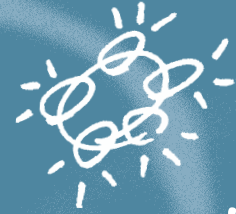




Department for Planning and Infrastructure
Government of Western Australia



Boating Communities

NEWSLETTER Number 1 2004

New patrols

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure and the Department of Fisheries are now working together to enforce the State's marine regulations.

Responsibility for Marine Safety in Western Australia remains with the Department for Planning and Infrastructure while the Department of Fisheries now plays a role in marine safety compliance.

The new Department of Fisheries Marine Patrol will undertake Marine Safety responsibilities between Lancelin, Rottnest and Mandurah, with the flexibility to extend to other regional centres. The Marine Patrol will combine both Marine Safety and Fisheries duties.

The reform will see increased contact between compliance officers, fishers and boating enthusiasts creating more opportunities to educate people on boating safety and fishing for the future.



On the river

On the Swan and Canning Rivers Department for Planning and Infrastructure Marine Officers continue to conduct regular patrols.

The focus of these patrols is to provide safe boating education and monitor marine compliance.

The Department's Marine Officers are happy to provide assistance and information to the boating community at any time.



Department for Planning and Infrastructure
Marine Safety

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Boating Communities



From the Director Marine Safety

Welcome to the first edition of Boating Communities published by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure.

The publication has been designed to inform and update every boater in the State about important safety and other marine related matters and will be published bi-annually. We hope that you will find it interesting and informative.

The Department would appreciate your views on Boating Communities. Please forward your comments by e-mail to Boating.Communities@dpi.wa.gov.au or by post to Boating Communities, PO Box 402, Fremantle 6959.

Finally, please take all necessary safety precautions on the water in 2004 and enjoy your boating.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Riches', with a long, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Brian Riches
Director Marine Safety

Slow Down and Keep the Waves Friendly

Driving too fast on the water is dangerous – to you, your passengers and other water users and the issue of speed continues to be a common complaint dealt with by the Department's Marine Officers.

Although there is an awareness among the general boating community about speeding in restricted areas, boat owners and more importantly new and inexperienced boat owners need to be reminded that speeding inconveniences other people using our waterways and has the potential to cause dangerous situations.

Skippers who ignore speed limits face the risk of increased fines with infringement penalties for speeding having doubled since last summer. The fine for exceeding the speed limit by ten knots or more has increased from \$100 to \$200.

8 Knot Speed Limits

Unless otherwise indicated an 8 knots maximum speed limit exists:

- within 45 metres of a moored vessel, river bank, jetty or wharf, or a person in the water;
- within 15 metres of another vessel underway;
- in a mooring area; and
- under the arch of a bridge.

In the Swan and Canning Rivers, between sunset and sunrise, the upper speed limit is ten knots.





You'll need training to be on the water

The State Government intends to introduce compulsory safety training for drivers of recreational boats.

Planning and Infrastructure Minister Alannah MacTiernan said it was no longer acceptable that a complete novice should be able to buy a powerful boat and take it out to sea.

"Every day volunteer search and rescue boats pick up boaters in trouble that could have been avoided, if only they were better educated."

"50 per cent of sea search and rescue operations are associated with driver incompetence."

The Minister told State Parliament that there was a high level of support for safety training, with a survey of boat owners showing that:

- 85 per cent thought there should be a minimum standard of capability for recreational boaters; and
- 33 per cent had experienced a situation where safety may have been of concern.

Ms MacTiernan said boat owners would have the opportunity to prove their competence and receive recognition for prior learning.

The Minister has asked the State Boating Council under the chairmanship of Mr Fred Riebeling MLA to report to her on the compulsory training regime.

Council membership includes those with interests in power boats, yachts, jet skis, water skis, fishing, search and rescue and boat retailing, with the water police also represented.

We will keep you updated on the progress in the next edition.

Are your boating skills up to scratch?

We recommend that you make 2004 the year you enrol in one of the courses available in WA, such as BoatSmart or the Yachting Australia's (YA) National Power Boat Training Scheme.

BoatSmart

The nationally recognised BoatSmart course is designed for the whole family and offers "hands on" teaching at an introductory level.

In one day you will learn the essentials of boating safety, such as:

- launch and retrieval;
- voyage preparation;
- practical boat handling and manoeuvring;
- safety regulations and equipment; and
- emergency procedures.

