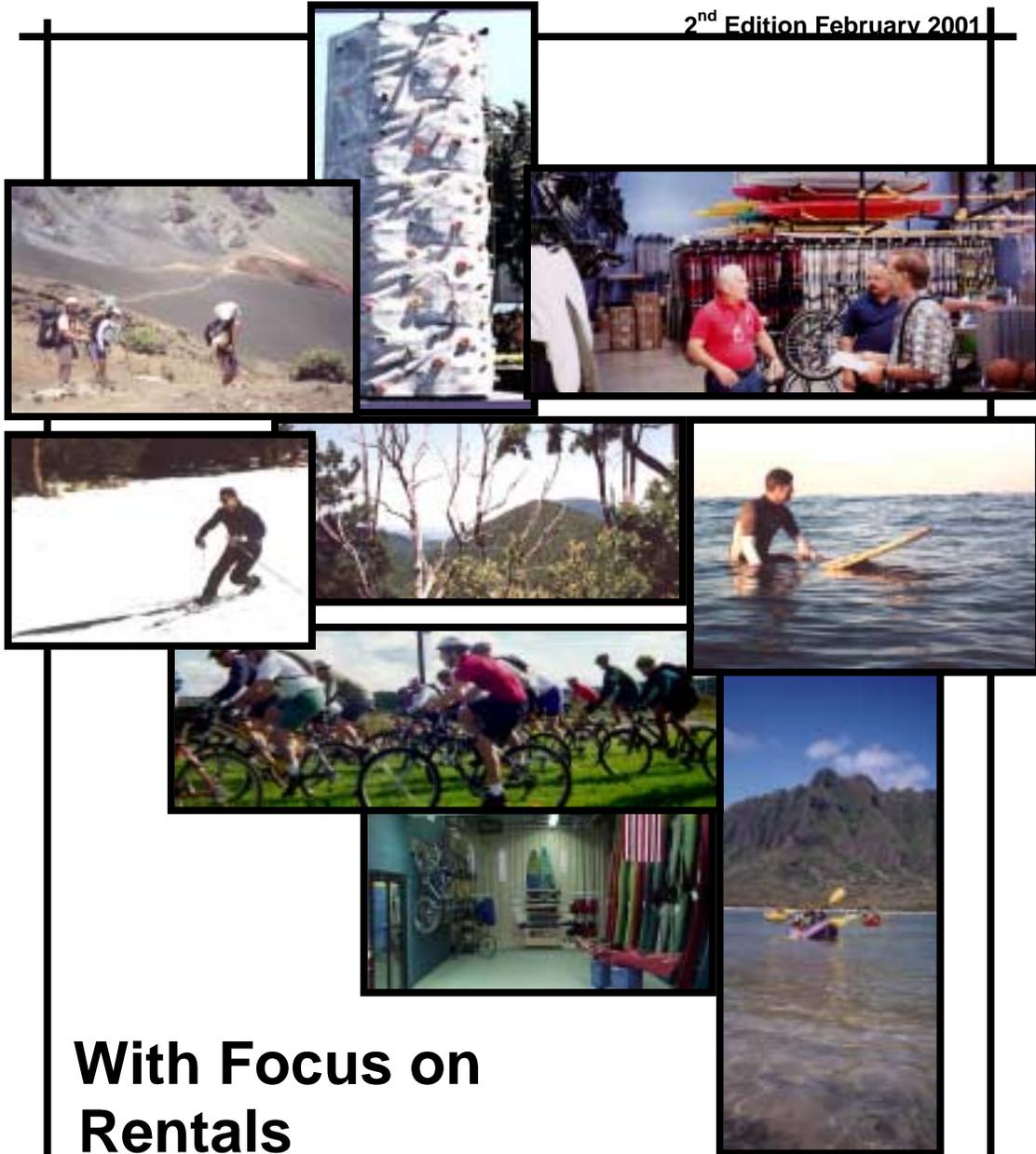


Outdoor Adventure Center's Managers' Guide

2nd Edition February 2001



**With Focus on
Rentals**

US Navy Morale, Welfare, & Recreation

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Outdoor Adventure Center’s Managers’ Guide; With Focus on Rentals

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U.S. Navy Morale, Welfare & Recreation

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CENTER'S MANAGERS' GUIDE; WITH FOCUS ON RENTALS

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF GUIDE

This manual is intended as a guide for Navy Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Outdoor Adventure Center (OAC) managers and staff. While the overall goal is for everyone to have comprehensive outdoor programs with all the core program elements; it is recognized that each rental operation is different. The manual has been written to address the wide variety of differences, which occur because of variables such as location, environmental conditions, adjacent and/or accessible civilian recreation opportunities, and the particular mission of each MWR Department and base.

The OAC is a facility that provides outdoor adventure equipment items to encourage and promote organized and self-directed outdoor adventure activities. At larger bases the OAC is often a stand-alone facility while at the smaller bases it is more common for the OAC to be co-located with one or more related programs in a single facility. Moreover, it is not uncommon for staff to be shared between all of the activities in the single facility and with other MWR programs. It is understood that base demographics, the local environment, seasonal opportunities, natural resources, funding levels, base traditions, and the staff's knowledge and skills govern equipment types and quantities of equipment offered.

This manual applies to any outdoor adventure program that rents equipment and gear. These guidelines can be applied worldwide to ensure Sailors and their families have access to the best possible outdoor

**PURPOSE OF
GUIDE
(cont.)**

adventure rental services possible, regardless of duty station.

The ultimate goal of this publication is to improve Navy Outdoor Adventure Centers worldwide. Outdoor Adventure Programs will be covered in another manual.

This guide is not a substitute for, nor does it take precedence over, DoD and DON regulations, instructions, and directives concerning MWR operations. Rather, this guide should be viewed and used as a supplement. Should contradictory information exist between this guide and the existing regularities; the existing regulation takes precedence.

**MWR VISION
STATEMENT**

Navy MWR is committed to providing our Sailors and their families access to the best possible customer-focused, MWR core program package regardless of duty station.

**OUTDOOR
ADVENTURE
MISSION
STATEMENT
& GOALS**

Our mission is to provide high quality outdoor adventure opportunities for the military community that empower individuals to grow physically, mentally, and spiritually, enhancing quality of life, and fostering passion for the outdoors.

