



# **ISAF Recognized Training - Accreditation Report**

## **Netherlands National Training Programme**

### **Introduction**

Following an application from the Koninklijk Nederlands Watersport Verbond for recognition of the Netherlands Learn to Sail Training Programme, an inspection was carried out from 16 to 19 August 2010.

The inspection included a review of the training programme management at the Watersportverbond offices in Nieuwegein, and visits to three sailing schools and one sailing club, at which a training programme was taking place.

All of the training currently takes place on inland waterways and is therefore free from strong tidal flows or ranges. There are some schools that operate near to waters used by commercial traffic but none of those visited posed any hazards that gave cause for concern.

### **1 National Programme Management Structure**

#### **1.1 National Training Manager**

The permanent, full time Training Manager, and signatory of the application for accreditation, is Christoffel van Hees. Christoffel's official title is the Watersportverbond "Manager, Youth and Training Development". Although he has only held this position for around three years, Christoffel has many years experience in the delivery of practical training and youth development in sailing, including performance coaching at international competitions. As the Manager, Youth and Training Development, Christoffel reports directly to the Board of the Watersportverbond.

One of Christoffel's areas of responsibility is to oversee the activities of the Commissie Watersport Opleidingen (CWO). The CWO is the section of the Watersportverbond that administers the National Training Programme (NTP) in the Netherlands. The National Training Programme is well established in over seventy accredited schools. Through the Watersportverbond, Christoffel is currently working hard to encourage all of the sailing clubs that offer training to adopt the CWO standards.

#### **1.2 Programme Management Structure**

The CWO has been established for twenty-five years. It is managed by a board that meets four times per annum. The board is made up of an elected chairman, a Secretary and four members drawn from Watersportverbond, HISWA (the "Dutch Association of Commerce and Industry in the Field of Marine and Water") and ANWB (The Royal Dutch Touring Club).

There is a complex but effective working organisation below the board that includes a Secretariat, Quality Commission, Controllers and Working Groups. The Secretariat provides a good level of consistency to the whole training programme through communication and support at all levels. The Quality Commission meets twice each year and reviews current programme effectiveness together with any developments, both required and in progress. The Controllers are a group of experienced Opleiders, the highest level of instructor, who are appointed to work as inspectors and provide feedback regarding their activities that in turn informs the board regarding the integrity of the training delivered by accredited schools and clubs. Working Groups are convened to address specific areas of interest identified by the board.

### **1.3 Systems, data and Records**

Comprehensive records are maintained of all accredited sailing schools, instructor qualifications and the number of competency certificates sold to the schools. Inspection reports are also held and relevant information made available to the Controllers who carry out subsequent inspections.

## **2 Accredited Training Centres**

### **2.1 Conditions for Accreditation**

Conditions for accreditation are readily available from the CWO. They can be obtained directly from their web site from which an application form can be downloaded.

One of the conditions for accreditation is to be registered with the local Chamber of Commerce. Such registration requires an aspirant organisation to meet national standards with regard to a wide range of public protection measures, including the provision of qualified first aiders.

### **2.2 Administration**

The accreditation process is administered by the CWO under the supervision of Jelle de Wit. As a qualified Opleider, Jelle has a comprehensive knowledge of the scheme from both practical experience and his current role as the Co-ordinator.

### **2.3 Boats Used**

The craft used at each school varies considerably. However, the indigenous keelboat, which is a 6.5 metre open boat named the Poly Valk, was universally declared to be the most suitable boat for older people. After gaining introductory and basic skills in Optimists and Picos, which were used by most schools, the gaff rigged Valk provides a logical progression. The mast can be lowered easily thus permitting the boat to use waterways with low bridges and gain access to a wide range of open water locations and a variety of journeying opportunities.

Several schools have a small number of more advanced modern dinghies and catamarans.

There are also a wide range of windsurfers in use with an appropriate range of rig sizes to provide good progression.

### **2.4 Training Equipment and Shoreside Facilities**

All of the locations visited provided an appropriate range of personal protective equipment including buoyancy aids. Although the condition of some of the equipment was 'well used', it appeared to be fit for purpose.

