the support of the U. S. Coast Guard Grant.

A Safety Afloat training module was put online in 2005, although the training was still available in other venues. For example, BSA summer camps are required to offer the training during each camp session. One goal of the grant was to standardize all presentation materials between online and instructor-conducted training options.

Over 42,000 adults complete the online Safety Afloat training each year. That online training module needed revision to include recent policy refinements. The old format used cartoons rather than actual photos or videos. Viewer interaction is not the same quality as more recent BSA online training modules for other subjects.

The requested grant funding was used to produce a professional- quality update for Safety Afloat online training and production of a DVD for live training options, using a re-designed format along with new video, audio, and still photography.

The BSA national office maintains a publication staff experienced in producing written literature, videos, and on-line training modules with the help of outside contractors as needed. Similar products to those in the grant, for example, online training modules for Trek Safety, Climb-On Safety, and Weather Hazards have been recently implemented. The project director was directly involved with those projects, as well as updates to the policies and support literature for Safety Afloat and development of the training material for Paddle Craft Safety. The likelihood of successful project completion is high.

Technical guidance for the grant products will be provided free-of-charge by volunteer subject matter experts. Video locations and participants should be available at no cost. Therefore, the grant funds are leveraged and cost effective. The online course supported by the grant will be free to participants

The BSA National Health and Safety Support Committee closely monitor fatalities and serious injuries that occur during Scouting events. The fatality per member rates from boating and swimming activities

are lower than those for the U.S. population at large, but the BSA goal is zero. That goal was met in four of the past ten years. The training products produced from the proposed grant are designed to keep the numbers as low as possible. That in turn supports the RBS mission to minimize loss of life and personal injury.

Youth, and often their parents serving as volunteers, naturally move through the BSA program as they age. Therefore the tens of thousands of BSA members who yearly participate in basic through advanced boating safety programs easily translate into hundreds of thousands of former members now part of the general population who have a firm footing in boating safety thanks to their BSA experience. That supports awareness of safe boating practices, life jacket wear, and other items that are objectives of the RBS program. The BSA will track the numbers of adults trained using the grant products on an annual basis and will provide those figures on request.

In order to ensure a quality product is produced, we worked closely with our subject matter experts who serve on our volunteer Aquatics Task Force. This group helped draft guidelines and storyboards for online Safety Afloat training and the Paddle Craft Safety presentations. The subject matter experts met with production staff to settle product design sufficiently to plan shooting needs and types of locations.

The National BSA office assigned staff and contracted outside services, such as video photographers and online training specialists, as needed. Aquatics sites were selected for video and still photography. Camps near the national BSA office in Irving TX were logical venues for most of the footage. The goal was to minimize travel costs and time while providing excellent examples.

Opportunities, such as the National Boy Scout Jamboree and the Sea Scout's International Sailing Koch Cup, were also used to reduce costs by utilizing these boating events for filming. Participant arrangements were made at BSA camps to use camp staff and onsite units in the footage. The BSA has procedures already in place for securing legal releases for any filming.

Several copies of the final DVD/CD were mailed at the end of December 2011 to Carlin Hertz, Non Profit Grants Coordinator for the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety Office. Any other collateral needed may be requested for use to address other audiences or to cover a specific need in boating safety. The cover of the DVD and the online version of the Safety Afloat training show the logos of the United States Coast Guard and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security with a statement 'Produced under a grant from the Sport Fish Restoration and boating Trust Fund administered by the U.S. Coast Guard'.

The Coast Guard is granted, at no cost, a non-exclusive, irrevocable license to publish, duplicate, exhibit or otherwise dispose of reports, data, or other information developed by the Boy Scouts of America through this grant project, including any copyrightable material.

### **Abstract**

***Safety Afloat*** training provides safety guidelines for adults, parents, or youth conducting any boating activity. The training outlines the knowledge, procedures, skills, and preparation needed to prevent and respond to boating accidents.

The training should be taken by anyone (both adult and youth) supervising any on-the-water boating activities with vessels of all types: sail, motor, or paddle craft. The nine points of Safety Afloat are covered in this training, along with recommendations on how to obtain the knowledge and skills specified in various points.