- Introduce people to outdoor adventure activities and their associated values and benefits.
 - Instruct people in appropriate attitudes, behaviors, and skills relevant to outdoor activities.
 - Organize and lead safe and challenging outings, activities, and programs.
 - Facilitate individual or externally sponsored outdoor pursuits through the provision of information, equipment rentals, sales, and referrals.
 - Provide high quality affordable outdoor adventure equipment.
-

**AVAILABILITY OF
ASSISTANCE**

One of Navy Personnel Command, MWR, Community Support Branch's functions is to offer assistance and technical advice to commands operating or initiating Outdoor Adventure Programs and Outdoor Recreation. If you are looking for assistance, please contact one of the following people.

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BACKGROUND & PROGRAM IDENTITY

PROGRAM DEFINITIONS & IDENTITY

The objective of the Navy's Outdoor Adventure Program is to introduce Sailors and their families to lifetime outdoor adventure pursuits and provide them with opportunities to participate. The associated values and benefits of participating in outdoor-related activities effectively contribute to the Navy's quality of life and retention efforts. Outdoor Adventure has long lasting, broad scope effects on other areas of a participant's life. Benefits include increased self-esteem, overall happiness, and general well being. The Outdoor Adventure Program promotes physical fitness, teamwork, leadership, skill development, and environmental ethics.

Currently, Navy Outdoor Adventure programs are a mismatch of unfocused energy and ill-defined operations. While there are a few excellent operations, there is no accepted definition, focus, or identity. Neither are there standards for core program elements, performance goals, nor program expectations for staff or customers.

At many Navy locations, Outdoor Adventure is a "catch- all" for rental equipment, such as lawn mowers, chain saws, carpet cleaners, athletic related equipment (softball, badminton, croquet), and party, picnic, and catering equipment (tables, chairs, grills, canopies, Santa suits, etc.). These items fit in a broad-spectrum rental shop, but have nothing to do with Outdoor Adventure creation. Outdoor Adventure should be an operation that stands on its own, has it's own individual identity and focus like a food and beverage facility, bowling center, or fitness program.

**PROGRAM
DEFINITIONS
& IDENTITY
(cont.)**

Factors that affect the types of outdoor programs offered include the base or regional demographics, professional and technical expertise of the outdoor adventure staff, installation, program culture and traditions, the geographic environment, and available funding.

A total service outdoor adventure program includes rentals, retail sales, repairs, instruction, competitions, and trips applied to “human powered” outdoor adventure. Every base has unique assets and requirements so outdoor adventure program delivery will vary, but a common identity is critical to ensure Navy wide consistency. Grouping like interests into the following facility and program options will reduce confusion, help direct the focus and convey the purpose of each base’s outdoor adventure program.

To keep outdoor adventure well defined, the following options are provided:

Outdoor Adventure Centers

The focus of these operations is typically human powered and specific to outdoor adventure activities. The program includes outdoor gear rentals, sales, instruction, repairs, trips, classes, and a resource and information center. The activities offered preferably take place in a natural, front-country, backcountry, or wilderness environment.

The name of the operation may reflect anything related to human powered outdoor pursuits. The name, image, and theme should be consistent with what is offered. *(The focus of Navy MWR's Outdoor Adventure Program Master Plan, accompanying standards, and metrics is on this program delivery option. The entire MWR Master Plan can be found at <http://mwr.navy.mil/subpages/mwrplns.htm>.)*

**PROGRAM
DEFINITIONS
& IDENTITY
(cont.)**

Outdoor Center & Other Rentals

Combinations of the Rental Center and the Outdoor Adventure Center, with the stipulation they must each have their own identity and area. These areas are discussed in more detail, but the focus of this guidebook is on improving rental programs. Not unlike a shopping mall, the Outdoor Adventure Center and Rental Center items are physically and visually separated into their own unique areas of the facility. They are marketed separately and have trained and specialized employees for each area. The name, image, and theme are consistent with what is offered. A typical example is an operation that rents camping trailers, motor boats, and other rentals, but also offers outdoor programs, trips, and classes. The trailers and motor boats can easily be visually and physically separated since they are usually stored outdoors.

Rental Centers

Rental shops carry a variety of equipment unrelated to outdoor adventure but may also include outdoor gear. Examples include trailers, boats, dunk tanks, home and garden tools, camping gear, athletic equipment, party items, catering items, U-Hauls, etc. Anything can be in the rental inventory that is appropriate, and within policies or local agreements between the Navy Exchange (NEX) and MWR. Instruction, repairs, and sales related to the equipment are appropriate. The name, image, and theme will be consistent with what is offered. Rental Centers should be considered rental shops, not outdoor adventure.

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OVERVIEW OF CORE PROGRAM ELEMENTS

CORE PROGRAMS

Unless the rental activity functions as a pure rental shop, the following core elements are needed for a consistent quality outdoor adventure program:

RENTAL

Rentals fill the customers need for high quality specialized outdoor gear required to participate in outdoor activities. High quality gear utilizing the latest technology will make the activity more enjoyable, easier to learn, and safer.

RETAIL SALES

An outdoor equipment retail operation will support the customer who has progressed beyond the novice stage of an outdoor pursuit. Frequent users and renters will find it's more cost effective and convenient to own than rent. Also, it is more practical to sell some items rather than renting them. Retail sales offer discounts to Sailors while the revenue will help offset the cost of the other program elements.

REPAIRS

Repairs are a valuable customer service, because most people do not have the skill, knowledge, time, desire, or special tools required to safely repair their equipment, especially items like bikes, skis, and snowboards. A repair service will also increase retail revenue. Almost every time a customer brings something in for repair, they are going to need some new parts.

**CORE PROGRAM
(cont.)**

EDUCATION AND SKILL INSTRUCTION

Instruction will provide personal and team development. The object is to teach people appropriate behaviors, ethics, and skills relevant to outdoor activities.

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Because of the transient nature of our population, reliable information and advice on all local outdoor activities, areas, instruction, and gear is a service that customers value. Information is available to educate the customer or offer information needed for self-directed outdoor activities. This includes videotapes, maps, guide books, brochures, gear lists, weather, ski reports, etc. First hand knowledge of experienced staff members is always the best source of information.

COMPETITIONS

Competitions are for the sake of fun, physical fitness, and the chance to test one's limits in an outdoor environment using outdoor skills, and outdoor gear.

**GENERAL
PRINCIPLES**

OAC activities are designed to meet the needs of the military community focusing on facilitating the use of outdoor equipment and educating customers on proper (safe) use, per Navy Outdoor Adventure accepted ethical and professional standards.

Rentals provide patrons an opportunity to participate in individual or group outdoor activities.

- Good, reliable gear is vital for a successful outdoor adventure program. If patrons have access to high quality, specialized outdoor rental gear, the activity will be more enjoyable, easier to learn, and safer.

