

Love me tender....but I'm not sure what safety equipment I need to put in it, or if I have to register it!

The subject of safety gear and registration requirements for 'tenders' often comes up about this time of year. There seems to be plenty of different opinions on both subjects and debate is healthy, however it won't stop you copping a fine if you do not comply with the minimum requirements.

Below I have hopefully put together the answers to these questions. This info has been compiled by searching DTEI handbooks, websites and also with help from the Principal Policy and Project Officer of Navigation Safety at the Department of Transport, Mr Peter Hurn.

Registration

Any boat fitted with an engine is required to be registered and the operator must hold an appropriate certificate of competence - for recreational purposes that is a boat operator's licence - this includes tender vessels regardless of size.

Safety Requirements

If the boat is to be used as a tender only (moving passengers or stores, ship to ship or ship to shore) the minimum safety requirements are detailed below (from Schedule 9, Clause 7, article 5 of the Harbors and Navigation Regulations 2009)

Schedule 9

Clause 7

(5) A tender vessel, while it is being used in conjunction with another vessel, may, instead of being equipped as required by Clause 6, be equipped with the following:

(a) 1 pair of paddles or oars or other means of auxiliary propulsion;

(b) either-

(i) 1 bailer; or

(ii) such number of manual or electric bilge pumps as to be capable of draining each compartment of the vessel (other than airtight void spaces);

(c) if the vessel is 1 500 m or more from the shoreline- PFD Type 1 for each person carried on the vessel.

NOTE: As a practical measure, in particularly small tenders, it may be prudent for those aboard to actually wear a PFD.

If however the boat is used for any other purpose than as a tender (moving passengers or stores, ship to ship or ship to shore) then the exemption for tender boats that limits the required minimum safety gear does not apply and all the required equipment to comply with Clause 6 is to be carried.

So, if you want to use your tender to go fishing, sightseeing, wake boarding, parasailing and general lairizing around, etc, etc. the rules change and you will need to put some extra safety gear on board to comply with Clause 6 of the Regulations.

NB: The items listed below are the minimum requirements for vessels under 8m in length. Please note that the safety gear requirements on your larger vessel will be greater than this....*but remember this advice is for your tender or dinghy.*

Clause 6

Semi-protected waters

These are waters up to 2 nautical miles from the low-water mark of the coast.

- one personal flotation device (PFD) Type 1 for each person on board (same as Clause 7)
- one suitable anchor with cable
- one bailer with a line attached, or a bilge pump* (same as Clause 7)
- two hand held red flares and two hand held orange smoke signals
- if the boat has an engine or cooking facilities - one fire extinguisher
- one waterproof and buoyant torch or lantern
- one fire bucket**
- one pair of paddles or oars or other means of auxiliary propulsion (if your vessel is under 6 metres)

Unprotected waters

These are waters more than two nautical miles from the low-water mark of the coast.

In addition to the items listed above you will need to also have on board: -

- a two-way marine radio capable of communication with onshore stations
- four litres of fresh water
- the boat must be fitted with a compass, preferably liquid damped. A GPS is not a compass.

* If the vessel has more than one compartment, enough pumps must be carried to be able to drain each compartment.

** If the bailer with line is suitable for use as a fire bucket, only one bucket is required, you can use the same bucket for bailer and fire bucket. If the vessel is required to carry more than one bailer, the fire bucket can be included as one of those if it has a line attached. **The fire bucket must:**

- be of a kind and size suitable for the collection of water
- not distort, collapse, or break when filled with water
- be attached to a lanyard of a length and breaking strain sufficient to allow the fire bucket to be cast over the side of the boat and retrieved filled with water
- be stowed as to be readily accessible in case of a fire

(Note: the fire bucket does not have to be made from metal but it must satisfy the requirements listed above)

Requirements for Fire Extinguishers

- must comply with AS 1841 in respect of the type of fuel or fuels carried by the vessel
- is maintained in accordance with AS 1851
- must be not less than the minimum approved size for the amount of flammable liquid carried.

Minimum size for Fire Extinguishers

- in the case of a vessel carrying not more than 115 litres of flammable liquid—0.9 kg;
- in the case of a vessel carrying more than 115 litres but not more than 350 litres of flammable liquid—2.0 kg;
- in the case of a vessel carrying more than 350 litres but not more than 695 litres of flammable liquid—4.5 kg;
- in the case of a vessel carrying more than 695 litres of flammable liquid—9.0 kg.

(Note: having multiple small extinguishers does not satisfy the size requirement – ie if you are required to carry a 2kg extinguisher, you must carry 1 x 2kg fire extinguisher, not 2 x 1kg fire extinguishers. However, if you are carrying the required size fire extinguisher, you may also carry additional smaller fire extinguishers)

Hope this helps!

Kind Regards

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