

2019-2020 EDITION



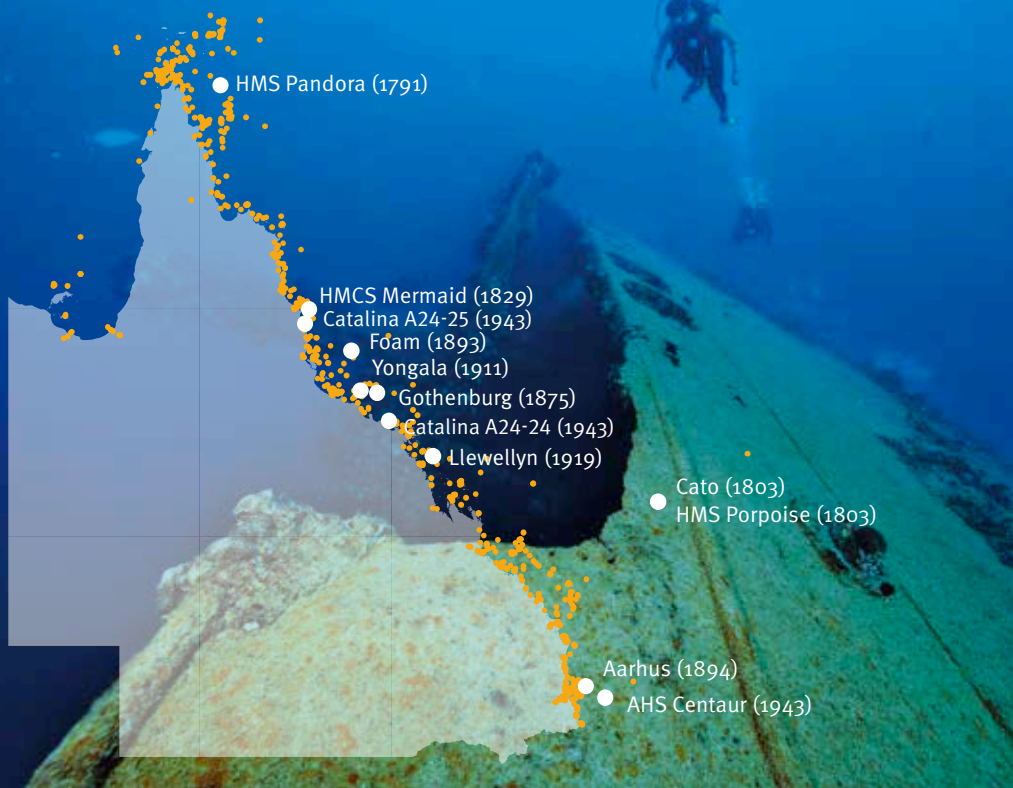
# QUEENSLAND Recreational Boating & Fishing GUIDE



# Help protect Queensland's maritime heritage

All of Queensland's shipwrecks, aircraft wrecks, and associated relics that are more than 75 years old are protected by law. Queensland has more than 1400 ships and aircraft that have been wrecked along the coastline, on fringing reefs or within inland waters. The majority of these wrecks are still to be found. Queensland's Department of Environment and Science (DES) is seeking information from the boating and fishing community regarding known fishing hook ups or possible wreck sites in any part of Queensland.

The following historic shipwrecks and aircraft wrecks are highly significant and lie within protected zones that require a free permit to enter and dive:



## Legend

- Protected zone ship and aircraft wrecks
- Queensland protected underwater cultural heritage

To report fishing hook ups, wreck sites, or relics, from a ship or aircraft, please contact DES by email: [archaeology@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:archaeology@des.qld.gov.au) or phone: 13 QGOV (137468).

To apply for a free permit visit [www.environment.gov.au](http://www.environment.gov.au)

Note: Underwater Cultural Heritage Protected Zones are marked on all navigational charts.

# Contents

<b>Key contacts</b> .....	2
Fisheries Queensland .....	2
Maritime Safety Queensland .....	3
Queensland Water Police .....	3
National parks, marine parks, fish habitat areas and wildlife .....	3
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority .....	3
<b>BOATING IN QUEENSLAND</b>	
<b>General rules and requirements</b> .....	6
General safety obligation .....	6
Australian Builders Plate .....	8
You and your boat .....	9
Registering a boat .....	10
BoatSafe – How to obtain a licence .....	10
Marine driver licence .....	12
Alcohol and drugs .....	12
Marine incidents .....	12
Speed limits .....	13
<b>Safety equipment</b> .....	14
Lifejackets .....	14
Lifejacket checklist .....	17
Distress signals, flares & emergency beacons .....	18
Firefighting equipment .....	20
Navigation equipment .....	20
Other important equipment .....	20
<b>Marine radio</b> .....	22
Licences and certificates .....	22
Mobile phones .....	22
Coastal distress marine radio network .....	22
Towing .....	22
Safety equipment for Queensland regulated ships .....	26
Seaplanes .....	28
Water limits .....	28
<b>Safe operation</b> .....	37
Navigating checklist .....	37
Skipper safety .....	37
How to avoid marine incidents .....	38
Collision rules .....	38
Giving way .....	39
Overtaking .....	39
Sailing boats .....	39
Sound signals .....	40
Navigation lights .....	40
Minimum required lights for boats under way .....	41
IALA buoyage system .....	42
Ship navigation area tips .....	45
Navigating with a Global Positioning System (GPS) .....	46
<b>Boating weather</b> .....	46
Extreme weather events and cyclones .....	46
<b>Personal watercraft</b> .....	47
Personal watercraft licensing .....	47
Personal watercraft registration .....	47
<b>Water sports</b> .....	49
Water skiing safety tips .....	50
Recognised water skiing symbols .....	50
Sail boats and sail boards .....	52
Rowing .....	52
Canoes, kayaks and surf skis .....	52
Divers' flags .....	52
Kitesurfing .....	52
<b>Boating offshore</b> .....	52
Safety tips when boating onshore .....	53
<b>Bar crossings</b> .....	53
<b>Boating on freshwater</b> .....	53
Freshwater boating tips .....	53
<b>Carbon monoxide hazard</b> .....	54
<b>Pollution</b> .....	54
Fuels, oils and chemicals .....	54
Sewage .....	55
<b>MARINE PARKS IN QUEENSLAND</b>	
<b>Great Barrier Reef Marine Park</b> .....	56
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park zoning .....	58
Know your zones in Moreton Bay Marine Park .....	60
Artificial reefs .....	61
Fish habitat areas .....	61
<b>Great Sandy Marine Park</b> .....	63
<b>FISHING IN QUEENSLAND</b>	
Recreational fishing rules for Queensland .....	66
Recreational fishing in Queensland waters .....	66
Size and possession limits .....	66
Measuring .....	66
Catch and release .....	67
Sustaining our fisheries .....	67
Compliance .....	69
Miscellaneous prohibitions .....	69
Fishing ethics .....	70
<b>Freshwaters</b> .....	70
No-take species .....	70
Freshwater fishing gear .....	71
Bait .....	73
Freshwater closed seasons .....	74
Freshwater closed waters .....	74
Stocked Impoundment Permit Scheme (SIPS) .....	76
Noxious fish .....	77
Other invasive fish .....	78
Non-indigenous fish .....	78
<b>Tidal waters</b> .....	79
No-take species .....	79
Tidal fishing gear .....	80
Spearfishing .....	81
Worm digging .....	82
Skin and fillet removal .....	82
Tidal waters closed seasons .....	83
Tidal waters closed waters .....	83
Crabbing .....	85
Other crustaceans and shellfish .....	86
Marine plants .....	87
<b>Size and possession limits</b> .....	88
Size and possession limits - Tidal waters .....	88
Size and possession limits - Fresh waters .....	96
<b>White spot disease</b> .....	99
Map of movement restriction area .....	100
<b>Pre-trip item checklist</b> .....	104

*This handbook should only be used as a guide, and the legislation is determinant. You should review the law if you have any doubts. The information in this edition is current at the time of printing.*

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The Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) advises  
that the summarised information in this guide should not be  
relied on as a complete or accurate representation of the legislative  
requirements. Users may access copies of the Fisheries Act 1994  
and other fisheries legislation via the internet at  
[www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au) and should seek their own legal advice. DAF  
disclaims all liability for all claims, loss, damages, cost or expense of  
whatever nature, howsoever occurring as a result of reliance upon the  
information contained in this guide.

## Fisheries Queensland

**Customer Service Centre**

Phone: 13 25 23

Email: [info@daf.qld.gov.au](mailto:info@daf.qld.gov.au)

Website: [fisheries.qld.gov.au](http://fisheries.qld.gov.au)

## Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol

Report suspected illegal fishing to the **Fishwatch  
hotline: 1800 017 116**

Report marine animals entangled in shark control  
equipment to the **Shark Control Program  
hotline: 1800 806 891**

**Warwick**

604 Yangan Road, Warwick

(07) 4542 6700 or 13 25 23

**Gold Coast**

40-44 Sea World Dr, Main Beach

(07) 5635 6900 or 13 25 23

**Redland Bay**

26-40 Delancey Street, Cleveland

(07) 3825 0445 or 13 25 23

**Brisbane (Pinkenba)**

Marine Operations Base, McArthur Avenue East,  
Pinkenba

(07) 3330 4210 or 13 25 23

**Mooloolaba**

18-20 Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba

(07) 5444 4599 or 13 25 23

**Noosa**

2 Russell Street, Noosaville

(07) 5449 7555 or 13 25 23

**Kingaroy**

214 Goodger Road, Kingaroy

(07) 4182 1828 or 13 25 23

**Hervey Bay**

Buccaneer Avenue, Urangan

(07) 4125 3989 or 13 25 23

**Bundaberg**

16-32 Enterprise Street, Bundaberg

(07) 4131 2365 or 13 25 23

**Gladstone**

QBFP Operations Base

7 Leo Zussino Drive, Gladstone

(07) 4971 6523 or 13 25 23

**Yeppoon**

John Howes Drive, Rosslyn Bay

(07) 4991 5105 or 13 25 23



### **Mackay**

30 Tennyson Street, Mackay  
(07) 4967 0724 or 13 25 23

### **Airlie Beach**

Combined Marine Operations Base, Shingley Drive,  
Airlie Beach  
(07) 4962 5250 or 13 25 23

### **Townsville**

9-15 Langton Street, Garbutt  
(07) 3330 4536 or 13 25 23

### **Ingham**

7 Haig Street, Ingham  
(07) 4757 3711 or 13 25 23

### **Cairns**

38-40 Tingira Street, Portsmith, Cairns  
(07) 4241 1270 or 13 25 23

### **Port Douglas**

9 Ashford Avenue, Port Douglas  
(07) 4099 5160 or 13 25 23

### **Karumba**

8 Palmer Street, The Point, Karumba  
(07) 4745 9142 or 13 25 23

### **Weipa**

Kerr Point Drive, Evans Landing, Weipa  
(07) 4069 8114 or 13 25 23

## **Maritime Safety Queensland**

### **Gold Coast**

40-44 Sea World Drive, Main Beach 4217  
(07) 5585 1810 A/H (07) 5539 7373

### **Brisbane**

MacArthur Avenue East, Pinkenba 4008  
(07) 3632 7500 A/H (07) 3305 1700

### **Sunshine Coast**

Parkyn Parade (Old Pilot Station),  
Mooloolaba 4557  
(07) 5373 2310 A/H (07) 3305 1700

### **Gladstone**

Level 7, 21 Yarroon Street, Gladstone 4680  
(07) 4971 5200 A/H (07) 4971 5200

### **Bundaberg**

Floor 2, 46 Quay Street, Bundaberg 4670  
(07) 4132 6600 A/H (07) 4971 5200

### **Hervey Bay**

Buccaneer Avenue, Hervey Bay 4655  
(07) 4194 9600 A/H (07) 4971 5200

### **Mackay**

Floor 3, 44 Nelson Street, Mackay 4740  
(07) 4944 3700 A/H (07) 4956 3489

### **Airlie Beach**

384 Shute Harbour Road, Airlie Beach 4802  
(07) 4841 4500 A/H (07) 4956 3489

### **Townsville**

60 Ross Street, South Townsville 4810  
(07) 4421 8100 A/H 1300 721 263

### **Cairns**

100-106 Tingira Street, Portsmith 4870  
(07) 4052 7400 A/H 1300 551 899

### **Weipa\***

1 Iraci Avenue, Weipa 4874  
(07) 4069 7165 A/H 1300 551 899

### **Karumba\***

Lot 75, Yappar Street, Karumba 4891  
(07) 4745 9281 A/H 1300 551 899

### **Thursday Island\***

Hastings Street,  
Thursday Island 4875  
(07) 4069 1351 A/H 1300 551 899

*# Office is closed on Mondays \* Telephone enquiries only.*

## **Queensland Water Police**

Gold Coast: (07) 5509 5700

Brisbane: (07) 3895 0333

Redland Bay (07) 3829 4129

Sunshine Coast: (07) 5457 6711

Hervey Bay: (07) 4125 3900

Gladstone: (07) 4971 3222

Yeppoon: (07) 4933 7990

Whitsunday: (07) 4967 7222

Townsville: (07) 4759 9777

Cairns: (07) 4057 3577

Thursday Island: (07) 4069 1520

The Water Police are responsible for crime prevention on the water and facilitate search and rescue activities in conjunction with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

Please note: All noise complaints must be directed to your local government.

For marine emergencies including search and rescue telephone 000.

## **National parks, marine parks, fish habitat areas and wildlife**

**Ph. 13 QGOV (13 74 68)**

**[des.qld.gov.au](http://des.qld.gov.au)**

**Report all wildlife incidents including, marine strandings and crocodile sightings:**  
1300 130 372.

## **Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority**

### **Townsville head office**

280 Flinders Street, Townsville 4810  
(07) 4750 0700 **[gbrmpa.gov.au](http://gbrmpa.gov.au)**

### **Report marine park offences:**

1800 380 048 (24hr hotline)

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# Be Crocwise

## Think twice when you're in croc country

Crocodile danger is real – don't risk your life. However, it is possible to live and play safely in croc country, just follow these guidelines and be crocwise.

**Where is croc country?** Croc country is defined as the shaded area north of the Boyne River.

**The smaller the vessel, the greater the risk.** Crocodiles have taken people from small vessels such as kayaks. Canoes, kayaks and other small craft are not suitable in crocodile habitat areas.