**GENERAL
PRINCIPLES
(cont.)**

- Rental shops need equipment that the customer would like to be “seen with.” Name brands and image are important and attractive to all users. Being seen with the latest and greatest equipment increases the user’s self-image.
- A user has greater confidence in the latest technology.
- Well maintained and tuned equipment adds appeal.
- Rental equipment should be easy to use and easy to maintain. Typically, in the long run, buying high quality equipment is more cost effective.
- Before purchasing equipment a needs-assessment should be conducted.

Regardless of the size or inventory levels of the outdoor adventure rental operation, every attempt is made to meet the program goals, and needs and desires of the majority of the eligible participants.

Outdoor adventure equipment rental programs are:

- Driven by patron demand.
- Customer service oriented.
- Diverse.
- Accessible.
- Quality oriented.
- Adequately stocked with equipment that is reasonably priced for the Navy community.
- Designed to utilize the unique characteristics of the surrounding environment.

Participation in organized outdoor adventure activities is encouraged and promoted.

Self-directed outdoor adventure activities are encouraged.

**GENERAL
PRINCIPLES
(cont.)**

Referral and information on local natural resources, guide services, outfitters, etc. are available.

The military community is provided complete information on the equipment rental program and services available in the area, both on and off base.

Participants are encouraged to take an interest in, and accept responsibility for learning proper and safe equipment use.

Procedures and methods are used to improve the customer, staff, and equipment flow. The staff and customers need to efficiently inspect, check out and return gear.

OAC has Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) in place.

- All OAC employees understand, comply with, and have access to the SOPs'.
- All staff in OAC's chain of command, from the MWR Director to the OAC staff, understand and are clear and consistent in applying the SOP and ensure that the standards apply to all customers, and staff equally.

If the MWR Department has outdoor trips, tours, or classes, the OAC staff will support the activity with, but not limited to:

- Equipment
- Transportation
- Planning and advising
- Staff support

**OUTDOOR
LEADERS
CREATE
CHANGE**

We have an exciting opportunity to develop and expand outdoor lifestyle services for our Sailors and their families. Changes in the definition and focus of outdoor adventure programs, and training are the basis upon which all changes, improvements, and long-term growth are founded. We are excited and expect the very best from these changes which can result in significant improvement of Navy outdoor adventure worldwide. We have some inspired, passionate, superb people and strong leaders in our outdoor adventure programs. These are the people who are crucial to the success and future of outdoor adventure. Regardless of the obstacles, they are the ones who are going to make it happen.

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STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

STAFF MEMBERS

OAC staff members are trained, educated, and experienced professionals. The staff has enthusiasm for their work and the services they offer. All personnel are trained in both core and customer services to ensure that customers are acknowledged immediately, and assisted.

The OAC hires staffs who are qualified. If they are not initially qualified they will be trained to be competent, knowledgeable, and skilled in rental services, as the job requires. Qualifications apply to permanent, part-time, flexible employees, contractors, and volunteers.

- Staff who do not have the expertise to repair, maintain, demonstrate, and competently outfit or rent equipment are not hired, or if employed, not put into situations where this will happen.
- Staff possesses or are working toward appropriate certifications.
- Certifications depend on the activity. For example, staff repairing bicycles are certified as bike mechanics, small engine mechanics, and ski-binding mechanics need certification from the binding's manufacturer. All staff members, including volunteers, should complete a certified course in first aid and CPR.
- All certifications are maintained and current.

Temporary Assigned Duty (TAD) and other military personnel assigned to the staff meet the same minimum knowledge and skill qualifications as the paid employees.

Every staff member has a current and accurate job description. This includes all paid staff, assigned military personnel, and volunteers.

Files for each employee and volunteer staff member are on file. Each file should include, but may not be limited to:

**STAFF
MEMBERS
(cont.)**

- Training records.
- Copies of certifications and licenses.
- Copies of evaluations.
- Current position description.

All records of Personal Service Contracts and other contracts used will be kept on file.

OAC personnel are identifiable as rental staff.

- The staff wears nametags and a uniform or shirt. The uniform's image is consistent with the employee's job and OAC's image. For example:
 - A mechanic may wear overalls with the OAC logo.
 - Staff in an outdoor specialty (programs, rentals, repairs, etc.) shop will wear active outdoor clothing with appropriate logos.

Staff has had local background checks.

The staff is kept up-to-date on policy changes, procedures, equipment condition, and equipment availability.

Staff are kept abreast of new developments in outdoor adventure programs, equipment, technology, services, instructional techniques, risk management, liability concerns, and industry practices.

The OAC staff has knowledge of and is aware of local customs, culture, known hazards, laws, and regulations.

All OAC employees with similar qualifications, knowledge, skills, and experience are paid equal to or greater than those in the same positions within the surrounding area.

**STAFF
MEMBERS
(cont.)**

Recognition and appreciation programs are in place for both paid and volunteer staff.

There is adequate staff to ensure the success and growth of the OAC without detracting from current successful operations.

- The OAC is adequately staffed to continue normal operations when employees are on TAD, annual or sick leave. When additional workloads are created by expansion of services, goods, collateral or assigned duties, normal operations will not suffer, and the staffing levels are adjusted accordingly.

**WORK
SCHEDULES**

Work schedules allow for optimum customer access to the OAC.

- There is a current work schedule posted for all staff members.

Down time (when the OAC is not opened for customers) is used to conduct inventories, clean, maintain, repair equipment, training, and accomplish administrative tasks. The down time is incorporated into the work schedule outside of open hours of operation.

- Staff may need to be scheduled so they are not conducting inventory, maintaining gear, etc. during open hours when they are needed to help customers.

Manager and key staff are accessible to customers, staff, and volunteers on a daily basis.

TRAINING

Customers expect and deserve staff to be up-to-date on outdoor activities and information. The staff receives appropriate training in the various program elements (e.g., equipment rentals, repairs, and resale). Specialized training in rental operations is continuous. Training is scheduled to keep all staff up to date on seasonal changes for equipment usage, maintenance and repair techniques, new gear, new programs, etc. Training is critical to maintain relevant staff certifications.

- Manager has attended the MWR Managers Course.
- Service providers complete base indoctrination within the first week of employment.
- Service providers attend the Star Service: Achieving Extraordinary Customer Relations program within the first 90 days of employment.
- Staff attends trade shows to maintain industry contacts, stays current on product trends, technology, and services.
- Participation in Navy and outdoor-related conferences, courses, workshops, and training clinics is encouraged.
- An in-house training program is in place for all staff members.

