

Boating Guide Bunbury - Busselton Marine Safety



April 2025

SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

	REGISTRABLE VESSELS Including sailing vessels that are or can be propelled by mechanical power.	
	PROTECTED WATERS Includes rivers, lakes, estuaries, harbours and waters within 400 metres from the shore in unprotected waters but excludes Cambridge Gulf and Lake Argyle.	UNPROTECTED WATERS Beyond 400 metres from the shore.
Recreational Skipper's Ticket The skipper of a recreational vessel, powered by a motor greater than 6 horsepower must hold an RST.	✓	✓
Lifejacket Carriage A lifejacket, as indicated in the table opposite, must be carried for every person on board.	Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	Minimum Level 100 MUST BE WORN
Lifejacket Wearing As indicated in the table opposite.	Minimum Level 100 MUST BE CARRIED	Minimum Level 100 MUST BE WORN
Distress Beacon (in-date) A GPS enabled 406 MHz EPIRB OR if worn by at least one person, a GPS enabled PLB. Distress beacons must be in-date and registered with AMSA.	RECOMMENDED	✓
Red and Orange Flares (in-date) At least two hand held red flares and two hand held orange flares must be carried. OR Electronic Visual Distress Signal (EVDSS) An electronic signalling device may be carried in lieu of flares IF a GPS enabled EPIRB or PLB (must be worn) is also carried.	RECOMMENDED	✓
Marine Radio A VHF or HF marine radio on any Registrable Vessel when operating more than 4 nautical miles from shore in unprotected waters.	RECOMMENDED	REQUIRED beyond 4 nautical miles RECOMMENDED within 4 nautical miles
Recommended Additional Safety Equipment It is recommended an anchor and line, a fire extinguisher and a means of removing water be carried.	RECOMMENDED	RECOMMENDED

Aids to navigation

It is illegal to interfere with, remove or damage any beacon, buoy or other artificial aid to navigation. Without permission in writing from DoT, it is illegal to secure any vessel to any beacon, buoy, seamark or other aid to navigation.

Marine Rescue Western Australia

Marine Rescue WA groups:
Augusta;
Bunbury;
Busselton;
Cape Naturaliste; and
Margaret River.

Age restrictions

A person under 10 years may not drive a motor boat. RST holders over 14 but under 16 years of age are restricted to operating during daylight hours at a speed less than 8 knots.

Interstate skipper's tickets

If you hold a valid/current interstate ticket, recognised by the Department of Transport (DoT) and you enter, as a visitor or with the intention of permanently residing in Western Australia, you have three months to have to have the qualification recognised.

Regardless from which state your boat is from you must hold a RST or equivalent to operate a vessel with a motor greater than 6 horsepower.

Medical fitness

Skippers are required to alert us if they develop a medical condition that affects their ability to safely operate a recreational vessel. More information can be found on our website under Recreational Skipper's Ticket.

For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56

Obstruction of navigation aids, channels and leads

Cray pots, drop nets, fishing nets, marker buoys or other buoyed objects cannot be placed or allowed to remain in any channel or fairway in any port or harbour, or in any channel, fairway or passage in any navigable waters without the permission of DoT. Also, you can't anchor or moor a vessel in any channel or fairway, unless the vessel is in distress.

Contact details

Department of Transport
Email: Ed.Boat@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: transport.wa.gov.au/marine
Marine Safety Hotline: 13 11 56

Police
Emergency: 000
Water Police: 9442 8600

Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Marine Rescue Western Australia
Emergency contact: VHF 16
Marine Rescue Augusta
Marine Rescue Bunbury
Marine Rescue Busselton

Boating Weather Forecasts
Boating weather: 1300 815 916
Website: bom.gov.au

Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development
Fishwatch: 1800 815 507
Website: dpird.wa.gov.au

Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions
Website: dbca.wa.gov.au

DECKEE Boating in WA just got smarter.
Download the free Deckee app.

