

MINISTRY OF TOURISM

GUIDELINES FOR KITESURFING ACTIVITIES

1. Purpose of the Guidelines

The guidelines aim at ensuring that kitesurfing activities are conducted in compliance with acceptable standards and a Code of Practice with a view to minimising the risks of accident.

2. Definition

Kitesurfing means a non-motorised surface water sport activity practised by a person standing on a board and propelled by his kite through the power of the wind

3. Clearance/Licences/Permits

A Surfing Licence is mandatory for any person to:

- (i) rent out kitesurfing equipment; and/or
- (ii) provide kitesurfing training

It is the responsibility of the operator to ensure that he/she is in possession of all clearance/permits/licences issued under any other enactment in relation to the surfing licence such as clearances from the Beach Authority, Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund and other relevant authorities.

Upon issue of a Surfing Licence, the licensee will be required to contribute to the Tourism Employees Welfare Fund (TEWF)/NPF/NPS.

4. Hours of operation for kitesurfing

The authorised hours for carrying out kitesurfing activities will be as follows:

- (i) from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. during the winter season; and
- (ii) from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. during the summer season.

5. Code of Practice and Sailing Rules

Every person (*irrespective of whether he has paid a fee or doing the activity on his own or for his own leisure*) who carries out the activity of kitesurfing will have to abide by the Code of Practice and the sailing rules referred to in Part A and Part B, respectively, at Annex.

6. Responsibilities of the Licensee

Before allowing a person to use his kitesurfing equipment, a licensee shall –

- (a) brief that person in a language he understands on –
 - (A) the Code of Practice set out in Annex;
 - (B) the currents, waves, winds and reefs;
 - (C) the marine environment and the possible hazards;
 - (D) the prevailing weather conditions and forecasts;
 - (E) the safety and security rules, and emergency procedures;
 - (G) the regulations or parts of a management plan relevant to kitesurfing for that particular area, wherever applicable;
 - (H) the different colours of buoys and flags, wherever applicable; and
 - (I) the international signals used; and
- (b) require that person to fill-in and sign a disclaimer form before carrying out kitesurfing activity, acknowledging that he is fully aware of the risks and dangers that may arise while carrying out the kitesurfing activity;
- (c) keep a register to be made readily available at the place where kitesurfing activity is being carried out for inspection by an authorised officer;
- (d) ensure that –
 - (i) any person, using his kitesurfing equipment, will carry out the kitesurfing activity –
 - (A) in accordance with the Code of Practice referred to at Annex;

(B) in such a way as not to be a source of danger to the public or a source of conflict to other beach users or sea users including fishers; and

(ii) his kitesurfing equipment is not left lying on the beach but is stowed away;

(iii) surveillance is carried out throughout the duration of the kitesurfing activity for which he is responsible; and

(e) carry out an inspection of all kitesurf boards, safety gears, rescue crafts and related equipment to ensure that these are properly maintained and are in safe operating condition.

(f) test safety devices prior to carrying out kitesurfing activities or letting same to clients.

7. Minimum Personnel

(a) A licensee shall employ, as minimum, the following personnel, unless the licensee holds the requested qualifications and expertise –

(i) an instructor holding qualifications acceptable to the Authority;

(ii) a person responsible for surveillance

(b) Either the instructor or the person responsible for surveillance shall hold basic qualifications in first-aid.

(c) No person will be authorised to conduct training in kitesurfing unless he holds qualifications as specified in the following table.

(d) An instructor will give training in kitesurfing in such manner as specified below.

(e) An assistant instructor will not be authorised to conduct training in kitesurfing but will assist an instructor.

