



Transport for NSW

# Boat driving licence practical logbook



## Introduction

Proof of practical boating experience is a key requirement for obtaining your general boat or personal watercraft (PWC) driving licence.

This logbook includes:

- Information about boat driving licences Pages 2-5
- Boat driving licence practical experience log Pages 6-10
- Guide to practical boating requirements Pages 11-16
- Boating trip checklist Pages 17-18.

Use this logbook to learn about safe boating practices and record your progress. Treat it as an important tool to help you become a competent, safety conscious and licensed skipper.

## Who must have a licence?

Anyone driving a powered vessel operating recreationally on NSW waters at a speed of 10 knots (approximately 18.5 km/h) or more must have a boat driving licence.

Ten knots is the speed at which most powerboats start to speed up, rise and plane (skim) on top of the water.

Additionally, anyone who drives a personal watercraft (PWC) at any speed must have a PWC licence.

## Types of licence

### General boat driving licence

You must have a NSW general boat driving licence (boat licence) to drive a powerboat or sailing boat using its engine for recreation on NSW waterways at a speed of 10 knots or more. This is approximately 18.5km/h.

A person must be 12 years of age or older in order to hold a licence.

If you're aged under 16, there are restrictions you must follow.

### Personal watercraft (PWC) driving licence

To drive a personal watercraft (PWC) - for example, a jet ski - you must have a PWC licence.

You must have a boat licence to get a PWC licence, or you can get both licences at the same time.

A person must be 12 years of age or older in order to hold a PWC driving licence.

Restrictions apply to licence holders under 16 years of age.

## Restrictions on licence holders from 12 to under 16 years of age

There are restrictions for people aged under 16 with a NSW boat licence or personal watercraft (PWC) licence. These restrictions help keep everyone safe.

If you're aged under 16, you must not drive a powered vessel:

- faster than 20 knots
- faster than 10 knots unless there's a person aged 16 or over on board who has a boat or PWC licence
- faster than 10 knots while towing a person
- faster than 10 knots at night (between sunset and sunrise) - for boats only
- at night (between sunset and sunrise) - for PWC only
- in any race, display, regatta, exhibition or similar operation.

People aged under 16 with an interstate or overseas licence must also follow these restrictions when using NSW waterways.

There may be exemptions to these restrictions for participants of licensed organised events.

## Licence period

A general boat driving licence or PWC driving licence is available for 1, 3, 5 or 10 years. Licences are initially issued as paper licences, followed by a plastic licence card. You can also choose to get a digital licence, which can be accessed via the Service NSW app.

## Getting your boat licence

To obtain a general boat driving licence, applicants must:

- Provide evidence of practical boating experience
- Successfully complete the general boat licence knowledge test.

To obtain a PWC driving licence, applicants must first obtain a general boat driving licence and then successfully complete the PWC licence knowledge test.

On completion of the requirements listed above and proof of identity (see page 5), the relevant boat driving licence will be issued to applicants on payment of the licence fee.

For more information on how to get a boat licence, call **13 77 88** or visit the licensing section of our website at **[roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au)**.

## How to comply with practical boating experience requirements

The following options are available as methods to satisfy the practical boating experience requirements:

### Option 1

Practical boating experience can be gained by completing this boat driving licence practical logbook. You must take a minimum of 3 trips with an experienced skipper in a powerboat or sailing boat using its engine.

An experienced skipper must be aged 18 or over and:

- have a current NSW or interstate boat licence, and have held their licence for a minimum of 3 consecutive years at any stage, or
- hold a certificate of competency.

The boat must have the required safety equipment. If you take the trips at night (between sunset and sunrise), the boat must have the required lights.

Details of each trip must be recorded in the practical logbook and be verified by the experienced skipper. The applicant and the experienced skipper must also confirm that all elements relating to practical experience competencies, as listed in the logbook,

have been covered by initialling each element across the three trips.

Logbooks are available free of charge from any service centre – see 'Find a Service NSW location' at **[service.nsw.gov.au](https://service.nsw.gov.au)** – or online from our website **[roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au)**.

Only trips carried out within the 12 months prior to the issue of a boat driving licence will be recognised for the purpose of satisfying practical experience requirements.

### Option 2

Applicants can also satisfy the practical experience requirement by completing practical boating training conducted by Authorised Training Providers (ATP).