**Your boat is your barrier.** Keep the boat between yourself and the water when launching or retrieving it.

**Leave the lure.** People have been attacked while recovering a fishing lure, even though they didn't see a crocodile there all day.

**Don't be the bait.** Keep your arms and legs inside your boat at all times when fishing.

**Crocodiles can lunge at people and animals at the water's edge.** They are ambush predators, and you may not see them. Stand back from the water when fishing or cast netting.

**Bin your food and fish scraps.** Don't leave food, fish scraps or bait near the water, around your camp site or at a boat ramp. Crocodiles will be attracted by an easy meal, and this puts subsequent visitors to the area at risk.

Remember to report all crocodile sightings on 1300 130 372 – even if you've reported the animal before.



# General rules and requirements

## General safety obligation

The *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994* imposes a safety obligation on all vessel owners and masters (skippers and personal watercraft riders) to operate vessels safely at all times.


**You're responsible for making sure your vessel is safe, properly equipped and maintained and operated in a safe manner.**

**This includes loading people, cargo and stores within the vessel's limits. Make sure the vessel is suitable for the waters where you will be boating.**

## You're the skipper, you're responsible!

Be a responsible skipper, before you head out on the water follow these simple tips:

- check that your boat is serviced and in a seaworthy condition
- have the required safety equipment on board, not expired and in good condition and easily accessible
- tell someone where you are going and when you intend to return
- have the correct marine licence and know how to handle the boat
- know how to use your marine radio
- check the weather and tides before you go out
- know the navigation rules and follow them
- wear your lifejacket—if it's not on it can't save you.



No matter the  
**WATER  
LEVEL**

**SUBMERGED**

**HAZARDS**

are always present

**sun**water

Stay safe around dams and weirs

## Australian builders plate

The Australian Builders Plate (ABP) is required for new and imported recreational boats built from 1 July 2006.

It provides essential safety information about a vessel's loading capacity, maximum outboard size and flotation fitted in a standard format.

Vessel owners who are upsizing motors on recreational boats and/or altering the performance by design may not be meeting their general safety obligation if the engine power is greater than the manufacturer's recommendation on the ABP.



### Don't go overboard!

Overloading your boat is one of the easiest ways to capsize it and puts at risk the safety of everyone on board. By allowing more people on board a boat than its maximum capacity, the risk of capsizing significantly increases.

Having an ABP adjacent to a boat's steering position means skippers, crew and passengers are constantly reminded of their boat's recommended loading capacity in good conditions (fair weather conditions in smooth waters).



The onus of safety rests with the skipper at all times. When using the boat in exposed waters or in rough conditions or carrying heavy loads, the skipper should consider reducing the number of persons taken on the trip.

All skippers must comply with the ABP.

Responsible skippers check the maximum number of people and weight load of a boat, as well as the maximum engine weight and power. Know how to safely load your boat by:

- storing heavy items low and central and secured in a place where they cannot move around
- distributing the weight, including passengers, evenly around the boat
- compensating for the weight of extra fuel and equipment.

## You and your boat

### A new boat

New boats are required to have an ABP with the exception of: an amphibious vehicle; a canoe, kayak or surf ski or similar vessel designed to be powered by paddle; a rowing shell used for racing or rowing training; a sailboard or sail kite; a surf row boat; a hydrofoil or hovercraft; a race boat; a sailing vessel; a submersible; and an aquatic toy.

If safety equipment has been supplied, double check the safety equipment table (page 26) to ensure you have all the required equipment.

Lifejackets are vital items – consider if you need to upgrade to better quality or inflatable lifejackets which can be worn with comfort all of the time.

If the boat is fitted with an under floor fuel tank, ensure a water trap fuel filter has been fitted.

It will help ensure that fuel does not become contaminated resulting in engine problems while out boating.

### A second hand boat

Because the boat is older and may have been modified by previous owners, be sure to check that:

- it is safe and any repairs or modifications have been carried out correctly
- it can safely go where you want to go, take who you want to take and do what you want to do
- the outboard fitted meets the requirements of the ABP
- lifejackets meet the current standard
- flares or EPIRB are in date
- if tiller steered, a safety lanyard is attached to the cut-off switch for the motor.

Buy with confidence. Consider getting a person with marine experience like a boat surveyor or builder to inspect the boat and give you a non- biased report.

For more information about choosing a safe boat (old or new) visit **[msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au)**.



### Boat owner responsibility

Boat owners are responsible for their boat from purchase to disposal. As a boat owner you are responsible for ensuring your vessel remains seaworthy, is not a hazard to navigation, and is not a marine pollution risk. Don't allow your vessel to become derelict.

### Insurance for vessels over 15m

Legislation requires all ships over 15 metres (for example 15.01 metres) in length to have insurance sufficient to pay for potential pollution clean-up, salvage and wreck removal.

### Registering a boat

All boats fitted with a propulsion motor of 3kW or more require registration when on the water in Queensland.

Registration forms must be lodged with a Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centre. Fees are calculated according to the boat length (exemptions and concessions do apply in some cases).

Your boat will be allocated registration symbols. These must be clearly visible in plain characters in a contrasting colour to the hull of the boat. The size of the symbols depends on the type of boat and must be able to be read from a distance of 30 metres.

- Vessels capable of planing must have symbols a minimum of 150 mm high on both sides.
- Personal watercraft (PWC) registration symbols must be displayed on both sides at least 100 mm high, easily seen while the craft is underway.
- Vessels not capable of planing, (for example canoes with motors, yachts) must have symbols a minimum of 75 mm high on both sides or on the stern.



**Boatsafe** is a competency-based scheme to ensure marine licence applicants meet the minimum level of skills and knowledge before obtaining a licence Queensland. When you enrol in a BoatSafe course, you must complete a Medical Fitness Disclosure Statement and give it to the BoatSafe trainer.

For a list of BoatSafe training providers in your local area visit [qld.gov.au/transport/boating](http://qld.gov.au/transport/boating).

Queensland recognises other states' marine licences. If your home state does not have any licensing requirements, you should obtain a marine licence before boating in.

When a registered boat is sold it is the responsibility of the new owner to lodge an application for transfer of the registration within 14 days. Registration may be cancelled if the boat is no longer used in Queensland, is withdrawn from service or no longer meets registration requirements.

Third party insurance is not included in the cost of registering your vessel. Independent advice should be sought about insurance as required.

From 1 October 2019 the Department of Transport and Mains Roads will no longer be issuing registration labels and it will no longer be a requirement to display one on your boat.

For more information about boat registrations visit [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

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### Tenders

Tenders are exempt from registration provided they are used within two nautical miles of the primary boat. The tender must be marked with the word 'tender' as well as the primary boat's registration symbols (at least 75 mm high) on the exterior of the tender. If this is not possible, they must be marked on the inside of the boat in the largest characters possible. The tender may be marked with the owner's name, if it is used for more than one of the owner's boats.

### Marine driver licence

A valid licence is required to operate all recreational boats powered by a motor of more than 4.5kW in Queensland.

Unlicensed drivers may drive a boat (where a licence is needed) provided a licensed driver is on board and is able to take immediate control. Unlicensed drivers are not allowed to tow a person (such as a water skier, knee boarder or an inflatable tow toy).

To obtain a recreational marine driver licence you must be aged 16 years or older and pass an approved BoatSafe course or have a recognised and valid interstate marine licence.

Marine licence forms must be lodged with a Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centre. You will receive a printed receipt showing you have a marine licence. If you have a valid Queensland driver's licence, a new licence will be sent to you in the mail with your marine licence/s indicator on the back. If not, you will be sent a marine licence indicator card.

### Are your boating skills up to date?

The average marine licence holder has their licence for 10 years before they register a boat. Inexperienced or out-of-practice skippers are a major cause of marine incidents. Practice makes perfect. You can refresh your boating skills at any time by re-doing your BoatSafe course. Visit the [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au) and check out the Maritime Matters and Maritime Minutes pages to help stay up to date.

### Alcohol and drugs

Skippers operating a recreational boat must have a blood alcohol limit of less than .05. Skippers should be aware that under their general safety obligation they must ensure that if they are in a situation where they may need to operate their boat, for example, if their boat drags anchor, that they are under .05 and in a fit state to operate the boat as necessary.

Police can ask you to provide a saliva sample to detect the presence of drugs. There is a zero tolerance for boating under the influence of drugs.

The skipper is also responsible for the safety of passengers and their alcohol consumption.

People on board need to take care because our data tells us that boat passengers are just as likely as skippers to be involved in incidents such as capsizing the vessel or falling overboard as a result of drinking alcohol.

Remember that the effects of alcohol are increased while on the water due to the sun, wind, and constant motion. Reflexes and response times to emergencies are slowed and swimming ability deteriorates considerably.

Alcohol and drugs affect your coordination, judgement, vision, balance and reaction time – increasing your risk of having a marine incident.

**Don't multiply the risks – think before you drink.**

### Marine incidents

All marine incidents must be reported to a shipping inspector on the approved form within 48 hours. Shipping inspectors and forms are available at Maritime Safety Queensland, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol and Queensland Water Police offices.

Reportable incidents include:

- the loss of a person from a boat
- the death of, grievous bodily harm to, or injuries to a person caused by a boat's operations
- the loss or abandonment of a boat
- a collision with a boat
- the stranding/grounding of a boat
- material damage to a boat
- material damage caused by a boat's operations
- danger to a person caused by a boat's operations
- danger of serious damage to a boat
- danger of serious damage to a structure caused by a boat's operations.

If in doubt about whether an incident is reportable — report it.

### Why reporting is important

The reporting of marine incidents is vital to the development of safety standards, education and on-water compliance programs that will benefit all waterways users.

Reporting a marine incident may also help you if you decide to make insurance claims for any damage. Some insurance companies may require a marine incident report to validate claims.



## Speed limits

Speed limits may apply. For safety reasons, it may be necessary to reduce your speed to be under these speed limits, stay below these limits and operate for the conditions. See page 38 for information on safe speed.

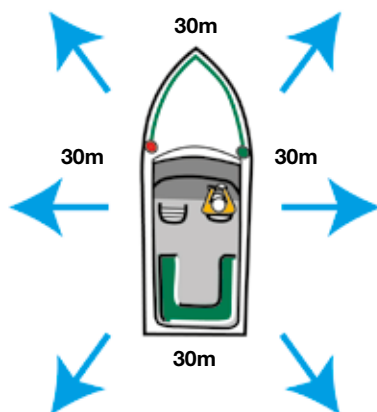
A 6 knot speed limit applies within all boat harbours, marinas and canals in Queensland.

### Distance off

A speed limit of 6 knots within 30 metres of boats anchored, moored to the shore or aground

- jetty, wharf, pontoon or boat ramp
- people in the water

Except PWCs which must not operate at more than 6 knots within 60 metres of people in the water. See page 48 for all PWC rules.



## Wash

Wash can create serious safety hazards for other boats, especially in marinas and anchorages where there is an expectation of calm conditions.

Wash can also create damage to:

- pontoons
- jetties
- vessels moored to these structures
- vessels in shallow water or anchored on a foreshore
- shorelines and river banks.

Even at slow speeds your boat will create wash. Responsible skippers look behind and ensure your wash is kept to a minimum. Be aware of the impact wash can have on other waterway users.

### Unlawful operations

A person who is the owner or master of a ship must not operate the ship within 30 metres of a diver in the water if a 'code A' flag is displayed in the vicinity of the diver.

## Safety equipment

Having the right safety equipment on board and knowing how to use it is essential – it may save your life in an emergency.

What you are required to carry depends on the size of your boat, whether it needs to be registered and where you're operating.

Page 26 provides a list of the minimum safety equipment to be carried on all recreational boats and PWCs.

### Be prepared for the unexpected!

Recommended safety equipment is optional – particularly by unregistered boats but responsible skippers should consider carrying the equipment at all times.

Safety equipment includes parts that can deteriorate over time for example webbing, straps, plastic buckles, and any fabrics or materials. This lowers their usefulness or makes them unusable. You must check your safety equipment regularly to ensure it's in good condition. Some items will need to be replaced or serviced by the expiry date or according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

### Lifejackets

Lifejackets are a vital piece of safety equipment. Think of them like your seatbelt on the water.

All lifejackets are designed for different purposes, wearer ages, sizes and weights. So choosing the right life jacket is important.

Lifejackets must display information about which Standard applies. The current Australian Standard is AS 4758 (AS 4758), which has replaced AS 1512–1996, AS 1499–1996 and AS 2260–1996. Lifejackets that meet these previous standards are no longer compliant and must be replaced. You cannot buy a new or replacement lifejacket manufactured/assessed to the old standard for use in Queensland.

The International Standards which are also compliant are:

- ISO12402
- EN399-1993
- NZS5823:2005

Good condition means the jacket does not have any rips or tears, pulled stitching, faded colour, broken buckles, water logged foam or any other reason to prevent the lifejacket from performing the way it should.

Lifejackets don't last forever, check with your lifejacket manufacturer on the lifespan of your lifejackets.

### Level 100 - open waters



- AS 4758 compliant lifejackets will be marked 'Level 100', 'Level 150' or 'Level 275'
- will assist you to keep face up in a floating position in calm water
- can be used in smooth, partially smooth and open waters
- not for use by personal watercraft (PWC) riders.



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**Level 50 - partially smooth waters**



- AS 4758 compliant lifejackets will be marked 'Level 50'
- may not rotate you to float face up, but will return you to the surface
- can be used in smooth or partially smooth waters
- can be used by PWC riders beyond smooth and partially smooth waters.

**Level 50 - special purpose (50s) smooth waters**



- AS 4758 compliant lifejackets will be marked 'Level 50 special purpose'
- may be a wet suit with built in buoyancy
- may not rotate you to float face up, but will return you to the surface
- not suitable for use beyond smooth waters.

**Inflatable lifejackets**



- not recommended for use when waterskiing, tubing or riding a PWC
- must be gas inflated (must not rely solely on oral inflation)
- must follow the manufacturer's servicing periods and instructions
- The owner or skipper must be able to produce documented evidence of full adherence to the manufactures documented servicing program
- can be used in the waters allowed by its buoyancy level.