Qualification of Instructor	Authorisation training
Instructor, IKO LEVEL 1 or equivalent	Authorised to conduct kitesurfing classes with 2 students using 1 kite only
Instructor, IKO LEVEL 2/LEVEL 2 SENIOR, or equivalent	Authorised to (a) conduct kitesurfing classes with 4 students using a maximum of 2 kites (b) train Assistant Instructors

Instructor, IKO LEVEL 2 SENIOR or equivalent, with an assistant instructor	Authorised to (a) conduct kitesurfing classes with 4 students using a maximum of 4 kites (b) train Assistant Instructors
Assistant Instructor	Assists Instructors

8. Kitesurfing equipment

- (i) A licensee shall have the following kitesurfing equipment to rent out –
 - (a) kitesurf boards;
 - (b) kites including proper safety devices;
 - (c) kite control bars;
 - (d) special kite harnesses;
 - (e) kites of all common sizes.

- (ii) A licensee shall, in addition to the equipment referred to above, provide the following kitesurfing equipment to beginners in kitesurfing–
 - (a) helmet of all common sizes;
 - (b) harness with a hold-down handle;
 - (c) floatation device of all common sizes for deep water locations;
 - (d) neoprene wet suit of at least 3mm inches, and of all common sizes, where necessary; and
 - (e) foot protection of all common sizes, where necessary.

9. Safety and Security

The licensee shall have:

- (a) an adequately equipped first aid kit for ready use at the place where kitesurfing is proposed to be carried out;
- (b) at least a rescue craft, or a contract with the holder of a pleasure craft licence for a rescue craft as approved by the Authority; and
- (c) a Very High Frequency Radio or an alternative means of communication which is available for ready use at the place where kitesurfing is proposed to be carried out.

10. Requirements to rent out kitesurfing equipment and provide kitesurfing training

The licensee shall have the following plans:

(i) **An Operation plan**

An operation plan consisting of –

- (a) a training manual for beginners and intermediates in kitesurfing, whichever applicable;
- (b) an assessment procedure before training or renting out the kitesurfing equipment to a person who intends to carry out kitesurfing;
- (c) a signal system to inform persons carrying kitesurfing activity of weather conditions as follows –
 - (i) Green flag – All safe;
 - (ii) Yellow flag – Kitesurfing only inside the lagoon;
 - (iii) Red flag – Danger! No kitesurfing at all; and

(ii) **A Maintenance plan**

A maintenance plan including –

- (a) the name of the person responsible for maintenance;
- (b) the frequency at which maintenance is and will be carried out (*specifying the dates and time*); and

- (c) the means and measures put in place to monitor the effectiveness of the plan.

(iii) An Emergency plan

An emergency plan providing for –

- (a) safety and emergency procedures and checks;
- (b) assignments and responsibilities of staff;
- (c) emergency procedures in case of equipment failure, adverse weather conditions, illness and injury; and
- (d) emergency telephone numbers.

11. Insurance Policy

The activity must be covered by a comprehensive insurance policy covering third party liability to the satisfaction of the Authority.

12. Weather Conditions

(i) Monitoring of weather conditions

The licensee or the person in charge shall:

- (a) ensure that all kitesurfing activities are being carried out under suitable weather conditions;
- (b) monitor the weather forecast daily before start of operation and during the activity; and
- (c) have updates on weather and sea conditions at regular intervals.

(ii) Pre Activity weather evaluation

- (a) It is the responsibility of the licensee or the person in charge to evaluate and determine if weather and sea conditions are favourable for the conduct of kitesurfing activity.
- (b) The licensee or person in charger shall not allow any person to undertake kitesurfing activity during adverse weather and sea conditions.

(iii) Cyclone warnings

No kitesurfing activity shall be conducted as from Cyclone Class 1 and all ongoing activities shall be interrupted.

(iv) Sea conditions/Tsunami warnings

No kitesurfing activity shall be conducted upon the issue of rough sea conditions, heavy swells and Tsunami warnings.

