

# Recreational Skipper's Ticket

Rules and Regulations

# What is the RST

- Developed by the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, the Recreational Skipper's Ticket (RST) will ensure that people in charge of recreational vessels have the minimum skills and knowledge to protect themselves, their passengers, and to share the waterways safely with others.
- The RST is a qualification based on a set of national marine safety competencies that a skipper must demonstrate to an authorised assessor.
- The assessment of these competencies will be in two sections: theory and practical.

# Who has to have one

- The person in charge of a vessel with a motor **greater** than 4.5 kilowatts (6 HP) (RST vessel) must hold a Recreational Skipper's Ticket.
- A person aged between 14 and 16 cannot be in charge of an RST vessel unless they hold an RST.
  - Age restrictions also apply to this age group – vessels may be operated only during daylight hours and at a maximum speed of 8 knots.
- If you're between 14 and 25 you must obtain an RST before April 2007.
- Over 25s will have until April 2008 before they are required to hold an RST.

# Responsibilities

- It does not matter whether you are the master of a large ship or skipper of your own trailer boat:
  - you are responsible for the safety of your vessel, crew and passengers;
  - you must not endanger any other vessel; and
  - you must be ready to assist others who need help.

# Signage

- All special-use areas have signs at the limits of the areas, this includes:
  - water ski areas;
  - boating prohibited areas; and
  - swimming prohibited areas
  - These must be strictly obeyed.
- At the launching ramps near ski areas there are also signs explaining
  - the rules for that particular area,
  - hours of operation,
  - direction of the ski circuit etc.
- Areas subject to speed limits will have signs depicting the maximum speed limit for the area.
- Make yourself familiar with these requirements.

# Age requirements

## To operate a **Non RST Vessel**

Under 10's - May not operate any vessel unaccompanied

Over 10's - May operate a powered recreational vessel if the motor is 4.5 kwp (6hp) or less.

Under 16's - May operate a vessel only during daylight hours and at a speed less than 8 knots.

## To operate an **RST Vessel**

14 - 25's - Must obtain an RST by 1 April 2007

Under 16's - May only operate a vessel during daylight hours and at a speed less than 8 knots

Over 25's - Must obtain an RST by 1 April 2008.

# Mooring Areas

- You need permission to lay a mooring in a controlled mooring area – which must be of a specified standard.
- You may not use a mooring within a mooring control area unless you have approval from the Department or the local authority.
- There must be only one vessel at a time on a mooring, and it must be no larger than the mooring was designed and approved for.

# Speed limits

You may not drive a powerboat at over eight knots:

- through an arch of a bridge (unless water skiing is specifically permitted for a bridge);
- in or through a mooring area;
- in any water less than three metres deep;
- within 15 metres of a vessel underway; and
- within 45 metres of:
  - (i) a moored vessel;
  - (ii) a person in the water;
  - (iii) a jetty or wharf; or
  - (iv) a river bank or low water mark.
- You are not allowed to travel at a speed or in a way that causes a nuisance or damage to people or other vessels, or causes damage or erosion to the bank or property.



# Obstruction

- Crab nets, fishing nets, marker buoys – or any other buoyed objects – are not allowed in any channel, fairway or passage without the permission of the Department.
  - Nor may you anchor or moor there unless you are in distress.
- You must not secure a vessel to a beacon or other navigation aid.

# Limits for small boats

- Vessels under 3.75 metres in length (including personal watercraft) may not go further to sea than five nautical miles from the mainland.

# Accidents and Incidents

- When an accident results in:
  - serious injury or death; or
  - the vessel has been damaged enough to make it unseaworthy or unsafe

the owner or skipper must report full particulars of the incident to the Department within seven days.

- You can pick up a special Incident Reprot form from:  
the Department's offices,  
download it from our website:  
*[www.dpi.wa.gov.au/imarine/1282.asp](http://www.dpi.wa.gov.au/imarine/1282.asp)* or  
phone (08) 9216 8999 for one to be sent to you.

# Assisting others

- All boaters have a legal obligation to assist people in distress unless:
  - they are unable to – perhaps the call for assistance was from too far away;
  - assistance is not required – perhaps Sea Rescue has taken over; or
  - the circumstances make it too dangerous.
- If an accident occurs nearby, you must assist where possible, provided it does not seriously endanger you or your passengers.

# Safety onboard

- Once a vessel is underway, everybody on board must keep all parts of their bodies within the limits of the hull.

# Right of way at jetties

- When two power boats approach the same public jetty from different directions, the vessel travelling down river must give way.

# Enforcement Officers

- In Western Australia, the acts and regulations that apply to recreational boats and boaters are administered by:
  - the Department for Planning and Infrastructure;
  - the Fisheries Department; and
  - the Water Police.
- They regularly check vessels for registration and safety gear, as well as controlling the behaviour of water users.