National Power Boat Training Scheme

The training program is an advanced version of BoatSmart and covers:

- skipper's responsibilities;
- safety equipment;
- marine radio;
- vessel construction and stability;
- fire prevention;
- meteorology;
- pilotage and buoyage;
- collision regulations; and
- practical boat handling and manoeuvring.

For further information on course availability and a list of course providers, visit our website at:

www.dpi.wa.gov.au/imate/boating/education/



Fisherman grateful for EPIRB

Jonathan Morrow of Pannawonica will be forever grateful that he had an EPIRB when he took his 4.8m aluminium runabout on a fishing trip.

He said the fishing wasn't memorable, but his experience when returning to shore certainly was.

"I was coming back in about 3.30pm and was about eight kilometres from the mouth of the Fortescue when the 50hp four-stroke engine started spluttering and coughing, before finally stopping altogether," Jonathan said.

"I fiddled with it for about an hour, trying this and that, but it became clear there was a fuel delivery problem and it wasn't going to restart.

"I stopped and took stock of my position. I had food and water and at least the wind was drifting me towards the shore.

"The tide was falling, and when I got close enough I got out and started hauling the boat through water that was waist to chest deep.

"It was tough going across sharp oyster rocks and around mangroves, but eventually I rounded a headland and got on to a small beach.



"By this time it had gone 5.30pm, it was starting to get dark and this was a pretty remote part of the coast. I took the water and food from the boat, found a clear space for the EPIRB, set it up and activated it.

"I knew the batteries didn't have a long time before expiry, so I had no way of knowing if anyone had received the signal.

"But I also knew that the best advice was to stay with my boat rather than try to walk out, which would have involved swimming a river, wading through mangroves and walking over more oyster rocks.

"So I made a fire, cooked a mud crab and waited.

"After about two and a half hours I heard a welcome sound. It was a plane that circled me and flashed its lights to show it had seen me.

"Three or four hours later the local police and a co-worker of mine arrived in a boat and picked me up.

"I had left the EPIRB running and it wasn't until I was rescued that the policeman turned it off. He then rang Canberra on a satellite phone to let them know I was all right."

Jonathan said his experience was one he could have done without, but he would be forever grateful that he had an EPIRB.

"If the engine had failed earlier and I hadn't had an EPIRB, I would have been in real trouble," he said.

Switch to 406MHz

After February 2009, the global search and rescue satellite system will no longer recognise the 121.5MHz frequency currently used by most EPIRBs. From that date, the distress frequency will be 406MHz.

A 406MHz beacon offers a number of advantages over the 121.5MHz including reduced response times, greater accuracy and a reduction in the number of false alarms through accidental activation. With 406MHz beacons, false alerts can be resolved by a quick radio or telephone call as they transmit a digital message that identifies the owner.

Boaters who are familiar with the cost of EPIRBs may be alarmed that the 406MHz EPIRB can cost between \$1,000 and \$1,500. However, the good news is that the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has been working closely with the manufacturers to produce a product that will retail at a more affordable price. AMSA has reported that the 406MHz beacons may be available early 2004 for less than \$600.

Only 406MHz EPIRBs bearing the Australian and New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 4280 are approved for marine use.



Take care not to spill it!

Despite the publicity given to major spills from oil tankers, oil from such disasters makes up only a very small percentage of the total oil pollution affecting our oceans. The two biggest causes are oil finding its way from drains to the oceans and oil spilt during routine maintenance of a vessel.

When refuelling always remember the following:

- do not start the dispenser until the outlet nozzle is inserted in the tank;
- ensure the fuel dispensers have automatic shut-off;
- only hold fuel dispensers open by hand – do not lock the dispenser in the open position;
- don't remove the filler hose until the fuel flow has stopped;
- take care not to over fill when refuelling;
- lift the filler hose to drain residues into the tank; and
- finally, if you spill any oil on board, wipe it up immediately and store the oily rags and spilt oil until it can be disposed of appropriately on shore.

Reporting spills and illegal dumping

We should all help keep our seas clean by reporting illegal dumping of garbage, oil or noxious substances if we see it happening. Good and accurate information will help in prosecuting offenders.

Under WA law, the polluter must report spills of oil or noxious substances to the Department and there are penalties for failing to do so.

The information needed is:

- when and where the incident occurred;
- name and registration number of the offending vessel;
- type and extent of pollution; and
- any other relevant information.

For further information or to report an incident phone the Department's Marine Environmental Protection Unit on (08) 9216 8902.



