

**Safety Education and Instruction Council Meeting**  
**Friday, February 20, 2015**  
**Fredericksburg, VA**  
**Courtyard Marriot Fredericksburg Historic District, Mary Washington Room**

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 a.m.

SEIC Chair, Steve Hutton, welcomed the group. He announced that future spring meetings will continue to be held in Fredericksburg, and fall meetings will be rotated to different locations to diversify geographic involvement.

**In attendance**

SEIC Members: Steve Hutton, Rusty Cooper, Robin Pope, Becky Molina, John Browning, Larry Ausley, Beth Weigandt, Joe Moore, Mike Aronoff, Jim Virgin, Ben Lawry, Josh Hall, Sam Fowlkes (on phone)

Liaisons: Keith Christopher (on phone), BSA

Office Staff: Kelsey Bracewell, Chris Stec

Guests: Peter Casson, Bob Myron, David Adams, Dan Maresh, Don Goff, Ben Morton, Rich Kulawiec, Charlie Duffy, Whit Overstreet, Adam Masters (on phone)

Quorum was established according to SEIC By-Laws. 13 voting members were present.

**September 2014 meeting minutes** were presented by SEIC Secretary, Becky Molina, and were accepted into record as written by unanimous vote.

**Keith Christopher, BSA Liaison, gave a report.**

- Keith thanked Chris Stec for participation in a BSA training session.
- Shooting for moving water training video, a joint ACA/BSA project, was completed. Due out in spring.
- With Jim Virgin, developed the manual *Program Features for Troops, Teams, and Crews: A guide to Program Planning*.
- Sea Scouts (nautical division of BSA, for teen boys and girls) is developing a paddlesports component.
- BSA Aquatic Supervision Manual has been updated.
- With USA Swimming, developing a Cub Scout swimming/boating safety program starting at 1<sup>st</sup> grade.

**Kelsey Bracewell and Chris Stec gave SEI Department report.**

- Kelsey and TJ Turner (not present) currently in national office as SEI staff.
- IT Conference October 23-25 in Charleston, SC.
- Oct 9-11 Swiftwater Rescue Conference in Dillsboro, NC
- PaddleReady mobile app has 5000+ downloads so far. More features are being added.
- "SUP Leashes and Lifejackets" PSA videos are on YouTube.
- USCG grant status (Chris) Wayne Stacy, liaison (not present).
  - ACA has benefitted from two USCG grants, one funding the BSA moving water video, the other providing social media funding for SEI programs.
  - Grants just applied for: social media outreach, and skills assessment for underserved communities
- Kelsey presented beta version of SEIC policy waiver request form. Standards Committee could use to evaluate requests for extensions of certification beyond the one-year extension described in SEIC Policy.
- JPE starting in March will change to a more comprehensive bimonthly publication called *Paddle*.
- Kelsey presented a new laminated instructor certification card integrated with certification letter and FAQ sheet for new instructors.
- USACK-ACA partnership announced by Chris Stec.

- This is a partnership, not a merger. The intent is to strengthen both organizations. USACK is understaffed and the ACA can lend structure and instructional frameworks. The ACA can learn from USACK high-skilled paddlers.
  - Potential elements include
    - Training or using ACA instructors to help identify early talent and guide paddlers to higher levels of training.
    - Granting ACA paddlesport coaching credentials
      - At levels from weekend recreation through more serious athletic training
      - Including Paralympics training
      - Lowest level could begin with online training module
  - In its initial phase, it is uncertain whether the partnership elements will fall to an SEIC sub-group or a different ACA department, or a separate advisory group.
  - Chris asked for group reactions and answered questions. Responses were favorable.
  - Steve suggested forming a workgroup of SEIC volunteers to look at partnership.
- Kelsey highlighted SEI programs in 2014. See attached PowerPoint for details.
  - Chris reported on Kayak Fishing: the discipline wants some SEIC formality.
    - An untapped market, evidenced in part by Rapid Media's dedicated *Kayak Angler*
    - Representatives from kayak fishing community are willing to fly to Fredericksburg to meet.
    - Discussion points about Endorsement possibilities for kayak fishing:
      - Craft and skills generally fit with with CK SOT curriculum.
      - Add onto CK or RK content components that are fishing-specific, such as anchoring, rigging, modified rescue techniques, nautical rules of the road.
      - Include SUP when talking about fishing. (Is kayak fishing craft-specific? Venue-specific?)
      - Analogous to SUP Yoga process/curriculum
    - Some felt that most kayak fishing consumers don't really care about kayaking skills.
  - Chris reported SEI attempting to standardize Discipline bylaws/governance.
    - Jim: Rafting Committee (a charter discipline) is holding off on completing its bylaws.
  - Kelsey reported SEI certification data.
    - 2014 audit removed about 1000 instructors from ACA pool.