DoT Direct anywhere, anytime!
Save time and go online today

Join us at
facebook.com/MarineSafetyWA

For further information go to
transport.wa.gov.au/boatingguides
or scan the QR code

The information contained in this publication is provided in good faith and believed to be accurate at time of publication. The State shall in no way be liable for any loss sustained or incurred by anyone relying on the information.
16-04-02-SER-0425-WEB

Navigation buoys and markers

Lateral Marks
Used to indicate the port and starboard sides of a navigable channel.

Port Marks
Light: Red, any rhythm

Starboard Marks
Light: Green, any rhythm

Safe Water Marks
Can be used as a landmark mark with safe water all round.
Light: White, occulting, isophase, 1 long flash every 10 seconds or Morse Code "A" (1 short + 1 long flash)

Isolated Danger Marks
Indicates an area of isolated danger
Light: White, group of 2 flashes

Special Marks
Used to indicate special areas such as traffic separation schemes, aquaculture sites etc.
Light: Yellow, any rhythm

Cardinal marks
Used to indicate that deeper water lies in a compass direction away from a danger area such as a reef, shallow areas, etc.

North Cardinal
Light: White light, continuous flashing
Pass to North

East Cardinal
Light: White light, 3 flashes
Pass to East

South Cardinal
Light: White light, 6 flashes + 1 long flash
Pass to South

West Cardinal
Light: White light, 9 flashes
Pass to West

DANGER AREA

NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION
For more detailed information, refer to Department of Transport's Nautical Chart Bunbury to Port Geographical WA 859

Legend

- 5 Knot Speed Limit
- 8 Knot Speed Limit
- Mooring Area
- Bunbury Port Security Area
- Closed Waters - Motorised Vessels
- Water Ski Area
- Swimming Prohibited
- Shallow Water
- Sailing Course Mark
- Beach / Ramp Boat Launching
- Public Toilet / GPS Validation Marker
- Parking / Boat Trailer Parking
- Fuel Outlet

Caution: The Cut
The entrance to the Cut can be extremely dangerous. Mariners are advised that breaking seas and tidal flow may be hazardous to navigation.

Caution
During moderate swell seas may break over depths of about 6 metres.

Freestyling personal water craft
Freestyle driving, wave jumping and surfing is prohibited in all speed restricted areas, and all waters of the Leschenault Estuary.

Bridge and powerline clearances
Clearance heights shown on this sign are in metres, above highest astronomical tide (HAT). Actual clearance will vary depending on the tide and/or flood level. The height of the tide throughout the day will vary depending on astronomical and meteorological conditions.

Bridge clearances

Australian Bridge	2.2m
Preston River Railway Bridge	2.2m
Preston River Road Bridge	1.7m
Koombana Channel Traffic Bridge	3.6m
Koombana Channel Pedestrian Bridge	3.6m
Koombana Channel Storm Surge Barrier Foot Bridge	3.6m

Powerline clearances

Preston River Lower	5.0m
Preston River Upper	6.2m

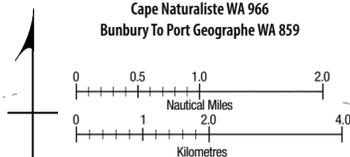
Notice to Mariners
Before undertaking any boating activities please check the Department's chart updates and Temporary Notices to Mariners list on Transport's website www.transport.wa.gov.au/tnm

Bunbury Port security
Under the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003 all the waters contained within the Bunbury Inner Harbour and an area extending for 50 metres around all port facilities and jetties within the Bunbury Outer Harbour have been designated a Port Security Zone. Vessel access within these zones will be controlled and unauthorised vessel entry is prohibited.

GEOGRAPHE BAY

NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION

For more detailed information,
refer to Department of Transport's Nautical Chart
Cape Naturaliste WA 966
Bunbury To Port Geographe WA 859



Legend

- 5 knot speed limit
- 8 knot speed limit
- Closed waters - all vessels
- Closed waters - motorised vessels
- Marine sanctuary zone
- Water ski area
- Swimming prohibited
- Shallow water
- Beach / ramp boat launching
- Public toilet / gps validation marker
- Parking / boat trailer parking
- Fuel outlet
- Submerged rock / rock awash
- Breakers

Closed waters - all vessels

1 Dunsborough - All that area of water within 120 metres of the foreshore at Dunsborough between the northern boundaries of Finlayson Street and Beach Road. Site of shark net enclosure.

