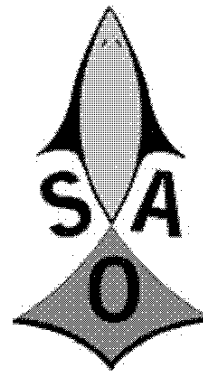


Small Commercial Vessel Operator

Program Planning & Delivery

Saskatchewan Outfitters Association

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Canada through Transport Canada has introduced new safety requirements for small boat operators and the equipment they use. Parts of these require small commercial vessel operators to develop skill sets associated with the safe operation of water craft.

No acceptable training or certification process presently exists.

The Saskatchewan Outfitters Association has undertaken to develop a training and certification process that will upgrade guide skills to meet Transport Canada's requirements.

This project will create a curriculum, describe the extent of the present training needs and describe a delivery mechanism for training and certification.

B. PROJECT OVERVIEW

1. Sector Profile

Outfitting is a sub-sector of the Saskatchewan Tourism Industry and is the largest single source of export dollars in the industry. The sector consists primarily of small owner-operated businesses, which are responsible for providing equipment, guides and accommodations for hunting, angling and touring experiences throughout the province. There are approximately 650 registered outfitters in the province of which 370 may be involved in fishing.

Estimates of the income for the outfitting industry are in the area of 200 million dollars with the fishing sector accounting for approximately 120 million. Saskatchewan Environment is presently undertaking a study which will provide a better indication of this value.

The industry relies heavily on strong partnerships with provincial regulatory, environment and resource management bodies. Outfitters have an inherent interest in the sustained management of Saskatchewan's natural environment and have been leaders in this area.

Over the last few years, the industry has identified the service component as being critical to maintaining its competitiveness. The industry deals in a world market with the majority of clients coming from the United States and Europe. Various other areas of Canada, the United States, Mexico, Russia and South Africa offer products similar to that found in Saskatchewan. Providing superior services and fostering value-added product are essential for the continued success of the industry.

The regulatory environment, in which the industry presently operates, does not recognize or encourage the quality of the outfitting experience. The industry and the public sector have taken some initiatives to address this situation. To date, discussions have centered on separating the wildlife management component from the business component with the latter to be more reflective of industry needs. It is proposed that a new system be established which would reflect service standards and other business ethics.

Safety considerations as outlined in this project would be considered an industry standard.

2. Background

The Saskatchewan Outfitting industry recognized the need for guide training in the early 90's. A variety of partnerships were developed to create a program and included groups such as the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association, Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council, and Saskatchewan Education and Human Resources Development Canada. This eventually resulted in a guide certification program administered by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council that emphasized the "Skills and Knowledge" requirements needed to be recognized as competent in an occupation. Safety was a recognized skill of this occupation however the emphasis centered around the skill sets involving customer service.

In the late 90's the federal government, through Transport Canada, began to address the issue of boat handler competency in response to increased boating accidents. Initially a general boat handling competency certification was created to address the needs associated with small pleasure craft. Also identified was the need for a more in depth process that targeted competencies of operators of small commercial vessels. This included fresh water fishing guides.

The Canadian Federation of Outfitting Associations is an organization that represents the outfitting industry across Canada. This group identified over ten thousand small vessel operators across Canada which are employed by their businesses. After meeting with the Ministry of Transport, the Canadian Federation of Outfitting Associations opted to monitor a Saskatchewan initiative that could create a model to be potentially used throughout Canada.

The Saskatchewan Outfitters Association along with provincial partners will be addressing a two stage process that will:

- a. Identify the scope of the guiding industry in Saskatchewan and a training curriculum acceptable to MOT.
- b. Develop a training delivery system that will enable guides in the province to meet the necessary federal requirements both for the present and into the future.

3. Occupational Characteristics

In order to understand the occupation of fishing guide it is necessary also to understand how the outfitting industry operates and is licensed.

The industry in Saskatchewan operates under a variety of acts and regulations from all levels of government. Primary regulations are administered by Saskatchewan Environment under the "Guides and Outfitters Regulations".

The new guide requirements are being introduced by a federal government department. They are the first federal regulations that specifically target employee working requirements in this industry sector.