**Dan Maresh, USCG Auxiliary Director of Education**, presented information on expansion of Auxiliary Programs to include paddle craft. Assisted by Don Goff, USCG Aux and L2 CK instructor.

- USCGAux programs include vessel inspection, shore-side safety classes, and appearance at public events. Vessel inspections are not regulatory; they recommend safety improvements aligned with local and state regulations.
- Accident statistics suggest a need for small craft safety awareness, especially for hunters and fishermen.
- ACA involvement may help lend credibility to programs, especially when viewed by insurance companies. The current USCGAux education program (PaddleAmerica) was panned.
- The ACA is developing a shoreside water safety class for the USCGA to present.
- Group ideas:
  - Consider ACA Paddling Clubs as a resource for contacting paddlers locally.
  - MeetUp.com could yield access to unofficial groups of people with no education and training, who may be open to learning for free.
  - Timing is critical aspect. Winter is a good time for shore-side safety classes.
  - Pursue groups like Team River Runner who cater to newbies.

#### **Division Reports (Rusty Cooper)**

- NW Division Report from Jim Virgin: NW Division doing SUP programs. State director program developing events to offer L1 courses.
- Middle States Division (reported by Mike Aronoff) soon offering divisional certification and training for scouts and other groups in RC, RK, CK, SUP. No interaction yet with ACA State Director.

- Europe Division report formal and thorough. Europe has country reps, instructional focus.

### **Committee Reports:**

- Introduction to Paddling Committee (Mike Aronoff) report to be covered in New Business.
- Touring Canoe Committee not represented at meeting; report in packet.
- River Canoe Committee (Beth Weigandt) reports moving along with goals. In addition to report in meeting packet, RCC met yesterday with 6 committee members.
  - Ben Morton elected new Vice Chair.
  - This year will review curricula for consistency.
  - Working with other disciplines on multi-discipline curriculum.
- River Kayak Committee (Larry Ausley) has a report in packet. Additionally, Larry reported new projects for coming year:
  - Make instructors more visible to public
  - Better educate instructors on delivering assessments
  - Revisit Instructor Update packaging for content and consistency to improve perceived value of Updates. Goal: Make them more inviting.
  - Value of RK Instruction Facebook group is good.
  - Big-name, notable kayakers will be submitting articles to Rapid Media publications on the value of paddlesports education and ACA.
  - Currently, a L5 RK instructor can become a L5 IT with no prerequisite to be a lower level IT first. Committee will develop proposal this year for prerequisite for L5 IT.
  - Working on a multi-craft trip leader assessment.
- Coastal Kayak Committee (John Browning) has a report in packet. Additionally,
  - Work on Trip Leader Assessment died on vine.
  - Recent elections resulted in Dale Williams as Vice Chair and Scott Sczepaniak as Secretary plus 4 new committee members.
- SUP Committee (Josh Hall) also held an election, results are in report. Also, new SUP Yoga program has been rolled out and is going well.
- Adaptive Paddling Committee (Joe Moore, new Chair) Report submitted to packet. Corrections:
  - 5 Adaptive Paddling Workshops were conducted in 2014, not 3. The others were in SC and WA.
  - The last 8 APWs have been held in 8 different states, the most in discipline history. All were privately funded, not grant-backed.
  - 11 APWs are already planned for 2015, with 2 more in the works, including one rafting.
  - 2014 AP summit was filled to capacity.
- Safety and Rescue Committee (Sam Fowlkes) has been holding monthly conference calls on
  - Swiftwater Rescue Conference planned, October 2015. More in-water skills planned.
  - Development of a Professional Rescue course in response to demand. Robin explained that the proposed course would meet standards for firefighters and other professional rescuers, adding paddling and hydrology components, plus common professional rescuers scenarios, such as vehicles in water.
  - Proposal to change Instructor: Student ratio in upcoming Motion.
  - Facebook page.
- Rafting Committee (Jim Virgin) delivered live report.
  - As a new discipline, Rafting is just now figuring out how to build its program.
  - Vision: one certified ACA raft instructor w/every rafting company in US.
  - Facebook page in development.
  - Working on a proposal to allow paddle and oar rafts to be included in the same course.
  - Also working w/adaptive program for rafts.
- Surf Kayaking: no report, no live report.