ATPs are independent organisations approved by Transport for NSW to deliver courses. Participation in these courses satisfies the practical boating experience requirement of the licence application process.

The ATP course may include both theory and on-water components. There may be circumstances where the ATP cannot conduct the on-water training component, eg applicants' proximity to a waterway.

In these cases, the ATP can complete the theory component, along with the Transport for NSW knowledge test, but you will need to complete the on-water training component by the use of a logbook with an experienced skipper.

Fees and conditions apply to attend a training course conducted by an approved ATP.

Transport for NSW provides a list of approved ATPs on our website at [roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au).

### How to comply with boat licence knowledge test requirements

Applicants for a boat driving licence must demonstrate the level of competency required by passing an appropriate boat driving knowledge test. There are two ways you can take the knowledge test: at a service centre or with an Authorised Training Provider (ATP).

All the information needed for a general boat licence knowledge test is included in the Boating Handbook. You can

test your knowledge before taking the test, by taking the online boating knowledge quiz available on our website [roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](http://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au).

Questions in the quizzes are taken from the pool of questions used in the real general boat and PWC licence knowledge tests.

You should also study the *Boating Handbook* and *Personal Watercraft Handbook* before sitting a test.

### Take the licence knowledge tests

You must pass the General Boat Licence Knowledge Test to apply for your boat licence.

The test has 50 multiple-choice questions about rules and safety on the water. To pass, you must correctly answer:

- a minimum of 24 of the 30 questions in the first part (Section A)
- all 20 questions in the second part (Section B).

You must pass the PWC Licence Knowledge Test to apply for your PWC licence.

The test is about PWC rules and safety on the water. To pass, you must answer a minimum of 12 of the 15 questions correctly.

If you're aged under 16 you must have a parent or legal guardian with you when you take the test.

A fee is payable for each licence test attempt. If you fail the boating knowledge test, another fee is charged to sit the test again.

A free interpreter service is available for applicants who need to take the test in another language. Please call **13 14 50** and ask the interpreter to phone **13 77 88**.

Applicants with special needs or learning difficulties should call **13 77 88** to discuss any issues or special arrangements required before booking in for the test.

## Recognised qualifications

Some Australian Sailing and Royal Yachting Association qualifications meet the practical experience and test requirements for a NSW boat licence. You still need to apply for a licence and pay the fee. To check if your qualification is recognised, call Transport for NSW on **13 77 88**.

## Interstate licences

The holder of an interstate boat licence may transfer their licence to a NSW boat driving licence on presentation of:

- The original or certified copy of the interstate licence, or
- A letter from the issuing jurisdiction, and
- Proof of identity (POI).

For more information call **13 77 88** or visit our website **roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au**.

## Apply for a licence

- An applicant must provide acceptable proof of identity documentation before sitting a test
- Applicants under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian when sitting the test. Proof of identity documentation for the parent or guardian is also required
- PWC driving licence applicants must provide two colour passport acceptable photographs with a light background. PWC licences are plastic photo cards
- Applicants must complete a licence application form, declare any medical condition or physical disability which may affect their ability to safely operate a boat, meet eyesight standards and pay the appropriate fees.

## Proof of identity (POI)

To ensure the accuracy of records, applicants must provide acceptable proof of identity (POI) when conducting a business transaction.

POI identification documents must be original documents or certified copies. For POI requirements and a full list of acceptable POI documents, visit **roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au** or call **13 77 88**.

## Combined driver/boat/PWC licence

Transport for NSW customers are able to combine their NSW driver licence and general boat or PWC driving licence onto one card.

Eligible customers can opt in only at the time of their NSW driver licence renewal and their driver licence card will be printed with a note on the reverse of the card that the licence holder also holds a NSW general boat driving licence or PWC driving licence.

This option may only be taken up by the customer at the time of driver licence renewal at select registries or service centres.

For more information, visit our website at **roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au**.

