

Boat Drivers' Qualifications Committee
DRIVERS' POLICY MANUAL

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Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Purpose	2
Step One - Education.....	2
Step Two - Participation.....	2
Step Three - Written and Practical Evaluations	2
Application for an Assistant Driver's Rating	2
Fast-Track Procedures for Open Rated Skiers and Level III Coaches.....	3
Quantitative Requirements for Advancement	3
Testing for Driver's Rating or Upgrade.....	3
Clinics	5
Tournament Credit.....	5
Reinstatement.....	6
Hardship	6
Senior Driver Emeritus.....	7
Regular/Senior Driver "Retired"	7
Discipline	8
Definitions	8

BOAT DRIVERS' GUIDELINES/POLICIES

PURPOSE

The drivers' program is designed to improve, develop, and maintain the skills of both aspiring drivers and those drivers with many years of experience behind the wheel. One of the goals of our program is to ensure knowledge and skills are shared to improve the skill levels of all drivers within the sport of water skiing. Advancement to **assistant**, **regular** and **senior** driver is accomplished through three steps. Step 1 - Education; Step 2 - Participation; and Step 3 - Evaluation.

ASSISTANT DRIVER - Individuals aspiring to be assistant drivers must complete an Assistant Drivers' Application form by fulfilling the requirements as outlined on the form. This must be done prior to attending a drivers' clinic. Once the application has been completed, you should contact your Drivers' Committee representative or USA-WS to attend the nearest clinic for the assistant drivers' exam (See section - Application for Assistant Drivers' Rating).

REGULAR & SENIOR DRIVERS - Individuals working towards regular and senior driver levels should follow the steps below:

STEP ONE - EDUCATION

Education is provided through drivers' clinics which are conducted in two parts; in a classroom setting and on the water. A clinic is mandatory to initially become an assistant driver and for upgrade to regular or senior driver. The concept of clinics is to provide background and education to apply during step 2 - participation. It is anticipated that drivers working towards an upgraded rating will not wait to attend a clinic as one of the last requirements for upgrade. With the exception of **aspiring** assistant drivers, a driver may **not** attend a clinic and be tested for upgrade on the same weekend. In addition, all drivers must attend a clinic once every four years to maintain his or her existing rating. (See policies on clinics for further information.)

STEP TWO - PARTICIPATION

For each rating level (assistant, regular & senior) there are quantitative requirements that must be met in order to advance. Typically, these requirements are met through experience gained from driving and working tournaments. (See section - Quantitative Requirements for Advancement.) Your record of work at these tournaments is recorded on the Tournament Officials' Record Sheet and mailed to USA-WS. It is your responsibility to ensure your work has been accurately recorded. Also, you should maintain your personal performance record so you can follow your progress towards advancement. It also serves as a back-up to USA-WS's records in case of discrepancies.

STEP THREE - WRITTEN AND PRACTICAL EVALUATIONS

Once you have completed all the quantitative requirements for your next rating, **including attending a clinic**, you should contact USA-WS Headquarters - Competition Department indicating that you are ready to be tested for upgrade to the next higher level. USA-WS will verify that your quantitative requirements have been completed and notify you and the regional Drivers' Committee member in your region that you are ready for the written and on the water practical evaluations. Your regional Drivers' Committee member will then make arrangements with you for testing at a sanctioned tournament.

The written testing for regular or senior driver is an open book, true/false, multiple choice, and fill-in exam. The on the water practical test will evaluate your skills under tournament conditions and will be conducted under the supervision of three senior drivers as outlined in the section - Testing for Driver's Rating or Upgrade.

APPLICATION FOR AN ASSISTANT DRIVER'S RATING

To obtain an assistant driver's rating, the individual must obtain an Application for Assistant Driver form and complete the requirements at a minimum of three sanctioned tournaments. In addition, a regular or senior driver must certify that the applicant has driven certain minimum performances in practice. Once the form is completed, the individual will take the form with him or her to a drivers' clinic where the individual must pass both written and practical evaluations. Upon successful completion of the clinic, the course instructor will issue an assistant driver's card. The completed application and written and practical testing must be returned to USA-WS Headquarters with the clinic registration.

