



# Level 5: Advanced Swiftwater Rescue

## Instructor Criteria

**Overview:** Fundamentally, it is expected that participants should possess the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this level of certification prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as Instructor Candidates at an Instructor Certification Exam (ICE).

### **Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):**

ACA courses are open to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck / head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket\*
8. Get on / off or in / out of a paddlecraft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddlecraft\*
10. Remount or reenter the paddlecraft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance\*
11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities and rescues listed in the appropriate Course Outline, and have the ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation\*

*\* To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve teaching and practicing EEC #7-11.*

**Course Prerequisites:** Completion of the appropriate level assessment course, or equivalent skills.

**Course Duration:** Combined IDW & ICE – 5 ½ Day (44 hour) Minimum

**Course Location / Venue:** ASWR instructor courses are taught on class II to class III rapids

**Class Ratio:** 12 Instructor Candidates: 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional instructor the ratio can be 24 : 2

*The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Instructor Candidates. The content covered and sequence of evaluation should be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location and time allowance.*



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### General Requirements for all Instructor Certifications:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Meet the appropriate essential eligibility criteria
- Successfully complete an Instructor Certification Workshop (IDW & ICE)
- Be a full ACA member & upon successful completion of the ICE, register with the Safety Education & Instruction Council
- Have and maintain First Aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material unassisted in the appropriate venue
- Demonstrate knowledge and ability to efficiently/effectively plan and implement appropriate instructional sessions and assessments for a different learning styles and ability levels, to include:
  - Differentiation of instruction based on the individual learner (student centered)
  - Use of an appropriate skills progression when teaching complex skill sets
  - Selects of appropriate teaching venue based on ability and desired outcomes
  - Focus on core principals rather than specific technique
  - Provides appropriate, specific and meaningful feedback

### Maintenance Requirements:

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and report the results to the National Office
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually

### Level 5: Swiftwater Rescue Instructor Requirements:

Fundamentally, we expect that candidates should have basic paddling and rescue skills, before presenting themselves for evaluation as instructor candidates as below:



# Level 5: Advanced Swiftwater Rescue

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### **Demonstrate knowledge of ACA Policies & Procedures:**

- How to register & report a course (with and without insurance)
- Understanding of the ACA Waiver & Release of Liability
- Instructor Maintenance Requirements

### **Demonstrate knowledge of teaching and learning theory:**

- Characteristics of different types of learners
- Effective teaching methods
- Effective prepared and impromptu presentations
- Evaluate and provide feedback
- Effective documentation of skill assessments

### **Demonstrate the following:**

- Positive interpersonal skills
- Appropriate group management skills (including leadership and judgment)
- Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site

### **Demonstrate the knowledge and ability to teach the following topics and skills:**

#### **Class Management**

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

#### **Rescue Philosophy**

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

#### **Rescue scene management**

##### **Understand and explain:**

- Review ICS and introduce new roles
- Implement ICS in prolonged scenarios

- Discuss formal ICS vs. “applied ICS” (what actually happens in most rescues)
- Explain “Self-directed rescue” and its application to ICS
- Review interactions with professional rescuers
- Evacuation options – what happens after the rescue? Carry out vs. go for help

#### **Medical Issues**

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

#### **Equipment**

- Focus on how to choose appropriate gear, instead of focusing on what the instructor preferences are
- Emphasize prior planning and practice when using rescue equipment
- Show awareness of new research data on equipment like helmets, hardware, rope and pfd's
- Understand the strengths and limitations of personal gear and rescue equipment

#### **Rescue Vest Techniques**

##### **Effectively set up and explain:**

- Multiple manufacturer models pros and cons  
Review and effectively practice multiple vest techniques including belays, line crossings, towing, V- and direct lowers, tethered swims, Review use of rescue tether
- Practice live bait rescues in more challenging water

#### **Throw Ropes**

- Discuss rope construction and characteristics desired in a river rescue rope
- Discuss and demonstrate appropriate rope care
- Explain advantages and disadvantages of all throwing techniques



# Level 5: Advanced Swiftwater Rescue

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- Discuss and demonstrate appropriate belay techniques
- Discuss and demonstrate proper rope receiving techniques
- Discuss and demonstrate multiple techniques for re-stuffing bags
- Discuss and demonstrate multiple techniques for recoiling ropes
- Demonstrate a vector pull and discuss its applications to rope rescue
- Consistently throw a bag at least 40 feet to a swimmer in a rapid, using multiple techniques, including a coil.
- Coil and make a second accurate throw, to a victim in a rapid at least 40 feet away, within 20 seconds.
- Consistently throw a bag at least 40 feet and cross a stationary, on-land, 4 foot wide target, using multiple techniques, including a coil
- Discuss reverse pendulum applications for rope throwing