Suitable shoreside training facilities and resources were available at each location. As the majority of accredited centres are residential sailing schools, domestic facilities were of a high standard. Similar standards are available at sailing clubs. The one club visited was well funded and provided excellent facilities.

### **2.5 Tuition System**

There are two parallel and complementary schemes that provide for the delivery of progressive sail training. These are personal competence awards that offer four levels of 'qualification' in each of the ten available disciplines and a corresponding four levels of

instructor qualifications. The CWO requires all accredited schools to promote the progressive schemes through conspicuous advertising.

A 'Passport' is given to students in which they can both record their progress and see the further options available. The passport shows which diplomas are held by the student and in addition the 'Vorderingenstaat' can be used to continue the course for a diploma at another CWO location.

There are two options for recognising completion of a course. One is the presentation of a numbered certificate. The certificates are issued to individual schools and the unique numbers are recorded by the CWO. The alternative is a sticker that can be fixed in the Passport and over stamped by the school to provide a limited degree of validation.

## **2.6 Safety Operations**

Each of the schools visited had a different approach to the detailed operation of their facilities. However in the context of safety, staffing and programme delivery there was a consistent theme, which was in keeping with the 'specification' of courses as detailed on the CWO web site, in the Yearbook and the personal Passport.

The majority of powered craft used for both teaching and safety cover were small rigid plastic vessels equipped with small tiller steered outboard motors, usually of less than five horsepower. At those schools where the training area is some distance from the shore base, a range of options were used to provide safe havens for breaks in activity afloat. These varied from the use of easily accessible islands to pontoons and small barges.

## **2.7 Child Protection**

Most of the Sailing instructors are young people who have learned to sail at the same school at which they teach. Consequently they and their families are well known to the management of the school. A similar situation exists in sailing clubs, where the majority of instructors are young people who have been club members since early childhood.

The principal of a sailing school is required by law to have a reference from the Netherlands Ministry of Justice.

Guidance and good advice with regard to appropriate working practices are given on the Watersportverbond web site.

## **2.8 Centre Inspection System**

The maintenance of standards is achieved through a system of mandatory annual inspections. Inspections are carried out, without forewarning, by a small number of specifically appointed Opleiders, referred to as "Controleurs".

The inspection follows a set format and includes the observation of a number of practical sessions. The inspection form is included in the Yearbook. The process is expected to take a full day to complete.

An inspection was observed and seen to be very comprehensive. The focus was upon the qualifications of the instructors, teaching ratios and quality of instruction. On water sessions were observed and candid feedback given both to the instructors running sessions and to the principal. There was little attention given to the material condition of either the shoreside facilities or the equipment, including craft, in use. However, the facilities and equipment seen during both the accreditation inspection and the preceding training review were all in good condition.

### **3 Safety Guidelines and Procedures**

#### **3.1 Safety Equipment**

Appropriate safety equipment was seen to be available, and in use, throughout the inspection. The only area of concern was with respect to the lack of use by some, of kill cords on the small outboard motors that are in common use. As these are usually less than five horsepower and are not considered to be powerful enough to present a hazard. Recent anecdotal evidence regarding a near miss situation has prompted the Watersportverbond to reconsider this and they are now in the process of raising the matter through their Quality Committee with the intention of making the use of kill cords on **all** engines a mandatory requirement.

#### **3.2 Knowledge and Skills of Instructor Application**

The quality of instruction is maintained by a well developed instructor training scheme. Most instructors have been students at the schools where they work and are well known by the owner or manager.

Instructors are usually trained by the school in which they are planning to work. The training is frequently provided at very low cost to the individual who repays the investment by working at the school for very low pay. The majority of instructors, especially at the lower levels, are in full time education and the role is predominantly filled by enthusiastic late teenagers or young adults.

#### **3.3 Risk Awareness and Management**

Each of the schools has an almost unique operating environment with regard to their location and access to training areas. Although there was not always a formal written risk assessment, there was sufficient evidence, by way of routine operation procedures, that risks were considered and appropriate preventative measures were taken during daily activity.