For the purpose of this project the difference between guides and outfitters should be clarified. An outfitter, under Saskatchewan provincial jurisdiction, is an individual or business that provides accommodations, equipment and expertise for purposes associated with angling. Outfitters must be licensed and designated with a resource allocation, both of which are presently administered by Saskatchewan Environment. No special requirements are needed to be an outfitter in Saskatchewan.

For simplicity sake, a guide in Saskatchewan is an individual who works for an outfitter and provides angling expertise and assistance on behalf of the outfitter. A fishing guide requires no form of provincial license and presently requires no certification. The only requirement is a guide must carry proper identification that indicates who he is working for and the duration of his employment.

By definition an outfitter is also a guide and may accompany clients while angling.

Neither a guide nor outfitter presently requires training as part of the licensing process. A Guide Certification Program is currently available in Saskatchewan and an outfitter certification program has been developed and is awaiting implementation. The guide training and certification focuses on customer service.

Guide training is normally done through "in house" training programs at outfitting businesses. (Although some training is based on existing certification criteria much is not). Those that are not, usually focus on operational detail sometimes at the expense of safety and customer service.

The size of outfitting operations often dictates the type and degree of training available. Larger operations handle upwards of 100 clients and may require over 50 guides. In this situation most have an on site trainer and guides live on site.

Smaller “mom & pop” business’ often do not have guides or may do the guiding themselves.

In a few situations the business depends upon guides being available from near by communities. In these situations guides have little training other than the knowledge of operating motorized vessels and knowledge of the water body.

The wide variety of operational types requires a training delivery mechanism that meets a variety of needs.

C. KEY DELIVERABLES

1. Curriculum for Training of Small Commercial Vessel Operators

A curriculum (*See Addendum 1*) has been produced and approved by MOT (*See Addendum 2*). This curriculum is based on the criteria as set forth by Transport Canada – Marine Personnel Standards and Pilotage. While the curriculum describes course content it does not address any special needs that might be identified in program deliver.

The guiding sector in Saskatchewan has a majority of adult First Nation guides that in many situations have unique learning needs.

From previous guide training delivered in the province to First Nations, the need for oral evaluation of trainees was established. This was particularly true for older, experienced guides. The curriculum approved by Transport Canada acknowledges the use of oral exams as an evaluation tool.

Further, it is important that the opportunity exists to deliver programs in the language of the trainee. In Northern Saskatchewan three languages are predominantly used including Cree, Dene and English. Effort should be made to insure that instructors are able to deliver training in the appropriate language when necessary. Translation should be made available if necessary.

2. Training Delivery System

(a) Present Industry Status – Survey Results

In order to determine the make up of the guiding sector in Saskatchewan the SOA initiated a survey of the industry.

Because all guides have to be employed by an outfitter an initial questionnaire was developed and sent to all fishing operators throughout Saskatchewan and to several hunting outfitters who were known to use boats to transport guests while hunting.

Follow up phone calls were made in an attempt to make contact with the businesses that did not initially respond. In total 287 mail outs were done.

In assessing information it was noted that many outfitting operations do not utilize guides particularly those that market themselves as light housekeeping operations or have secondary angling endorsements.

In total there are approximately 370 outfitting operations in Saskatchewan that are licensed for angling. Saskatchewan licensing system uses an endorsement system that designates which species an outfitter may provide services for. The categories include angling, big game, game birds and other wildlife.

The breakdown for angling is as follows:

Primary Endorsement – 251
Endorsement 2 – 80
Endorsement 3 – 39

Outfitters that have angling as a primary endorsement are the most likely to use guides, although many of these are light housekeeping.

Endorsement 2 and endorsement 3 angling outfitters seldom utilize guides other than providing guiding services by the owner/operator.

Although all owner operators in the Primary Angling Endorsement category are by regulations considered to be guides in actual practise not all do guide. It is estimated that perhaps 50% guide on a limited basis.