FAST-TRACK RATING PROCEDURE FOR OPEN RATED SKIERS AND LEVEL III COACHES

A fast track procedure has been established for Open rated skiers and Level III coaches to earn a Regular Driver's rating in a reduced amount of time. The procedure reduces the quantitative requirements to be eligible to test for Regular Driver for 1.) An Open rated skier in the event/events the Open rating is held or 2.) A Level III coach.

The aspiring driver must fill out the Assistant Driver application and provide proof of rating and/or certification. The proof of rating and/or certification replaces the need to complete the sign-off requirements. The individual must take the completed form to a driver's clinic and pass the written and practical evaluations to become an Assistant Driver.

The quantitative requirements to be able to advance to Regular Driver are reduced from 10 tournaments worked to 5 and from 2 tournaments as Assistant Chief Driver to 1. The requirements to attend a clinic and pass the written and practical evaluations are the same. After successfully completing the requirements and passing the evaluations the individual will have earned the Regular Driver Rating.

QUANTITATIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR ADVANCEMENT

	Min. Age	Number of Tournaments	Assist Chief	Chief	Written Test	Practical Test	Clinic	Biennial Renewal - # of Tournaments
Assistant	16				1	1	1	4
Regular	18	10 *5	2 *1		1	1	1	6
Senior		16		2	1	1	1	6

*denotes Fast-Track requirement

All quantitative requirements including the clinic must be completed prior to requesting an upgrade to regular or senior driver. Once the quantitative requirements are completed, the individual should contact USA-WS Headquarters - Competition Department to request testing for advancement. The candidate should wait at least thirty days for USA-WS to verify all quantitative work. USA-WS will then inform the candidate and the Drivers' Committee member in the candidate's region, by letter, that the candidate is ready for testing. The regional Drivers' Committee member will then make all arrangements for testing at a sanctioned tournament. *There is no minimum time requirement to complete the quantitative requirements to advance.*

TESTING FOR DRIVER'S RATING OR UPGRADE

Any person wanting to obtain a driver's rating or upgrade his or her existing rating must successfully pass both a written test and a practical evaluation of his or her skills in a boat on the water. A person may test twice

during a calendar year for an assistant or regular driver's rating. A person may only test once for a senior driver's rating during a calendar year.

The on the water practical evaluation should be administered by three senior drivers. **With approval of the regional Drivers' Committee member**, the number of test administrators (examiners) can be reduced to two seniors. For Regular and Senior testing when only two examiners are available, the use of slalom end course video meeting the technical guidelines for record capable tournaments is required, and review of boat path by the two examiners will be made from the video. It is also recommended that video review be used similarly for boat path in the jump event when there are only two examiners. The **minimum** requirements are as follows:

Assistant	1 Senior driver, 2 Regular drivers	or	2 Senior drivers
Regular	2 Senior drivers, 1 Regular driver	or	2 Senior drivers + video
Senior	3 Senior drivers	or	2 Senior drivers + video

In the event the appropriate level of drivers is not available to hold a CLINIC, the regional Drivers' Committee member shall describe in writing the situation and forward it to the Chair of the Committee for a vote and/or appropriate action, prior to holding the clinic.

Testing for assistant driver shall be done as part of a drivers' clinic. Upgrade to regular or senior driver shall be done at a class C or higher tournament.

Since testing for regular and senior driver is done as part of a class C or higher sanctioned tournament, one of the examiners must also be an AWSA rated judge. Two of the examiners shall ride in the boat. One shall act as the boat judge. The third examiner shall position himself or herself at the end of the course to observe the boat path both inside and outside of the course. If the third examiner is not used, end-course video (required for slalom and recommended for jump) must be used to evaluate boat path inside the course. All evaluation of in-course slalom boat path must be done either by an examiner stationed at the end of the course or by the examiners' review of end-course video which meets the technical requirements for class "E" and above tournaments. The video should be made available to the driver for feedback on his or her performance.

Testing for the assistant driver's rating and advancement to Regular or Senior driver must be done using an approved speed control system with automatic timing.

