

Marine Notice No. 31 of 2016

Notice to all Masters, Owners and Users of Pleasure and Recreational Craft

Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft

In response to Marine Casualty Investigation Board recommendations, the purpose of this Marine Notice is to remind all owners, masters, operators and users of pleasure and recreational craft of the availability of the **Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft**. The Code of Practice is a useful source of advice and guidance on the operation of a range of recreational craft and of information on relevant legislation applicable to such craft.

Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft

It is the responsibility of owners and operators of recreational craft to ensure that a vessel is properly operated, maintained and equipped. The **Code of Practice for the Safe Operation of Recreational Craft** assists with this responsibility by providing safety information on legislative requirements in a simple and user-friendly way, and by giving straightforward safety advice and guidance on best practice in relation to vessel standards, equipment and operation for different types of recreational craft and their areas of operation.

Part A of the Code of Practice outlines the legislative requirements that are applicable to:

- all pleasure craft
- pleasure craft greater than 12 metres in length
- pleasure craft greater than 15 Net Registered Tons
- pleasure craft greater than 13.7 metres in length.

Part B of the Code of Practice contains recommended guidelines and best practice on training, safety equipment, voyage planning and communications for the safe operation of the following craft:

- Sailing Dinghies
- Sail and Motor Craft – Coastal Operation
- Sail and Motor Craft – Inland Waterways
- Personal Watercraft, e.g. Jetskis
- Windsurfing
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Rowing
- Charter Boats/Bare Boat Hire.

General information is also provided on Safety Operations and Emergency Procedures.

The Irish Maritime Administration encourages all those engaged in leisure pursuits on the water to be aware of and familiar with the contents of the Code of Practice, and to comply with the safety requirements. The Marine Casualty Investigation Board has recommended the use of the Code as an information source. The Code of Practice is available free of

charge on request from Maritime Safety Policy Division (email: marineleisuresafety@dttas.ie) and is also available to view or download from www.safetyonthewater.ie or from the Department's website at [Code of Practice](#).

Particular attention is drawn to the following requirements and advice:

- the legal requirements in relation to the **wearing and carrying of Personal Flotation Devices/Lifejackets** and the need for the proper care and maintenance of such devices. The following Marine Notices provide further information -

[Marine Notice No. 10 of 2016](#) – Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids Main Points.

[Marine Notice No. 39 of 2013](#) – Wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) and increase your chance of survival in the event of entering water).

[Marine Notice No. 45 of 2012](#) – Lifejackets and Buoyancy Aids
- the need to **check current weather forecasts and sea conditions** prior to departure and to plan your voyage;
- **Pre-Departure Safety Checks and Briefing** – the briefing of all persons on board on emergency procedures and the location and use of safety/emergency equipment on board, e.g. flares;
- the need to ensure that a **designated person ashore** is aware of your departure and return times, where you are going, and have a procedure in place to raise the alarm if necessary;
- the importance of having a dependable means of **communication**. Where VHF radio equipment is available, craft users should be familiar with its use. Where mobile phone use is proposed, the phone should at all times be fully charged and the signal strength and charge indicator should be regularly checked while the vessel is underway;
- when operating a pleasure craft, a person must not be under the influence of **alcohol or drugs** or any combination of drugs or of drugs and alcohol to such an extent as to be incapable of having proper control of the craft;
- in a **marine emergency**, call 999 or 112 and ask for the Coast Guard.

Irish Maritime Administration,
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport,
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60, Ireland.

03/08/2016

For any technical assistance in relation to this Marine Notice, please contact:
The Marine Survey Office, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, D02 TR60. tel: +353-(0)1-678 3400.
For general enquiries, please contact the Maritime Safety Policy Division, tel: +353-(0)1-678 3418.
Written enquiries concerning Marine Notices should be addressed to:
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