SURVEY RESULTS

Total Guides Angling	1052
Full Time	407
Part Time	275
Owner/Operator	<u>370</u>
	1052

Average Wage/Day	
Full Time	\$147
Part Time	\$133
Owner/Operator	\$147

Average Days Worked	
Full Time	71
Part Time	29
Owner/Operator	15

Total Yearly Wage	
Full Time 407 X \$147 X 71 days =	4,247,859
Part Time 275 X \$133 X 29 days =	1,060,675
Owner/Operator 370 X 1/3 X 133 X 15 days =	246,050

Total Yearly Guiding = 5,554,584

Other Information

- ❖ Guides (other than owner/operator) with Fresh Water Fishing Guide Certification - 23%
- ❖ Guides with "on the job training" - 86%
- ❖ Guides with other training (CPR, First Aid, Guide College) - 21%
- ❖ Language predominately spoken by guides:
 - English – 55%
 - Cree – 40%
 - Dene – 5%

(b) Consideration & Recommendations for Training Delivery

i. Geographic Distribution of Small Commercial Vessel Operators

The majority of fishing guides are located in the Northern half of the province with numbers at 90% north and 10% south.

While this concentration would seem supportive of easier program delivery, in fact the remoteness of many northern operations presents challenges. It is desirable to provide certification and training at the place where guides work rather than in their home communities.

Programs should be delivered in the summer or fall because of the need to access the water body on which the guide works. Other necessary equipment that may be required for program delivery would be available at the place of employment.

Many fishing operations are not road accessible and must be accessed by aircraft which adds to the cost of program delivery.

Recommendation: It would be advisable for an instructor to deliver a program on site rather than transport the guide to a central area to receive instruction.

ii. Cultural Implications

The majority of guides in the La Ronge area are Cree speaking and most guides in the north are Dene. To provide required evaluations by means of written exams in English would present challenges to many existing guides. A solution would be to provide oral exams or a means of evaluation in the language the guides feel most comfortable. This has worked successfully in other guide training programs.

Recommendation: It is recommended that people fluent in Dene and Cree are involved in the program delivery as instructors.

iii. Federal Criteria

- ***Instructor Qualifications & Course Criteria***

Federal regulations indicate that all instructors must have a minimum of an MED A1 level. Presently there are no qualified instructors in Saskatchewan to deliver these programs.

Programs are offered in British Columbia that would qualify instructors to teach the course requirements. These are 4 days in duration and have tuition fees of about \$500.

The present MOT criteria indicates that training sessions may only accommodate twelve people at a time. If 1000 people need training immediately and given an average class size of 10; this would require 100 separate sessions to be held. However 80% of the present outfitting businesses have fewer than 10 guides (a more reasonable number would be 6), then the requirement would be 165 training sessions.

With the expectations that MOT will limit the time for training to 2-3 years prior to any degree of compliance taking place this requires anywhere from 40-80 course sessions a year. (Each session will be 1 day in length).

Recommendation: It is recommended that 6 individuals be identified to participate in training in order to receive the MED A1 rating. These individuals would be available to provide on site training in Saskatchewan.

- ***Time frame for implementation***

The MOT has provided a temporary approval of a curriculum (6 months) which will be changed to permanent approval with the provision that at least one training program occur within six months. The deadline for this to occur is September 30, 2006.

Recommendation: It is recommended that one initial program be conducted at the earliest possible date to meet MOT requirements. Because the Saskatchewan instructors will not be training prior to this time, an out of province, qualified instructor should be employed to carry out this training session. This will also provide a test for the program delivery with an evaluation to determine strengths and weaknesses of the prepared model.

- **MOT changes to regulations**

Proposed MOT regulation changes make a new classification of “sheltered waters”. Sheltered waters are areas that have no section of the water body greater than one nautical from any shore line. On “sheltered waters” small commercial vessel operators do not require a special certification process but do still need the Pleasure Craft Operator Card.

This presents an additional challenge in that a 2nd program will have to be delivered to ensure guides can continue to be employed. The extent of the numbers involved cannot be determined until the number of lakes have been identified that are deemed to be “sheltered waters”. It is estimated that no more than 20% of the guides will be affected.

Recommendation: Those instructors trained with MED 1A qualification that will be delivering the MOT approved Small Commercial Vessel Operator Program also be familiar with and deliver the Pleasure Craft Operator Certificate Program.