SCORING THE WRITTEN & PRACTICAL EXAMS - Drivers advancing to the next higher rating must pass a WRITTEN TEST. The written test shall be an open book test with a copy of the current AWSA rulebook made available. The following are passing WRITTEN TEST scores:

	<u>General Consideration</u>	<u>Slalom</u>	<u>Trick</u>	<u>Jump</u>
Assistant	20 correct out of 25	23/28	12/15	16/20
Regular	21 correct out of 25	24/28	13/15	17/20
Senior	23 correct out of 25	25/28	14/15	18/20

Drivers successfully completing the written test will then take the PRACTICAL TEST. All examiners shall rate the driver on those critical factors observed, as outlined in the supplied Boat Driver's Practical Evaluation Forms. Note that these forms and criteria for Assistant driver tests differ from those for Regular and Senior tests (manual vs. speed control driving). Each examiner shall compute a score for each event (slalom, tricks, jump). A score for EACH EVENT will then be computed by averaging the individual examiner's scores for that event. The following minimum scores are required for upgrade:

Assistant Driver	- 3.0
Regular Driver	- 3.5
Senior Driver	- 4.0

Each event (slalom, tricks and jump) must have an average score equal to or exceeding the above numbers in order to advance to the next higher level for that event. Scores should not be rounded and shall be computed to at least one decimal point. A driver may pass in one event but not pass in another. This may result in a

driver with a regular rating in slalom, for example, and an assistant rating in jump.

INSPECTION OF EQUIPMENT: The examiners will inspect the boat to be used prior to testing to ensure it is adequate to pull the event. Inspection shall also be made to ensure there is no play in the steering, that the throttle operates smoothly, that the speed control system and related instrumentation are in good working order, and that there are no problems with the boat that will affect the results of the practical evaluation.

SKIERS FOR PRACTICAL TEST - REGULAR & SENIOR DRIVER: When giving the practical test for upgrade to regular or senior driver, the candidate must drive the more difficult events. The more difficult mens events

(Mens 1, Mens 2, Mens 3) should be used. An adequate number of skiers should be pulled to properly evaluate the candidate's skills and abilities; typically at least 10 to 15 skiers per event (two events can be combined to obtain a sufficient number of skiers for testing). Also, when selecting a tournament for testing purposes, select one where slalom, jump and trick performances will be in the range expected for a Regular or Senior Driver.

CLINICS

MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS: All drivers must attend an AWSA-sanctioned drivers' clinic once every four years to maintain his or her current rating. Failure to do so will result in an automatic down grade to the next lower rating. Clinic credit will be given to drivers who drive at the AWSA Approved Tournament Towboat Evaluations. Speed control-oriented classroom-only clinics so approved by the regional Drivers' Committee member will meet clinic requirements for maintenance only. All other clinics will consist of classroom and on the water sessions, which will be strongly recommended for advancement credit. Participation in a Drivers clinic annually is recommended.

All drivers will be required to review a driver related document annually. The document will consist of speed control and rule changes. Senior drivers must submit a slalom end course video, annually, to their regional drivers' committee representative.

ADMINISTERING CLINICS: Clinics are to be administered by AWSA rated drivers. It is recommended that, in all cases, senior drivers be used. For the classroom portion, one senior driver is required as the instructor (others may assist and are often beneficial to prompt discussion with the group). For the on the water portion of the clinic, three senior drivers are required. (The regional Drivers' Committee member for those areas within the region where three senior drivers are unavailable can approve an exception. In that case, at a minimum, one senior and two regular drivers are required, unless end course video is used as outlined under - Testing for Driver's Rating or Upgrade). The on the water portion is recommended but not required.

SPLITTING CLINICS: A clinic can be split during a calendar year so that the classroom portion can be given at a date earlier than the on the water practical portion. Splitting of any clinic must have the prior approval of the regional Drivers' Committee member. A clinic cannot be split over two calendar years.

FEES & MATERIALS: Upon completion of a clinic, all materials must be returned to USA-WS Headquarters' Competition Department. This includes the completed registration sheet, completed assistant driver applications, the written tests, completed Practical Evaluation Forms, and **ALL** unused forms, tests and materials. Each person attending a clinic shall complete the registration form and pay the registration fee. Instructors are not required to pay a registration fee but do receive clinic credit.