The importance of a consistently high level of customer service is emphasized by all employees through ongoing training and reinforcement. Training includes, but is not limited to:

- The OAC's SOP
- MWR and OAC's philosophy, ethics, goals, and objectives
- Health and safety principles
- Cash control

**TRAINING
(cont.)**

- Marketing
- Equipment maintenance program
- Medical emergency procedures including CPR training
- Customer service training
- Outdoor specialty skills and knowledge

Every staff member receives a minimum of twenty hours of professional training, a year to update or learn new skills, and improve job performance.

OAC staff meetings are scheduled and conducted at least once a month.

- A store culture is maintained through regular meetings and a system of daily communication. Meetings are held to disseminate program information, special events, new equipment, price changes, and other critical staff information. Staff are allowed to speak their mind, encouraged to share information, offer new ideas, and take on innovative projects.

VOLUNTEERS

Reference: Navy MWR Policy On Recruiting, Training, And Accepting Volunteer Services, (NPC Ltr 1710 PERS – 658 of 20 March 2000.)

Risk Management Manual for Navy MWR Nonappropriated Fund Activities, BUPERSINST 5890.1 PERS-65, June 1996.

A formal agreement, Agreement for Services of Volunteers, is signed designating terms and conditions under which volunteers will be working in the OAC.

Volunteers have position descriptions.

The services of volunteers will be donated and the volunteers shall receive no compensation from the OAC.

**VOLUNTEERS
(cont.)**

The activity agrees to indemnify volunteers, their heirs, executor, or administrators for any and all sums that the volunteers, heirs, executors, or administrators may be legally obligated to pay due to personal liability of the volunteer arising from duties performed within the scope of the Agreement for Services of Volunteers.

Volunteers are used to complement paid positions, not replace them.

Volunteers are required to have installation record checks.

Volunteers receive the same training and skills enhancement as paid staff members whenever possible.

- All staff receive training appropriate to and required of their specific job's duties and responsibilities.

Volunteers' contributed services, dates, and hours of work are documented and on file.

Recognition and appreciation programs are in place for volunteers.

RISK MANAGEMENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The OAC's day-to-day, routine operations do not put employees or customers in harms way.

Written emergency procedures are posted for staff members at each facility.

An emergency phone number and point of contact is posted at each facility.

The staff is responsible for ensuring that safety and health of all employees and customers are an integral part of their business.

The staff is always alert for potential hazards or problems.

Staff acknowledges that any accident, safety hazard, noncompliance with personal protective gear requirements, etc. is considered to be preventable and correctable.

All staff are knowledgeable of workplace hazards and receive adequate training to perform work in a safe manner.

The staff is provided with and wears protective clothing or equipment when required for safe work performance.

Staff reports to immediate supervisor any unsafe condition, equipment, or material which is considered to be unsafe, or likely to become a hazard.

OAC complies with all fire, safety, and health regulations.

**OVERSEAS
CONSIDERATIONS**

Overseas operations keep up-to-date on health concerns in areas that the customers routinely visit. For information on health issues contact the base's Medical, Preventive Medicine and Centers For Disease Control And Prevention, Travelers Health at: www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm#Geographic or the Travelers, Health hotline numbers, toll-free 877-FYI-TRIP. The toll-free fax number for requesting information is 888-232-3299. (NOTE: Any information available by fax is available on the web site.)

Overseas operations stay in touch with the base's local Security Department Officer to keep up to date on the political, social, and cultural atmosphere. Security wants to ensure that our activities and outdoor pursuits and those of our patrons don't create a hostile environment.

Federal, military, host country, state, and local laws, rules, regulations, and ethics apply to OAC program operations.

GENERAL

Customers are informed of, acknowledge, and assume the inherent risks of using applicable rental gear.

Releases, Hold Harmless Agreements, rental forms, repair forms, and similar documents are reviewed and approved locally by the legal office responsible for providing legal advice to the command.

Employee and patron safety is never guaranteed in rentals, retail sales, programs, classes, or any other operations.

- Nothing can be guaranteed safe.

The OAC has a written search and rescue protocol if renting water craft and are located near the water. This may also apply to any other operations where OAC staff may encounter a rescue situation involving outdoor adventure activities.

**GENERAL
(cont.)**

- If required to conduct rescues, the staff are trained and properly equipped to competently carry out rescue operations.

Many liability claims can be avoided, or the eventual claim settlement costs reduced by ensuring that the injured OAC patron or guest receives immediate initial medical treatment. Refer to Risk Management Manual for Navy MWR Nonappropriated fund Activities, BUPERSINST 5890.1.

- The NAF Central Self-insurance Fund will reimburse the organization for costs incurred on behalf of injured patrons and guests for emergency care for injuries resulting from their participation in MWR NAF sponsored programs, activities, or events.
 - If medical attention is needed immediate medical attention is provided.
 - If it isn't life threatening, the injured person or their parent or guardian should be allowed to choose the care provider of their choice. In all other cases the staff member in charge at the scene should arrange for the patient to be taken to the closest medical facility.
-

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FACILITIES

SPACE AND LOCATION

Program identity and theme are visible to customers both within the facility and the facility's exterior.

- Location. The building has been assessed and analyzed for both visibility and accessibility. Every attempt is made to compensate for a lack in either area.

Facilities are attractive, clean, uncluttered, and well maintained.

- Keep facilities and satellite operations clean and in good repair at all times. The director or manager should inspect all facilities at least once a week.

A detailed inspection checklist encompassing all interior and exterior areas of staffed facilities is used and kept on record. An employee is assigned to daily inspect and police the facility and grounds.

Seasonal items are well displayed and like items grouped together.

- Building and space needs
 - Space is available to support all core program activities.

A devoted building or a separate, dedicated space for outdoor adventure

- The facility meets the demands of the program.
- All areas and facilities conform to Navy and government regulations. All areas and facilities should be accessible to the handicapped.

**SPACE AND
LOCATION
(cont.)**

- Outside entryways are locking double doors with flush sills and sufficient height to facilitate movement of equipment.
- Floors should be of a durable, non-skid, and resilient material that can withstand hard usage.
- Proper temperature, humidity, and air circulation levels are maintained in the building.
- There is adequate shelving, bins, cabinets, open-end cubicles, etc. for storage of equipment and supplies.

An outside compound with electrical outlets and water for washing gear.

Inside gear cleaning and drying area with an industrial strength washer and dryer.

- The floor is moisture-proof, non-skid surface that is resistant to detergents and corrosive materials.

Well lighted equipment repair area.