**INFLATABLE LIFEJACKETS REQUIRE SERVICING – IS YOURS GOOD TO GO?**

**Coastal and SOLAS**

- not recommended for use when waterskiing, tubing or riding a PWC
- designed to keep the body afloat for long periods
- these lifejackets are typically at least a Level 150 and have more flotation than a Level 100 lifejacket and have reflective tape and a whistle to attract attention
- can be used in all waters.

## Compulsory wearing of life jackets

It is compulsory to wear a life jacket:

- when crossing a designated coastal bar\* in an open boat that is less than 4.8 m in length
  - if you are under the age of 12 (from 12 months and up to, but not including, 12 years of age) in an open boat that is less than 4.8 m in length and under way
  - when riding a PWC, waterskiing or tubing
- \* the designated coastal bars are listed on page 53

**If you're not wearing it, it can't save you – wear it!**



### Lifejacket checklist

- Do you have the right lifejackets for your whole trip?
- Are your lifejackets suited to your activity?
- Do you have enough lifejackets for everyone that will be on board and are they the right size?
- Are your lifejackets in good condition?
- If you will be boating at night, do your lifejackets have reflective tape to help others to see you better at night?
- Do you have a 'LIFEJACKET' sticker on your boat to show others where the lifejackets are stored?

## Distress signals, flares and emergency beacons

If you are in an emergency on the water and need help you can use distress signals, flares and EPIRBs to show you are in distress and need assistance.



Signalling devices are compulsory for all boats operating between sunset and sunrise. A torch, fluorescent light, lantern or cyalume stick are all suitable as long as they generate enough light to be seen by other boats and prevent a collision and attract attention.

Other distress signals include marine radio broadcast, flares, signal mirror, V sheet and sound signal.

### Flares

Flares are a way for a boat in trouble to attract the attention of other boats or aircraft in the area.

All vessels and PWCs (excluding a tender not requiring registration) operating beyond smooth water limits must carry handheld orange smoke



and handheld red flares as part of their safety equipment. Use handheld orange smoke signals for daytime and handheld red flares for night time. Always read the instructions and familiarise yourself with their operation before storing your flares on board. Store flares in a dry place where they will be readily accessible in an emergency.

Talk to your local marine rescue group or boating club about attending their flare demonstration events.

Flares have a lifespan of three years and must be replaced prior to the expiry date.

Boaties are reminded to dispose of old flares correctly. Visit [msq.qld.gov.au/safety/distress-signals](http://msq.qld.gov.au/safety/distress-signals) for flare disposal locations in Queensland.

### EPIRBs and PLBs

An Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) is an electronic device that, when activated, can help search and rescue authorities pinpoint your position.



Once activated, EPIRBs continuously send out a signal for at least 48 hours.

All boats must carry a 406MHz EPIRB when operating more than 2 nautical miles from land or outside smooth and partially smooth water limits. Maritime Safety Queensland recommend the use of EPIRBs fitted with an inbuilt GPS as they provide rescuers with your location quicker and with greater accuracy compared to EPIRBs without GPS.

EPIRBs must:

- comply with the Australian Standard 4280.1:2003
- be registered with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority – registration is free and must be renewed every 2 years.



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Operators of lightweight craft have a choice if they want to carry an EPIRB or a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB). If you chose to carry a PLB in place of an EPIRB it must comply with the following:

- GPS enabled
- float
- be worn by the operator
- comply with AS/NZ 4280.20
- be registered with AMSA
- in service.

Lightweight craft means off the beach type craft, human powered canoe and kayak, small sailing vessels (less than 6 m in length) and personal watercraft.

For more information on emergency beacons visit [beacons.amsa.gov.au](http://beacons.amsa.gov.au).

Search and rescue authorities respond to all activations – you must only activate the EPIRB or PLB in an emergency. If you accidentally activate an EPIRB/PLB or no longer require help you must tell them immediately by radioing your local volunteer marine rescue organisation or calling Rescue Coordination Centre's 24-hour emergency number on 1800 641 792. To avoid accidental activations store EPIRBs in its mounting bracket in an accessible place away from other gear.

An EPIRB must be serviced or replaced according to the manufacturer's recommendations before it expires.

Boaties are reminded to dispose of old EPIRB/PLBs correctly. Do not dispose of old beacons in general waste as it will end up in landfill and could be accidentally activate. Contact your local battery store to check whether they disconnect and dispose of beacons. A small fee may apply. Your EPIRB manufacturers will also provide a process of how to disable an expired EPIRB and prepare it for the battery to be recycled.

## Firefighting equipment

All registered recreational boats over 5 metres in length must carry firefighting equipment that can extinguish a fire quickly and effectively.

Ensure you buy your firefighting equipment from an authorised dealer who can work out the best type of extinguisher for your needs.



TIP: Know how to use your fire extinguisher, read the instructions on the extinguisher or take a course.

***Fire extinguishers must be serviced at specified intervals or replaced according to the manufacturer's advice before it expires.***

## Navigation equipment

All boats operating in partially smooth waters and beyond should carry some form of navigation equipment for example, charts, compass or GPS with an electronic chart.

GPS verification marks are installed at selected boat ramps for boaters to check the accuracy of on board GPS navigation equipment. Visit [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au) for GPS verification mark locations in Queensland.

Check out Maritime Safety Queensland's free boating maps for selective waterways at [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

## Other important equipment

It is recommended that all boats carry suitable:

- **Pumping and bailing equipment:** For boats under 5 metres, buckets are considered suitable bailing equipment. Boats 5 metres and over require a bilge pump.
- **Anchoring equipment:** All boats should carry a suitable anchor with a minimum of 2 metres of chain and a length of line suitable for the depth of water you intend to operate in. A guide for this is a 5 to 1 ratio, every metre of water depth have 5 metres of anchor line.



### **Danforth anchor**

Most commonly used by small craft as it has excellent holding power in mud and sand.

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### **CQR or Plough anchor**

Used by larger, heavier boats.

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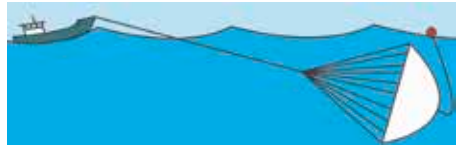


### **Reef anchor**

Designed for coral or rock by using prongs that can straighten out, creating less environmental impact.



### **Sea anchor**



A small drogue acting like a parachute, dramatically slows the rate of drift.

### **Manual propulsion equipment**

Boats under 6 metres in length should carry oars, paddles or another secondary means of propulsion in case of an emergency. If the boat has fittings for rowlocks, carry the correct length oars with rowlocks securely attached. If not, the paddles should be long and of sufficient strength to do the job. An auxiliary outboard should be of sufficient power to allow the ship to make way.

### **Drinking water**

All boats should carry sufficient drinking water for everyone on board for the duration of the trip.

## Marine radio

Marine radios are essential safety equipment and can be the only way to communicate with other boats or marine rescue groups and receive navigation warnings and weather updates.

Responsible skippers should know how to operate a marine radio, the distress and safety frequencies and how to properly format and transmit distress and safety messages.

Use your radio to log your trip with your local marine rescue group.

### Radio licences and certificates

Under federal regulations, operators of VHF and MF/HF radios are required to hold an operating certificate. Many Coast Guard and volunteer marine rescue stations provide these courses or the assessment for the certificate.

Visit [acma.gov.au](http://acma.gov.au) and navigate to the 'marine, amateur and CB radio' pages for more information.

### Mobile phones

Although commonly carried on boats, mobile phones are not seen as a substitute for marine radio or emergency radio communications.

## Coastal distress marine radio network

Maritime Safety Queensland has a 24 hour listening watch service for distress and urgency calls to cover most coastal waters between the Torres Strait and the New South Wales border on VHF channels 16 and 67

Volunteer marine rescue organisations play an important role in delivering the coastal distress marine radio network service. They maintain a listening watch during their operating hours. For more information on volunteer rescue stations and frequencies monitored in your area contact your local Australian volunteer Coast Guard or Marine Rescue Queensland flotilla or the Moreton Bay Trailer Boat Club Radio Room.

## Towing

Towing trailers requires additional skills and knowledge. A trailer can greatly affect the handling and performance of a vehicle. Some special rules apply to size and weight of the trailer and its load:

- Towing more than one trailer at a time is not allowed.
- Nobody is to ride in the trailer or in the boat on a trailer.

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# Queensland Marine Rescue VHF Repeater Channels



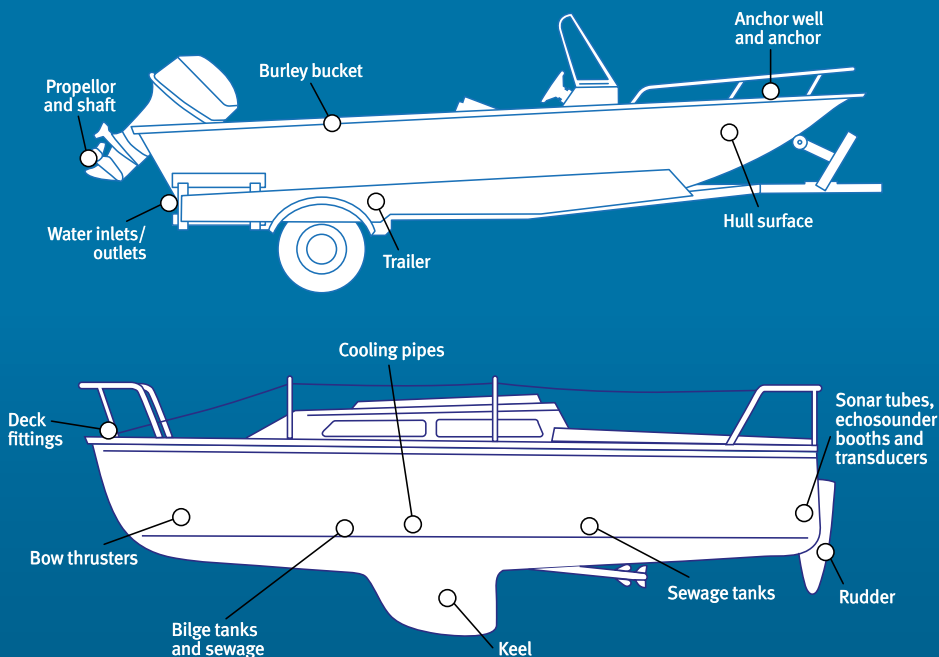
CALL SIGN	REPEATER CHANNEL	PHONE
VMR Thursday Island	22, 82	4069 2444
VMR St Pauls	22, 82	4069 4124
VMR Weipa	N/A	4069 7867
VMR Aurukun	N/A	4060 6800
VMR Kurumba	80	4745 9999
VMR Burketown	80	4745 5177
VMR Mornington Island	80	4745 7478
AVGC Cape York	22, 82	4069 3030
AVCG Cooktown	21, 82	4069 5655
AVCG Port Douglas	81	4099 5392
AVCG Cairns	81	4051 2192
AVCG Innisfail	21	4063 2396
AVCG Tully	80	4066 9300
AVCG Cardwell	82	4066 8792
AVCG Ingham	81	4777 8110
AVCG Townsville	22	4771 4831
VMR Burdekin	80	4783 1014
VMR Bowen	21	4786 1950
VMR Whitsunday	80, 81	4946 7207
VMR Midge Point	80	4945 1047
VMR Mackay	21, 80	4955 5448
AVCG Thirsty Sound	81, 83	4937 3155
AVCG Rockhampton	22	4921 2266
AVCG Yeppoon	21, 22	4933 6600
AVCG Keppel Sands	21, 22	4934 4906
VMR Gladstone	82	4972 3333
VMR Round Hill	81, 82	4974 9383
VMR Bundaberg	22, 80, 81	4159 4349
VMR Hervey Bay	22	4128 9666
VMR Hervey Bay	22	4128 9666
AVCG Sandy Straits	80, 82	4129 8141
AVCG Tin Can Bay	80, 82	5486 4290
AVCG Noosa	22, 80	5449 7670
AVCG Mooloolaba	22, 80, 81	5444 3222
AVCG Caloundra	80, 81, 82	5491 3533
VMR Bribie Island	81	3408 7596
AVCG Redcliffe	21, 22, 80, 81, 82	3203 5522
VMR Brisbane	81	3269 8888
AVCG Brisbane	81	3396 5911
VMR Raby Bay	81	3821 2244
VMR Victoria Point	81	3207 8717
AVCG Redland Bay	81	3206 7777
VMR North Stradbroke	81	3409 9338
VMR Jacob's Well	82	5546 1100
Seaway Tower	22, 81, 82	5591 2948
AVCG Southport	22, 81, 82	5531 1421
VMR Southport	22, 81, 82	5591 1300
VMR Currumbin	82	5534 1000
MRNSW Point Danger	22	5536 9333

# Marine biosecurity

Everyone plays a part

## All it takes is one boat to introduce or spread a marine pest

Clean your boat regularly and check for pests on marine structures



Report suspected marine pests by contacting  
Biosecurity Queensland

13 25 23

[biosecurity.qld.gov.au](http://biosecurity.qld.gov.au)

# Safety equipment for Queensland regulated ships

- All equipment must be in good working order. For EPIRBs, fire fire extinguishers, flares and inflatable life jackets, check the service expiry or replacement date. Make sure yours are current.
- Boats not requiring registration means recreational boats with an engine or auxiliary under 3 kW. Requirements or recommendations listed also apply to international or interstate boats operating in Queensland.
  - Boats requiring registration means recreational boats with an engine or auxiliary of 3 kW or more. Requirements or recommendations listed also apply to international or interstate boats operating in Queensland.
  - Tenders do not require registration if operated within 2 nautical miles (nm) of the primary boat. Tenders that do not require registration are not required to carry safety equipment other than a light for signalling. Operators should consider equipping a tender with safety equipment appropriate to the location of operation.
  - PWC means personal watercraft for example a jet ski.
  - Required means equipment that must be carried. Recommended means equipment that is suggested to be carried to meet the General Safety Obligation.

