

SAMSA AND APA: FAQs

1. What is the “first” step? Is it my responsibility as an operator to contact SAMSA for a survey?

It is the operator’s responsibility to contact SAMSA and arrange the survey. Ideally, a number of Operators within an area should get together to arrange their surveys for the same day or consecutive days.

2. How do I contact SAMSA?

Visit the SAMSA website to get a list of the SAMSA offices countrywide. Please call the office in addition to e-mailing.

<http://www.samsa.org.za/content/contact-us>

3. What is the process?

You will need to submit a “Request for Survey” form. SAMSA will then issue you with the numbers for your fleet of boats and arrange a date for the survey. You will be invoiced and will have to pay in advance. You then need to apply the numbers issued onto your boat and make sure you have all the required equipment and paperwork in place. Once the survey is complete, you will be issued with a Licence to Operator or LGSC.

4. Tell me more about the boat numbers?

SAMSA will issue a list of numbers unique to your operation and each boat will have its own number. The numbers need to be marked on the boat in a permanent and clearly legible way, not less than 10mm high. You can use permanent marker or have special numbers manufactured that you can glue on.

5. What will happen if I don’t get my boats surveyed?

By running trips with boats that have not been surveyed, you are breaking the law and SAMSA have the power to issue a Prohibition Notice which will compel you to cease operations immediately.

6. How does it benefit me to be a member of APA?

In terms of the Merchant Shipping Act, all commercial boats are required to be annually surveyed. This applies to paddling operators as well. The requirements for this survey under the act are onerous and expensive but APA has reached an agreement with SAMSA that operators who are APA members and who comply with the APA regulations receive a vastly discounted rate and a much simpler survey process.

7. Very briefly, what APA regulations do I need to comply with?

All guides must be qualified, you must sign the code of conduct and you must comply with the terms of the APA Operating Standards. All of this is included in Marine Notice 28. SAMSA does understand that most guides are freelance and their names will appear on more than one operators list.

8. What if I am not an APA member?

SAMSA will treat non-APA members as any other commercial vessel and survey their boats individually. The peculiar risks associated with that operation will need to be assessed on a case by case basis. APA will provide SAMSA with a list of members each year.

9. How do I prepare for the survey?

Contact APA and ask for a copy of the Marine Notice 28. Study it carefully as it gives you all of the information you need. If you are lacking in certain areas (e.g. equipment, guides not qualified etc.), contact APA for advice on how to comply.

10. Which boats are currently approved in terms of the Marine Notice?

At present, ARK rafts and crocs, canoes by Roamer Rand and Rapid and Tide Sports canoes (buoyancy must be fitted) Fluid Synergys (buoyancy must be fitted) are all approved. This means that only a visual inspection is needed rather than a buoyancy test in the water.

11. What does 'buoyancy must be fitted' mean?

These boats do not have inherent buoyancy so additional buoyancy must be fitted. The fore and aft compartments of canoes can be filled with foam or approved PET bottles or polystyrene can be fitted into the hull of the Synergy. 'Steri-Nappy' buckets as used for client's gear are not acceptable in canoes.

12. What if I use other boats?

The inspector will do a buoyancy test (in the water on the day. If you have a number of boats, all of the same design, contact APA as it is possible to have additional types of craft added to the Marine Notice if necessary. Ideally, they should have a Buoyancy Certificate and SAMSA can assist manufacturers in this regard.

13. What about tubes, lilos, river boards etc?

These are not currently covered by the policy.

14. I hire my boats – how do I comply with the law?

The owner of the boats must ensure that they have been surveyed by SAMSA . You can check this by asking for the Licence to Operate and checking that each boat has a registration number on it .

15. My operation is based on the Nambian side of the Orange River. Do I still need to be surveyed?

The Merchant Shipping Act applies to all boats operating in South African waters. This applies to the Orange on the SA side. We would recommend that Namibian based operators do the survey just in case as, if there is an incident, SAMSA will do an enquiry. If the boats have been surveyed or registered in Namibia then this will not apply.

16. I run my trips off the coastline – do I need to be surveyed?

Yes you do. APA is currently drawing up Operating Procedures for these types of operations which will be submitted to SAMSA shortly.

More Questions? Contact APA on