# Boat driving licence practical experience log

<b>Trips - minimum 3</b>	<b>Only trips carried out within 12 months of the date of applying for the boat licence will be recognised for the purpose of satisfying practical experience requirements.</b> Note: Trips carried out between sunset and sunrise are optional.				
<b>Date</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Experienced Skipper Details:</b> An experienced skipper is a person who is 18 years or older and holds, as a minimum, a current and valid NSW or interstate boat driving licence and has at any stage held a boat driving licence for at least three (3) consecutive years.			<b>Signature of Experienced Skipper</b>
		<b>Name</b>	<b>Licence No.</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>	
<b>DECLARATION:</b> I declare I have completed a minimum of 3 trips in a power-driven boat under power, and during these trips I have completed each task in the Boat Driving Licence Practical Experience Log (Sections 1.1 to 3.4). I understand the nominated experienced skipper(s) may be contacted to verify information given in this log and my boat driving licence may be cancelled if information provided is found to be incorrect or untrue. Note: Heavy penalties apply for making false entries in this logbook.					
<b>Applicant's Full Name:</b>				<b>Contact Number:</b>	
<b>Applicant's Address:</b>				<b>Date of Birth:</b>	
<b>Applicant's Signature:</b>				<b>Date:</b>	

# Boat driving licence practical experience log

Skipper  
Initial

Applicant  
Initial

## 1 Carry out trip preparation and planning

### 1.1 Maintain the boat and safety equipment

Discuss the need for the boat to be maintained/serviced on a regular basis.

Discuss requirements for safety equipment to be carried and identify what safety equipment is required for the vessel.

Applicant to review safety equipment purpose, location, service requirements and appropriate stowage.

### 1.2 Mooring, berthing and trailers

Discuss need for mooring/berthing apparatus to be maintained/serviced on a regular basis.

Discuss elements of launch and recovery of trailerable vessel if applicable.

### 1.3 Plan trip

Skipper to discuss trip planning and the need to check:

- Weather
- Suitability of vessel for trip including conditions (wave height, tides, etc)
- Number of passengers allowed for with adequate equipment/gear/food/water/etc
- Emergency contact details
- You have let someone know where you are going
- That person is informed of safe return.

Applicant to prepare a trip plan using this checklist.

# Boat driving licence practical experience log

Skipper  
Initial

Applicant  
Initial

## 2 Safely operate a mechanically powered recreational boat

### 2.1 Manoeuvre and handle boat

At least one pre-start check to be carried out by applicant.

Motor prepared for start and started by applicant.

Applicant to manoeuvre the boat in various conditions and in accordance with key messages of:

- Proper lookout
- Safe speed
- Stay on right
- Awareness of boat impacts (eg wash, noise and discharge).

Drills carried out:

- Drive boat forward and astern
- Approach and departure from buoy, jetty, beach and trailer (if using).

### 2.2 Navigation

Skipper describes navigations aids (port and starboard buoys, cardinal buoys, signage), and their purpose.

Skipper discusses collision avoidance techniques.

Applicant shows capacity to determine hazards and boating conditions when navigating the boat while underway.

**Note:** A guide to assist skipper and applicant is on pages 11-16.

# Boat driving licence practical experience log

Skipper  
Initial

Applicant  
Initial

## 2.3 Anchor the boat

Applicant selects safe anchorage site in accordance with prevailing and forecast conditions and in accordance with legislation.

Applicant selects correct type of anchor for location.

Anchor is lowered, set and monitored according to prevailing conditions by the applicant.

Anchor is retrieved and securely stowed by the applicant.

## 3 Respond to boating emergencies and incidents

### 3.1 Use safety equipment

Discuss nature, type, location, accessibility and serviceability of safety equipment.

Discuss appropriate use of safety equipment in a range of emergencies.

Applicant to put on a lifejacket.

### 3.2 Raise alarms

Discuss how to communicate alarm to passengers.

Discuss different kinds of emergency and how to identify.

Discuss use of distress signals (waving for assistance, v-sheet, flares, radio, mobile phone, EPIRB).

# Boat driving licence practical experience log

Skipper  
Initial

Applicant  
Initial

## 3.3 Deal with on-board emergency

Discuss actions required to deal with an emergency situation including managing the emergency and protecting passengers.

Discuss how a boat's position is identified, recorded and communicated to emergency services along with passenger details and nature of emergency.

Discuss how assistance is summoned from other boats nearby.

Discuss providing assistance to injured persons.

Discuss how communication with rescuers is maintained.

Discuss how to prepare for abandoning the boat, if required.

Discuss how to communicate the end of emergency to appropriate personnel.

## 3.4 Assist others in distress

Carry out man overboard simulation drill.

Discuss how distress signals from others are recognised and nature of assistance required is identified.

Discuss capability to safely assist or relay emergency, taking into account own safety and physical proximity to the emergency incident.