TOURNAMENT CREDIT

Chief Driver - The chief driver shall receive credit for driving a tournament even if he or she does not actually drive in the tournament. The chief driver must complete the TOWBOAT DOCUMENTATION FORM and return it to USA-WS headquarters within 10 days. Failure to do so will result in NO credit for driving the tournament.

Assistant Chief Driver - The assistant chief driver will NOT receive credit for driving a tournament where he or

she does not drive in the tournament. However, credit will be given for advancement purposes in meeting the requirement to serve in the capacity as assistant chief driver.

For upgrade purposes, work towards fulfilling the quantitative requirements as chief driver or assistant chief driver of a tournament may not also count towards the required number of tournaments to be driven. For example, serving as chief driver of a tournament counts towards work as a chief driver or towards tournament quantity, but not both.

Other Drivers - Appointed or assigned drivers will receive credit only for those events driven in a sanctioned tournament.

Driving in a novice tournament counts as full credit for maintenance purpose only - not for upgrade.

Driving in a Fun (Class "F") tournament does not count toward maintenance or upgrading except that the Chief Driver of a Class F tournament receives one credit (maintenance or upgrade) for the events included in that tournament.

Participation in a Drivers Clinic with on the water instruction can be substituted as a tournament driving credit for up to one credit per year. Participation includes instructors as well as clinic attendees.

Drivers working as Driving Practical Examiners qualify for a tournament credit.

The minimum number of tournament credits must be met over a two year period in order to maintain one's rating.

REINSTATEMENT

Assistant Driver - If a person has held a valid **Assistant** driver's rating in the previous five years, the individual may re-instate his or her rating by attending a clinic and successfully completing both the written and practical portions of the assistant driver's test at that clinic. The clinic registration form should clearly indicate that the person is a re-instatement so USA-WS Headquarters can verify previous tournament credits. A new application form for assistant driver will NOT have to be completed. Upon successful re-instatement, the driver will be able to use any tournaments driven in the past five years as credit towards advancement.

Regular Driver - If the person has held a valid **Regular** driver's rating in the previous five years, the individual may re-instate his or her regular driver's rating by first attending a clinic. Upon completing the clinic, the person must contact USA-WS Headquarters (Competition Department) to verify the date he or she was downgraded to an assistant driver. USA-WS Headquarters will contact the regional Drivers' Committee member who will schedule a testing date in a class C tournament. Upon successful re-instatement, the driver will be able to use any previous experience and tournaments driven as a regular driver as credit towards advancement.

Senior Driver - If the person has held a valid **Senior** driver's rating in the previous five years, the individual may re-instate his or her senior driver's rating by first attending a clinic. Upon completing the clinic, the person must contact USA-WS Headquarters (Competition Department) to verify the date he or she was downgraded to a regular driver. USA-WS Headquarters will contact the regional Drivers' Committee member who will schedule a testing date in a class C tournament.

HARDSHIP

The Drivers' Committee has the responsibility to ensure that all drivers have the current skills necessary to guarantee skiers the best ride possible. A skier should not have to ski behind a driver who has not practiced his or her skills. Driving skills require continual work during practice and tournaments. The requirements for maintaining a rating are minimal and necessary to ensure our skiers receive the best driving available.

There are, however, situations beyond a driver's control which would prevent him or her from meeting the minimal renewal requirements. An excusable hardship is an event or condition over which a driver has no

control. In other words, the event or condition is not self-imposed and personal choice has not been exercised.

Each request for hardship will be considered on its own merits. Hardships will not be granted for ability, prior qualifications, personality, or length of service. Hardships are not renewable.

The following are examples and are not all inclusive:

Excusable conditions:

1. Medical problems - major injury or illness, surgery, pregnancy.
2. Military duty.
3. Temporary job assignments lasting two months or more over which you have no control.

Inexcusable conditions:

1. Non-awareness of renewal requirements.
2. Personal error in record keeping.
3. Lack of tournament attendance due to other personal activities.
4. Absence due to school.
5. Failure to attend a drivers' clinic.

Individuals applying for hardship shall obtain and complete a hardship petition available upon request from USA-WS Headquarters' Competition Department. The deadline for a hardship request is May 1 of the year following the downgrade or 60 days after official USA-WS notification, which ever is later.