An inspector had raised a query with respect to one of the schools, which is located on flowing river water, regarding the strength of the current and proximity of commercial shipping. The matter was discussed by the Watersportverbond and a subsequent inspection agreed that the school had adequate provision in their normal operating practices to mitigate the risks.

#### **3.4 Operating Procedures**

Each school has its own operating procedures. Although these varied with regard to quantity and content, there was consistent evidence, from observation of practical activity, that staff were conversant with the normal established practices at every location visited. There was also consistency in the areas covered by the procedures seen at each centre.

#### **3.5 Local Operating Procedures**

Covered under section 3.4.

#### **3.6 Accident and First Aid Training**

There is a legal requirement for persons trained in First Aid to be present at any registered organisation and / or workplace. The number of trained people is 'regulated' by the number of people who are likely to attend.

Some of the schools visited have included a comprehensive section on First Aid provision in an instructor training manual. However, there was no evident consistency between schools nor any stipulation with regard to the level of formal training and assessment of ability.

### 3.7 Major Incident Plan

Although documented procedures were not in place, the response to a hypothetical major incident was appropriate. The benefit of providing guidance for both Watersportverbond and the accredited training establishments was discussed for further future development.

### 3.8 Duty of Care Guidelines

Covered during instructor training.

## 4 Instructors

### 4.1 Instructor Structure and Qualifications

There are four instructor levels, each of which is discipline specific. Before becoming an instructor at any level or in any discipline, the candidate is required to hold the competence award above the level at which they will teach and in the same discipline. Direct entry at any level is possible but unusual. Training is delivered by a minimum of a Level Four instructor, is progressive, includes practical experience under supervision and is moderated.

The instructor levels are –

**Level 2** – works under the direct supervision of higher level instructors; can assist in the delivery of introductory and basic skills sessions.

**Level 3** – can work independently to instruct basic techniques to beginners; can assess up to Diploma Two competence in discipline; can supervise Level Two instructors; also referred to as Instructor A, equates to ISSA Level One and EQF Level Three.

**Level 4** – can deliver advanced techniques; supervises Level Two and Three instructors; can assess up to Diploma III competence in discipline unless further qualified to “**Level Four \***” in which case can assess to Diploma IV competence in discipline; may be owner or manager of a sailing school; can deliver instructor training; also referred to as Instructor B, equates to ISSA Level Two and EQF Level Four.

**Opleider** – can train and assess instructors at all levels.

The Opleider training package takes a full season to complete. In 2009, nine of the eighteen candidates were successful, which is considered to be a normal success rate. Candidates are required to be Level Four \* instructors. An initial three days of foundation workshops is followed by a period of individual development under the guidance of a mentor. A comprehensive workbook is maintained throughout the training. The final assessment is completed late in the year.

### 4.2 Safety Boat Training

There is no legal requirement for formal training in the use of any vessel of less than fifteen metres provided it does not exceed twenty kilometres per hour and carries less than twelve people. Consequently the small safety boats that are popular with most schools can be used legally by anyone without any training.

Training in the operation of the small powered boats is included in the Diploma Four course and is assessed before the Diploma is issued, provided the candidate is over fifteen years old. There is no syllabus and the sailing school is able to decide both the content and the time allocated.

There is a legal requirement for anyone driving a powerboat that exceeds the previously mentioned criteria, which includes RIBs used at some schools, to be over eighteen years of age and to pass a theory test to gain an International Certificate of Competence. There are no other stipulations with regard to the operation of small powered craft.

#### **4.3 Who is Taught by Whom**

Covered under 2.5 and 4.1.

#### **4.4 Who Teaches What**

Covered under 2.5 and 4.1.

#### **4.5 Techniques for Instruction**

The standard of instruction seen at all of the schools visited implied that qualified instructors are well versed in sound instructional techniques. Instructor training records showed a progressive approach to instructor development, referenced to training objectives that included aspects that affect learning.

The standard of delivery at the sailing club that was visited lacked the consistency seen at schools. Those instructors with CWO Qualifications delivered good sessions. However, unqualified 'instructors' delivered a poor session that lacked structure and did little to engage the young participants.