Discuss how appropriate response to an emergency is prepared for and implemented.

Discuss how to communicate the end of emergency incident to appropriate personnel.



## 1.2 Mooring, berthing and trailers

Ensure your mooring, berth or trailer is in good condition and ready for use. Take time to regularly inspect fittings and check for wear and tear. Replace any parts that look worn or suspect. Be able to launch and retrieve the boat safely using a trailer (if applicable).

### Mooring and berth maintenance:

- Appropriateness of mooring/berthing equipment and site
- Regularity of checks
- Services by recognised contractor
- Serviceable mooring and berthing lines
- Fenders
- Anchors and other ground tackle.

## 1.3 Plan trip

The boat and its gear must be appropriate for the area of navigation. Consider contingencies for events such as adverse changes in weather. Study local charts or maps, paying particular attention to any hazards, and plan for adequate supplies of food, water and fuel. Tell someone where you are going and expected time of return, and leave your contact and/or emergency contact details with someone reliable. And of course, let that person know you have returned.

Ensure all gear on the boat is in good working order and stowed properly. When loading, keep the number of people and amount of gear within the safe design limits of the vessel.

### Weather and conditions:

- Current forecast
- Wind
- Latest weather and conditions information
- Source of weather information
- Tides (flood and ebb tides)
- Rips and bars
- Wave height
- Visibility
- Day/night.



### Area of operation:

- Hazards
- Local knowledge, rules and protocols
- Events
- Emergency response
- Access and exit points
- Safe havens
- Launching ramps
- Destination port.

### Trip activity:

- Adequate fuel for distance to be travelled
- Way points
- Suitability of boat for the activity
- Radio used and frequency
- Call signs
- Trip intention forms
- Description of boat
- Registration number
- Trip departure and return time
- Area and nature of operation.

### People to advise:

- Family member
- Neighbour(s)
- Water Police
- Recognised marine rescue services
- Local police
- Relative
- Club

- Harbour master
- Note in car (if appropriate)
- Coastal radio stations.

#### **Provisions:**

- Water
- Food
- Ice
- Sun protection
- Wet weather gear
- First aid kit
- Personal medication for all passengers
- Batteries
- Gas
- Adequate emergency fuel (reserve) and a method of fuel transfer.

#### **Activity details to be communicated:**

- Vessel description or photo
- Number of people in boat
- Departure/arrival times
- Types of radios
- Must advise trip conclusion
- Shore contact details
- Trailer registration number
- Fuel capacity and usage.

#### **Pre-start check:**

- Fuel is connected
- Battery is charged and connected
- Engine kill switch lanyard
- Fumes, petrol
- Fuel and water leaks
- Open hatches/windows/doors
- Ventilation
- Sea-cock opening
- Secure loose gear
- Turn on marine radio
- Checking bilge water levels
- Navigation lights
- Raising radio aerials.

### **2.1 Manoeuvre and handle boat**

Carry out a pre-start check. Always operate your vessel safely. Keep a proper lookout at all times and be aware of your impact on other people and the environment.



### **2.2 Navigation**

Observe the system of navigation markers at all times. Know and apply the rules for preventing collisions at sea, eg keep to the starboard (right) side of channels, give way to vessels approaching from the right, maintain a safe speed relevant for the conditions and always keep a proper lookout. Be aware of hazards and local conditions and take these into account when navigating.

#### **Manoeuvring conditions:**

- From or to a ramp, pontoon, wharf, mooring or anchorage
- Confined areas (narrow channels, marinas, moorings, obstructions)
- Sea-states: coastal bars, waves, rips, high seas, tidal surges, choppy conditions
- Low speed/high speed
- Wakes/wash/waves
- Poor visibility
- Effect of wind
- Large vessels.

### Safe manoeuvring:

- Steer straight line
- Astern
- Figure-eight
- Right of way
- Port-starboard
- Throttle control
- Emergency stop
- Trim and stability of vessel
- Towing or being towed
- Picking up a towed person
- Berthing
- Standing-on/stemming the tide
- Retrieval of person overboard.

### Monitoring:

- Cooling system
- Bilge, portholes and hatches
- Location and welfare of persons on board
- Oil, fuel and water
- Radio
- Position of boat
- Other water users
- Battery and electrical systems
- Ventilation.