Water ski and parasailing area

2 Castle Rock and Wonnerup Inlet - All the waters of Geographe Bay between Castle Rock and Wonnerup Inlet except the following:- That area of water from a point on the foreshore 100 metres west of the boat launching ramp at the foot of Dolphin Road to a point on the foreshore 100 metres west of the foot of Carey Street and for a distance of 2,000 metres to seaward. All the waters within 300 metres offshore except the waterski take-off areas labled 3 to 7, which may be used as take-off and set-down points.

Swimming prohibited area

3 Quindalup - Swimming is prohibited from 10 metres west of the boat ramp for 300 metres east along the foreshore and extending 300 metres seaward in a north north-easterly direction.

Water ski take-off areas

3 Quindalup - All the waters contained within an area commencing 100 metres east of the boat ramp continuing for a distance of 190 metres eastward along the foreshore and extending 300 metres seaward in a north north-easterly direction.

4 Siesta Park - All the waters contained within an area commencing at the Siesta Park Groyne for a distance of 300 metres east along the foreshore and extending 300 metres to seaward.

5 Abbey - All waters contained within an area commencing 100 metres west of the boat launching ramp at Newton Beach for a distance of 400 metres west along the foreshore and extending 300 metres to seaward.

6 West Busseton - All waters contained within an area commencing 100 metres west of the boat launching ramp at the foot of Dolphin Road for a distance of 450 metres west along the foreshore and extending 300 metres to seaward.

7 East Busseton - All the waters extending 300 metres to seaward from the foreshore between a point 100 metres west of the foot of Carey Street and a point 100 metres west of the foot of Georgette Street.

Freestyling personal water craft

Freestyle driving, wave jumping and surfing is prohibited in all speed restricted areas in the state. These activities are also prohibited in these water ski take-off and landing areas.



General speed restrictions

It is illegal, in any navigable waters, to drive a motor boat at a speed exceeding eight knots, water ski or para-sail:

- through an arch of a bridge;
- in or through a mooring area;
- within 15 metres of a vessel underway;
- within 50 metres of -
 - (i) a moored vessel;
 - (ii) a person in the water;
 - (iii) a jetty or wharf;
 - (iv) a river bank or low water mark.

Navigation lights

All vessels underway during the hours of sunset to sunrise must display appropriate navigation lights for the size and type of craft.

For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56.

Paddle craft, kiteboarding and windsurfing

Paddle craft, kite boarders and windsurfers operating more than 400 metres from shore are required to carry safety equipment. For more information, please visit transport.wa.gov.au/marine/boating-safety-equipment.asp or call 13 11 56.



Personal water craft (PWC)

Every skipper of a PWC must hold an RST. A skipper who is older than 14 but under 16 years of age with an RST can only operate a PWC during daylight hours at a maximum speed of 8 knots. Every person on board a PWC must wear a lifejacket (minimum 50S) at all times. Additionally:

- When travelling beyond 400 metres from shore in unprotected waters you need:
 - a GPS enabled EPIRB or PLB (PLB must be worn)
 - flares or electronic visual distress signal device (EVDS).
- Beyond 4 nautical miles from shore in unprotected waters, a VHF marine radio must also be carried.



For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56.

Distress beacons (in-date)

EPIRB (AS/NZS 4280.1) or PLB (AS/NZS 4280.2)

Distress beacons must be in-date and registered with Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

When operating more than 400 metres from shore in unprotected waters you must carry a GPS enabled EPIRB or PLB worn by a person on board.

For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56.