Item	Smooth water			Partially smooth waters			Beyond smooth and partially smooth waters		
	Not requiring registration	Registered*	PWC	Not requiring registration	Registered*	PWC	Not requiring registration <sup>1</sup>	Registered*	PWC <sup>2</sup>
<b>EPIRB*(406 MHz)</b> Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon. When operating more than 2nm from land and not within smooth and partially smooth waters. Must be registered with AMSA. Registration must be renewed every two years.							required	required	required
	EPIRBs must have a printed expiry date and be replaced or serviced by the manufacturer (or authorised service agent) by this date; must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZ 4280.1:2003; and must be registered in the name of the owner/master with AMSA.								
<b>Signalling device</b> For example a torch, or fluorescent light, or lantern or cyalume stick. Required when operating between sunset and sunrise.	required	required	required	required	required	required	required	required	required
<b>Lifejackets#</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>One of the appropriate size for each person (12 months and over) on board, except if a person is wearing an inflatable diver jacket and the vessel is engaged in diving activities.</li><li>Children under 12 must wear the lifejacket when underway in an open boat under 4.8m.</li><li>Lifejackets must be worn when crossing designated coastal bars in open boats under 4.8m.</li><li>Skiers or people being towed<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>At least level 50 or level 50 special purpose, or wetsuit with built in flotation approved as level 50 special purpose in smooth waters.</li><li>At least level 50 in partially smooth waters and beyond.</li></ul></li></ul>	Level 275, 150, 100, level 50 or level 50 special purpose recommended	Level 275, 150, 100, level 50 or level 50 special purpose required	Level 50 or level 50 special purpose required	Level 275, 150, 100, or level 50 recommended	Level 275, 150, 100, or level 50 required	Level 50 required	Level 275, 150 or 100 recommended	Level 275, 150 or 100 required	Level 50 required
	• If the boat has level flotation**, and grab handles, lines or a secure hold for each person onboard, a lifejacket is not required in a river, creek or stream, or waters contained within breakwaters or revetments. • Lifejackets not required for a registered* tender if used within 1km of the primary boat and tender has a level flotation statement** in the approved form.			• Lifejackets not required for a registered* tender if used within 1km of the primary boat and tender has a level flotation statement** in the approved form.			• Lifejackets not required for a registered* tender if used within 500m of the primary boat and tender has a level flotation statement** in the approved form.		
<b>V sheet</b>				recommended	required	required <sup>A</sup>	recommended	required	required <sup>A</sup>
<b>Flares</b> Two red hand flares and two hand held orange smoke signals.				recommended	required	required <sup>A</sup>	recommended	required	required <sup>A</sup>
<b>Fire fighting equipment **</b> All boats over 5m. Must be capable of extinguishing a fire quickly and effectively.	recommended	required		recommended	required		recommended	required	



Item	Smooth water			Partially smooth waters			Beyond smooth and partially smooth waters		
	Not requiring registration	Registered*	PWC	Not requiring registration	Registered*	PWC	Not requiring registration†	Registered*	PWC‡
<b>Navigation</b> A chart and a liquid damped compass appropriate to the operational area, or other directional finding or positioning equipment. For a PWC without a chart or compass, an electronic navigation device appropriate to the operational area.				recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>40</sup>	recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>40</sup>
<b>Anchoring</b> For boats less than 5m, the cable can be chain or rope. For boats over 5m, the cable can be chain of at least 2m attached to anchor and rope. The type and weight of anchor and length and thickness of the cable should be appropriate for the type and weight of ship, the weather and sea conditions and the nature of the seabed.	recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>40</sup>	recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>40</sup>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: one anchor with at least 18m of cable</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: one anchor with at least 27m of cable</li> <li>• 8m and over: two anchors with at least 37m of cable each</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: one anchor with at least 27m of cable</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: one anchor with at least 27m of cable</li> <li>• 8m and over: two anchors with at least 37m of cable each</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: one anchor with at least 27m of cable</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: one anchor with at least 27m of cable</li> <li>• 8m and over: two anchors with at least 37m of cable each</li> </ul>		
<b>Pumping/bailing equipment</b>	recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: suitable bailing equipment</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: bilge pump 45L/minute capacity</li> <li>• 8m and over: bilge pump 70L/minute capacity</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: suitable bailing equipment</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: bilge pump 45L/minute capacity</li> <li>• 8m and over: bilge pump 70L/minute capacity</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• less than 5m: suitable bailing equipment</li> <li>• 5m to less than 8m: bilge pump 45L/minute capacity</li> <li>• 8m and over: bilge pump 70L/minute capacity</li> </ul>		
<b>Secondary propulsion</b> (boats under 6m).	recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended	
<b>Drinking water</b> Enough for everyone on board for the trip.	recommended	recommended		recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>41</sup>	recommended	recommended	recommended <sup>41</sup>

KEY

- \* Also includes boats/tenders that are required to be registered but are not.
- \*\* A level flotation statement in the approved form, is an Australian Builders Plate that indicates the boat has level flotation.
- ^ Does not apply to a PWC operating in an approved aquatic event or beyond partially smooth waters and within 0.5 nautical miles from land.
- # Owners/masters must give each person on board information about where the safety equipment is kept. Lifejackets must be clearly visible to passengers or readily accessible and indicated by a clearly visible sign with a white background marked with the word 'lifejackets' in red letters or vice versa.
- o It is recommended the type and weight of anchor and the length and thickness of the cable should be appropriate for the type and weight of the PWC, the weather and sea conditions and the nature of the seabed.
- s Lightweight Craft are permitted to substitute an EPIRB with a PLB. The PLB must float, be registered with AMSA, be GPS enabled, be worn by the operator, in service and comply with the Australian Standard. Lightweight Craft are off the beach type craft, human powered canoe and kayak, small sailing vessels (less than 6m in length) and personal watercraft.
- « Oars, paddles or another secondary means of propulsion.
- Portable fire extinguishers which have a manufacture stamp of more than five years prior, must be pressure tested by an approved agent.

## Boating in Queensland

- Over-width boats must comply with special permit conditions.

As a guide always check the following when towing:

- your vehicle towing capacity, to ensure your car can tow the boat and trailer combination
- the brakes on the trailer are the correct type for the load/weight
- the trailer is in good condition and safe to operate
- all lights and brakes work and safety chains are sufficient and securely fitted
- all loose items in the boat or trailer are secured away.
- The boat is secured to the trailer and outboard leg supported.

### An over-width boat is

- a boat exceeding 2.5 metres wide, or
- a boat exceeding 12.5 metres in length, or
- a boat which, when towed, results in the combination (towing vehicle, trailer and boat) exceeding 19 metres in length, or
- a boat exceeding 4.3 metres in height.

If your boat is over-width refer to the Over-width Boat Towing Bulletin for details on what you have to do to comply with the towing permit.

## Seaplanes

When on the water, seaplanes are just like any other vessel. They are subject to all the restrictions and privileges of other boats and conduct their operations accordingly.

Don't be alarmed if a seaplane alights or takes off in the waterways near you.

Seaplane pilots are specially trained and qualified to operate upon the water.

Like other boat operators, they hold a marine licence to operate a powered vessel.

Avoid making sudden changes of direction which might confuse the pilot or obstruct the seaplane's path.

## Water limits

Because Queensland's waterways are so diverse there are designated water limits affecting the types of safety equipment required.

There are three types of limits:

- smooth waters include rivers, creeks, streams and lakes, waters within breakwaters or revetments and within half a nautical mile from land within partially smooth limits and other waters specified in legislation
- partially smooth waters are determined by Maritime Safety Queensland and are specified in legislation
- open waters are areas beyond these limits.

A complete list of maps showing these designated water limits as on page 31 - 36.

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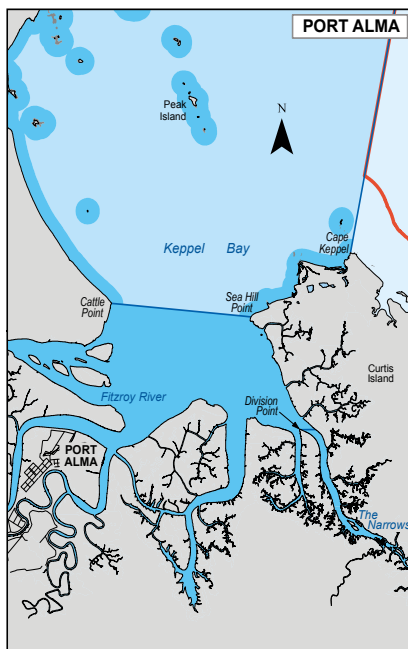
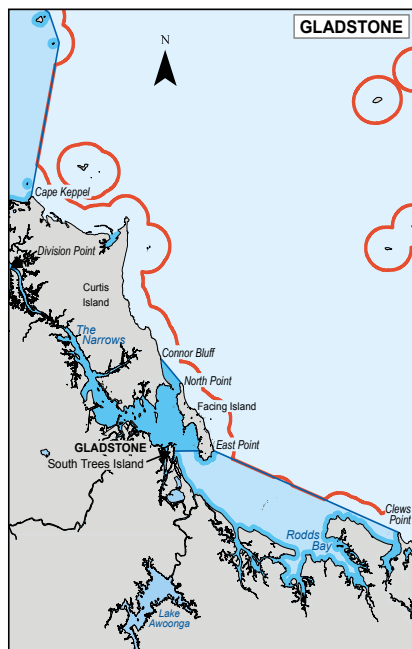
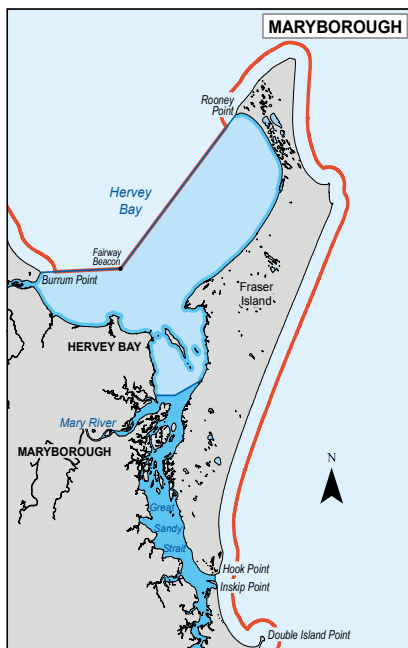
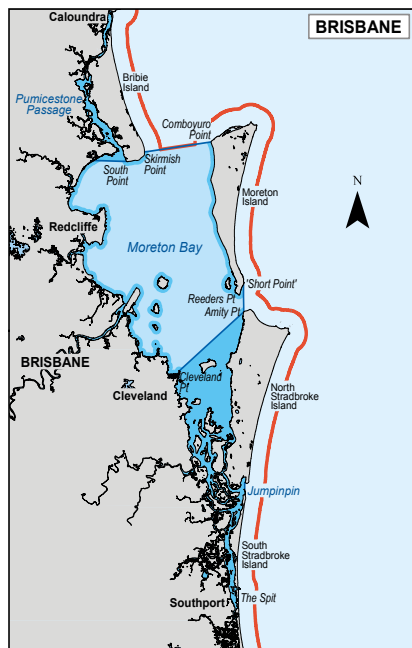
# Designated Water Limits



# Legend



the red line designates limits beyond which EPIRBs must be carried.

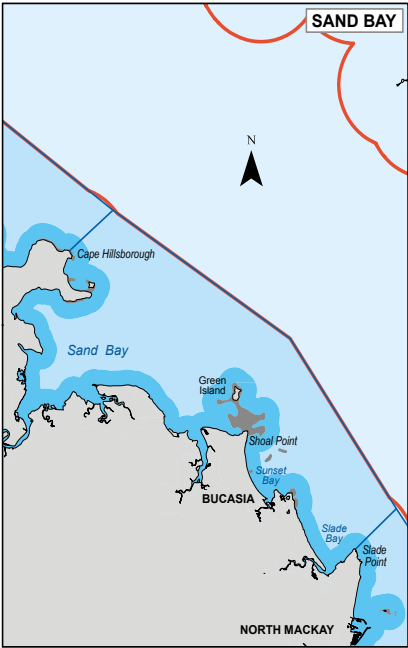
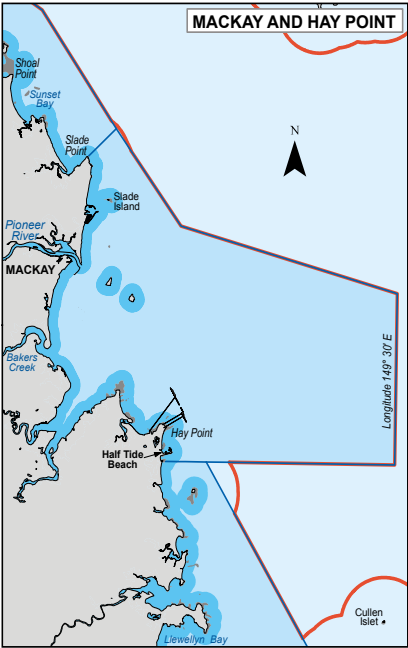
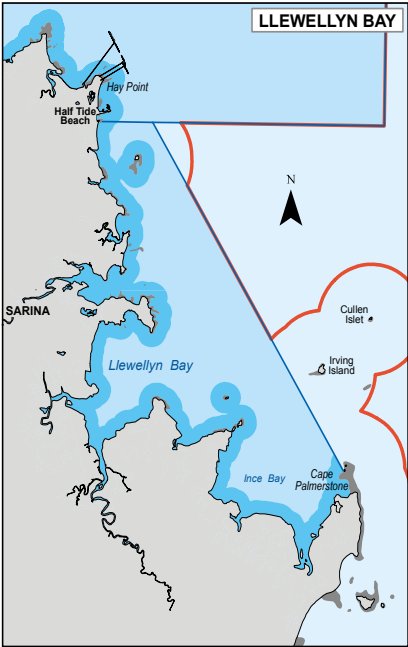
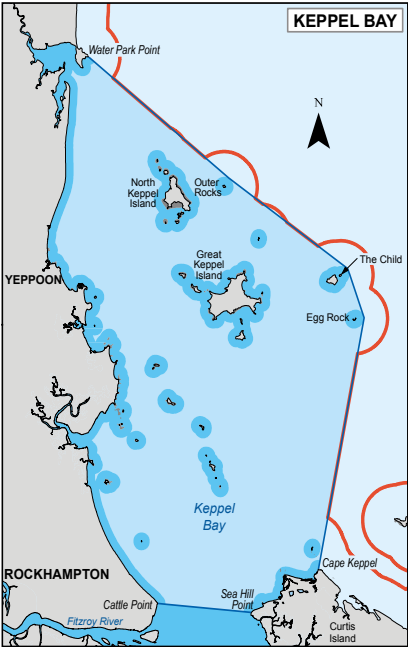