### **Knots**

- Describe features of effective knots
- Describe the strengths and limitations of common rescue knots
- Choose appropriate knots in any given situation
- Appropriately tie all required and optional knots in the SWR curriculum
- Appropriately tie a Munter hitch, a mariner hitch, and a radium release hitch
- Tie an in-line figure 8 and a double eyed figure 8

### **Line Crossing and other river crossing techniques**

#### **Effectively set up and explain:**

- Zip lines / tensioned diagonals
- Angled, direct hand over hand short line crossing
- Wedges to assist victims
- Boat pendulums and tag lines on boats

- Discussion and dry land set up of vertical rescue (e.g., Tyrolean)

### **Advanced Techniques**

#### **Effectively set up and explain the following:**

- Anchors and Mechanical Advantage
- Review basic principles and techniques
- Advanced knots and their uses in anchor and MA systems – double eye eight, in line eight, in line eight follow through and Munter hitch
- Load releasing knots – Mariner’s knot, Double Munter hitch and Radium release hitch
- Introduce “wrap-pull” anchors
- Introduce 3, 4+ point anchors
- Anchors in difficult environments i.e. underwater chocks, direction changes and climbing hardware (e.g., “friends”)
- Piggyback rigs –standard set up and simple tensionless wrap method
- Introduce new MA systems (2:1, 4:1, 6:1 9:1 and higher degrees of MA) emphasizing friction loss reduction

### **Pins and Entrapments**

#### **Understand, explain and effectively set up:**

- Application of rope techniques to pinned craft and entrapped victims
- Hard boat and inflatable boat differences and options
- Determine ideal angle of pull (IAP) based on anchor point locations and initial boat pivot
- Multiple attachment systems and roll over concepts (e.g., Steve Thomas rope trick)
- Multiple haul lines – haul line, roll over line and recovery line
- Practice broach, flat and vertical pin escapes
- Line capture devices used to snag pinned boats

### **Advanced Rope Techniques**

#### **Show understanding and competency in the following:**

- Review stabilization lines and snag lines and simple cinches



# Level 5: Advanced Swiftwater Rescue

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- Cinches can be complex and time consuming; upstream spotters are essential
- Uses include equipment recovery, body recovery and entrapments; ***improperly applied cinches have the potential to cause fatal injuries; be sure to cinch the torso and not the neck***
- Ideally, cinches are as simple as feasible, releasable after application
- Effectively set up and explain:
  - Simple cinches, (open and closed), Kiwi cinches using tethered rescuer and line capture devices and closing loop cinches

### Water Hazards and Hydrology

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

### Swimming

- Choose appropriate swimming venues, with lower risk to students
- Discuss and demonstrate appropriate techniques for entering rivers
- Discuss and demonstrate defensive and aggressive swimming techniques
- Effectively and repeatedly peel out, catch eddies and ferry. Effectively swim through waves and hydraulics
- Aggressively swim a downstream class II or higher whitewater course at least 100 yards long, with multiple ferries and eddy moves
- Discuss appropriate techniques for managing strainer, holes and drops

### Strainers

- Create and position an effective strainer bar
- Discuss and demonstrate defensive, passive and aggressive approaches to strainers

- Discuss “Canadian Log Roll” technique for trees too large to avoid or swim over

### Wading

- Discuss and demonstrate multiple wading techniques
- Choose appropriate techniques for application in other skill modules
- Discuss and demonstrate practical applications of wading solo with a paddle, wading with a partner and wading as part of 3+ person team (e.g., wedge, line astern, fence)

### Boat Based Rescue

#### Understand, explain and effectively set up:

- Recovering swimmers and gear in more challenging water
- Boats as rescue platforms (e.g., 2 and 4 point tethered boat, Telfer lowers)

Inflatable based tethered rescuer teams

#### Tethered and Non-Tethered Swimming Rescues

##### Explain and demonstrate:

- Discuss and demonstrate effective technique and timing for tethered rescues including the reverse pendulum
- Apply effective swimming strategies
- Discuss and apply common patterns of victim behavior
- Emphasize the high risk nature of contact rescues
- Discuss and demonstrate appropriate uses of live bait rescues, beyond contact rescues including line receiver teams why this an effective tool for a final downstream safety parameter including the following implications
- Review victim psychology
- Fast, simple, extremely dangerous
- Unconscious victims
- Aggressive victims
- Technique limitations

### V-lowers



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- Emphasize strengths, limitations, and multiple applications
- Discuss and demonstrate in-water communication with shore teams
- Develop appropriate emergency plans for vest failure
- Discuss and demonstrate effective body positions while deployed on a V-lower

### **Scenarios**

- Create advanced scenarios appropriate for specific sites and participants
- Effectively manage scenarios and provide safety
- Provide effective feedback to scenario participants
- Effectively participate in appropriately challenging scenarios