

Boating Safety Requirements in Western Australia

Recreational Boating Safety in WA

The Department for Planning and Infrastructure sets the minimum amount and standards of safety equipment to be carried on private boats. The amount of safety equipment varies depending on how far offshore that you travel and it is important to understand that these are minimum standards.

Responsible skippers will carry with them extra gear that is suitable for the trip. All safety equipment on board must be maintained in good condition and be accessible at all times.

1. Protected Waters

Protected waters include rivers, lakes, estuaries and boat harbours.

Any vessel that operates within these protected waters needs to carry aboard the following safety equipment:

Bilge Pump or Bailer or Bucket

Boats 7 meters and over must have a bilge pump. Boats under 7 meters may have a bilge pump or a bailer.

The bilge pump must be capable of removing at least 4,000 litres of water an hour.

Electric or automatic pumps must also have an indicator to show when they are working. Any boats that have full length sealed, self draining decks are not required to carry bilge pumps onboard.

Fire Extinguisher

Boats that have inboard motors or liquid or gas fuelled appliances, must carry an extinguisher. Boats that have outboard motors and no such appliances do not have to carry extinguishers.

Any Australian Standards approved extinguisher other than a water filled type is acceptable.

2. Unprotected – within 2 Nautical Miles of Shore

As for *Protected Waters* plus +

Lifejackets (PFD's – Personal Floatation Device)

Approved Type (Cat.) 1 life jackets must be carried on board every vessel for each person in the correct size. Life jackets are the most important piece of safety equipment on any vessel and must be in a good condition and easily accessible.

Anchor and Line

The anchor must be of an approved type that will work in a sandy seabed and with enough line to suit the depth of water in which you usually operate. A grapnel anchor is not an approved type and can only be carried as an additional anchor.

Flares

Hand Held Red: Two hand held red flares or two parachute distress rockets. These flares are best used at night time but can be used during the day as they expel a large volume of smoke and burn extremely brightly.

Orange Smoke: Along with the two hand held red flares you are also required to carry two hand held orange smoke signals or one smoke canister. These flares are only suitable for daylight hours and are best used when you are in sight of land, another vessel or aircraft.

It is recommended that you store your flares in a water tight container.

3. Between 2 and 5 Nautical Miles of the Mainland Shore

As for *Unprotected – within 2 Nautical Miles of Shore* plus +

EPIRB

An EPIRB or *Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon* is a simple and effective alerting and locating device.

An EPIRB is required to be carried if you are operating beyond 2 nautical miles from the mainland shore or more than 400 metres from an island located more than 2 nautical miles from the mainland shore.

4. More than 5 Nautical Miles from the Mainland Shore

As for *Between 2 and 5 Nautical Miles of the Mainland Shore* plus +

Parachute Distress Flares

Two parachute distress flares: You do not need to carry hand held red flares as well as parachute distress flares.

Two Way Marine Band Radio

The choice of marine radio is up to you. It can be either a 27MHz, VHF or HF. Whenever at sea, you must have your radio turned on and tuned to the distress frequency or the working frequency of a Sea Rescue Group.

Recommended Additional Safety Equipment

Second or Dual battery

Carry a spare battery or alternate means of starting the engine.

Spare Fuel

Carry 50 per cent more fuel than you expect to use for your planned length of trip.

First Aid Kit

To cover accidents or injury that could befall any member onboard, a first aid kit is essential.

Knife

Always handy with many uses. Keep your knife sharp at all times.

Extra Rope

Additional rope onboard can be extremely useful for various purposes and for towing.

Fresh Water

A good supply of fresh water is essential when boating as the sun can quickly dehydrate you.

Alternative Power

Spare outboard, oars or paddles to get the boat to safety in the event of a power failure.

Torch

A torch can be useful in an emergency situation for attracting attention.

Mirror

This is a signaling device that uses the sun's rays to attract the attention of other vessels.

Navigation chart & compass

Marine charts give detailed information including depths, navigation hazards and anchorages.

Depth sounder

A depth sounder is a useful aid when approaching an anchorage or confirming chart details.

Fire blanket

There may be times when a fire blanket is better than an extinguisher.

Life raft

Inflatable life rafts are wonderful insurance for larger vessels travelling well offshore.

Clothing

Clothing should not restrict your movements or significantly reduce your buoyancy.

Life buoy

Larger vessels may carry life buoys, stowed ready for throwing if a person goes overboard.

Tool Kit

There is no substitute for an adequate tool kit onboard your boat. Your tool kit should include,

Manufacturer's recommended spares

Spanner set to suit your motor

Spare prop and shear pins

Spare spark plugs & plug spanner

Spare fuel filter

Adjustable spanner

Screwdriver set

Electrical tape

Hammer & pliers