- The floor is moisture-proof, non-skid surface that is resistant to detergents and corrosive materials.

Indoor gear storage.

Class room.

Customer service area.

- The service counter and surrounding area is large enough to accommodate patrons at peak demand times.

Equipment display area.

**SPACE AND
LOCATION
(cont.)**

Well lighted resale area with slat-wall all the way around.

Dressing rooms.

A resource/information area.

Administrative space free from the distractions of the day-to-day operations.

Staff locker space.

Highly visible outside signs.

Adequate customer parking, gear pick-up and return parking.

The OAC facility is equipped with state of the art automated networked equipment to maximize the efficiency of service and information, minimize customer wait time, and ensure accurate maintenance of historical data.

- The facility is equipped with a minimum of two updated computers, with on-line access to E-mail, Internet, and a Website. The OAC counter staff will use one of the computers and the other will be in the office.
 - Both computers have easy access to a printer, copier, and Fax machine during operating hours.
- The customer service counter is equipped with standardized POS system.
- Office is equipped with a compartment safe and each cashier is assigned a designated drawer.

**HOURS OF
OPERATION**

The hours of operation are based on customer needs, established programs, the mission, character, and location of the OAC.

- Surveys and patron counts are applied to determine operating hours.

Hours of operation are consistent and reliable.

- If the sign says open at 8 a.m. and closed at 5 p.m. the facility is opened and closed during those hours.
-

GENERAL EQUIPMENT RENTAL PROGRAM GUIDELINES

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Rental rates, policies and procedures are posted at the facility in a highly visible but attractive, unobtrusive way.

- An assortment of posted flyers and signs scattered about is not appropriate. One sign in a visible place, in addition to having the policy in a brochure describing equipment, equipment cost, and services is appropriate.

Equipment on inventory is available on a first-come, first-served basis, regardless of rank or grade.

The OAC doesn't allow reservations of high demand equipment for the exclusive or priority use of individuals or groups on a continuing basis.

- Certain high demand items may require a reservation system be put in place. The choices of reservation systems are many and varied, and should be left up to the discretion of the OAC manager based on the assessment of what works best. It is not practical to reserve items that are inexpensive or items that the OAC seldom runs out of.
- Avoid having rentals not available for customer's use because an individual or group has long term possession of the item. For example, renting out a travel trailer for several months to a customer during peak season. Exceptions can be made when properly planned for. As an example, when offering season ski rental packages, purchase adequate ski packages to meet the daily and weekend rental needs, as well as group needs.

**POLICIES &
PROCEDURES
(cont.)**

The rental contract/agreement should be reviewed locally by the legal office responsible for providing legal advice to the command.

Rental contracts are used for all rental transactions and are signed by the renter.

Restitution for damaged or lost equipment is the responsibility of the user. The person who signed the rental agreement/contract will pay for damaged, stolen, or lost rental equipment.

Program and rental staff are aware of basic weather patterns and follow base weather protocol.

- The staff is familiar with the environment where the rental gear will be used and have experience using the gear in that environment. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - General knowledge of commonly known environmental conditions and possible hazards.
 - Knowledge to realistically offer the customer options in geographical locations, gear or outdoor activities.
 - The knowledge and experience to sensibly recommend gear to the customers. The ability to discern what the customer may really need and what gear would be nice to have. Staff recommends gear for specific locations, seasons, and activities.

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE**

Employees attend service orientation prior to any customer interaction.

**CUSTOMER
SERVICE
(cont.)**

Customer interaction standards are written and visible to employees. These standards include:

- Greeting customers
- Immediate welcome with a cheerful tone of voice and smile
- Uses customer's name (when known)
- Uses polite words like "please" and "thank you"
- Listens to determine customer's needs
- Gives full attention to what customer is saying
- Takes ownership for customer complaints by expressing concern, sorting out the situation, apologizing, assuring, and following up to correct the mistake.
- Does what is best for the customer to the level of empowerment authorized by the organization.
- Solves problems and handles situations whenever possible so that manager does not need to be called upon.
- Presents policy without using the word "policy" and in a way a customer can accept.
- Takes the initiative to ensure that a customer is helped even when employee cannot personally handle or fix the situation.
- Closes customer interaction with a "thank you" and invitation to return.

**CUSTOMER
FEEDBACK**

Required Elements

A customer card feedback program consisting of gathering and handling both positive and negative comments is implemented. Maximum comment response time is 48 hours maximum.

Customer feedback surveys are conducted annually with results and an action response report documented. Survey method includes at least one of the following.

- Interception
 - Pulse Point
 - Focus Groups
-

**INSTRUCTION
AND INFORMATION**

The OAC conducts instructional classes when appropriate, emphasizing the use of rental gear:

- Other than basic instruction during the checkout procedure, rental operations generally do not offer instruction, but if there is a safety concern additional instruction should be offered. An example would be sea kayaks. While hands on instruction may not be mandatory prior to renting a sea kayak, the sensible customer may want to learn and practice safety and rescue techniques prior to taking that wilderness trip. Instruction that could be offered includes:
 - Environment hazards.
 - Self rescue and the rescue of others.
 - Trip planning.
 - Skill development.
 - Equipment care and maintenance.
 - Nature appreciation.
 - Environmental ethics.

If applicable, maps of designated routes, and itineraries for trips are available to customers who wish to plan their own trips. Cautions of known and potential hazards on the routes are included.

- As part of the rental process for renting canoes or kayaks the customer can be given some ideas and options on where and when to go.
- If the employee is giving out this information they need to be a knowledgeable participant in the sport, and know the route, so they can provide the customer with appropriate information.

**DETERMINING
RENTAL FEES**

Rental fees are reasonably priced and consistent with the region and overall MWR operating requirements. Fees are also competitive with similar local operations.

For similar items, fees are less than the local market (e.g. 25%).

In addition to price comparisons, fees are based on but not limited to the following considerations:

- The equipment's frequency of repair rate.
- Frequency of maintenance needed.
- Frequency of cleaning needed.
- Rental life expectancy.
- The time needed and ease of checking-out and checking-in the equipment.
- Fees are also based on the quality of the equipment. Poor quality and low value equipment don't deserve premium fees.

The fees are incrementally and monetarily consistent from one day to multiple days.

- If a tent cost \$5 per day and \$10 for three days, a backpack that costs \$5 per day will be \$10 for three days.
- The rate increase for multiple days is consistent, so a \$3 per day stove could be \$6 for three days. In this case daily fees were doubled to get the three-day rate.