### **Standards Committee Report (Steve Hutton):**

- Welcomed new SEIC officers: Vice Chair Rusty Cooper and Secretary Becky Molina.
- SC has been evaluating annual ITE renewals. Thanks to past and new Standards Committee and to Kelsey for work on those. Questions arose about IT process, to be addressed.
- Fall SEIC meeting will be at IT conference. Great opportunity to make impact.

**Motions:****Motion 20150220-A: Clarification of SEIC Policy Manual Chapter 3.B.2.c (SEI Department)**

*Update SEIC Policy Manual Chapter 3.B.2.c with the underlined words:*

*c) Have taught and properly reported at least two skills courses at their desired level of IT certification*

- Presented by Chris Stec as part of IT revisions. Motion seconded.
- Robin made friendly amendment “within the past four years” timeframe?
- Friendly amendment seconded and accepted by Chris.
- Motion passed unanimously, and later passed ACA Board.

**Motion 20150220-C: Safety and Rescue Instructor: Student Ratio Change (SR Committee)**

*Revise the current 1 to 5 instructor to student ratio to 1 to 12 on all Safety & Rescue courses*

Sam Fowlkes presented rationale:

- About ½ of course content is on dry land. Different setting than other ACA paddling classes.
- Instructors have strict control over how many are in the water. Students run safety scenarios.
- 1:12 is industry standard ratio, including NFPA, Rescue 3, and other training organizations.
- Question about whether a greater ratio be considered for groups of younger (teen) students. Robin and Sam believe that need is covered by instructor discretion.
- It was noted that the new ratio is not consistent with other ACA programs, and there has been an SEI push for consistency across disciplines.
- Voting on motion: 11 in favor. 2 abstentions. (Josh and Ben).
- Motion passed SEIC, and later passed ACA Board.

**Motion 20150220-D: Motion to adopt L2 Essentials of Sit on Top River Kayaking Instructor Criteria**

*Motion to adopt the attached draft “L2: Essentials of Sit-On-Top River Kayaking Instructor Criteria”*

- Mike Aronoff introduced the motion:
  - River Kayak Committee and Introduction to Paddling Committee jointly sponsored.
  - There is enough interest for this level.
  - New course can address river fishing.
- Larry Ausley suggested changing the wording to add “includes inflatables.”
- Mike accepted friendly amendment.
- Voting: 13 in favor. No opposition or abstentions. Motion passed SEIC; later passed ACA Board.

**Review the SEIC Action Item document from the September 2014 meeting.**

- Publish the ACA Strategic Plan on the ACA website (SEI Office): Not completed.
- Update and publish the DIF article written by Sam Fowlkes (Chris Stec): Task force looking at DIF structure.
- Send latest discipline charter to Chris Stec (All Disciplines): All but Rafting have completed this task.
- Work on common L4 ICW requirements (All discipline chairs) The ACA BoD has directed the SEIC to do this as a result of recent CK proposals. Goal is for L4 to look more uniform. RCC doesn’t want to change their L4.
- Develop a L2 SOT through IPC (IPC Chair, Mike Aronoff): Completed.
- Develop a public education resource for river hazards – white paper (River Kayak/Larry Ausley) Completed.
- Develop Adaptive Paddling Endorsement maintenance requirements (Joe Moore) Completed a year ago.
- Update the ACA skills report form – add whether the student has a disability (SEI Office) Completed.
- Develop new Rafting charter (Rafting Chair, Jim Virgin) Ongoing.
- Clean-up the L3 SOT certification and assessment documents (Coastal Kayak) Completed.
- Publish the new required Trainer Evaluation form (SEI Office) Under New Business.
- Develop a proposal to move from our present time/tenure requirements to begin the IT process to a certain number of courses taught (Robin Pope): Deferred to IT Conference in October.

- Prepare a proposal for the Fall meeting to reduce the minimum number of students for L5 ICW (IDW or ICE) to two to support a recent change adopted from the River Kayak and River Canoe River Kayak (Larry Ausley) Completed.
- The Value Proposition for Course Reporting (Chris) JPE article, not completed.
- Trainer Evaluations - Why do we need them? How can we improve? (Standards Committee) Ongoing
- First Aid Requirements Memo (Steve Hutton, Requirement appropriate to level and venue) Ongoing
- Provide written guidance on whether the + rating on the international rapid scale denotes that it exceeds venue maximum rating (Steve Hutton, Requested by River Kayak)
- Submit a new L3 Coastal SUP curriculum package (SUP Committee) Ongoing.
- Document Instructional Best Practices (Steve Hutton): Publish samples of good course paperwork online for review (Outlines, candidate evaluations, feedback, continuation forms, etc.) Ongoing.
- Publish a consolidated discipline charter (SEI Office & Sam Fowlkes) Ongoing.
- Girl Scout Liaison Recruitment (SEI Office) Chris has reached out, no response. Mike can ask Capital area director of training to come to SEIC meeting.