Fortuitously, witnessing a poor session further strengthened Christoffel's resolve to ensure that sailing clubs that want to deliver training should only do so if they work to the high standards required by CWO accreditation.

#### **4.6 Successful Teaching Methods**

Teaching methods delivered by CWO qualified instructors at accredited Sailing Schools appeared to be effective. Young people demonstrated competence at their level of sailing and an enthusiasm to learn more.

### **5 The Syllabus**

#### **5.1 The Syllabus**

The syllabus is clearly defined. Details are readily available on the CWO web site, the individual Passport and record cards. All schools are required to advertise the CWO in public places, which invariably includes information regarding the progressive nature of the training schemes.

#### **5.2 Structure**

The structure of both competence and instructor awards are aligned with the standards proposed in the ISAF National Training Scheme Manual (1999), the International Sailing Schools Association (ISSA) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

There are four levels of competence in each of nine disciplines. These are progressive and adequate performance is assessed before the Diploma is awarded. The structure is such that elements can be 'signed off', which can encourage further participation. The ten disciplines are –

- Single handed junior
- Double handed junior
- Junior catamaran

Junior Keelboat  
Single handed dinghy  
Double handed dinghy  
Catamaran  
Keelboat  
Windsurf race  
Windsurf funboard

The CWO also provides similar training and awards in yacht sailing, seamanship, motor cruising, large motor vessels, outboard powered vessels and rowing.

The four levels of competence are described as “Diploma” –

**Diploma I** – capable of navigating a vessel as described in the discipline under supervision.

**Diploma II** – capable of independently navigating a vessel in the discipline under normal conditions up to and including Force Four on the Beaufort Scale.

**Diploma III** – capable of independently navigating a vessel in the discipline under normal conditions up to and including Force Six on the Beaufort Scale and taking sole responsibility for vessel and crew in such conditions.

**Diploma IV** – capable of independently navigating a vessel in the discipline under all conditions and taking sole responsibility for vessel and crew in such conditions.

### **5.3 Content**

The content of the syllabi is appropriate to each level and includes relevant theory.

## **6 Participant Standards Achieved**

### **6.1 Participant Assessment**

Formal assessments are carried out to confirm that the required standards have been achieved for both Diploma and Instructor candidates. The standard of sailing of participants observed during the inspection indicated that they were competent up to the level of qualification that they held.

## **7 Communication**

### **7.1 Communication**

The Watersportverbond and CWO both have very clear web sites that are well structured and easy to navigate. These are supported by printed documents in which there is a high level of consistency. There are links to other organisations that combine to provide a comprehensive source of information on a wide range of topics, both core and peripheral to sailing.

The management of the Watersportverbond includes regular reviews of training effectiveness and invites feedback from the schools and clubs. There is a current move to establish eight regions in which lead clubs will be identified to act as the focus of development for others to share.

## **Recommendation**

The Watersportverbond has a clearly defined and transparent structure that has evolved over a period of approximately twenty five years. The organisation provides a training scheme that is well suited to the sailing environment and provides a focal point for youth sailing in the Netherlands. In the context of the Connect to Sailing initiative, it is a working example of a successful organisation.

It is recommended that the Watersportverbond should be awarded full ISAF Accreditation as the organisation responsible for the National Training Programme delivered by the CWO.

## **Acknowledgement**

The support and accommodating hospitality of both Christoffel van Hees and Jelle de Wit throughout the review was exemplary. Their enthusiasm for the development of sailing in the Netherlands equips them well to be the custodians of that responsibility.

The assistance given by Abel Zeilstra of 't Garijp sailing school, Hans Jurgen Klaassen of VW de Twee Provinciën sailing club, Johan Punt of De Biesbosch sailing school and Joep de Klerk of De Viking sailing school by way of their willingness to share their knowledge and experience is gratefully acknowledged.

The opportunity to observe a Controleur undertaking an inspection was invaluable. The sincerity of Frans Robertus, shown during the visit to De Biesbosch sailing school, was also exemplary.

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