Boating Communities

New Digital Charts now available

The Western Australian Raster Nautical Chart series
RRP \$467.50 inc. GST

This is a new product from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, consisting of digital facsimiles of the Department's published paper charts on CD ROM for use with a compatible Electronic Charting System (ECS). Such systems include:

- Endeavour®
- C-Plot
- MaxSea
- OceanVision
- Seafarer® Viewer
- Transas® NaviSailor



(As a special introductory price, Endeavour® software is available bundled with WARNC as a package for \$599 inc GST)

Western Australian Digital Nautical Chart Images (CD available early 2004) RRP \$82.50 inc. GST

This CD contains raster (ECW and TIFF) and PDF (Adobe Acrobat) formats of the Department's nautical charts, covering Perth local waters from Lancelin to Dawesville.

The charts on the CD are not geo-referenced, but contain graticule information relating to the Geocentric Datum of Australia 94 (GDA94). Chart scales range from 1:25,000 to 1:50,000 with individual insets supplied at larger scales.

The chart images supplied on CD are not intended for navigational use, however, they are suitable as background images for computers and some GPS mapping software. The images are compatible with a range of software products capable of reading ECW, TIFF and PDF formats.

The charts available are:

- Lancelin, Seabird, Guilderton
- Two Rocks, Yanchep, Quinns Rocks
- Trigg, Rottne Island, Swan & Canning Rivers, Ocean Reef to Cape Peron
- Cape Peron to Dawesville, Peel Inlet & Harvey Estuary.

For information on either product please contact the Department's Charts Officer on (08) 9216 8234

Tell them where you're goingand when you're back

You're way off the coast, in trouble, and no one even knows you've left.

Don't let this happen to you.

Log on

Before you leave, contact a volunteer sea rescue group on marine radio (27MHz channel 27.88, VHF channel 16 or HF channel 2182).

The minimum details you need to tell them are:

- your vessel's details;
- when you are leaving;
- where from;
- where you intend to go;
- the number of people on board; and
- when you expect to get back.

It's also useful to tell them what safety equipment you have on board, your boat's fuel capacity, car and trailer details and an alternative contact person on land.

By logging on with a sea rescue group, if you do need help it will arrive much quicker. The time saved could be the difference between life and death.

Log off

When you log on with a volunteer sea rescue group, remember it is just as important to log off when you get back in, otherwise they'll start searching for you.



Changes to Diving Regulations

Diving in WA will be safer following a series of recent changes to the diving regulations. To avoid endangering a diver all boaters need to be aware of the current regulations.

All boats must keep at least 50 metres clear of boats, buoys or lights showing diving signals. If it's not possible to stay 50 metres clear - say the channel is too narrow - then you must drop your speed to the slowest at which you can safely navigate, while keeping a proper lookout for people in the water for the time you are within 50 metres of the flag.

If you are diving, remember that a dive flag is only a visual indication and will not automatically prevent other craft from venturing into your dive area. Therefore, always listen out for other craft before surfacing, and try to surface at, or as near to, your craft as possible.

Diving signals from a vessel

- By day: International Code Flag "A" . The flag must be not less than 750mm in length and not less than 600mm width, and visible through 360°.
- By night: The international lights to indicate that "a vessel is restricted in her ability to manoeuvre" . These are three lights in a vertical line: the top and bottom are red and the middle one is white with a visibility of not less than 200 metres. The diver's boat should also show other appropriate lights such as an anchor light.



Boats required to be registered

If your boat has a motor, or is fitted for one, it must be registered with the Department and is subject to an annual registration fee.

A tender to a larger vessel is exempt from registration provided it meets the following conditions:

- is no more than 3.1 metres in length;
- has a motor no bigger than 3.73kW (5hp);
- is used only as a life boat and for ship to shore transfers; and
- displays the parent vessel registration numbers.

Registration assists with the identification and recovery of stolen boats, but more importantly, it gives authorities accurate information for sea search and rescue operations should you require assistance.

Fees contribute to better boating facilities, safety patrols and boating safety education to ensure that you can enjoy your day on the water.

If your boat is registered with another Australian authority and you have moved to Western Australia permanently, you must register your boat with the Department within three months.



Involved in a boating incident?

Where serious injury or death occurs or a vessel is damaged rendering it unseaworthy or incapable of being safely navigated, the owner or the person in charge must, within seven days, report full particulars of the incident to the Department.

A special form for reporting boating incident is available from the Department's offices or by phoning (08) 9216 8999.

If you are not directly involved in an incident but see one occur or are nearby, you have an obligation to assist where possible, provided that in doing so you do not endanger yourself or your passengers.

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<http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/imarine/>

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