## New Business

1. Prone Kayaking Discussion (Adam Masters)
  - Adam on GoToMeeting presented PowerPoint.
  - Questions
    - Current swiftwater rescue applications? Bellyak can get into position faster for pinned boat. Used for ice rescue in the Northeast. Mobile buoyancy aid. Lowhead dam rescue, live bait situation. Floating litter. Fire departments have given positive feedback. Standardization and increased effectiveness needed.
    - Adam fielded questions about attachment points and storage.
    - Limitation of use: not vertical drops.
    - Why its own discipline? Why not fold into adaptive/swiftwater? AM: Bellyak handles differently; techniques and trim are different. Has its own skill progression. Not as much torque or power are required.
    - Unique safety aspects to prone kayaking? AM: keeping hands safe in moving water. Rolling and remounting. Being separated from craft. (no leash)
  - Steve: straw poll: Who thinks this is worth some collaborative thought as an SEIC endeavor?
    - 7 (Josh, Robin, Steve, Joe, Ben, Becky, Sam) out of 13 voting yes.
    - Strong no: John, Larry, Beth, Mike
    - Abstain: Jim, Rusty
    - Robin, Ben, Joe, and Josh agreed to work with Adam.
2. SUP Committee Motions (Josh Hall)
  - a. *Holding L2 instructor credential is a prerequisite for attending L3/4 IDW/ICE in SUP disciplines.*
    - *Applies to Level 3: Surf SUP, L3: Whitewater SUP, and L4: Advanced Whitewater SUP IDW/ICE Course Prerequisites: Level 2: Essentials of SUP instructor in good standing and successful completion of L3: Surf SUP skills assessment or equivalent skills.*
    - *Also requires successful completion of skills assessment at level below the instructor level sought.*
    - Larry moved that we entertain the motion. All voting members present concurred.
    - Discussion points included:
      - Need: there is a distinct dividing line between L2 and L3 skills based on conditions and equipment. This change would prevent new instructor candidates from starting their training in a specialized, higher-level venue, which has been a problem in other disciplines. Fundamentals need to be developed in “zero” conditions (on a pond).
      - Parallel requirements, given the historic push for consistency across disciplines. The L2/L3 dividing line is especially distinct in SUP. This discipline could be a test case. Other disciplines can decide whether to follow. Agreement that each discipline knows best.
      - Multi-level courses: New L3 stand-alone ICW/ICE would not start from zero; they’d be more like Level upgrades. It’d be possible to run two consecutive courses: a L1-2 followed by L3; candidates register for the first one or both. ITs submit two course reports.

- A friendly amendment requiring L2 instructors to have teaching experience before pursuing L3 certification was proposed and discussed. Because the SUP discipline committee had already discussed and not supported that idea, the friendly amendment was rejected.
    - Voting for: 10. Voting against: 1 (Ben). Abstaining: 2 (Joe, Josh)
    - **Motion passed SEIC, and subsequently passed ACA Board.**
  - b. *Motion to change the following SUP instructor course durations to reflect passage of prior motion:*
    - *L3 Surf SUP Instructor certification course durations: IDW (8 hours – 1 day) / ICE (8 hours – 1 day)*
    - *L3 WW SUP Instructor certification course durations: IDW (8 hours – 1 day) / ICE (8 hours – 1 day)*
    - *L4 Adv WW SUP Instructor certification course durations: IDW (16 hour– 2 day) / ICE (8 hours – 1 day)*
    - Voting for: 12; Voting against: 0; Abstaining: 1 (Josh)
    - **Motion passed SEIC, and subsequently passed ACA Board.**
3. Instructor Trainer Application – Policy & Process Change (Chris Stec)
- Need outlined: this is a current and historical issue: a high percentage of IT applications are incomplete.
  - Action heretofore on current proposal: Options A (require ITCs to take online course) or Option B (require an ITDW) were proposed previously and discussed via email and conference call.
    - *The revised motion in premeeting packet includes:*
      - *IT application/registration as an ITC required up front.*
      - *Online course mandatory with 100% pass requirement.*
      - *ITDW mandate off the table.*
  - Discussion:
    - Changes will make ITC tracking and IT application process much easier for staff and Standards Committee. ITEs will have greater responsibility for developing administrative IT skills.
    - Changes must be made in SEIC policy to reflect what the motion will change.
    - Online components are to be developed first, then later a new ITDW outline will take shape.
    - There will most likely be a short grandfathering period for a select number of ITCs who start the process before the end of this year. However, the primary goal will be for all ITCs starting Jan 1, 2016 to be required to adhere to all aspects of the revised system.
    - Changes will also serve to standardize ITE duties and expectations.
    - Some changes were suggested and made to the new IT application form: listing ITDW as an alternative to co-teach, APW added.
  - Voting on motion. For: 13; Against: 0; Abstaining: 0.
  - **Motion passed SEIC, and subsequently passed ACA Board.**
4. Coaching Track in Conjunction with USACK (Chris Stec) Discussed earlier under SEIC report. Workgroup including Ben, Rusty to liaise with USACK.
5. Essential Eligibility Criteria Update (SEI Staff)
- Historically, EEC were written for adaptive workshops. 7-8 years ago EEC were written for skills courses and IDW/ICEs. They need a review perhaps, which is a huge task with legal implications. Joe as APC Chair could be the first to take a look at it in a manner similar to IT process review: make a proposal, allow for discussion, 30 days review, then to board.
  - This came from an issue regarding a certain ITC.
  - Joe drew a distinction between instructor criteria and EEC, posing the question as “Do you have the right to attempt to become an instructor?”
6. Instructor Course Participants under age 18 (Robin Pope)
- Problems: Instructor candidates under 18 are appearing on course reports, some as young as 14.
  - Many ITs believe it’s okay if candidates are nearly 18, or if a Standards Committee waiver is obtained.
  - SEIC Policy says that instructors need to be 18, but nothing about the age of IDW/ICE participants.