# Diving Regulations

- A boat with divers working from it must carry the appropriate day or night signals.
- The daytime signal for divers is an International Code Flag "A".
  - The flag must be at least 750mm long and 600mm wide.
  - Divers operating without a vessel, for example from a jetty, must also display the International Code Flag "A" of the same minimum size.
- By night the diver's vessel, as well as appropriate lights such as an anchor light,
  - must show three all-round lights in a vertical line: the top and bottom lights red, the middle one white.
  - People night diving without a vessel must display a yellow-orange flashing light that can be seen from a minimum distance of 200 metres.



# Diving Regulations

- All vessels must keep at least 50 metres clear of boats, buoys or areas showing diving signals.
  - Where it is not possible to keep 50 metres clear, the approaching vessel should travel at the slowest possible speed and keep a good lookout for people in the water.

# Water Skiing

- “Water skiing” means being towed over water, at a speed of 8 knots or more, by a motor boat, so as to be supported on the surface by a ski or skis, an aquaplane or other apparatus, or the feet.
- You may ski only in gazetted ski areas.
  - The international collision rules still apply to ski areas.
- The driver of a vessel engaged in water skiing must be at least 17 years of age and hold an RST.
- The driver must also be accompanied by an observer who is at least 14 years old.
  - The observer must be on board and watching the skier at all times.
- The driver must keep a proper lookout at all times and should not be watching the skier.

# Personal Watercraft

- A personal watercraft (PWC) – often called a jet ski – is a craft propelled by an inboard motor powering a water jet pump. The operator sits, stands or kneels and uses handlebars to steer it.
- PWCs and similar craft are powerboats as far as the rules are concerned. This means there are rules on the age of drivers, the distance offshore they can operate, equipment to be carried, speed limits and so on.
- There are also a few extra rules and a few concessions in regard to PWC's operation.

# Personal Watercraft

## Safety equipment

- Every person on board a PWC must wear a personal flotation device at all times:
  - Within 400 metres of the shore it can be a PFD Type 1, 2, or 3.
  - Between 400 metres and two nautical miles from shore in unprotected waters a PFD Type 1 must be worn. You must also carry an inshore distress flare kit, in serviceable condition.
  - Between two and five nautical miles, a PFD Type 1 must be worn. You must also carry an inshore distress flare kit and an EPIRB.

## Operational limits

- Vessels under 3.75 metres are not permitted more than five nautical miles off shore.

# Personal Watercraft

## Freestyle driving, wake and wave jumping

- Freestyle driving is driving a PWC in such a way that the driver of another vessel would be unable to predict your course and speed in order to avoid a collision with you.
- Wave and wake jumping is driving your PWC over a wave or swell with the aim of becoming airborne.
  - The wave or the swell may be formed naturally or by the passage of a vessel.
- Freestyle driving and wake jumping is prohibited:
  - within any speed restricted area;
  - within 30 metres of another PWC; and
  - within 50 metres of another vessel or person in the water.

# Personal Watercraft

## **PWCs in ski areas**

- PWCs are prohibited in most water ski areas unless they are being used to tow water skiers.
- PWCs are permitted to operate in most of the large offshore water ski areas such as Warnbro, Cockburn Sound and Geographe Bay.
- Check the signs at the launching ramps before using your PWC.

# Vessel registration

## **Vessels that must be registered**

- If your vessel has a motor, or is fitted for one, it must be registered with the Department and will be subject to an annual registration fee.
- If your vessel is currently registered in another state, you get three months grace after bringing it into Western Australia. After that time, you must register it in this state.

# Vessel registration

## Exemptions from registration

- The following recreational vessels do not have to be registered:
  - yachts;
  - canoes; and
  - surf skis and other craft without motors.
- A tender to a larger vessel provided it is:
  - no more than 3.1 metres long; and
  - has a motor no bigger than 3.73kWp (5hp) and is used only as a lifeboat and for ship to shore transport.



# Vessel registration

## **Change of ownership details**

- The owner of a registered vessel must notify the Department within 15 days of any changes to the registered details of the vessel or the address of the owner.
- The seller must notify the Department within seven days of selling the vessel.
- The buyer must notify the Department within 15 days of buying the vessel.

# Vessel registration

## Placement of registration numbers and sticker

- Numbers must be fixed as follows:
  - **Powerboats** – Midships on both sides of the hull where they are clearly visible – not under the flare of the bow – 150mm high.
  - **Yachts** – On the side of the hull immediately forward of the transom – 50mm high.
  - **Inflatable boats** – As for a powerboat or on boards hung over either side – 150mm high.
  - **Tenders** – Must have its parent vessel's number displayed on each side of the boat forward of the transom.
- On all vessels, the registration sticker must be fixed on the port side of the vessel, adjacent to the registration number.