### Hazards and conditions:

- Weather
- Set and drift
- Effect of wind, tides and currents
- Submerged objects
- Other boats/wash
- Restricted waters
- Crossing bars.

### Aids to small craft navigation:

- IALA Buoyage System "A"
- Charts
- Compasses
- GPS
- Sounder
- Tide tables
- Passage plan
- Marine references
- Notices to mariners
- Radio navigational warnings.

### Impact of boat use on others and the environment:

- Noise
- Wake/wash/waves
- Safety of others
- Disturbance or injury to wildlife
- Disposal of waste, including sewage and grey water
- Effects of detergent

- Anti-foul
- Disposal of bilge water
- Fuelling arrangements
- Potential damage to seagrasses and other sensitive habitats, eg when anchoring or running aground.



**Collision regulations such as:**

- Navigating in narrow channels
- Giving way to other vessels
- Overtaking
- Proper lookout
- Sound signals, lights and shapes
- Responsibilities and duty of care
- Use of buoyage system
- Speed
- Recognition of lights and markers
- Rules of road
- Recognition of operation areas
- Specific activity rules, eg PWCs, water skis
- Safety equipment requirements
- Accident/incident reporting.

**Marine regulations such as:**

- Safety regulations
- Licensing and registration
- Speed limit restrictions
- Distance off requirements
- Marine incident reporting
- Carrying capacity
- Alcohol limits
- Age of operators
- Pollution.

## 2.3 Anchoring

Ensure your anchor is appropriate for the size of boat, the location and the conditions, eg some anchors work better in sand than others. Understand the difference in anchor type. Always lower, set and monitor your anchor to suit the location and conditions. When retrieving your anchor, ensure it is stowed securely.

**Types of anchors:**

- Danforth
- Grapnel/reef
- Bruce
- Plough
- Admiralty
- Sea anchor
- Sarca.

**Anchoring systems:**

- Multiple anchors
- Bow and stern anchors
- Mooring buoy.

## 3.1 Use safety equipment

Discuss the nature, type, accessibility and serviceability of all safety equipment on board (see list on page 11). Note that all safety equipment should only be used in a manner appropriate to the incident or emergency.

## 3.2 Raise alarms

Be ready to identify and react to an emergency if needed. Ensure all on board are informed of any emergency. Be able to use appropriate distress signals at the appropriate time.

## 3.3 Respond to onboard emergency

Be prepared to inform all people onboard of necessary actions in order to respond to an emergency. Be prepared to identify and communicate your position should an emergency arise. You also need to be able to render assistance to injured people, be able to abandon the boat if required and communicate with rescuers.

### Emergencies:

- Fire (smoke or heat)
- Collision
- Grounding
- Man overboard
- Person retrieval from water
- Capsize
- Swamping
- Sinking
- Motor breakdown or malfunction (electrical/mechanical)
- Fouled propeller
- Anchoring
- Flooding
- Lost
- Injuries/illnesses
- Hypothermia
- Lack of fuel
- Contaminated fuel.

### Distress signals:

- Flares
- Flags
- Radio
- Hand signals
- Dye marker
- International Code Signal of Distress
- Sound signals (including voice)
- EPIRB – 406MHz

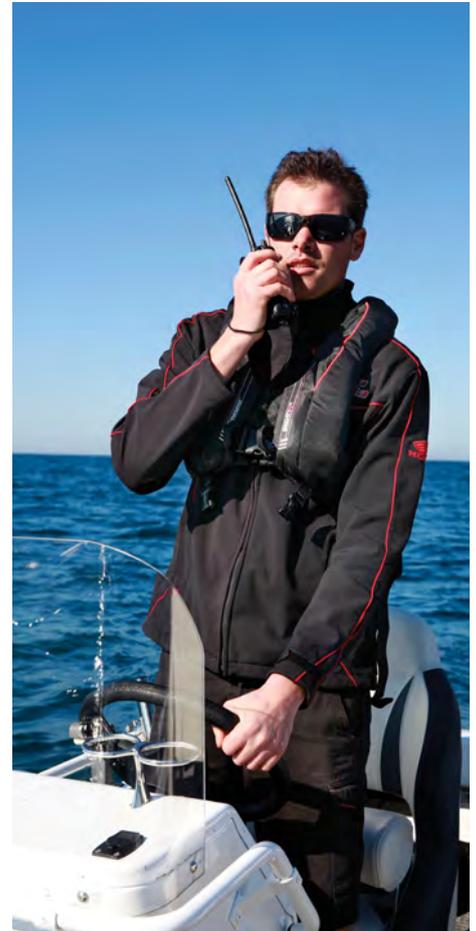
- V-sheet
- Reflective mirror
- Light signals
- Mobile phone.

