



Safety Equipment Flares Marine Safety



Know how to use them

Flares are best used when you believe there is chance of it being seen.

The method used to fire flares varies widely between flare types and manufacturers. The firing instructions are always printed on the flare, and you should be familiar with your flare's method. Hand-held red flares, especially, burn very hot and may spill glowing embers. Hold it downwind so that embers don't spill into the vessel and point it downwards while in your hand to avoid being burnt.

If you see a flare, contact the Water Police or phone 000 to report it.

Storage

Flares should always be readily accessible:

- stored in a waterproof container (marked with the registration number of your boat);
- in a place where they don't receive too much pounding in rough conditions;
- away from dampness; and
- away from heat sources above 60°C.



Expiry dates

Flares must be within the expiry date and maintained in serviceable condition at all times. Check them regularly to ensure they have not been rendered unserviceable by exposure to moisture. Mildew or bubbling of paper coatings may indicate this.



Disposal

Do not discard unserviceable or out of date flares in general rubbish collections or land fill. Visit the DoT website for disposal locations.

Unauthorised use of flares

There are severe penalties for the improper use of flares. Flares have a very serious purpose.

Falsely indicating distress rightly carries a severe penalty, but it also wastes a lot of time and resources – possibly weakening the ability to respond to a genuine emergency.

Do not leave flares in your vessel when it is not in use, and keep them away from children.

Contact details

Email: marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/imagine
Marine Safety Hotline: 1300 863 308

Police

Water Police: 9442 8600
Emergency: 000

Regional

Albany: 9892 7333
Broome: 9192 0200
Bunbury: 9792 6666
Carnarvon: 9941 6800
Esperance: 9076 2100
Exmouth: 9949 2079
Geraldton: 9956 0111
Kalgoorlie: 9022 5999
Karratha: 6551 6800
Kununurra: 9168 3298

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



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Distress flares

All vessels operating outside protected waters must carry flares. The type you need depends on how far offshore you travel. Flares must be manufactured to *Australian Standard AS 2092-2004* or comply with *Australian Maritime Safety Authority Marine Orders Part 25*.

For inshore waters

Within five nautical miles from the mainland, or within one nautical mile from an island situated more than five nautical miles from the mainland, you will need:

- two hand-held orange smoke flares or one orange smoke canister; and
- two hand-held red flares or two parachute flares.

For offshore waters

More than five nautical miles from the mainland, or more than one nautical mile from an island situated more than five nautical miles from the mainland, you will need:

- two hand-held orange smoke flares or one orange smoke canister; and
- two parachute flares.

If you operate both inshore and offshore you only need to carry an offshore set of flares.

Required flares

All boats operating outside protected waters must carry flares. The type you need depends on how far offshore you travel.

Distance from shore		Smoke flares	Incandescent flares
Inshore	Within 5 nautical miles from the mainland, or within one nautical mile from an island situated more than 5 nautical miles from the mainland	2 hand-held orange smoke flares or 1 orange smoke canister	2 hand-held red flares or 2 parachute flares
Offshore	More than 5 nautical miles from the mainland, or more than one nautical mile from an island situated more than 5 nautical miles from the mainland	2 hand-held orange smoke flares or 1 orange smoke canister	2 parachute flares

Only an offshore set of flares is required if operating in both inshore and offshore areas.

Types of flares

Orange smoke flares



These are designed for day use only and have no luminosity. They emit a cloud of orange smoke. Orange hand held flares burn for about 60 seconds. The buoyant canister, which is safe for use in petrol or oil covered water, burns for about three minutes. Potential sighting range by day is 4 kilometres, although this can drop to less than 1 kilometre in a fresh breeze. These flares are especially visible from aircraft, even on windy days.

Red hand-held flares



These are designed for use both night and day and burn for about 45 seconds at 15,000 candle power. Potential sighting range at night is 10–12 kilometres and about 4–6 kilometres during the day.

Parachute flares



These are designed for use both night and day. They project a rocket to 300 metres high and then deploy a parachute-suspended red flare, which burns for about 40 seconds at 30,000 candle power. Potential sighting range is 15 kilometres by day and 40 kilometres at night.

Flares and their characteristics

Type of flare		Suitable use	Burn time	Sighting range potential
Smoke flares	Orange hand-held smoke flare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day use only • No luminosity • Orange cloud of smoke • Especially visible from aircraft 	60 seconds	Day: 4 km Note: less than 1 km in a fresh breeze
	Orange smoke canister flare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day use only • No luminosity • Orange cloud of smoke • Especially visible from aircraft 	3 minutes	Day: 4 km Note: less than 1 km in a fresh breeze
Incandescent flares	Red hand-held flares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night and day • Emits 15,000 candle power of light 	45 seconds	Day: 4-6 km Night: 10-12 km
	Parachute flares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Night and day • Emits 30,000 candle power of light • Propels a parachute-suspended red flare to an altitude of approximately 300 metres 	40 seconds	Day: 15 km Night: 40 km