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Annex

PART A – CODE OF PRACTICE

Every person who carries out the activity of kitesurfing shall –

- (a) abide by any relevant law governing kitesurfing;
- (b) ensure that the kitesurfing carried out is not a source of danger to the public;
- (c) be fully informed of any management plans, zoning of the area in which he operates;
- (d) make a risk assessment of the spot by taking cognisance of the wind, water and weather conditions and by checking the area thoroughly;
- (e) avoid launching and landing near trees, automobiles, people, streets, power lines and other obstacles;
- (f) avoid crowded beaches and areas with rocks and/or reef;
- (g) carry out a pre-flight check as follows –
 - (i) check kite for tears, leaky bladders and attachment points;
 - (ii) check the bar system for wear, abrasion and knots;
 - (iii) inspect and test the quick release system; and
 - (iv) check the harness, control bar lines and leaders;
- (h) ensure that he has proper safety equipment, that is a tested and well-maintained;
- (i) ensure that proper launching and landing techniques are used;
- (j) ensure he has adequate space on which to launch and land;
- (k) give way to the public on the beach and be mindful of other beach or sea users, including fishers, windsurfers, boaters, and swimmers or other users carrying out surface and underwater activities;
- (l) launch, land and ride preferably with a partner;

- (m) ensure that someone onshore keeps an eye on him or that a third party is notified of his intended trip, location and expected time of return;
- (n) not kitesurf further from the shore than he is able to swim back;
- (o) save a reserve of energy and end his kitesurfing session before he is exhausted;
- (p) understand the technique of self-rescue and be familiar with rescue signals before using his kitesurf in deep water;
- (q) be responsible for the safe operation of his kite and shall not endanger anyone including themselves;
- (r) follow the right-of-way rules;
- (s) avoid obstructing the way or cluttering any area with grounded kites, unrolled lines or scattered boards and keep lines rolled up when kites are not in use.;
- (t) secure their kites with sand while on land;
- (u) not kitesurf in congested areas with swimmers, boats, crafts or obstacles;
- (v) not kitesurf at an upward distance of less than 30 metres from a person swimming, fishing or engaged in other nautical activities;
- (w) approach the shore slowly with caution;
- (x) take care to avoid causing an accidental jump in well powered conditions by slowing suddenly while approaching the shore;
- (y) arrange for assisted landings or launchings at least 30 metres from bystanders, power lines and other obstacles especially in the upwind area because of dangerous upthrusts;
- (z) avoid using non-kitesurfers for assisted launchings and landings;
- (za) use mutually-understood hand and/or visual signals to improve landing safety;
- (zb) safely self-land his kite if no assistant is available;
- (zc) depower his kite immediately even in deep water to avoid being lifted or dragged in sudden gusty winds.

PART B – SAILING RULES

1. A starboard rider (kite on the right-hand side) has priority over the oncoming rider and should keep his course, speed with the kite high to allow the other rider to give way.
2. A port tack rider (kite on the left-hand side) must give way to the oncoming rider by adjusting his course or speed and passing downwind with the kite low to avoid collision.
3. Where 2 kitesurfers converge, and they are on the same tack, the kitesurfer most upwind must give way to the kitesurfer most downwind. The leeward kitesurfer has right of way in this situation.
4. Where 2 kitesurfers converge in a way that may lead to the kites colliding, the upwind kitesurfer must fly his kite as high as possible, and the downwind kitesurfer must fly his kite as low as possible.
5. A kitesurfer overtaking must give way and go downwind of the other kitesurfer in clear time. The kitesurfer being overtaken should maintain his course.
6. When changing direction, the kitesurfer has to look ahead and behind before turning.
7. Before jumping, a kitesurfer shall ensure a safety distance of 50 metres downwind.
8. When jumping, a kitesurfer must give up his right of way to any other kitesurfer on a steady course.
9. A kitesurfer riding on a wave has priority over any other kitesurfer.
10. A kitesurfer closest to the curl of the wave has absolute priority on that wave. All other kitesurfers must keep well clear of a kitesurfer on a wave.
11. Whilst surfing, priority must be given to other sea users in the following order – (a) swimmers (b) body surfers (c) surfers (d) windsurfers and (e) kitesurfers (as the user with the least mobility has right of way over the one with more mobility).
12. A kitesurfer entering the water from the beach has priority over incoming kitesurfers from the sea.

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