Diving

Any boat with divers (not snorkellers) operating from it must always display signals by day or night to alert other boat users. The daytime signal for divers is an International Code Flag "A". The flag must be at least 750 millimetres long and 600 millimetres wide.

Divers operating without a vessel, for example from a jetty, must also display the International Code Flag "A".

The flag can be displayed from a buoy and must not be less than 300 millimetres in length and 200 millimetres in width.

The flag must be clearly visible to all vessels operating in the vicinity.

Vessels to keep clear

When approaching a place or another vessel displaying the International Code Flag "A" or the appropriate signal during the hours of darkness, you must -

- (a) keep your vessel at least 50 metres clear of that place or vessel; or
- (b) where it is not possible to keep 50 metres clear of that place or vessel -
 - (i) proceed at the slowest speed at which the vessel can be safely navigated; and
 - (ii) maintain a proper lookout for people in the water.

For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56.



Water skiing

Water skiing involves being towed over water at a speed of 8 knots or more by a vessel.

It takes at least three people to go water skiing:

1. A driver of at least 17 years of age with a Recreational Skipper's Ticket.
2. An observer of at least 14 years of age.
3. A person being towed. Vessels taking off with skiers always give way to vessels landing a skier.



Beach take-off and landings are only permitted in the designated take-off and landing areas.

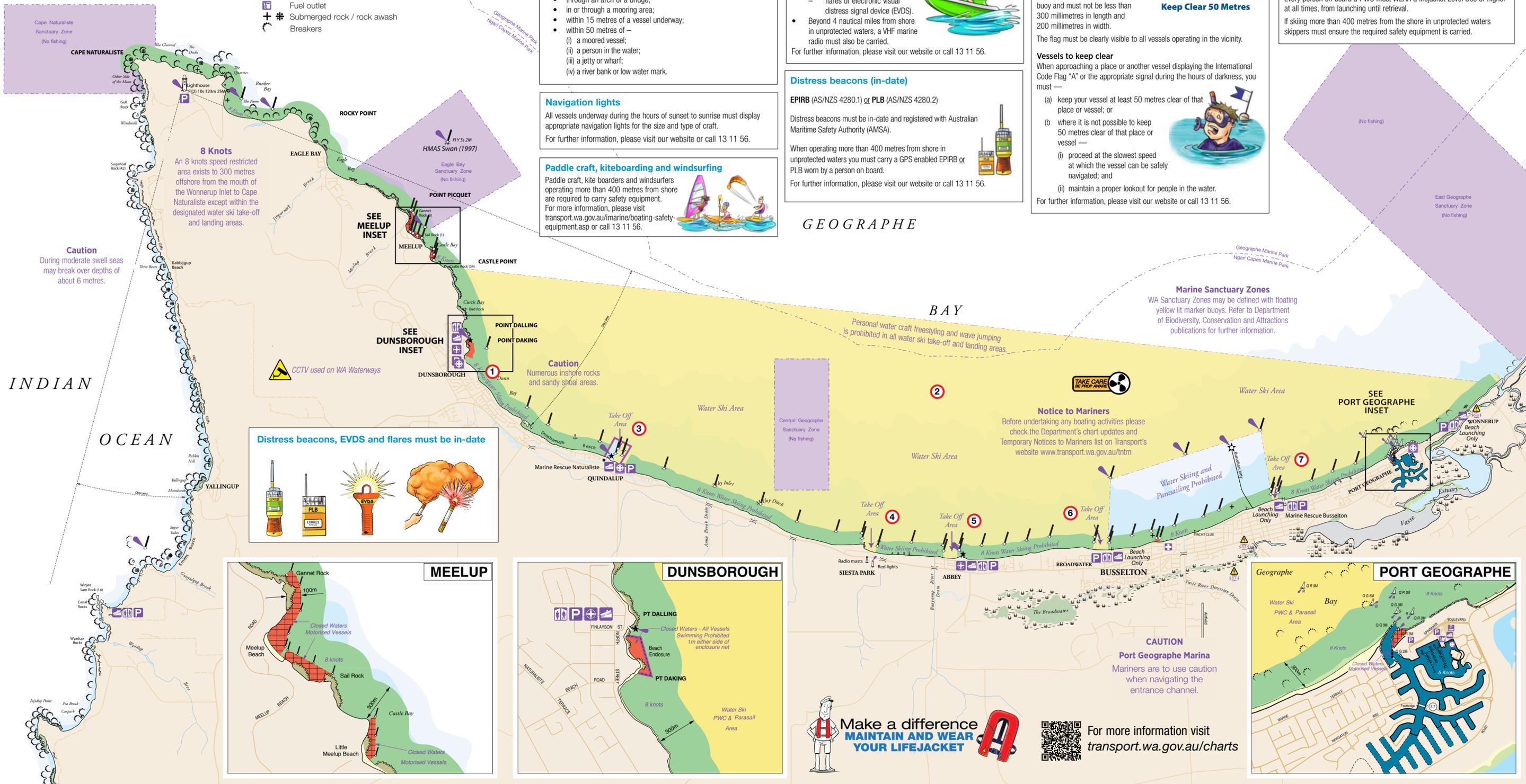
Skiiing is only permitted between the hours of sunrise to sunset, unless otherwise indicated. For further information, please visit our website or call 13 11 56