Boating in Queensland

Legend



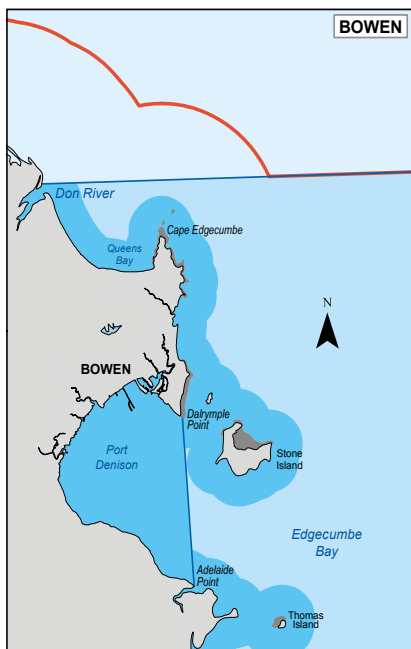
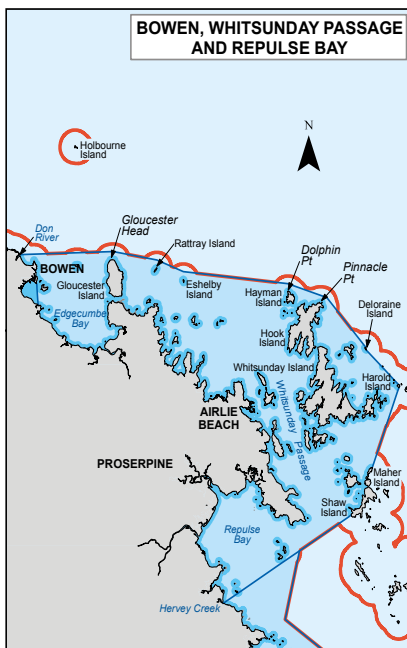
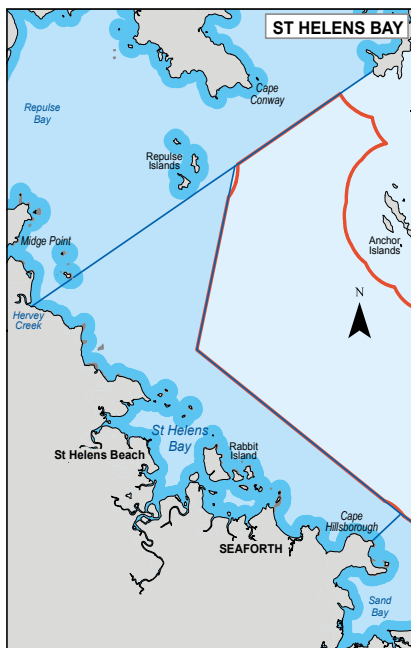
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# Legend



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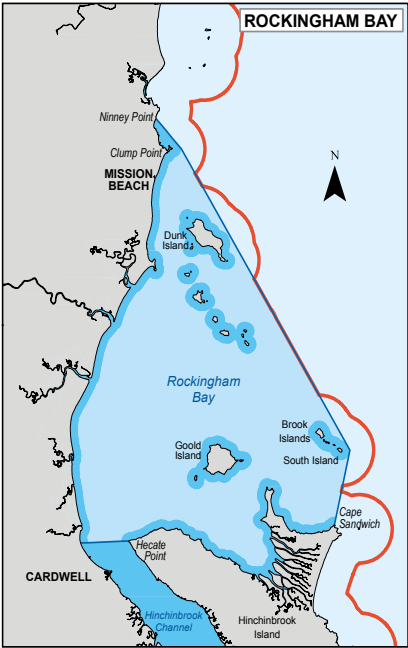
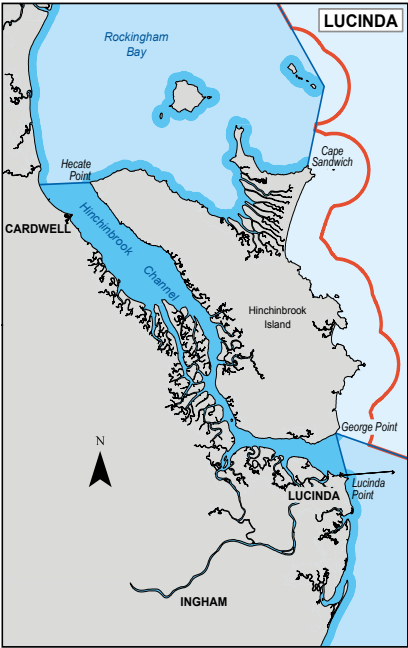
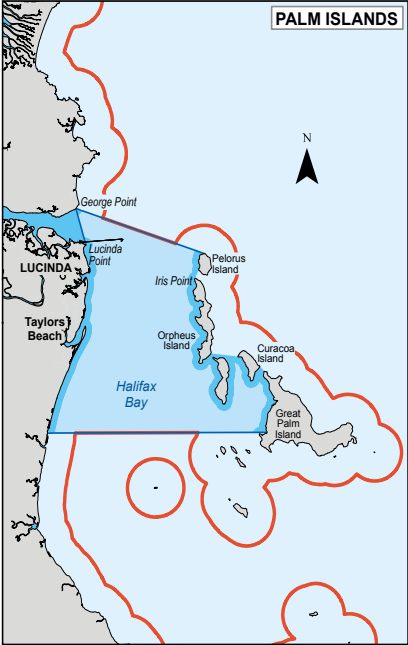
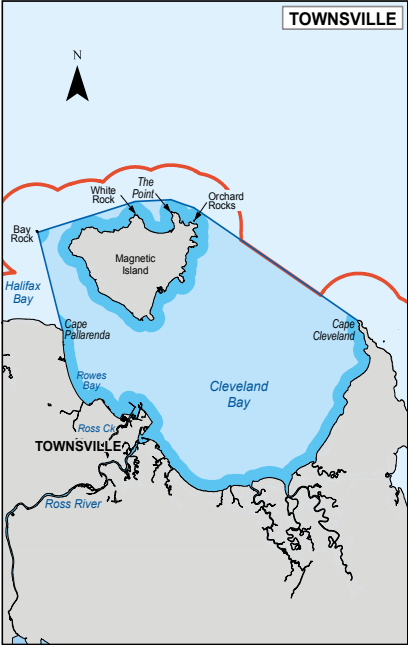


Boating in Queensland

Legend



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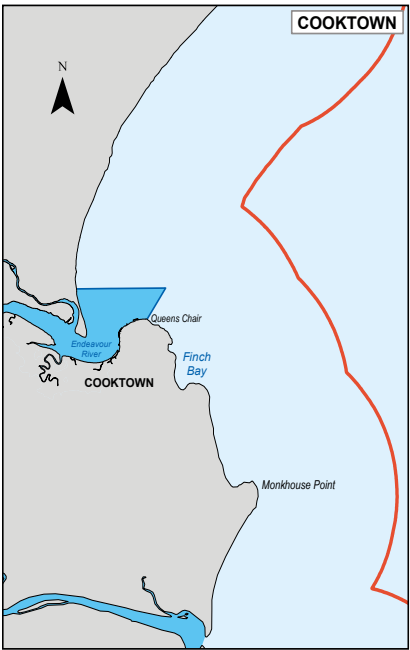
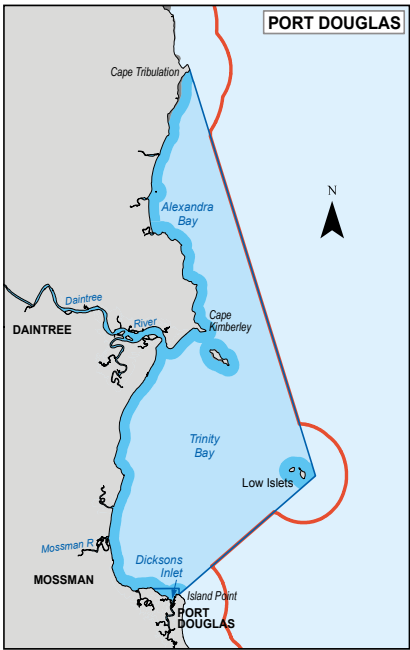
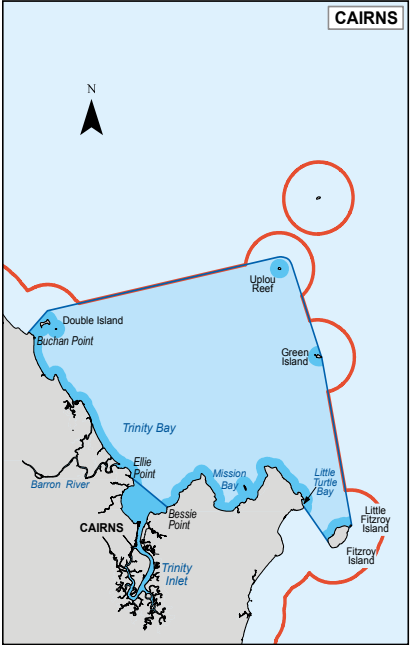
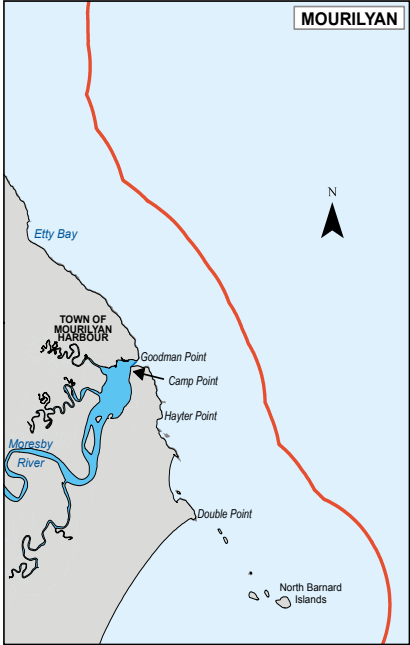




**Legend**



the red line designates limits beyond which EPIRBs must be carried.

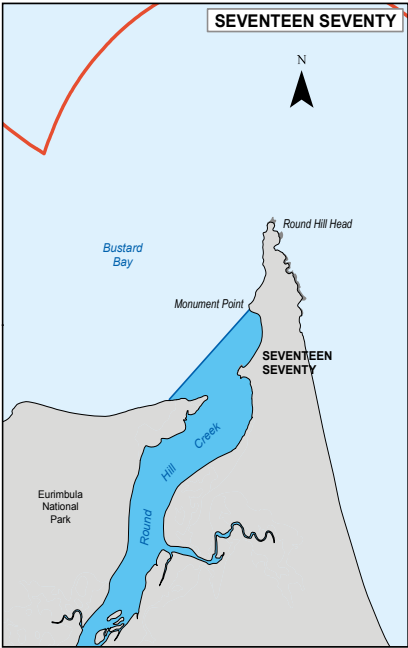
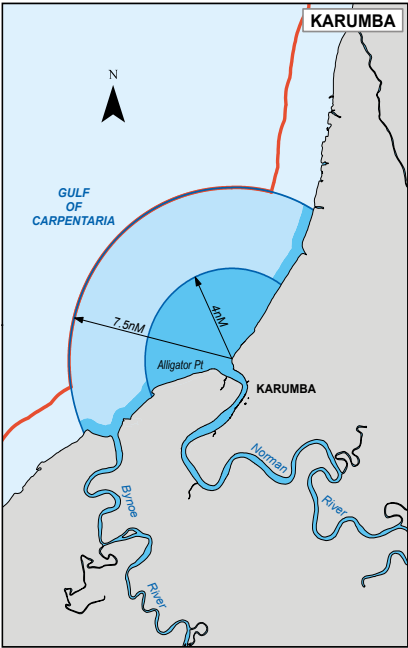
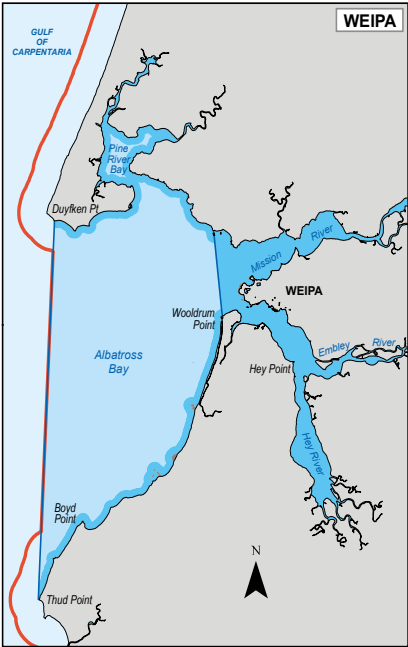
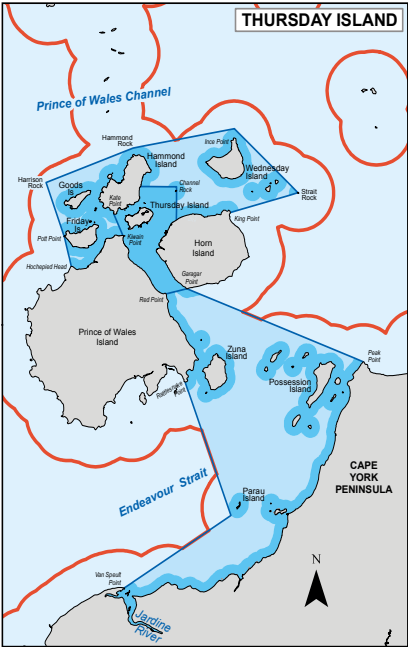


Boating in Queensland

Legend



the red line designates limits beyond which EPIRBs must be carried.



# Safe operation

It is the responsibility of every boat owner and skipper to operate the boat under their control in a safe manner.

Operating safely combines the following:

- the boat is in good condition and safe to operate
- crew and passengers are safe
- the right equipment is on board and ready to be used
- crew and passengers know what to do in an emergency
- the skipper is competent in operating the boat
- rules are followed so that other waterway users are not injured by unsafe operations.

Driving a boat is very different to driving a car. There are a range of rules that you must know as a boat owner or skipper.