- The EEC say “be 18 years or older.” Joe pointed out that age is not a functional threshold, so it doesn’t belong in EEC anyway. And that, if it’s a waive-able criterion, it’s not essential.
  - There was discussion as to the origin of the age requirement, be it legal (which differs among states), insurance-driven, industry standard, or otherwise.
  - Many entities hire 16 and 17-year olds for paddling supervision, especially summer camps and liveries.
  - Steve summarized the general consensus that younger students (age 16-17) should be allowed to participate without certification and be continued.
7. Membership Requirements for Instructors (Steve Hutton / Patrick Frehner)
- Instructors newly certified pay dues in Year 1 then they don’t pay again until Year 4 to get back in the good graces of the ACA. One option: pay back dues when renewing certification.
  - Discussion: instructors who don’t pay are misrepresenting themselves. It’s not ethical. SEI Policy requires annual membership and dues.
  - Beth moved to amend SEIC Policy manual wherever appropriate to reflect, in addition to standing maintenance requirements for Instructors, ITs, and ITEs:  
*If ACA membership and/or SEIC dues lapsed at any point during the certification period, those back dues must be paid in order to renew certification.*
    - Seconded.
    - In favor: 12. None opposed or abstaining.
- 7 ½. IPC new business (Mike): Multidiscipline Paddlesport Certification
- Level of certification need for livery workers, county parks, etc. Many entities have requirements for people who work around water to have some sort of certification. Credential called “safety facilitator”
  - Would include Quickstart-level paddling skills plus safety knowledge.
  - Would increase opportunities for ACA training and exposure.
  - Concern, as with former Operation Paddle Safe verification program: would people pay?
  - All agreed to pursue the possibilities; John, Beth, Becky, Mike, Jim, Peter, Ben agreed to workgroup.
8. Pack Canoe Instruction. (Charlie Wilson) Charlie, not present, thinks it belongs somewhere in ACA curricula. There is information in the pre-meeting packet. No action at this time.
9. Inaugural Instructor Trainer Conference (Chris Stec) in Charleston, SC in October. Josh Hall is co-chair. Planning a unique event aimed specifically at ITs and ITEs. Program will include USACK people and educators. Trying to get on-water time as well, and special dinners.
10. How to provide more instructor updates each year (Chris Stec): No action.

### Wrap-Up

Concluding feedback was generally very positive: many participants were excited about renewed energy in the group, the caliber of people involved, level of detail of discussions, the lack of acrimony, and the pace of movement through the agenda. Some mentioned specific appreciation for face-to-face discussion about the IT process, the SUP instructor sequencing proposal, the presence of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the willingness of the SEIC as a whole to respect individual disciplines. Wishes for future meetings included greater attendance, a discussion of instructor retention strategies, and less focus on details and new proposals that could serve to spread the council too thin.

Motion to adjourn, seconded. Meeting concluded at 4:26 p.m.