



- Position Statement -

Mandatory lifejackets for Recreational Vessels in WA

Where there's evidence and statistics to support the wearing of lifejackets in high-risk situations such as boat fishing at night or alone Recfishwest would consider supporting mandatory wearing of lifejackets in certain situations.

Recfishwest works hard to promote safety and we want to see all fishers return home safe at the end of a day's fishing. We encourage and promote safe fishing experiences for all and we equip fishers with the knowledge to make their own decision about whether to fish and to fish in the safest possible manner.

We support increased education campaigns targeted towards vessel owners, of the risks associated with boating, it's important that people have good knowledge to make their own informed decisions in specific situations.

Boat and kayak fishing in WA offer a large variety of fishing activities and one strict rule cannot cover all situations.

We believe safety largely comes down to individuals and skippers making the right choices. Personal responsibility is the key to achieving lasting positive improvements in safe fishing practices.

Background:

The WA Department of Transport (DOT) has recently concluded a review of recreational boating safety requirements and is currently seeking feedback on 12 proposed changes to recreational boat safety equipment.

This review looked at a range of safety equipment including lifejackets, distress signals – (EPIRBs, PLBs and flares), radios and distress signalling sheets, compasses, GPSs, fire extinguishers and miscellaneous equipment (first aid, lighting, paddles, bilge pumps and anchors). Recfishwest believe personal responsibility is the most important factor in improved safety outcomes however we are keen to hear your thoughts on these proposed changes.

The safety review was long overdue review and Recfishwest welcome attempts to simplify the safety equipment required for recreational vessels.

Whether you fish from a kayak, a tinny or a more substantial boat Recfishwest encourage you to take a look at the recommendations and have your say by completing the DOT safety survey before

the 22nd November 2019 and we encourage you to let us know what you think of the proposed changes.

Your views will be used to inform our submission to government on these proposals.

The 12 proposed changes to recreational vessel safety include;

Proposals from the Recreational Vessel Safety Equipment Review	
Proposal 1	Vessel length will not restrict the distance a vessel can operate from shore.
Proposal 2	There will be no mandated safety equipment for any vessel in protected waters or within 400 metres of any shore in unprotected waters
Proposal 3	It will be mandatory to carry an appropriately sized lifejacket with a minimum buoyancy of Level 100 (Type 1) for each person on board any vessel when operating more than 400 metres offshore in unprotected waters
Proposal 4	When lifejacket carriage is mandated (Proposal 3), the wearing of a level 100 or higher lifejacket will be required for each person on board: - a vessel less than 4.8 metres; - if they are more than one year old and under the age of 12 years on any size vessel
Proposal 5	It will be mandatory to carry a Global Positioning System (GPS) enabled emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) on any vessel when operating more than 400 metres from shore in unprotected waters.
Proposal 6	A GPS enabled personal locating beacon (PLB) may be carried in lieu of an EPIRB provided the PLB is worn by at least one person onboard at all times
Proposal 7	It will be mandatory to carry two in date hand-held orange smoke flares and two in date red hand-held flares on any vessel when operating more than 400 metres from shore in unprotected waters.
Proposal 8	An approved electronic night signalling device may be carried in lieu of flares if a GPS enabled EPIRB or PLB is also carried.
Proposal 9	It will be mandatory to carry either a HF or VHF marine radio on any vessel when operating more than 4 nautical miles from shore in unprotected waters (27 MHz marine radios to be phased out over a 5-year period).
Proposal 10	It will not be mandatory to carry a fire extinguisher on any vessel
Proposal 11	It will not be mandatory to carry or have fitted a means of removing unwanted water from any vessel.
Proposal 12	It will not be mandatory to carry an anchor or line on any vessel.