A common situation is when skippers approach head on and try to pass the same way as a car when on the water we pass on the port side (left sides). More information on page 39.

Do not be complacent because of the perception of open water. Often narrow channels restrict boats to passing close to one another, and between beacons and shallow banks. There is plenty to hit when driving a boat.



## Navigating checklist

- **Visibility:** Operate slowly in rain, fog, mist, smoke and glare. Take special care when travelling at night as potential hazards are harder to see. Ensure you do a safe speed.
- **Other boats:** Slow down in busy areas and when near moored or anchored boats, and remember — working boats and larger ships may have difficulty manoeuvring.
- **Navigation hazards:** Slow down in shallow areas and when boating in unfamiliar water. Water depth can vary and change quickly, particularly in freshwater.
- **Wind, waves and currents:** These may affect the boat's stopping and turning ability. The type of motor, hull and design will all impact on the boat's manoeuvrability.
- **Check your navigation lights are working and fitted correctly.**

## Skipper safety

Most boats have a fixed throttle system. This means the skipper can set the throttle for a specific speed and the engine will maintain revolutions until the throttle is altered unlike a motor vehicle which has a spring operated foot accelerator.

With a fixed throttle system, if the skipper leaves or is thrown from the helm position, the vessel will maintain speed until the throttle is altered to reduce speed. It is strongly recommended that the skippers of all boats, but especially tiller steered boats and PWC, have a throttle lanyard attached to their wrist which will stop the motor instantly if the skipper loses control of the boat.

**Ensure you wear a safety lanyard at all times that will stop the motor in emergencies.**

### How to avoid marine incidents

Most marine incidents are avoidable and are often caused through inattention, lack of knowledge and experience, or complacency of the skipper.

#### Collisions

Make your intentions clear - actions must be clear and deliberate so other skippers can see your intentions. Never assume the skipper of another boat will observe the rules; always be prepared to take action to avoid a collision.

Keep a proper lookout – a proper lookout, through sight and sound, must be kept at all times. Slow down and take extra precautions in bad weather, restricted visibility and the hours of darkness to assist with the early detection of other boats in the area.

Assess risk of collision and take action - use all means available to assess whether other boats pose a risk of collision. If a risk of collision exists take early, positive action (changing course and/or speed) to eliminate the risk. Never assume the other boat will automatically 'give way'.

#### Groundings

Know the waterway – plan your trip and use navigational aids such as charts, GPS and beacons.

Pay attention – many groundings occur because the skipper misreads a beacon through inattention.

Tides – the height of the tide may mean some waterways are unnavigable at certain times.

Check out Maritime Safety Queensland's free tide tables for official tidal predictions for Queensland ports [www.qld.gov.au/transport/boating](http://www.qld.gov.au/transport/boating).

#### Capsizes and swamping

Boats capsize or swamp mostly because of poor stability or rough conditions. Poor stability is caused by excess weight on board, whether it is people or cargo, and where the weight is positioned. It is essential to position weight as low as possible and ensure the bow or stern is not lower than the other. If the boat appears to be slow to respond to a roll or pitch then the boat may be overloaded.

In rough conditions the boat relies on the bow to provide lift into the prevailing sea condition whether it is wind chop or ocean swell. When a boat breaks down or is drifting, the wind will turn the bow away from the wave direction and the stern will face into the waves. This is a dangerous situation as the stern or transom usually has the lowest freeboard and is subject to taking water.

If you break down or are adrift in rough conditions, anchor immediately if practical or deploy a drogue (a bucket can act as a drogue) to keep the bow into the sea. Never anchor your boat by the stern. Even the passing wake of a boat can come over the transom and cause a swamping.

#### Speeding

All boats must travel at a safe speed so you can act to avoid a collision and stop the boat in time to avoid any danger that arises suddenly. Wash created by speed must not cause any damage to the shoreline.

The skipper of a boat must operate the boat at less than six knots (about the same as a brisk walking pace) or the speed necessary to safely control and manoeuvre the boat if it is causing excessive wash that may cause a marine incident or damage the shoreline.

### Collision rules

The 'International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea' (COLREGs) are the traffic laws of the sea. They give clear indication about passing, approaching, giving way and overtaking to avoid collisions with other boats.

All boat skippers must thoroughly understand and apply the rules in all situations.

#### Channels

When navigating in narrow channels, all boats should travel on the starboard side or right-hand side of the channel and pass oncoming boats on the port side.



If plenty of distance separates two passing boats, there's no need to deliberately alter course to pass to the right of the other boat. The rule is simply there to remove doubt in the event of a close situation.

Small boats (including sailing boats) should keep clear of large boats that have limited room to manoeuvre in channels.



## Giving way

All boats, whether power or sail, must always take action to avoid a collision.

### Power boats

'Look all around, give way to the right, turn to the right and stay to the right'.



### Head on

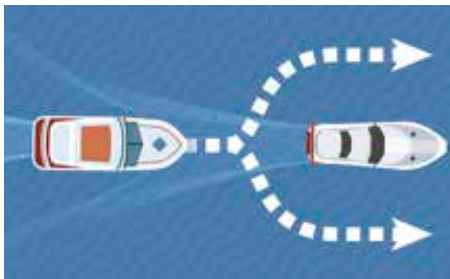
When meeting head on, both boats are required to alter course to starboard (right), never to port (left). Any turn should be large enough to be obvious to the other boat.



## Overtaking

If you are overtaking a boat, you can do so to either side of the boat you wish to pass.

However, you must keep well clear of the boat you are overtaking. This applies to both sail and powerboats. In narrow channels you must be particularly careful when overtaking. In all instances, make sure you do not cut in front of the boat you have overtaken.



## Sailing boats

### Wind on different side

When each sailing boat has the wind on a different side, the boat with wind on the port side shall keep out of the way of the other.

If sailing a boat with the wind on the port side and you see a sailing boat to windward and cannot determine with certainty whether the boat has the wind on the port or starboard side, take action to keep clear.



### Wind on the same side

When both sailing boats have the wind on the same side, the boat to windward shall keep out of the way of the boat to leeward.

Note: The windward side is the side opposite to that on which the mainsail is carried or, in the case of a square-rigged boat, the side opposite to that on which the largest fore and aft sail is carried.

Power and sail

A power boat generally gives way to sail unless the sailing boat is in the process of overtaking it. However, don't expect large, less manoeuvrable boats under power to give way. All small craft should give large boats a wide berth.



Sound signals

Most recreational boats do not use sound signals. However, they are used by ships and larger vessels. Boats over 12 metres should carry sound signals, a whistle and a bell. Vessels under 12 metres should have some means of making an efficient sound signal. You should be aware of signals and what action you should take when you hear a signal. Sound signals may be accompanied by light signals. All boats should use sound signals in restricted visibility to alert others of their position. Use common sense and slow your boat or stop, and be ready to take immediate action. Be extremely cautious when operating in restricted visibility.

One short blast means

'I am altering my course to starboard'.

Two short blasts mean

'I am altering my course to port'.

Three short blasts mean

'I am operating engines astern' (the boat may be reversing or stopping).

Five (or more) short blasts mean

'I am unsure of your intentions'.

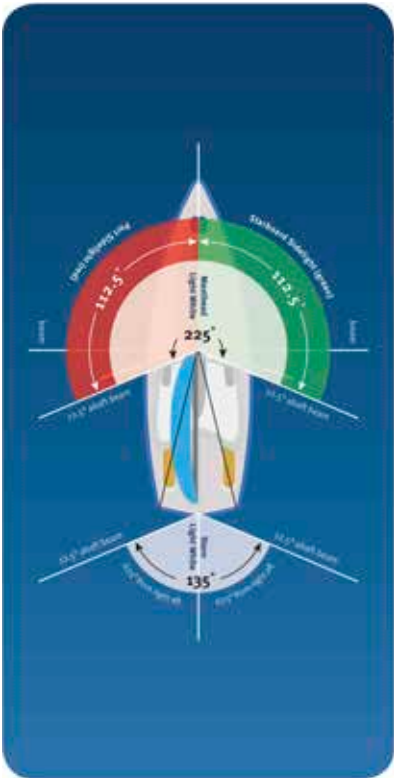
Navigation lights

Are your navigation lights fitted correctly?

It is important that lights are fitted according to the collision regulations so that other boats can determine what type of boat you are and the course you are on.

A common mistake is the fitting of the red and green sidelights on the same angle of the curve of the bow of the boat. This results in the angles of light crossing over each other when seen from head on. This also affects the side view.

Side lights must be kept parallel to the centreline of the boat.



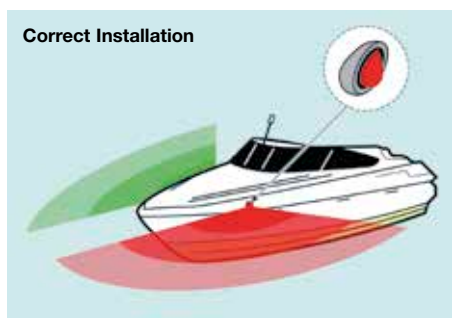
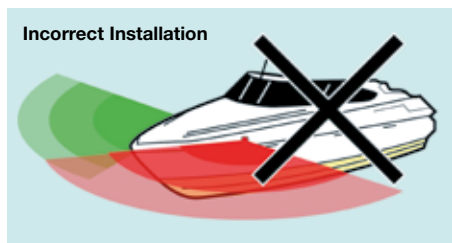
- By law, boats operating from sunset to sunrise, whether at anchor or under way, must display the correct lighting. A boat is 'under way' when it is not at anchor, made fast to shore or aground (this includes drifting).
- Navigation lights must also be used in daylight hours during periods of restricted visibility.

or in other circumstances when it is deemed necessary.

- Lights must be placed and displayed appropriate to the size and class of your boat.

These lights tell other boat skippers about the boat and what it is doing – whether it is at anchor, under sail or motoring.

- Navigation lights must be positioned so they are not obscured by the boat's superstructure or interfered with by the deck lights. They should be fitted by the manufacturer or an authorised person.
- The masthead and/or all-round white light must be fitted (if practical) on the centre line (bow to stern) of the boat and positioned a minimum of one metre above the side lights. When operating at night, carry replacement bulbs.

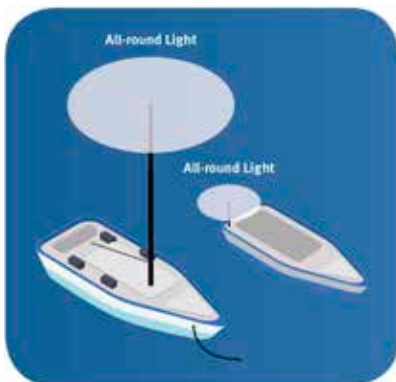


## Minimum required lights for boats under way

### Power boats

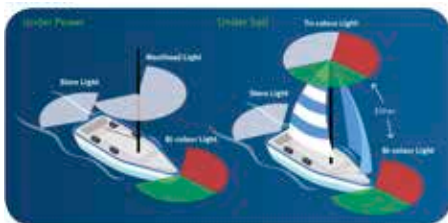
- Less than 7 metres in length with a maximum speed not exceeding 7 knots – a white light visible all round and, if possible, separate or combined sidelights.
- Less than 12 metres in length:
  - separate or combined sidelights, a masthead light and a stern light or

- separate or combined sidelights, an all-round white light.



### Sailing boats

- Less than 7 metres in length – the lights required for sailing boats over 7 metres in length. If not, a torch or lantern showing a white light ready to display to avoid a collision.
- More than 7 metres in length and less than 20 metres in length:
  - a) Combined lantern at or near the top of the mast that incorporates sidelights and stern light or
  - b) Separate sidelights and stern light.



### Rowing/ paddle craft

- The lights required for sailing boats over 7 metres in length. If not a torch or lantern showing a white light ready to display in time to prevent a collision.



Boating in Queensland

- Special rules exist for operating in the Brisbane River, details can be found in the Brisbane River Code of Conduct which can be found at [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au)

Boats moored or at anchor

The International Regulations for the Prevention of Collisions at Sea 1972 (COLREGS) require vessels at anchor to display an all-round white light, where it may be best seen, between the hours of sunset and sunrise and during times of restricted visibility. For moored boats, it is a condition of the buoy mooring authority to display an anchor light.

Under the COLREGS, the anchor light must be visible for 2 nautical miles for all vessels up to 50 metres in length.

There are many other combinations of lights used on boats. The lights shown will relate to the activity the boat or ship is engaged in (for example fishing, dredging, not under command).

A simple rule of thumb for a small powerboat is to stay clear of any boats exhibiting additional lights.

Navigation at night

The waterways are not like well-defined roads. It is unsafe to navigate a boat with lights illuminating the water directly ahead because it will deprive you and other boat skippers of night vision.

Spotlights can be used to identify specific hazards, but this should be done only when operating at very slow speed and without affecting other waterway users.

The most important rules to remember when driving a boat at night are to slow down and keep a good lookout.





Night navigation tips

- Not all navigation hazards have lights indicating their position (examples are shallow banks, oyster leases, and many navigation markers).
- It is difficult to judge distances at night.
- Background lighting can cause confusion.
- All boats are required to show lights.
- A safe speed is a speed at which sufficient action can be taken in time to prevent a collision.
- Keep an extra good lookout.

Boats with limited manoeuvrability

Many work boats operate in Queensland waterways. The nature of the activities undertaken by these craft means that they are often stationary and not always noticed by passing vessel traffic. The effects of wash on a stationary workboat can pose a considerable risk, as crew are often moving between the vessel and a fixed structure, for example, a marine aid to navigation. To protect vessels and their crew, internationally recognised marine signals are displayed.

When a vessel displaying any of these signals is sighted, other traffic should stay clear and preferably slow down, to minimise wash.

Vessel situation	Day shapes	'Signature lights'
Restricted in ability to maneuver		
Not under command		

A vessel displaying the combination of flags shown, either separately or in conjunction with one of the above signals, is requesting that passing boats slow down.



IALA buoyage system

A system of buoys, spars and lights, known as IALA Buoyage System 'A' is used to assist safe navigation.

These are the equivalent of road signs on highways.

Each type of mark has a unique combination of colour, shape, topmark and light. You must be able to recognise these and pass them safely on the correct side.



