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Attention: CMAC

Paddle Canada (PC) appreciates the opportunity to provide the Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) with an opinion regarding a board leash as an allowed substitution for an approved PFD when Stand Up Paddleboarding (SUP).

Paddle Canada and CMAC share the goal of safe enjoyment of Canadian waters by all recreational users. PC, through our over 1100 certified instructors, is the leading provider of recreational paddle sports instruction and certification in Canada. Our comprehensive instructional programs in canoeing, kayaking and now SUP are widely accepted coast to coast to coast. Safety is a critical mission at Paddle Canada. Safety is not treated as a separate topic in our programs - it is an attitude that is woven into every aspect of our instructional programs and certifications.

Paddle Canada and our instructors continue to support the wearing of PFDs at all times by all paddle sports participants and indeed, we insist that during any of our courses, all participants wear an approved and properly fitted PFD. **Therefore, PC does not support the substitution request submitted to the CMAC Secretariat by Bob Purdy.** However, Paddle Canada does recognize the additional safety offered under most circumstances by a properly worn board leash, for many of the reasons cited by Mr. Purdy in his analysis. We accept the accuracy of the idea that "a worn leash normally is a benefit vs. an un-worn PFD strapped to a SUP board," however Paddle Canada feels that allowing the substitution would only send a mixed message and would serve to dilute the more important message that the PFD should be worn." We feel that the combination of the two (PFD and the paddleboard leash) normally represents the safest overall option, given the risks of this rapidly growing paddle sport.

Thank you for seeking our input. Paddle Canada always appreciates the opportunity to contribute to increasing the safety and enjoyment of recreational paddlers on Canadian waterways.

Respectfully submitted,

Blair Doyle
President
Paddle Canada