SENIOR DRIVER EMERITUS

A Senior Driver Emeritus has been recognized as a Senior Driver who has made a significant contribution to the sport of water skiing through many years of driving. A Senior Driver Emeritus retains the right to work as a Chief Driver or Driver of a Class C or lower tournament with no maintenance requirements. The Senior Driver Emeritus recognizes that it takes significant practice to retain the skills necessary to drive in a sanctioned tournament and would not drive if his or her skills were not up to date.

Minimum Requirements:

- <10 Years as a Senior Driver
- <Driven 5 Regional Tournaments
- <Driven 2 National Tournaments

Extensive special service of a driver in professional or international events may, at the discretion of the Drivers' Committee, be substituted for any of the above toward meeting minimum requirements.

The candidate can apply for Emeritus status in one, two, or three events. The candidate will retain his or her current rating in the events not granted Emeritus status. The candidate will apply to his or her regional Drivers' Committee member by letter indicating his or her qualifications. The Drivers' Committee member will verify the minimum requirements have been met and obtain the approval by vote of his or her Regional Council. The nomination will then be forwarded to the Chair of the Committee who will forward the recommendation to USA-WS for ballot out to the entire committee for vote. Approval requires 2/3 vote of approval by the committee. The recommendation will then be sent forward to the Board of Directors for approval.

REGULAR/SENIOR DRIVER "RETIRED"

Many Regular or Senior Drivers do not meet the requirements for Senior Driver Emeritus, but have been a dedicated driver in the sport for many years. The Regular/Senior Driver "Retired" status allows a driver to

retire from the sport of water skiing without being subjected to downgrading. The following requirements apply:

- <Minimum of five years as a Regular or Senior Driver
- <Retirement means ***no more driving***

The candidate will send a letter requesting "Retired" status to: USA-WS Headquarters' Competition Department, Regional Drivers' Committee member, and the Regional Executive Vice President. USA-WS Headquarters will send the driver a letter of confirmation and a certificate honoring their years of service.

A Regular/Senior Driver "Retired" is eligible for reinstatement under the same guidelines as other drivers.

DISCIPLINE

Any driver intentionally breaking the rules may be subject to disciplinary action. Any individual observing such intentional disregard of the rules shall report the incident in writing to their regional Drivers' Committee Representative and copy the Chair of the Drivers' Committee. The Chair will ballot the committee, and, if the committee finds that the situation so warrants will recommend a course of action to the President of AWSA. Actions may include a letter of reprimand, suspension and/or demotion depending on the nature of the incident and any past occurrences.

DEFINITIONS

ASSISTANT DRIVER - An Assistant Driver may drive any Class C or lower tournament.

REGULAR DRIVER - A Regular Driver may drive any tournament, including record capability tournaments except the National Tournament. A Regular Driver may be the chief driver of a Class C or lower tournament.

SENIOR DRIVER - A Senior Driver may drive any tournament and may be chief driver of any tournament.

ASSISTANT CHIEF DRIVER - The Assistant Chief Driver of a Class C or lower tournament can be an Assistant, Regular or Senior Driver. The Assistant Chief Driver of a Class E, L, R, and Regional Tournament shall be a Regular or Senior Driver. The Assistant Chief Driver of the National Tournament shall be a Senior Driver. The Assistant Chief Driver, if used, shall act in the place of the Chief Driver in the event the Chief Driver is unavailable. In situations where the Assistant Chief Driver is fulfilling requirements towards an upgraded rating, the Chief Driver should try where all possible to allow the Assistant Chief Driver to make boat and driver assignments to gain the knowledge necessary to function in the future as a Chief Driver.

CHIEF DRIVER - The Chief Driver of a Class C or lower tournament shall be a Regular or Senior Driver. The Chief Driver of Class E, L, R, Regional and National Tournaments shall be a Senior Driver. The Chief Driver is responsible for assigning all boats and drivers to events. The Chief Driver is responsible for completing all necessary towboat documentation and other paperwork related to drivers assignments.

In areas where a senior or regular driver is not available, the Executive Vice President may approve the use of an assistant driver as the chief driver of a class C tournament, under the supervision of the chief judge.