**BSA Paddle Craft Safety** expands Safety Afloat training to include the skills, as well as the knowledge, needed for a unit leader or adult to confidently supervise canoeing or kayaking excursions on flat water. Persons completing the training should be better able to assess their preparation to supervise paddle craft activities.

The new Safety Afloat policy and online training is available online at [www.scouting.org](http://www.scouting.org). A person need not be a member of the BSA to access the site and take the training. A link to Safety Afloat is [www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/gss02.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/HealthandSafety/GSS/gss02.aspx). Online training histories for registered members are automatically updated when the online version of Safety Afloat is completed. A training certificate is available to be printed at the end of the course.

Safety Afloat training may be offered locally by instructors approved by the council aquatics committee or other council authority. Such training would utilize the Safety Afloat video contained on the new **Safety Afloat/Paddle Craft Safety** DVD, now available also through our Supply catalog No. AV-09DVD02. A complimentary copy of the DVD/CD was provided to all 302 local councils and territories through the grant from the United States Coast Guard Recreational Boating Safety program.

Although Safety Afloat procedures require leaders to have skill training for the watercraft used in the activity, skill training is not part of the basic Safety Afloat training, and is not required to obtain a commitment card. Skill training for canoes or kayaks is provided by Aquatics Supervision: Paddle Craft Safety instruction. This **Safety Afloat/Paddle Craft Safety** DVD also contains an instructor's guide, a PowerPoint, and two training videos for the Paddle Craft Safety course—one for canoeing and one for kayaking. The training and support materials are in English and Spanish.

#### **Tasks Accomplished in last quarter between October 1 – December 31, 2011:**

The project was completed by the extended deadline of December 31, 2011. We spent this last quarter completing the tape copying for the Safety Afloat video and completing the PowerPoint and final footage/stills/video for the Paddle Craft Safety training.

1. Complete on site taping for final footage for video and stills for Safety Afloat training and Paddle Craft Safety training
2. Shoot additional footage/stills for Paddle Craft Safety training support
3. Prepared for filming of remaining list of needed scenes
4. Complete preparation for final presentation for Paddle Craft Safety training
5. Produce DVDs for distribution, including training outline
6. Mail copies of DVD to all local councils to use in training of youth and adults
7. Share copies for all camp schools training aquatics/boating personnel

**Tasks completed during project timeframe—July 2012 – December 2011:**

<b><u>Tasks completed</u></b>	<b><u>Date to be completed</u></b>
1. Outline developed for basic format of training	Summer 2010
2. Shoot stills and video for project at summer events	August 31, 2010
3. Storyboard outlined and rough draft developed	September 1, 2010
4. Script outline draft developed with visual and audio proposed	September 30, 2010
5. Review of available assets for video and stills	October 15, 2010
6. Develop list of potential initial scenes to be filmed	October 31, 2010
7. Finalize story boards and scripts and scene shot needs	December 31, 2010
8. Filming session for qualified supervision/classification scenes	January 31, 2011
9. Tape narrator in studio	January 31, 2011
10. Review of initial footage/training by Aquatics Task Force	March 26, 2011
11. Filming session for outdoor lake boating scenes	April 2, 2011
12. Review of all footage and stills in hand to manage needs	April 10, 2011
13. First draft of training video reviewed	April 15, 2011
14. Final draft of training video reviewed	May 15, 2011
15. Development of and approval of wrapper for casing of DVD	May 31, 2011
16. Development of presentation of Paddle Craft Safety training used in training adults and older youth	June 1, 2011
17. Shoot any additional footage/stills needed to support the Paddle Craft Safety training	June 30, 2011
18. Filming session to take additional outdoor footage	June 29-July 1, 2011
19. Review and selection of final footage to develop DVD	July 25, 2011
20. Conduct final videotaping for scenes for Paddle Craft Safety	August 31, 2011
21. Secure DVD and cover approval of content for Safety Afloat	September 30, 2011
22. Review of Paddle Craft Safety training presentation	October 31, 2011
23. Preparation of release of printed DVD and training outline	November 15, 2011
24. Complete editing of videos for Paddle Craft Safety	December 1, 2011
25. Release of Safety Afloat training	December 20, 2011
26. Release of Paddle Craft Safety training presentation	December 20, 2011

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