Lifejackets and safety equipment. Skippers must CARRY a lifejacket minimum Level 100 for everyone on board when they are on any WA waterway.

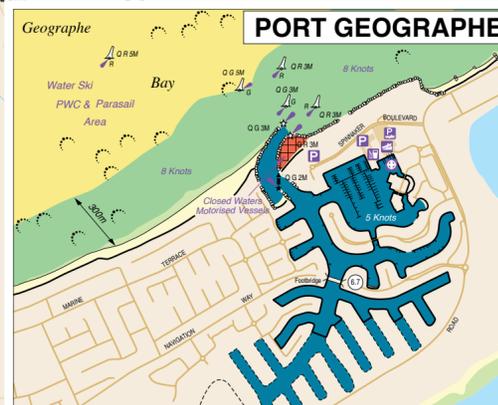
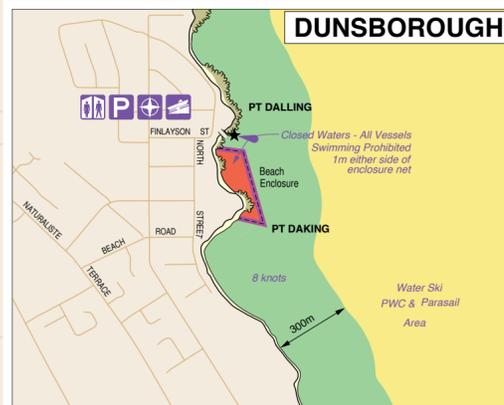
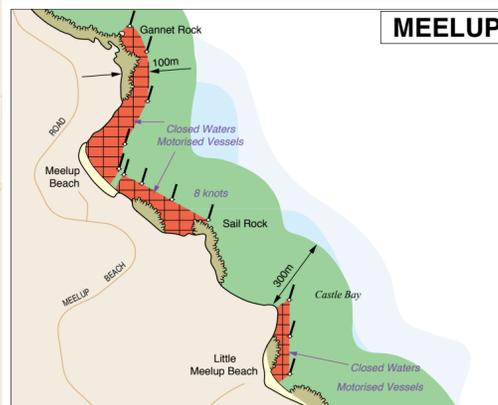
Compulsory wearing of a lifejacket minimum Level 100 occurs when more than 400 metres from the shore in unprotected waters for children aged between one and 12 years and for everyone on board when the vessel is less than 4.8 metres.

Every person on board a PWC must WEAR a lifejacket Level 50s or higher at all times, from launching until retrieval.

If skiing more than 400 metres from the shore in unprotected waters skippers must ensure the required safety equipment is carried.



Distress beacons, EVDS and flares must be in-date



For more information visit transport.wa.gov.au/charts