### When going upstream (away from the sea)

- Keep red (port-hand marks) on the left-hand side (to port)
- Keep green (starboard-hand marks) on the right-hand side (to starboard)
- When going downstream (towards the sea) Keep red (port-hand marks) on your right-hand side (to starboard)
- Keep green (starboard-hand marks) on your left-hand side (to port)

### Local direction of buoyage

Where there is doubt, the direction of buoyage is indicated on charts by the symbol:



### Lateral marks

Port and starboard marks are referred to as lateral marks. They indicate the port-hand and starboard-hand sides of navigable waters (channels).

When both a port and starboard mark are placed near to each other, travel directly between them.

Often lateral marks are not placed in pairs. The safe side to pass a lateral mark is generally determined by the direction of travel to or from the sea, or a predetermined local direction of buoyage.

#### PORT



#### STARBOARD



### Cardinal marks

A cardinal mark indicates where the deepest and safest water can be found. That is, where the mariner has safe passage. It may also indicate the safe side on which to pass a danger and to draw attention to a feature in the channel such as a bend or junction.

### NORTH

Safe water to the north of the cardinal.

Topmarks point 'up' toward the NORTH for safest water. At night the frequency of the flashes are an uninterrupted quick flash.



### SOUTH

Safe water to the south of the cardinal.

Topmarks both point 'down' towards the SOUTH for safe water. The frequency of flashes is 6 quick flashes in a group followed by a long flash.



### EAST

Safe water to the east of the cardinal.

The topmarks are in the shape of an egg, so remember the e of egg is for safe water to the EAST. The frequency of the flashes is 3 quick flashes in a group.

Any other than those used for the white lights of a cardinal, isolated danger and safe water marks.

Variations in the design of buoys will exist in many areas. Illustrations indicate the approved shapes, colouring and topmarks.



WEST

Safe water to the West of the cardinal.

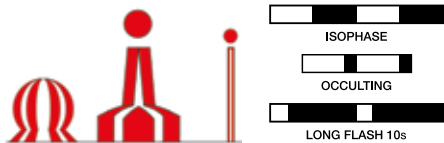
The topmarks make the shape of a wine glass so remember the w of wine glass is for safe water to the WEST. The frequency of the flashes is 9 quick flashes in a group.



Safe water marks

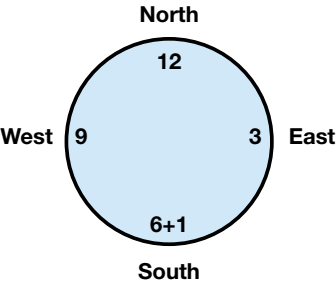
Indicates that there is navigable water all around the mark – for example, mid channel.

At night a white light shows Isophase, or Occulting, or Morse A, or a single long flash every 10 seconds. To remember this, associate a single sphere with a single flash.

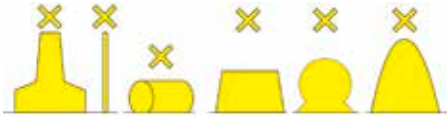


To remember the light flash rates for cardinal marks, the number of flashes for east, south and west agrees with a clock face.

A north mark has a continuous flashing light.



## Special marks



Special marks can be used to mark a specific structure or feature such as a cable or pipeline, or to indicate that a channel divides. The direction to navigate around a special mark is often obvious by using a chart. At night the light is yellow.

## Isolated danger marks



Indicates there is an isolated danger with navigable water all around it – for example, an isolated shoal, rock or wreck.

At night a white flashing light shows groups of two flashes. The best way to remember this is to associate two flashes with two spheres as the topmarks.

## Boating in ship navigation areas

The chances of large ships and small boats interacting is high in shipping channels, pilot boarding grounds, anchorages, swing basins or port and berths.

Ships can approach quickly and silently and do not have brakes. Large ships often travel at speeds over 20 knots and can have a stopping distance of more than 2 nautical miles (3.7 kilometres).

A small boat rarely appears on ship's radar and can be unseen from the helm of the ship. This blind spot can extend several nautical mile because the bow of the ship and its cargo obscures the view.

When travelling in narrower channels, large ships can have very low under-keel clearance and cannot turn or slow down.

**Skippers of smaller boats should avoid or keep clear of these areas.**



## Ship Navigation Area Tips

- Maintain a constant lookout at all times, using all means available.
- Monitor the appropriate VHF channel for the area when near shipping traffic and keep up-to-date with local traffic movement information.
- Don't rely only on mobile phones for marine communications – the ship's captain or pilot won't know your number, and you don't know theirs!
- Always cross a shipping channel at 90 degrees behind a ship and only when it is clear and safe to travel.
- Never cross in front of a large ship. If a small boat breaks down or runs out of fuel this can end with disastrous results.
- Between sunset and sunrise and when visibility is restricted, show the correct navigation lights.
- Don't anchor near, or fish in, a channel or near navigation aids marking designated shipping channels.

## Navigating with a Global Positioning System (GPS)

Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are commonly found on recreational boats, and while a good navigation aid, they should not be relied upon (like any other electronic equipment dependent on battery power).

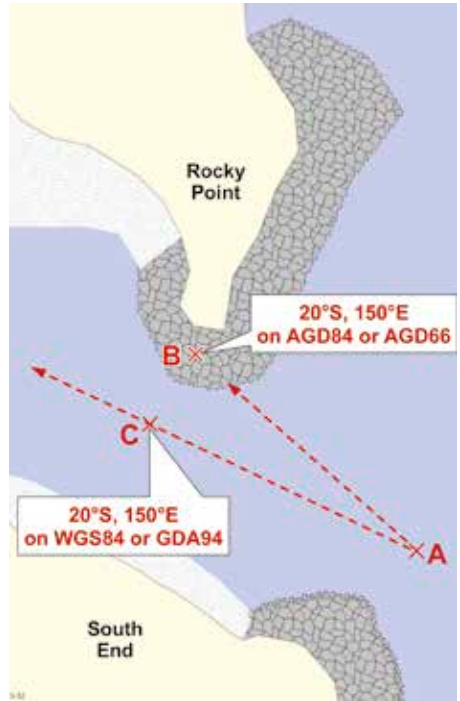
A GPS is able to provide a latitude and longitude, updated almost continuously. This can then be plotted on a chart and should be verified with a compass.

There have been a number of navigational incidents, where boats have run aground and into obstructions, attributed to people using GPS data alone. Some positions given by GPS will need to be adjusted due to differing datum (see cautionary advice on charts). As with all fixes, the GPS position should be checked against something else.

A GPS is not a substitute for sound watch keeping and navigational practices and should be used only in conjunction with other aids to navigation.

Masters should still maintain a proper lookout while the vessel is underway to identify any approaching hazards.

When going to a waypoint in a straight line, check what is in between your boat's initial location and the waypoint.



wind. If you are in a marina or hardstand area, ask the manager for instructions.

**Have a plan and tell others, including your passengers and crew.**

## Boating weather

### Be prepared!

Always check marine weather forecasts before you go boating and keep checking them while you are on the water.

Forecast information is available from the Bureau of Meteorology and is regularly broadcast on VHF by volunteer marine rescue organisations.

Visit [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au) for the latest weather forecasting. Check out the MetEye forecast maps which are adjusted by meteorologists to better represent expected weather. It also allows you to better select the weather information you want for your boating area.

Personal safety is the number one priority. At the first sign of bad or severe weather, make sure everyone on board is wearing a lifejacket. If you cannot get back to your mooring or boat ramp, look for shelter in rivers or creeks with a mangrove fringe to act as a buffer from the

### Extreme weather events and cyclones

Severe weather season in Queensland is from November to April. Boat skippers need to ensure that they make all possible preparations for extreme weather, cyclones and flooding.

Don't leave preparations to the last minute. All boat owners are responsible for ensuring that their boat is properly maintained, able to reasonably withstand the weather they may encounter and you are prepared.

Maritime Safety Queensland has plans in place for extreme weather events to reduce the damage caused by cyclones and tidal surges in most harbours throughout the state.

Extreme weather event contingency plans vary from region to region. Ensure you are familiar with the warning and/or alert levels used in your area, as they can differ. Copies of the extreme weather contingency plans are available at

Maritime Safety Queensland offices or you can visit [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

You must obey and follow all directions issued by the Regional Harbour Master during extreme weather events. And don't leave your cyclone mooring or shelter until the harbour master has given the all clear.

Prepare, plan and obey these simple rules and you could prevent damage to your boat and others.

## Personal watercraft

Whether you own or just borrow a PWC, it is important to operate it responsibly by understanding the safety rules and regulations for PWCs in Queensland.

It's easy to lose track of how close you are to the shore, fixed objects and other waterway users - keep a proper look out at all times. To gain the most enjoyment from your PWC ride where you can have fun but remain mindful of others. Ride responsibly – know your limits!

### Personal watercraft licensing

It is compulsory for all PWC riders to hold a personal watercraft licence (PWCL) in addition to a recreational marine driver licence (RMDL).

A supervised unlicensed driver is not allowed to carry passengers. A supervising PWCL holder must wear the kill switch safety lanyard when the PWC is being driven by an unlicensed driver.

To obtain a PWCL you must be aged 16 years or older and pass an approved BoatSafe course. A valid recreational marine driver licence is a prerequisite for the PWC licence.

Note: Equivalent interstate PWCL are acceptable and transferable to Queensland's PWCL.

Restricted PWC Licence issued to children in states such as New South Wales and Victoria are not accepted or transferable to Queensland's PWCL. Short-term visitors to Queensland can use their boat licence if that is all that is required to operate a PWC in their home state.

### Personal watercraft registration

All PWCs must be registered and must display:

- registration symbols on both sides
- symbols which are at least 100 mm high and in a contrasting colour to the hull
- symbols which are visible from 30 metres when the PWC is underway
- registration sticker on the port side adjacent to the registration symbols.

### Safety equipment for personal watercraft

See page 26 for safety equipment requirements.

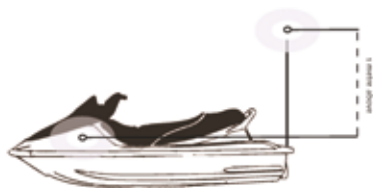
It is recommended that PWCs operating in partially smooth and open waters also carry navigation equipment, anchoring, pumping/bailing equipment and drinking water.

PWC riders and passengers must wear a lifejacket at all times. See page 14 for information on lifejackets.

PWCs operators may also choose to wear a personal locator beacon (PLB) in place of, or as well as an EPIRB. To see the full conditions see page 18 for information on emergency beacons.

### Navigation lights

PWCs travelling at night or at times of reduced visibility must show navigation lights – sidelights and either an all-round white light or a stern and masthead light.



### Personal watercraft distance and speed

It is important you do not exceed set speed limits for your safety and everyone else using the water. Do not travel at speeds where your wash can cause damage to the shoreline, other boats or injury to others. Consider the density of traffic in the area to determine a safe speed.

When riding a PWC the following distances must be maintained, or speed reduced to 6 knots (approx 11 kph) within 60 metres from:

- people in the water
- from anchored or moored boats, boat ramps, jetties or pontoons
- the shore
- boundary of bathing reserve.

Exceptions apply to '6 knots within 60 metres from the shore' rule under the following conditions:

- the waterway is less than 120 metres wide and the PWC is operated along or near the centre of the waters, or within a marked channel and their PWC is operated in a straight line or in the most appropriate or direct route.
- the PWC is being used for waterskiing.

PWCs must also remain under 10 knots within 30 metres of another moving vessel (unless the PWC is in an approved aquatic event or where compliance would endanger the operator or another person).



### Consider the boat traffic in the area to determine a safe speed and adjust accordingly. Ride responsibly.

In coastal waters, freestyling or wave jumping is not permitted when:

- in any 6 knot zone including harbours, marinas and speed zones as signed
- within 200 metres of the shore if dwellings are within 100 metres of the shore line and those dwellings are visible to the PWC rider.

## Kids and PWCs

It is great fun to involve the whole family in your boating and PWC adventures.

A couple of quick points about kids and PWCs. You should:

- operate your PWC only with the child seated behind you, never between you and the handle bars
- only have passengers who can place both feet at the same time firmly in the foot wells of the PWC
- have the correct number of people on board for the number of seats available. It is no longer considered safe to count children under 12 years of age as half a person. Three seats means 3 people – no matter the age.

MSQ's marine incident data shows us this is the safest practice for your family.

Operating outside of these points may leave you liable to prosecution in regards to your general safety obligations, under Transport Operations Marine Safety Regulation.

## Water sports

Queensland's waterways are shared by all types of boats used for water sports, including those that do not require registration. All boats are subject to marine safety regulations.

### Water skiing

Water skiing involves towing people behind a boat on skis, bare feet, inflatable toys, boards and parasailing.

The skipper of the boat or PWC is responsible for the safety of others and must be appropriately licensed. They have a general safety obligation to:

- make sure the boat is capable of towing skiers have the correct safety equipment for skiers and passengers
- operate the boat as safely as possible and check the area is safe for skiing
- have an observer onboard.

## Observers

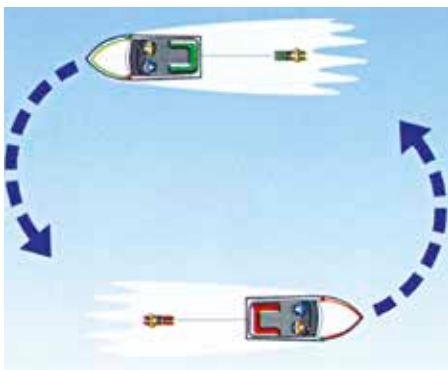
You must not drive a boat towing a skier unless there is another person, the observer, on board. The observer must be 13 years or older and competent to watch the skier at all times. They must immediately tell the skipper if:

- there is a danger, or potential for danger to the skier
- the skier signals the observer
- the skier has a fall or mishap
- a vessel is approaching from behind.

## Lifejackets for skiers

When water skiing, the skier must wear a life jacket at all times:

- at least Level 50S (special purpose) or a wetsuit with inbuilt flotation approved as a Level 50S in smooth water limits
- at least Level 50 in partially smooth water limits.



It is compulsory for all children under 12 years, in open boats under 4.8 metres whilst underway, to wear an appropriately fitted life jacket at all times.

See page 14 for information on lifejackets.

