



Circular 032:03:08

To: Clubs Boat Sweeps
Boat Captains

Cc: Aquatic Sports Executive Aquatic Sports Council

From: Chris Munro, Manager Aquatic Sport

Date: 13 March 2008

Subject: Surf Boat Laws and Marine Regulations

Action: For information purposes

Concerns have been raised with Life Saving Victoria from Water Safety Police, following a recent incident.

Surf Boats must display lights if rowing from sunset to sunrise (in darkness) and in restricted visibility during daylight hours.

Three lights must be displayed:

- Port Sidelight (Red)
- Starboard Sidelight (Green)
- Stern Light (White) (can be displayed on sweep oar)

The above information should be read in conjunction with the Life Saving Victoria Safety Management Plan (draft) attached.

For additional detail on this Circular contact: Chris Munro, Aquatic Sports Manager

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LSV Craft Safety Management Plan

Introduction

All lifesaving clubs and many individual members own and operate craft which normally by law are required to carry safety equipment and operate within the legal boundaries of the Victorian Marine Act.

This document outlines the operational and equipment requirements for the usage of lifesaving craft. Its purpose is to provide a standard which allows the effective management and operation of craft while maintaining utmost safety to the public, fellow lifesavers, operators and crews.

This document specifies the requirements that individuals and clubs must adhere to when operating lifesaving equipment powered by paddle, oar or mechanical means, specifically:

- Powercraft (including IRBs, RHIBs, ORBs, RWC)
- Surf Skis including those owned and operated by individual members
- Surf Boats

Lifesavers will utilise craft for a range of activities these include:

- search and rescue activities including water safety
- training
- competition

As part of their duties lifesavers may be required to operate craft in close proximity to people, in no boating/pwc zones and within inshore limits where speed restriction exist. In some circumstances search and rescue activities may require speed to be above that of what is normally permitted within law.

Definitions

For the purpose of this document the following definitions apply:

Craft - a life saving craft powered by oar or paddle and defined to the following approved lifesaving equipment:

- a) a surf ski; or
- b) a surf boat, or
- c) a short ski

Form of communication - A direct means of communication back to a base or other service must be available. This could be a mobile phone or two-way radio with prior site testing required, avoiding potential signal blackout spots.

IRB - Inflatable Rescue Boat

RHIB - Rigid Hulled Inflatable Rescue Boat – usually larger than 6 metres

ORB - Offshore Rescue Boat

RWC - Rescue Water Craft (jet ski)

Shore – Land or land based structure for example jetty or pier

Operator – powercraft driver, skipper, coxswain, boat sweep or ski paddler

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Common Requirements

The following requirements are common across LSV craft operation.

- Have safety equipment as per schedule 1
- Operate craft in line with schedule 2
- Must be appropriately qualified proficient members
- All persons using LSV craft for operational activities (e.g. patrols, lifesaving and competition) must be qualified and currently proficient with the appropriate LSV award applicable to the craft.
- Personnel otherwise using LSV craft should have met the prerequisites for the training in the appropriate award applicable to the usage of the craft.
- Initial instruction/training must include clear instructions or training protocols on how to use the equipment, particularly in regards to injury prevention and survival in the event of a possible accident or loss of craft.
- Due to medical advice members under the age of 16 years should not undertake formalised training and are not permitted to compete in surf boats.
- In addition, members under the age of 15 years should not undertake formalised training and are not permitted to compete on surf skis.
- Formalised competition using surf skis is permissible for members 15 years of age or over (who are proficient Bronze medallion holders) with the proviso that the U/17 Ironman and Ironwoman events will not include a surf ski leg.
- In addition, members are not permitted to compete in open age category Ironman and Ironwoman event until they reach 16 years of age.
- This does not preclude members under the age of 16 years (surf boats) or 15 years (surf ski) participating in less formal skill based sessions with the added consideration that all members under 16 years of age when skill training in surf boats and members under the age of 15 years on surf skis are supported by a suitably qualified coach.
- Where a Club wishes to hold open or social days for the public or for schools or other non SLS clubs, etc. and to use LSV craft, the Club will need to submit advice to their State Centre, confirm insurance cover, ensure that there is adequate water safety and to undertake a risk assessment to review the safety of users. In such circumstances members operating or supervising the use of LSV craft must be qualified and currently proficient with the appropriate award applicable to the craft.

