

Safety equipment for recreational boats and personal watercraft (PWC)

All equipment must be in good working order, and not past the expiry date for replacement or service (EPIRB, fire extinguisher, flares and inflatable life jackets).

- Boats not requiring registration means recreational boats with an engine or auxiliary under 3 kW (4 hp). Requirements or recommendations listed also apply to international or interstate boats operating in Queensland.
- Boats requiring registration means recreational boats with an engine or auxiliary of 3 kW or more (over 4 hp). Requirements or recommendations listed also apply to international or interstate boats operating in Queensland.
- Tenders do not require registration if operated within 2 nautical miles (nm) of the primary boat. Tenders that do not require registration are not required to carry safety equipment other than a light for signalling. Operators should consider equipping a tender with safety equipment appropriate to the location of operation.
- PWC means personal watercraft for example a jet ski.
- Required means equipment that must be carried. Recommended means equipment that is suggested to be carried to meet the general safety obligation.

| Item | Smooth water | | | Partially smooth waters | | | Beyond smooth and partially smooth waters | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|
| | Not requiring registration | Registered* | PWC | Not requiring registration | Registered* | PWC | Not requiring registration | Registered* | PWC |
| EPIRB(406 MHz) Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon. When operating more than 2 nm from land. Must be registered with AMSA. Registration must be renewed every two years. | | | | | | | required | required | required |
| | EPIRBs must have a printed expiry date and be replaced or serviced by the manufacturer (or authorised service agent) by this date; must comply with Australian Standard AS/NZ 4280.1:2003; and must be registered in the name of the owner/master with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority. | | | | | | | | |
| Signalling device for example a torch, or fluorescent light, or lantern or cyalume stick. Required when operating between sunset and sunrise. | required | required | required | required | required | required | required | required | required |
| Personal flotation devices (PFDs)/life jackets[#] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the appropriate size for each person (12 months and over) on board, except if a person is wearing an inflatable diver jacket and the vessel is engaged in diving activities. Children under 12 must wear the PFD when underway in an open boat under 4.8 m. Skiers or people being towed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFD type 2, 3 or level 50 or level 50 special purpose, or wetsuit with inbuilt flotation approved as PFD type 3 in smooth waters. PFD type 2 or level 50 in partially smooth waters. | PFD type 1, 2 or 3 or level 275, 150, 100, level 50 or level 50 special purpose recommended | PFD type 1, 2 or 3 or level 275, 150, 100, level 50 or level 50 special purpose required | PFD type 2 or 3 or level 50 or level 50 special purpose required | PFD type 1 or 2 or level 275, 150, 100, or level 50 recommended | PFD type 1 or 2 or level 275, 150, 100, or level 50 required | PFD type 2 or level 50 required | PFD type 1 or level 275, 150 or 100 recommended | PFD type 1 or level 275, 150 or 100 required | PFD type 2 or level 50 required |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the boat has positive flotation**, and grab handles, lines or a secure hold for each person onboard, a lifejacket is not required in a river, creek or stream, or waters contained within breakwaters or revetments PFD not required for a registered* tender to a recreational boat if used within 1 km of the primary boat and tender has a positive flotation statement** in the approved form. | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFDs must be worn when crossing designated bars in open boats under 4.8 m. PFD not required for a registered* tender to a recreational boat if used within 1 km of the primary boat and tender has a positive flotation statement** in the approved form. | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PFDs must be worn when crossing designated bars in open boats under 4.8 m. PFD not required for a registered* tender to a recreational boat if used within 500 m of the primary boat and tender has a positive flotation statement** in the approved form. | | |
| V sheet | | | | recommended | required | required^ | recommended | required | required^ |
| Flares two red hand flares and two orange smoke flares. | | | | recommended | required | required^ | recommended | required | required^ |
| Fire fighting equipment all boats over 5 m. Must be capable of extinguishing a fire quickly and effectively. | recommended | required | | recommended | required | | recommended | required | |
| RideSmart sticker must be visible from steering position. | | | required | | | required | | | required |
| Capacity label except sailing ships. Must be visible from all steering positions. | | required | required | | required | required | | required | required |
| | Capacity label can be either an Australian Builders Plate or a label issued by Maritime Safety Queensland. Not required for international or interstate boats operating in Queensland. | | | | | | | | |
| Navigation chart and a liquid damped compass appropriate to the operational area, or other directional finding or positioning equipment. For a PWC without a chart or compass, an electronic navigation device appropriate to the operational area. | | | | recommended | recommended | recommended^ | recommended | recommended | recommended^ |
| Anchoring For boats less than 5 m, the cable can be chain or rope. For boats over 5 m, the cable can be chain of at least 2 m attached to anchor and rope. Length of chain/rope should be appropriate for the depth of water you are anchoring in. For a PWC, an anchor and cable appropriate to area of operation. | recommended | recommended | | recommended | recommended | recommended^ | recommended | recommended | recommended^ |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> less than 5 m, one anchor with 18 m cable 5-8 m, one anchor with 27 m cable over 8 m, two anchors with 37 m cable each | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> less than 5 m, one anchor with 27 m cable 5-8 m, one anchor with 27 m cable over 8 m, two anchors with 37 m cable each | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> less than 5 m, one anchor with 27 m cable 5-8 m, one anchor with 27 m cable over 8 m, two anchors with 37 m cable each | | |
| Pumping/bailing equipment | recommended | recommended | | recommended | recommended | | recommended | recommended | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> under 5 m: suitable bailing equipment 5-8 m: bilge pump 45 L/ minute capacity over 8 m: bilge pump 70 L/minute capacity | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> under 5 m: suitable bailing equipment 5-8 m: bilge pump 45 L/minute capacity over 8 m: bilge pump 70 L/minute capacity | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> under 5 m: suitable bailing equipment 5-8 m: bilge pump 45 L/minute capacity over 8 m: bilge pump 70 L/minute capacity | | |
| Manual propulsion oars or paddles (boats under 6 m) | recommended | recommended | | recommended | recommended | | recommended | recommended | |

Further information to accompany table:

- * Also includes boats/tenders that are required to be registered but are not.
- ** A positive flotation statement is a certificate, in the approved form, from a manufacturer or an accredited marine surveyor. It is not required to be carried on board, but an enforcement agency may ask the owner to provide proof of its existence.
- ^ Does not apply to a PWC operating in an approved aquatic event or beyond partially smooth waters and within 0.5 nautical miles from land.
- # Owners/masters must give each person on board information about where the safety equipment is kept. PFDs (or life jackets) must be clearly visible to passengers or readily accessible and indicated by a clearly visible sign with a white background marked with the word 'life jackets' in red letters or vice versa.

The following table compares the types of life jackets and PFDs under the Australian standards.

| Under standard AS 4758 | Under previous standards |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Level 275 Level 150 | Coastal life jacket |
| Level 275 Level 150 Level 100 | PFD type 1 (AS 1512–1996) |
| Level 50 | PFD type 2 (AS 1499–1996) |
| Level 50 special purpose | PFD type 3 (AS 2260–1996) |