## Rules on the water

- Direction of travel - When skiing in lakes, rivers and creeks, boats should travel in an anticlockwise pattern (see above). In a few



## Water skiing safety tips

- Check the depth and width of the waterway (to make turns safely) and look for any hazards in the area to see if it is safe for skiing.
- The tip of the ski must always be showing before the boat starts.
- After a fall, a skier should always clasp hands over head if unhurt until seen by the observer and boat driver.
- No signal from a fallen skier calls for immediate action by the observer and skipper.
- A fallen skier getting into a boat should leave their skis in the water and swim towards the boat.
- The skipper should always stop the engine(s) before picking up the skiers in the water.
- Skiers should enter a boat over the stern whenever possible.

## Recognised water ski signals

The following signals are suggestions only. The observer and skiers should agree to the signals beforehand.



Start: Nod the head.



Faster: Open palm facing up – motion upwards or nod head if both hands in use.



Slower: Open palm facing down – motion downwards or shake head if both hands are in use.



Speed required: Use the number of fingers for km required. For example, 23 – first two fingers then three fingers.



Speed OK: Arm upraised with thumb and forefinger making an 'O' – OK signal.



Turns: Palm vertical, curving motion of hand in direction required.



Whip off: Point to direction and then give quick circular motions with hand.



Stop: Hand up with fingers outstretched.



Back to dock: Point with downward swing of the arm.



Cut motor: Finger drawn across throat in cutting motion.



OK after fall: Skier should clasp hands over head if unhurt, until seen by the boat driver.



locations local customs and conditions may dictate the direction of travel. Always check before skiing.

- Skiing or towing on a personal watercraft
- When towing a skier on a PWC you must obey personal watercraft rules. See Page 48 for more information on PWC requirements.
- Prohibited areas - Water skiing is prohibited in all 6 knot zones including harbours and marinas, within 30 metres of people in the water, anchored boats, diver's flags, jetties, pontoons or boat ramps.
- Restricted areas – Restricted areas are published on the Maritime Safety Queensland website at [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au) and Gold Coast Waterways Authority website at [gcwa.qld.gov.au](http://gcwa.qld.gov.au). Additionally, the Gold and Sunshine Coasts have some designated water ski areas and times for operation - These are usually marked by signs.

Water skiing is permitted in all other areas. However, it is the responsibility of the skipper to ensure the area is safe and suitable for skiing.

### Sail boats and sail boards

Sail boats and boards are propelled by the wind, requiring special skills to control direction and speed. When learning to sail, choose a quiet area away from anchored boats and activity.

Like all other boat users, operators of these craft have a responsibility to take all action to avoid a collision and operate safely.

### Rowing

Like canoes and kayaks, rowing boats are difficult to see and can be swamped easily.

As a general rule, keep the starboard side close to the shore of busy rivers. An all-round white flashing light is recommended between sunset and sunrise. (see also page 40 on lighting).

A code of conduct has been developed to promote safety on the Brisbane River. All rowing boats must be fitted with an all-round white flashing light if they are on the river before sunrise or after sunset. Download the code of conduct and the Brisbane RiverShare Pocket Guide from [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

### Canoes, kayaks and surf skis

Canoes and kayaks create little or no noise and have a small profile on the water, often making them difficult to see, and they often appear stationary. It is essential to be seen all the time as speedboats and larger boats can create wash capable of capsizing the boat.

Travel close to banks to avoid high traffic areas. Where possible travel in a group, keep the group together and adopt a one/all stop attitude. Wear a lifejacket.

### Divers' flags



Divers can surface at any time, sometimes a significant distance from where they enter the water. In the interest of diver safety, any boat is excluded from operating within 30 metres of a diver in the

water if a Code A flag is displayed (see above). It is legal for the boat tending the diver to operate within the 30 metres.

Also a snorkeler in this instance is treated as a diver. A snorkeler is just as hard to see from a boat in the water as a diver using air tanks.

### Kitesurfing

Kitesurfing involves a surfboard with a length of line attached to a kite. The kite acts as a sail and propels the rider through the water.

Kitesurfs work best in windy conditions and reach speeds up to 30 knots.

Sailing rules apply to kitesurfing and other boats should give them a wide berth. If a kitesurfer drops the kite, other boats should travel upwind of the kitesurfer to avoid becoming tangled in the line.

Kitesurfers should stay at least 30 metres from swimmers and boats.

### Tow-in surfing

A code of conduct has been developed to promote the safety of tow-in surfing on the Gold Coast. The code provides guidance on a number of important safety aspects, including:

- general rules relating to proceeding at a safe speed, keeping a proper lookout and avoiding collision
- specific rules of operation for personal watercraft (PWC) in relation to speed and distance off requirements
- rules governing the operation of vessels in and near Gold Coast City Council bathing reserves and requirements to be met to qualify for the tow-in surfing observer exemption
- specific requirements for tow-in surfing operations within Currumbin Alley and Tallebudgera Creek mouth.

Download the code of conduct from [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

## Boating offshore

Boating in offshore waters brings with it a new range of safety risks which the skipper must be aware of. The most important thing is to have a boat that can handle offshore conditions and is capable of travelling extended distances in rough conditions.

Dinghies are not suitable offshore craft. While conditions in the morning might look ideal, these can change rapidly and become rough and dangerous. Offshore boats should have an enclosed foredeck to prevent water coming on board, or if the craft is an open boat with centre console configuration, a self-draining deck.

Flotation is a must and many new boats will have buoyancy built in and specified on the Australian Builders Plate. However, the aim is to prevent water coming on board, and if it does, to be able to escape as quickly as possible.

Consider installing a second high volume bilge pump which will offload water quickly. Always have at least two heavy-duty buckets ready for use, as a bucket is an extremely efficient method of bailing water.

Consider carrying two batteries, one for starting and one for running accessories. This way you will always be able to start the motor. Make sure they are marine batteries which are designed for the marine environment.

### Safety tips when boating offshore

- **Keep a weather watch — receive regular weather updates for changes.**
- **Keep a fuel watch — ensure the boat is fully fuelled before leaving the ramp or marina. Be aware that in rough weather more fuel will be used. Always have a reserve supply.**

## Bar crossings

A bar is an accumulation of sand or silt at the entrance of a river, creek, lake or harbour. Never underestimate a coastal bar as conditions can change quickly and without warning.

Designated coastal bars in Queensland include Currumbin Bar, Tallebudgera Bar, Jumpinpin Bar, South Passage Bar, Caloundra Bar, Mooloolah River mouth, Noosa Bar, Gold Coast Seaway, Round Hill Creek, and Wide Bay Bar.

Bar crossing rules (under 4.8 m) Everyone in open boats under 4.8 metres, while crossing a designated coastal bar, must be wearing a lifejacket.

If you cross the bar without a lifejacket on, you cross the line!

### Bar crossings can be dangerous

Bar conditions can produce steep and often breaking seas. Even small waves can capsize, swamp or sink a boat. For these reasons it is important to take a number of precautions and manoeuvre the boat with extreme caution.

All bars are different. Local knowledge, experience and the right kind of boat are critical when trying to cross a bar. Only experienced skippers should try to cross a coastal bar and, even then, you should be very careful. You can learn about each bar by asking local boaters, volunteer marine rescue organisations or local marine authorities who cross it regularly.

It's a good idea to radio the local marine rescue group for an update on bar conditions and advise them of your intended crossing and safe passing.

## Boating on freshwater

Queensland has many inland waterways ideal for fishing, boating and water sports. Operating on freshwater lakes and dams, however, can be quite different to estuary boating.

Boat registration and licensing requirements are the same for freshwater, inland waterways and coastal waters.

Some freshwater impoundments and dams do not allow some types of activities while other have specific restrictions or permit requirements. Petrol motors are not always permitted on some dams for environmental reasons. Always check the local waterway rules before you go.

### Freshwater boating tips

- Freshwater does not necessarily mean calm water – have your safety equipment on board and be prepared for any conditions. Always check the weather.
- Freshwater is less buoyant than salt water and the water temperature is usually colder. This increases the risk of cold water shock to the body and reduces the ability to function – so wear a lifejacket.
- If you are using an electric motor on your boat, make sure the battery is fully charged before every trip and have a back-up.
- If you are canoeing and kayaking, travel close to the banks to avoid high traffic area and be aware of wash from larger boats.
- If you are boating, riding your PWC or water-skiing, remember to consider other waterway users and be aware of your speed, wash and freshwater hazards.
- Keep a proper lookout at all times.
- Heavy rain can cause strong currents and bring debris and flotsam to the waterway.

Drought can cause a big drop in the water level and expose submerged objects like old fences, sticks, trees, rocks and sandbanks. Slow down when boating close to shore and avoid hitting underwater hazards.

- Rivers can have blind spots at river bends or caused by land, tree and overhanging branch obstructions.
- Don't go alone and tell someone where you are. Freshwater areas can be remote and miles wide with no quick access to shelter or assistance if you run into trouble.

## Carbon monoxide hazard

Carbon monoxide is a toxic gas made by incomplete ignition or burning of carbon-based fuels like petrol, propane, charcoal, wood and oil. You can't smell it, see it or taste it, but it can pose a real threat to the personal safety of those on board your boat.

Carbon monoxide can accumulate anywhere in and around your boat and in all weather conditions. Sources of carbon monoxide on your boat include engines, gas cooking ranges and gas and water heaters. Boats with partially enclosed cabins, wheelhouses or passenger accommodation are at higher risk. It can also collect in area near the exhaust outlets at the stern of the boat.

Fitting and maintain carbon monoxide detectors and alarms is a good way to minimise the risks of carbon monoxide poisoning. High concentrations of carbon monoxide can be fatal in minutes. If poisoning is suspected move to fresh air and seek medical advice immediately.

If you have enclosed spaces whether temporary or permanent on board your boat ensure you understand the risks and have safety procedures in place. More information on carbon monoxide and boats is available at [msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

## Pollution

Whether your boat is large or small, it is an offence to deliberately discharge pollutants into Queensland coastal waters.

### Garbage requirements

Garbage is hazardous to marine life and all users of our waterways. All skippers and PWC riders need to manage the use and disposal of all garbage generated on board correctly. Play your part:

- don't throw anything overboard
- have secure bins or garbage bags to store garbage on board until you return to shore
- use crockery or re-useable plates and cutlery
- make the effort to retrieve lost or damaged fishing gear
- if garbage does end up in the water, take the time to pick it up
- don't abandon crab pots, as floats and lines can entangle wildlife and foul boat propellers

- paint scrapings and residues that enter the water from hull maintenance activities are classed as garbage pollution.



### Vessels 12 metres and over

All vessels measuring 12 metres or more are required by law to display a placard with the following information.

### Garbage management plans

Garbage management plans are required for vessels of 100 gross tons and above (generally vessels of 12 metres or more) or with the capacity to carry 15 or more persons.

This is an international requirement arising from the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, which is given effect in commonwealth and state/ territory legislation.

For more information visit

[msq.qld.gov.au](http://msq.qld.gov.au).

## Fuels, oils and chemicals

Most oil and chemical pollution results from activities such as refuelling, boat maintenance and bilge discharges. Reduce oil and chemicals entering our waterways:

- do not overfill your tank
- watch the breathers for signs of blow-back or overflow
- ensure your bilges are clean before discharging them
- use phosphate free biodegradable detergents
- carry absorbent material on board to clean up any accidental spills
- repair oil and fuel leaks when first noticed.

If you accidentally spill oil or chemicals into the water, or see a spill, do your bit for the marine environment and contact your local harbour

master, marina manager or port authority, so it can be contained and cleaned up as soon as possible.

## Sewage

The discharge of sewage into the marine environment poses serious health and environmental issues. To reduce the impacts associated with vessel sourced sewage prohibitions and restrictions are in place for the discharge of sewage.

### Untreated sewage

Untreated sewage is sewage that has not passed through an on-board sewage treatment system. In areas where the discharge of untreated sewage is allowed, the effluent must pass through a macerator before being discharged, in order to assist with dispersion and improve visual amenity for all waterways users.

**Note:** Macerated sewage is not classed as treated sewage. Macerated sewage is untreated sewage.

Untreated sewage is prohibited from being discharged in the following areas:

- Prohibited discharge waters — these are canals, marinas, boat harbours, the Noosa River and designated areas of state marine parks.
- Smooth waters – these are the designated smooth water limits. See page 28 for more information on smooth waters.
- Hervey Bay and Northern Moreton Bay waters within 1852 m (1 nM) of reefs, for example oyster lease or fish farm, the mean low water mark of the mainland, or if the ship is a declared ship, all Hervey Bay and Northern Moreton Bay waters.

**Note:** (A declared ship has a fixed toilet and is: a domestic commercial vessels with a certificate of operation issued, or taken to be issued, under the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012* stating it is a class 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 4C, 4D or 4E ship or another Queensland regulated ships regulated under the *Transport Operations*

*(Marine Safety) Act 1994* and Regulation 2016 designed to carry more than 12 passengers.)

- Open waters –
- (a) within 926 m ( $\frac{1}{2}$  NM) of a wharf or jetty other than a jetty that is a marina (b) within 1852 m (1 NM) of
  - Aquaculture fisheries resources
  - If a vessel has 7–15 people on board: a reef, or the mean low water mark of an island or the mainland.

**Note:** If you have 16 or more persons on board, the discharge of untreated sewage is not permitted anywhere in Queensland coastal waters.

### Treated sewage

Treated sewage is sewage that has passed through an on board sewage treatment system and is categorised as either grade A, B or C depending on the level of treatment it has received.

All treated sewage is prohibited from being discharged in 'prohibited discharge waters' such as canals, marinas, boat harbours, the Noosa River and designated areas of state marine parks.

Additionally, the following types of treated sewage have the following restrictions on discharge:

- Grade A treated sewage (highest level of treatment) — No further restrictions.
- Grade B treated sewage (moderate level of treatment)
  - Nil discharge in Hervey Bay waters, Northern Moreton Bay waters, open waters and smooth waters within 700 m of a person in the water, an aquaculture fisheries resource and a reef.
- Grade C treated sewage (lowest treatment)
  - Nil discharge in Hervey Bay waters, Northern Moreton Bay waters, open waters and smooth waters within 926 m ( $\frac{1}{2}$  nM) of a person in the water, an aquaculture fisheries resource and a reef.

For more information visit [msq.qld.gov.au](https://msq.qld.gov.au).