**DETERMINING
RENTAL FEES
(cont.)**

The following is a sample fee schedule format:

	1 day	3 days	7 days
Backpack	\$5.00	\$10.00	\$20.00
Stove	\$3.00	\$6.00	\$12.00
Kayak	\$10.00	\$20.00	\$40.00

Rental fees should be simple, easy to use, read, and calculate. The fee schedule is based on a system that best serves the customer.

Charges for lost or stolen gear is based on the wholesale cost of the item, plus 40%, which includes shipping, administration, and assembling fees. Older equipment should be pro-rated. The intent is not to take advantage of the customer.

Keep the check-out and check-in times simple and easy to understand. For example: After checking out the gear, return the gear any time during open hours on the day due. If the gear is returned on day late, the renter pays for one more rental day.

Flat rate cleaning and drying charges are assigned. The staff is trained in proper techniques and given tips for dealing with customers on this issue. Keep it simple.

- Any equipment returned wet or soiled beyond normal use should be assigned a charge. For instance:
 - Wet ski or snowboard boots, tents, and sleeping bags, three dollars.
 - Tents, sleeping bags or clothing returned with trash in them, caked with mud or other unknown substances, five dollars.

**DETERMINING
RENTAL FEES
(cont.)**

- Trailers returned and not cleaned, thirty dollars.
- A cleaning fee deposit is recommended for travel trailers.

Rental rates, policies, and procedures are posted at the facility in a highly visible but attractive and unobtrusive way.

- An assortment of posted flyers and signs scattered about is not appropriate. One sign in a visible place, in addition to having the policy in a brochure describing equipment and services is appropriate.

Private organizations, such as the Boy and Girl Scouts, pay the standard rental fees for any equipment used.

**RESALE
OPERATIONS**

Reference: Maximizing Golf Shop Profits, PERS 655 Business Activities Branch, MWR Managers' Desk Reference Duty 7.0--Manage Supplies and Equipment, and OPNAVINST 1700.7D which includes the Navy resale policy.

Resale items sold at OAC outlets are in support of or a convenience to the patron. Sales are designed to encourage and enhance participation in recreational activities. Resale items directly complement the equipment and programs available at the OAC.

- The OAC retails name brand quality gear.
- The rental and retail equipment are of the same brand and purchased from the same company.
- Resale and rental items are purchased wholesale direct from the company or from others who can offer the same pricing structure.

**RESALE
OPERATIONS
(cont.)**

- OAC sales outlets do not engage in practices designed to compete with or solicit customers from other shops and businesses that provide comparable goods or services.
- The OAC has it's own market niche. Resale items don't duplicate items found at the local Navy Exchange or mass merchants.

Return and refund policies are clearly posted.

Patrons should be able to return any resale item.

- Customers are encouraged to keep all hang tags and all receipts, especially if they are buying a gift or unsure of keeping the gear for various reasons like fit, compatibility, color, etc.
- Exceptions: There are no refunds for close out items and climbing gear like harnesses, ropes, webbing, and carabiners or any other life supporting gear. When applicable the customer is informed of this policy at the time of purchase.

**FINANCE AND
ACCOUNTING**

As a category B MWR activity, outdoor adventure is funded as follows:

- 65% Appropriated Fund support (APF).
- 35% Fees and charges.

The exceptions are the resale component, large boats, snowmobiles, camping trailers, and other outdoor adventure equipment considered to be MWR Category C. Category C operations are primarily self-supporting and only authorized limited APF support.

OAC uses appropriate RAMCAS Activity and Department codes.

FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING (cont.)

- Ensure the correct activity and Department codes are used as follows:
 - Activity 13 (Outdoor Adventure)
 - * Department 03 (Merchandise Resale), to record merchandise retail income/expenses
 - Activity 13 (Outdoor Adventure)
 - * Department 10 (General Program Operations), to record such activities as trips, demonstrations, instructional classes, competitions, and other non-rental type services as related to outdoor adventure.
 - Activity 13 (Outdoor Adventure)
 - * Department 12 (Rental-Programs), to record rental income and expenses for services and products relating to outdoor adventure activities considered to be in MWR categories A and B. Examples of these would include, but are not necessarily limited to, fishing, paddle sports, skiing, camping, backpacking, boating, backpacking, horseback riding, etc.
 - Activity 28 (Category C Adventure Equipment Rental)
 - * Department 12 (Rentals-Program) to record rental income and expenses relating to large boats, snow mobiles, camping trailers and other outdoor adventure equipment considered to be MWR Category C.
- The OAC director and/or manager know the financial status of the operation.
- The director and/or manager has on file and understands the following:

**FINANCE AND
ACCOUNTING
(cont.)**

- The budget process.
- The program's RAMCAS monthly financial summaries.
- The program's Actual to Budget reports.

The OAC director and/or manager prepares the yearly budget.

A five-year plan is in place and updated annually.

- This plan should form the basis for each year's annual budget input to the local MWR department's budget. The plan should be used to project and quantify short and long term program initiatives and equipment requirements based on patron needs assessments. The plan includes a list of all outdoor adventure equipment rental resources in the area, both on and off base.

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RENTAL EQUIPMENT CHECK-OUT PROCEDURES

CHECKING OUT GEAR

Good customer service begins with good equipment check-out procedures.

Checking-out gear is not only operating a cash register, but a review of the activities the customer wishes to participate in, the customers intended use of the equipment, as well as the condition of the equipment.

- Show interest in the customer. Ask a lot of leading questions and try to ascertain who is going to use the gear, what it is going to be used for, and where it is going to be used.

OAC staff assists customers in selecting gear or equipment based on participants' skill levels, knowledge, physical size, and ability. An effort is made to provide customers with the appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear for participating in their chosen activity.

Each customer is educated and briefed as to the proper care of every item that is rented.

- This process can be conducted with scheduled classes, during the checkout procedure, with informative handouts, or instructional videotapes.
- The staff has the knowledge and ability to demonstrate proper use of all equipment utilized or rented. When demonstrating a product, the staff does not take shortcuts.
 - The demonstration is technically correct.
 - The equipment will work as demonstrated in actual use.

**CHECKING
OUT GEAR
(cont.)**

- Obvious ways to misuse the equipment are pointed out.
- The equipment is not oversold.
- The staff sticks to the manufacturer's equipment specifications and recommended use when discussing the gear with customers.
- Instruction is not given by someone who isn't intimately familiar with the equipment.

The customer is provided with an instruction sheet for items that may have confusing assembly, operating or safety procedures.

A staff member clearly explains the penalties and charges for late gear, losses, and damages with the customer.