### Preparation for abandoning:

- Brief everyone onboard
- Donning of life jackets (if not already done)
- Identifying location of vessel
- Communicating to rescuers of actions taken or to be taken
- Readiness of life raft/life rings
- Activate EPIRB
- Identification and collection of emergency equipment, provisions, drinking water and clothing
- Deployment of anchor or sea anchor.

### 3.4 Assist others in distress

Understand the range of distress signals and the nature of response required. Be prepared to assess your capability to safely assist others, taking into account your own safety and proximity to the incident. Be prepared to assist in an emergency and to communicate the end of an emergency to appropriate people.



## Boating trip checklist

By using this checklist as a guide, you will be able to check what needs to be organised on board before, during and after each trip. You're the skipper and your passengers will appreciate knowing you're concerned about boating safety.

### Home or marina maintenance (know your boat)

Do you regularly service and maintain your boat?

Has it been checked for this trip?

### Pre-departure

Does the boat have current registration (if required) and are the label and numbers properly displayed?

Is the skipper and anyone else who will be driving the vessel carrying the correct and current licence if required?

Plan the trip, including travel times and select suitable anchorage locations if needed.

Carry charts (maps) for the area you plan to visit.

Do you know the maximum amount of people you can carry on this boat? Check the safety label, Australian Builders Plate (ABP) or manufacturers plate.

Do you have the required safety/emergency equipment on board?

Do you have an emergency plan for this trip?

Do you have the latest weather forecasts for the trip duration?

Listen to broadcast of up-to-date weather observations.

Is the boat suitable for the trip conditions e.g. offshore?

Do you have tidal predictions and range?

Do you have the latest bar crossing information?

Calculate adequate fuel plus reserve.

Are batteries charged?

If undertaking night-time navigation, check navigation lights (running and anchored).

Check tool kit and repair/replacement spares.

Replenish first aid supplies if necessary.

Check that all passengers have adequate clothing and sun protection.

Tell someone where you are going and the time you expect to return.

Continued over page 

## Launching and getting underway

Check the bungs are firmly secured.

Secure all loose items in the boat.

Is there adequate ventilation in all areas and for all situations?

Discuss safety requirements and use of safety equipment with passengers.

Explain use of engine kill switch lanyard, test function before getting underway, attach lanyard to driver's lifejacket, clothing or wrist.

If required, log on with the local volunteer marine rescue group.

Put on lifejackets at times of heightened risk, such as crossing a coastal bar, boating alone, at night, in adverse conditions or if you are a poor swimmer. Children under 12 years of age must wear a lifejacket at most times. For full details visit **[roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au)**.

Take care of the environment. Avoid polluting, watch your wash and noise and anchor away from seagrass beds.

Dispose of your rubbish ashore and never allow raw sewage, oily water or any chemicals to enter the waterway.

Limit alcohol consumption. Stay under 0.05 on the water (0.00 if less than 18 years old).

## Upon returning

Log off with the local volunteer marine rescue group if required.

Courtesy counts at the ramp, so when using a trailer, retrieve the boat then move away from the ramp before stopping to secure the boat and gear.

Isolate all battery power sources.

After retrieving trailerable vessels, unscrew bungs to release water. Do not allow oily water to enter the waterway.

## Home or marina maintenance (at the end of the trip)

Clean and flush motor whilst preventing pollution from reaching drains or the waterway.

Inspect boat for wear and tear.

Boat, trailer, equipment care.



# WEAR A LIFEJACKET

THERE'S ONE FOR YOUR FAVOURITE ACTIVITY



With inflatable lifejacket styles, you'll be able to wear one all day without it getting in the way. Wearing a lifejacket could help save your life.

Find the right lifejacket for your favourite activity and information on how to service inflatable lifejackets at [lifejacketwearit.com.au](http://lifejacketwearit.com.au)

WEAR A LIFEJACKET DON'T RISK YOUR LIFE

## **For more information:**

**[roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-waterways.transport.nsw.gov.au)**

**13 77 88 – Licensing and registration**

**13 12 36 – Other Maritime products and enquiries**

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