- **Certification Authority**

The MOT defines their responsibility in marine safety to be that of describing the parameter of safety through regulations and ensuring compliance to regulations. Any training and certification processes are deemed to be outside of their areas of interest. The regulations do state that any group or organization promoting and delivering training to meet regulations must provide for a certification process that includes keeping permanent records of who is certified.

Recommendation: The Saskatchewan Outfitters Association assume the responsibility of maintaining the necessary records that will identify all individuals who have successfully completed the necessary certification processes and that this provincial organization work with its provincial counterparts across Canada to set up similar processes in other province.

iv. Long Term Training Needs

It is expected that the total number of guides (small commercial vessel operators) required by the outfitting industry should remain fairly constant into the future however there will be some need for yearly recruitment in the industry. It is estimated that approximately 10% or 100 new guides will need certification on an annual bases.

Recommendation: During the first three years a number of larger operations that employ large numbers of guides should be encouraged to have trainers on staff. This will require some efforts from both a financial and human resource perspective. This could be off set by some long term financial benefits in terms of convenient and less expensive on site training and certification. The training and certification process to be conducted over the next 2-3 years look carefully at the number of new individuals coming into the industry and develop a long term certification process based on more exact numbers. The opportunity to include regional colleges in training efforts should be considered.

The process should also monitor industry trends that will determine the overall needs for the foreseeable future.

3. Identify a Pool of Trainers

Potential trainers will be identified by:

- Existing Certified MOT Trainers

The present qualifications for existing trainers designated by Transport Canada are exceedingly high. Presently no Transport Canada trainers are established or live in Saskatchewan. Only a few are located in the two neighbouring provinces of Manitoba and Alberta.

Both the Canadian Federation of Outfitters Associations and the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association have asked Transport Canada to review instructor qualifications in light of the need to insure instructors are available to deliver programs in the time frame as outlined by Transport Canada.

Transport Canada is presently addressing this situation.

- Existing Safety Instructors

Presently there are large numbers of certified safety instructors employed by both public and private institutions. These include areas of fire protection, ambulance services and police. (St. John's Ambulance, Red Cross) Initial inquiries have indicated high levels of interest by individuals

in these areas who would be willing to expand their services into small vessel operator training.

- **Outfitting Operations**

Larger outfitting businesses have expressed interest in having on site trainers to deliver required training as well as in house training to their staff. Many outfitting operations presently have people employed who have background in various areas associated with these regulations including first aid, water rescue and fire fighting. Some recognition of prior learning should be included in part to recognize trainer qualifications.

4. Identify Partners for Project Delivery

The training and certification process should be considered to have two stages dependant on short and long term needs.

STAGE 1

In this stage training is targeted at existing small commercial vessel operators. The objective is to train up to 400 guides over a two year period. This includes an early initial training module required by MOT to test the proposed curriculum and evaluate the process and instructors.

Partners identified to date are:

- a. All owners of outfitting businesses
- b. Saskatchewan Outfitters Association
- c. Transport Canada
- d. Sask Advanced Education & Employment / Sector Partnerships
- e. Saskatchewan Northern Affairs
- f. Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council / Sask Tourism
- g. Regional Colleges
- h. Canadian Federation of Outfitting Association

STAGE 2

The second stage of training will occur after the initial three years and focus on training of new entrants into the industry. These positions will be needed to replace existing guides that will leave due to retirement or other reasons.

Partners identified to date for this 2nd stage include:

- a. Outfitting businesses
- b. Saskatchewan Outfitters Associations
- c. Regional Colleges

5. Develop a Plan for Building Industry Capacity

The Canadian Outfitting Industry is presently subject to an extensive regulatory regime by three levels of government. The industry views the new Transport Canada regulations on small commercial vessel operator as an additional regulation to be accommodated. The new regulations on operator competency came simultaneously with a variety of other Transport Canada regulations dealing with water craft standards and communications.

The Canadian Outfitting Industry does view safety and liability issues as high priority but refers to the industry's positive accident statistics that do not indicate an unsafe environment.

The industry would be more inclined to accept safety requirements if not presented as part of a larger regulative package.