LSV Craft Operator Code of Conduct

Act responsible and with care

The operator of the craft has a responsibility to the crew, community and the organisation to act in a responsible and considerate manner before, during and after the operation of the craft.

Accepting the fact that in some cases the craft operator may have to drive with reasonable aggression the operator should not allow this aggression to replace skill in the operation of the craft. Operators and crew are placed in an important position and should at all times act with responsibility and care.

Promote a culture of safety

The operator must maintain the safe operation of the craft, safety towards the crew, the public and oneself. The operator must have an understanding in assessing risk while operating the craft and promote safety at any opportunity.

Your craft is high profile

LSV craft operators must understand that LSV craft are “high profile” added to the fact they are usually bigger and quicker than most craft in the water. A near miss for a board rider, body surfer or any other person in the water can be a traumatic experience. The size, speed, noise, power and/or smell of the craft can be both annoying and frightening. Craft operators must respect the rights of swimmers and other water users to enjoy their time within the water.

Understanding your limitations and that of your crew

The operator must respect and understand the limitations of oneself and that of the crews to perform in varying conditions. Experience, skills and knowledge of the craft differ from person to person. Operators and crew should maintain a level of competency and adopt a culture of continuous improvement in relation to skill development.

Follow operating procedures

Operator must follow the normal operating procedures as laid down by Life Saving training manuals and policies. Operator must read and understand operating procedures and keep up to date with current issues. Operators have a responsibility to ensure the continued successful operation of LSV's rescue services to the community.

Schedule 1 - PFD and Safety Equipment Requirements

Craft	Location	Requirement
IRB	Within 750 metres of the shore and visual view of the club house or normal area of patrol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must carry two PFDs (1,2,or 3) • Carry tow rope • Carry whistle • Carry rescue tube • Form of communication • knife
IRB	Must operate within 2 km of the shore (unless escorted by another SAR vessel and be approved by LSV Comms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupants must be wearing PFDs (1,2,or 3) • Carry whistle • Carry tow rope • Carry rescue tube • Form of communication • knife
RWC	Must operate within 2 km of the shore (unless escorted by another SAR vessel and be approved by LSV Comms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupants must wear PFD (1,2 or 3) • Carry rescue tube • Carry Torch • Carry Knife • Form of communication
ORB, RHIB	Must operate within 5 Nm or within the limits of its survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupants must wear PFD (1,2 or 3) • Carry rescue tube • Carry Torch • Carry Knife • Carry form of communication &/or UHF &/or VHF Radio • Tow Rope • Fire extinguisher • Must carry equipment as required by survey.
Surf Ski	Within 750 metres of the shore and visual view of the club house or normal area of patrol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Surf Ski	Must operate within 1.5 km of the shore (unless escorted by another LSV craft or SAR vessel and be approved by LSV Comms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PFD (1,2 or 3) • Form of communication
Surf boat	Within 750 metres of the shore and visual view of the club house or normal area of patrol.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescue Tube
Surf boat	Must operate within 1.5 km of the shore (unless escorted by a LSV powercraft or SAR vessel and be approved by LSV Comms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x Rescue Tubes • Form of communication

Schedule 2 – Operational Requirements within 200 meters of shore

Craft	Risk	Requirement
Surfboats	<p>Cold days</p> <p>Less than 50 people in the water (not including lifesaving members)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate the craft under 5 knots within 50 m from members of the public in the water/craft. • Ensure 100 m clear zone when catching waves returning to shore. • Remain more than 100 m away from the flagged swimming zone.
Surf skis	All times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure clear zone when catching waves returning to shore. • Remain more than 25 m away from the flagged swimming zone. • Avoid areas of high population and consider impacts
Powercraft	<p>Cold days</p> <p>Less than 50 people in the water (not including lifesaving members)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate the craft under 5 knots within 50 m from members of the public in the water/craft. • When training off the beach Ensure 25 m signed/flagged clear zone for beaching/launching and inshore manoeuvring
All craft (except surf skis)	<p>Warm days (populated areas)</p> <p>50 people or more in the water (not including lifesaving members)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operator must assess if it is safe to conduct training. • When training off the beach Rescue craft access zone sign/s and or flags erected for beaching and launching area • Where needed uniformed lifesavers actively ensure 100 m clear zone when craft (particularly surfboat) are returning to shore or launching or when surf zone training is being conducted. • Operate the craft under 5 knots within 50 m from members of the public in the water.