A staff member and the renter inspect the equipment together, prior to issuing, and upon the return of equipment.

The renter will retain a copy of the rental agreement which in addition to showing the renter's personal information (name, address, phone numbers, unit, etc.), includes a description of the property, check-out and check-in times, rental rates, and other useful information.

- The renter agrees to indemnify and hold MWR/OAC harmless for any and all liability claims for bodily injury to any person(s) or third party property damage arising out of or caused by the renter's negligence or the negligence of other users granted permission to use the rented equipment.

**CHECKING
OUT GEAR
(cont.)**

- The renter agrees to return the equipment in the same condition as when it was checked out, excluding normal wear and tear.

Signed rental forms and Hold Harmless statements by the patron acknowledging receipt of the equipment, understanding the use and hazards of the equipment and it's proper care are used and on file.

- Patrons are also informed via the rental agreement that they are responsible for the safekeeping of rental gear, including theft or damage, while it is in their custody.
- The checkout procedure must ensure that patrons are accountable for the proper use and return of equipment.

The patron indicates they are satisfied with the instructions given to them for the proper and safe use of the equipment.

The renter is asked to read rental agreement/ contract and Hold Harmless/Release before signing.

The person who signed the rental equipment must be the person who returns the equipment, or a family member may return it.

The gear is returned to the same location it was picked up. One point of pickup and return.

- The customer is never confused they know where they check it out, they know where they return it. Gear is picked up and returned during OAC business hours.

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RENTAL EQUIPMENT MANAGEMENT

EQUIPMENT INVENTORY

A good rental shop has the proper equipment available and all equipment is well maintained and ready to rent. The OAC maintains an adequate stock of equipment to support the core outdoor adventure activities available in the area.

- Reasons for having enough gear are:
 - Reservations will not have to be made.
 - Revenue will not be lost because the item was not there to rent.
 - Customers will not leave disappointed or frustrated.
 - Staffing levels and staff experience are sufficient to take care of all the gear and all of the customers.
 - Inventory levels should be consistent with staffing levels and expertise as well as available storage. If you can't take care of the gear, don't purchase it.

- Reasons for not having enough gear are:
 - Staffing levels are not adequate to service the customer and take care of the gear.
 - Staff doesn't have the knowledge, skill or experience to use, maintain, or rent the gear.
 - There is no reasonable space to store the gear.
 - Funds are not available to purchase the gear.
 - There is no identified need for the gear.

**EQUIPMENT
INVENTORY
(cont.)**

The acquisition of specialized equipment is justified by user surveys, needs assessments, documented user demands, or industry trends.

Equipment safety is a priority. Select gear that increases safety, without destroying the experience of the activity. For example, orange neon colored tents may increase safety by being readily visible, but visually distract from the wilderness environment.

- Other priorities for choosing equipment are:
 - Technology that enhances safety.
 - Durability.
 - Items that are likely to remain functional without excessive maintenance.
 - The cost of the gear.
 - Gear that can be easily and quickly checked out and returned.
 - Gear that is uncomplicated, easy and simple for the customer to use.
 - Availability of the gear.
 - Product evaluation and reviews.

Quality equipment and gear are effectively purchased.

- Quality name brand equipment is purchased at wholesale or below. The staff researches the product's uses, strengths, and limitations, and whenever possible selects gear at trade shows prior to purchasing.

**EQUIPMENT
INVENTORY
(cont.)**

Staff has an appropriate certification and understanding of all equipment they will be using, inspecting, maintaining repairing or issuing. Staff need to know how all gear works and how to use it. An exception with maintenance staff can be made if someone else (for instance, a qualified contractor) maintains the gear.

All equipment is used as the manufacturer recommends. There are times when safety and customer satisfaction can be placed in jeopardy by issuing the improper gear. Compare the manufacturer's recommendations to the intended use. Some examples that may compromise safety are:

- Renting touring canoes or sea kayaks as white water boats.
- Issuing a two or three season tent for use in extreme environments such as severe wind, heavy snow, and/or cold weather.
- Putting fuels in stoves and lanterns other than recommended by the manufacturer.
- Issuing ski and snowboard boots that are not compatible with the binding systems they were designed for.
- Renting out any gear that is not within current industry safety standards.
- Renting out trailers that require Class III hitches to customers with Class I or II hitches.

Equipment is maintained and in good working condition, is cared for in an appropriate manner. Maintenance and repair procedures follow industry standards.

**EQUIPMENT
INVENTORY
(cont.)**

- Equipment receives routine preventive maintenance to ensure safety, endurance, longevity, and optimum performance. Operations include an appropriate inspection schedule for equipment and associated protective gear.
- Certified technicians adjust, test, maintain, and track scuba gear, ski bindings, ski boots, bicycles, small engines, etc. in accordance with industry standards.

All equipment is assigned an inventory or stock number.

- A record file on utilization of each piece of equipment is maintained. These records are important to analyze and justify replacement schedules based on the level of customer demand.
- The stock numbers should be large, easy to read and have consistent placement to help locate them. Put the numbers in an inconspicuous place whenever possible. Our customers will not appreciate wearing a backpack with a big NAVY MWR 001-XXX inventory number emblazoned on the outside.

Rental records are maintained. OAC keeps appropriate usage and condition logs for equipment. Up-to-date computer software is essential for accurate, complete records. Records are documented for, but not limited to:

- Equipment's purchase price and age.
- Amount of each item on inventory.
- Equipment maintenance and repair.
- Equipment usage, rental frequency.
- Per item gross income.
- Per item net income.
- Patron counts.

**EQUIPMENT
INVENTORY
(cont.)**

Equipment is evaluated and inventoried annually in accordance with pre-determined replacement schedules.

Replacement schedules are set up for all equipment. These schedules are benchmarks and will vary with each item. Some of the considerations to be taken into account prior to retiring gear are:

- The number of user days.
- Quality of the equipment.
- Quality of repairs and maintenance.
- Manufacturer's recommendations.
- Trends and new technical developments in the industry.

Slow moving rental items are reviewed for elimination from the inventory and removed.

Damaged or unsafe equipment is eliminated from the inventory and removed from the facility. Unsafe gear may need to be destroyed to ensure it is not used.

- The manufacturer considers un-indemnified ski bindings not safe and no one should use them. Retired climbing ropes are life supporting and not safe for climbing purposes. Do not DRMO unsafe gear unless it has been rendered non-functional for the purpose it was designed for, or clearly marked as not suitable for use as originally designed.