Presently Transport Canada has not developed a communications program to explain what the new requirements entail and why they are required. In order to achieve compliance to these regulations it will be necessary to accentuate the need for safety and consumer protection.

Transport Canada will be encouraged to work with individual provincial industry associations and the Canadian Federation of Outfitters Associations to bring this message forward.

The Saskatchewan Outfitters Association will continue to advocate with its members on the need for guide certification including a safety component. The Saskatchewan Outfitters Association will also communicate with Human Resources Canada and the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council to ensure that small commercial vessel operator certification is a pre-requisite for the certification of "Fresh Water Angling Guide".

FINANCIAL

The following describes the financial implications of a 3 year program that would provide training and certification thus enabling the provinces existing 1,000 guides to continue to work by meeting new Transport Canada Regulations

Year One

1. Test Program Delivery

Instructor = \$250 x 12 students =	\$ 3,000
Travel & Accommodation = \$500 x 2 people =	<u>\$ 1,000</u>
	\$ 4,000
Certification = \$30 x 12 =	<u>\$ 360</u>
	\$ 4,360

2. Instructor training for 10 Instructors

Tuition = \$500 x 10 instructors =	\$ 5,000
Travel \$800 x 10 instructors =	\$ 8,000
Per Diem / Accommodation = \$250 / day x 5 days x 10 =	<u>\$ 12,500</u>
	\$ 25,500

3. Instruction

Instruction = 500 students x \$200 =	\$100,000
Includes	\$150 Instructor fees
	\$30 Certification fees
	\$20 Training Manuals

4. Coordination

Salary =	\$ 50,000
Office/phone/sec =	\$ 5,000
Travel	<u>\$ 8,000</u>

Total Year One = **\$192,860**

5. Wages (Guides) =

512 x \$140 =	\$ 71,680
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Total = \$264,540

Year Two

1. Instruction =		
300 students x \$200 =		\$ 60,000
2. Coordination =		
Salary =		\$ 50,000
Office/phone/fax =		\$ 4,000
Travel =		\$ 6,000
		\$ 60,000
	Total =	<u>\$120,000</u>

Year Three

1. Instruction =		
200 students x \$200 =		\$ 40,000
2. Coordination =		
Salary =		\$ 50,000
Office/phone/fax =		\$ 3,000
Travel =		\$ 4,000
		\$ 57,000
	Total =	\$ 97,000
3. Wages =		
200 students x \$140 =		<u>\$ 28,000</u>
	Total =	<u>\$125,000</u>

Program Costs

Year One =	\$264,540
Year Two =	\$120,000
Year Three =	<u>\$125,000</u>
	\$509,540

Revenue

Outfitter Guide Contributions (Wages)

Year One = 512 x \$140 =	\$ 71,680
Year Two = 300 x \$140 =	\$ 42,000
Year Three = 200 x \$140 =	<u>\$ 28,000</u>
	\$141,680

Course Fees x \$75/guide

Year One = 512 x \$75 =	\$ 38,400
Year Two = 300 x \$75 =	\$ 22,500
Year Three = 200 x \$75 =	<u>\$ 15,000</u>
	\$ 75,900

Total = \$217,580

Required Funding

Program Costs	\$548,000
Minus Program Revenue	<u>\$217,580</u>
	TOTAL = \$330,420

F. NEXT STEPS

1. Create a 3 year term position for Training Coordinator.
The responsibility would include;
 - Identify and coordinate training requirements
 - Supervision of all training and instructors
 - Identify long term training needs and processes
 - Develop a record keeping system for certified guides
 - Liaise with outfitting industry and MOT
2. Deliver one training program prior to September 1, 2006 to meet MOT requirements and provide for a test of the delivery mechanism prior to full implementation of training.
3. Continue to liaise with Transport Canada to monitor any changes to the regulations and implement necessary changes to the certification process.
4. Identify candidates for training by working with the camp operator.
5. Identify instructors and ensure they have the proper level of qualifications.
6. Arrange for the necessary training.
7. Continue capacity building in the industry to foster a safety culture.
8. Liaise with HRDC to ensure that small commercial vessel operator certification becomes a pre-requisite for fresh water guide training.
9. Form partnerships with other training groups to foster a long term delivery system.