# Pollution & environment

## Rubbish

- The pollution regulations relating to boating state that there is no dumping of:
  - Oil or noxious substances or plastic anywhere. Plastics include synthetic ropes and synthetic fishing lines and nets.
  - Floating rubbish within 25 nautical miles of the nearest land.
  - Garbage including food wastes, paper products, rags, glass or metals within 12 miles from the nearest land, or three miles if the garbage has been passed through an approved grinder.

# Pollution & environment

## **Bilge**

- Check your bilges and keep them clean and dry.
  - If an automatic bilge pump puts an oil and bilge water mix in the water it will land you in trouble.
- Inspect fuel lines and seals regularly and ensure that oil leaks are dealt with quickly.
- Fit a drip tray under the engines with drainage to a holding tank for disposal ashore.
- Consider fitting high efficiency by-pass oil filters.
  - These decrease the frequency of oil changes.
- If you have engine oil leaks, consider placing oil absorbent/water repellent material in the bilge.

# Pollution & environment

## Refuelling

- Refuelling is the most common time for spillage of fuel into the environment.
- Guard against overfilling by:
  - knowing how much fuel you need to take (allowing space in the tank for expansion);
  - not leaving the filling nozzle unattended; and
  - listening for blow back from the tank breathers – you may need to slow the filling rate.

# Pollution & environment

## Reporting spills and illegal dumping

- Under Western Australian law, the polluter must report spills of oil or noxious substances to the Department for Planning and Infrastructure – 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;
  - any other relevant information.
- For further information or to report an incident phone: Marine Environmental Protection Unit (08) 9216 8803.

# Sewage

- The discharge of sewage from vessels, especially at popular destinations, reduces water quality, creates a human health risk and is universally loathed aesthetically.
- To limit the impact of sewage on our environment, the State Government has adopted a regulatory plan that establishes three sewage discharge zones based on the degree of risk to public health and/or the environment:
  - areas of water where sewage discharge is completely prohibited for health and/or environmental reasons;
  - areas where treated sewage discharge is acceptable; and
  - areas, mostly well offshore, where untreated sewage can be discharged from vessels safely.

# Sewage - Zone 1

## **Zone 1 - No Discharge Zone**

- The discharge of sewage from vessels, treated or untreated, is prohibited in Zone 1.
- The no discharge zone includes:
  - marinas, yacht clubs, boat harbours and ports/maritime export facilities;
  - most inland waters;
  - designated areas of the Rottneest Island Marine Reserve;
  - marine nature reserves and sanctuary zones within marine parks;
  - designated parts of marine parks, marine management areas or fish habitat protection areas;
  - within 500 metres of any aquaculture operation;
  - within 100 metres of any recognised swimming area; and
  - other designated areas of high environmental value.



# Sewage - Zone 2

## **Zone 2: No discharge except for vessels with approved treatment systems**

- Sewage treated to an approved standard can be discharged in Zone 2.
- The treated sewage discharge zone includes designated areas outside of Zone 1 such as:
  - parts of estuaries, marine parks and fish habitat protection areas, where the dilution factor is deemed to be satisfactory;
  - the remainder of the Rottnest Island Marine Reserve; and
  - waters more than 20 metres from a stationary vessel or person in the water.

# Sewage - Zone 3

## **Zone 3: Open Zone**

- Untreated sewage may be discharged from vessels within Zone 3.
- Zone 3 comprises all State Waters except:
  - those waters which are within Zone 1 or Zone 2;
  - waters within 500 metres of land; and
  - waters within 100 metres of a stationary vessel or person in the water.
- Boat owners and operators must adopt onboard sewage management measures if sewage is likely to be generated.
  - This could be a portable toilet, holding tank or a sewage treatment system.
- It is important to check with the relevant authority to find out the zoning for the area in which you are boating.

# Marine habitat

## Anchoring

- Reefs and sea grass beds are very important to sea life, and you should avoid anchoring on them.
- You can almost always find a patch of sand among them that your anchor will not hurt.
- If you have no choice but to anchor on reef, use a specialised reef anchor.
  - Note: There may be “anchoring prohibited” rules in parts of marine national parks.

# Marine habitat

## **Disturbance of wildlife**

- You should not try to get close to sea lions, whales, dolphins and whale sharks – they can become distressed, especially if the mammals have babies with them.

# Marine habitat

## Noise, wake and wash

- Wake and wash can cause damage to vessels on moorings and in pens, and injury to people on board them.
  - Keep your speed low enough to cause negligible wash when passing near these areas – and also in the vicinity of wildlife.
- For the sakes of both people and wildlife limit the noise you have control over – music for instance – and ensure that your exhaust noise has not increased with the age of your motor.