Participation records, customer comment cards, surveys, etc. are used and evaluated on an on going basis to assess the overall quality and effectiveness of the OAC.

- The program has an evaluation plan. The process of determining the effectiveness, worth or outcome of the OAC program in terms of achieving pre-determined goals. This is a continuing and on-going process.

**EQUIPMENT
INVENTORY
(cont.)**

NAF equipment and rental gear having an original cost of \$300 or less, that is usable, up to industry standards, and still has retail value is sold at the OAC.

- For all equipment disposal refer to Disposal of Excess Equipment BUPERSINST 1710.11 B.
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**VEHICLES AND
TRAILERS**

All OAC vehicles and trailers are selected and designed for use in their specific area of operation, road conditions, and environment.

Vehicles

- The number of passengers carried doesn't exceed the seating capacity of the vehicle.
- All passengers wear seat belts.
- No smoking in any vehicle.
- Drinking alcohol is prohibited in all vehicles.

All OAC vehicles and trailers are properly maintained with each having a maintenance and repair log.

- A written preventive maintenance schedule is kept on file. All inspections, maintenance, repairs, and problems are recorded and dated.

All OAC vehicles and trailers have the safety and emergency equipment needed for the expected conditions to be encountered.

- Trucks, vans, busses, and trailers may be equipped with but not limited to flags, flares, spare tire and jack, flashlights, fire extinguishers, tire chains, ice scrapers, shovel, cell phone, and first-aid kits. This is contingent upon the vehicle's use and the user. For example a rental trailer doesn't need to have a first-aid kit or flashlights but a program van should.

VEHICLES AND TRAILERS (cont.)

It is strongly recommended that rental patrons contact their insurance company and verify that they have comprehensive insurance covering them for any damage while renting and/or towing OAC trailers.

- Any damages to the trailer or to another party will, most likely, result in the renter being held financially liable and paying for all damages incurred to the OAC trailer and any other involved vehicles. Exceptions to this is can occur. For example, a customer is not expected to pay for damages if a rental trailer's wheel bearing goes out because it had not been properly inspected, maintained or repaired.

Rental patrons and OAC towing vehicles must meet all manufacturer requirements for the specific trailer model used.

- For example. To tow a certain trailer the vehicle may require trailer brakes, a class three hitch, a seven pin Bargeman connector, and a two-inch ball. The vehicle will also need to meet a certain gross weight depending on the trailer to be towed. If the requirement can't be met, the trailer should not be towed.

The towing vehicle and the trailer must meet all local, state, federal, and military requirements.

Trailers are equipped with safety chains.

WATERCRAFT

The OAC has knowledge of and follows all US Coast Guard (USCG), federal, host country, state, and local laws and regulations.

All watercraft are selected and designed for use in their specific area of operation, water conditions, and environment.

**WATERCRAFT
(cont.)**

The OAC is encouraged to offer boating safety classes for each type of watercraft rented.

Watercraft is properly maintained with each having a maintenance and repair log.

- A written preventive maintenance schedule is kept on file. All inspections, maintenance, repairs, and problems are recorded and dated.

Watercraft has the safety and emergency equipment needed for the expected conditions to be encountered. This may vary, it depends on the environment and conditions, but some examples include:

- Canoe rentals include paddles, fitted Personal Flotation Devices (PFD), and bow and stern lines.
- Decked sea kayaks include paddles, fitted PFD's, spray skirts, signaling device, paddle floats, pumps, and other rescue devices.

Check lists are used to verify that the proper safety equipment is given to the customer.

USCG regulations require that a PFD be aboard every type of watercraft for each person embarked. The USCG regulations do not require wearing the PFD's, but wearing a PFD is encouraged and highly recommended while on the water. It is important that all students, and instructors, wear PFD's while participating in boating classes on the water.

OUTDOOR ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS APPENDIX / REFERENCE

AMERICAN FLY-FISHING TRADE ASSN.

P.O. Box 164
Kelso, WA 98626
360/636-0708, fax 360/636-3971
info@affta.com
www.affta.com

THE ASSOCIATION FOR EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

2305 Canyon Blvd., Ste. 100
Boulder, CO 80302-5651
303/440-8844, fax 303/440-9581

EASTERN OUTDOOR REPS ASSN.

P.O. Box 18283
Asheville, NC 28814-0282
828/252-7956, fax 828/252-0623

EASTERN WINTER SPORTS REPS ASSN.

5142 State St.
White Haven, PA 18661
717/443-7180, fax 717/443-0388
lirvin1070@aol.com

MIDWEST WINTER SPORTS REPS ASSN.

8335 Thomas Ct. N.
Minneapolis, MN 55444
612/424-9565, fax 612/424-9565

MIDWESTERN REPS ASSN.

2375 Catob
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
616/526-5772, fax 616/526-5886

NATIONAL BICYCLE DEALERS ASSN.

777 W. 19th St., Ste. 0
Costa Mesa, CA 62627
949/722-6909, fax 949/722-1747
bikeshops@aol.com
www.nbda.com

NATIONAL MARINE MANUFACTURERS ASSN.

200 E. Randolph Dr., Ste. 5100
Chicago, IL 60601
312/946-6200, fax 312/946-0388
www.nmma.org

NATIONAL SPORTING GOODS ASSN.

1699 Wall St., Ste. 700
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056-5780
847/439-4000, fax 847/439-0111
nsga1699@aol.com
www.nsga.org

OUTDOOR RECREATION COALITION OF AMERICA

2475 Broadway
Boulder, CO 80304
303/444-3353
www.orca.org

PROFESSIONAL PADDLESPORTS ASSOCIATION

7432 Alban Station Blvd.
Suite A-111
Springfield, VA 22150
703/451-3864, fax 703/451-1015
www.propaddle.com

RENTAL INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

216 N. East Street,
Woodland, CA 95776-5904
P.O. Box 1967, Woodland, CA 95776-1967
530/666-4337 fax: 530/666-1233
Toll Free: 800.272.7400
www.riassn.org

**SNOWSPORTS INDUSTRIES
AMERICA**

8377-B Greensboro Dr.
McLean, VA 22102-3587
703/556-9020, fax 703/821-8276
siamail@ix.netcom.com

**SOUTHEASTERN WINTER REPS
ASSN.**

P.O. Box 83
Rocky Ridge, MD 21778
301/831-6474, fax 301/831-6474

**TRADE ASSOCIATION OF
PADDLESPORTS**

12455 N. Wauwatosia Road
Mequon, WI 53097
262/242-5228 or fax: 262/242-4428
www.gopaddle.org

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Seattle, WA 98199
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