

Safety Recommendations for Vessels

Use this checklist below as a rubric for your own operations and add to it where necessary.

No.	Element	Recommendation
1	Boating EAPs	<p>Establish EAPs to cover all possible situations, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. lost or incapacitated vessel; 2. loss or breakdown of communications; 3. fire on board (**in some territories, these must be drilled monthly and logged**); 4. injuries on board; 5. man overboard (**in some territories, these must be drilled monthly and logged**); 6. safe recovery of injured divers 7. weather-related situations; 8. beach-launch accidents; 9. beach-recovery accidents; 10. capsize or collision damage; 11. abandon ship (**in some territories, these must be drilled monthly and logged**); 12. hijack or piracy; 13. encounters with maritime authorities; 14. aggressive behavior by crew, dive staff, or customers; 15. emergency evacuation of passengers or crew. <p>Conduct a risk assessment to determine if there are any other emergency situations that could occur, based on your specific circumstances, vessel, location, crew compliments and types of divers that you may accommodate.</p>
2	Life jackets	Boats should have at least one life jacket per person on board. The jackets' condition should be monitored periodically.
3	Visual distress signaling devices	<p>Boats should have a combination of dedicated signaling devices, including flares, flags, and electric lights.</p> <p>There should be at least three devices that can be used night and day.</p> <p>Some pyrotechnic devices may meet both night and day use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For nighttime use: (parachute) flares or distress lights • For daytime use: distress flags, combination flares, or smoke marker <p>Expiration dates should be strictly monitored.</p>
4	Portable fire extinguishers	<p>Portable extinguishers, of an appropriate class for dealing with fires involving flammable liquids, vapors, and other combustible materials, are required. At a minimum, there should be one per engine and at least one for each of the living spaces and one at the helm within reach of the captain.</p> <p>Local regulations may dictate the exact numbers and types of extinguishers required.</p> <p>Monthly maintenance inspections should be done by the owner. Regular inspections, on an annual or other basis as required, should be done by an approved service company. Service expiration dates must be monitored.</p>

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5	Sound signaling devices	Sound signaling devices are needed for periods of reduced visibility.
6	Flashlights and portable spotlights	If the vessel is not fitted with navigation lights, portable lighting should be carried on board. Spare batteries and bulbs should be stowed aboard in sealed containers. Portable spotlights for searches may be powered from the boat's electrical system.
7	Flags or day shapes	An alpha signal flag, or another appropriate day shape, should be displayed if the vessel is stationary, such as during diving. A diver-down flag should be displayed whenever divers are in the water.
8	Radio	Boats should have a marine radio (VHF or suitable equivalent based on your circumstances) with at least two spare channels appropriate to the area of operation and with a selective calling system.
9	Nautical charts, magnetic compass, and/or GPS device	Manual aids to navigation are required. Digital aids to navigation may be used, but do not replace the requirement for manual aids. Charts need to be updated regularly, as may be required Onboard illumination is necessary for operation after sunset.
10	Non-slip surfaces	Have a plan to minimize risk of slips and falls via engineering controls (such as non-slip surfaces), administrative controls (such as verbal cautionary instructions during each activity) or protective equipment (such as providing non-slip shoes).
11	Ladder safety	Install suitable and appropriately designed ladders for safe exit from the water. Slips, bumps, pinches, lacerations, amputations and challenging access are typical risks encountered on boat ladders, especially in rougher seas. Reiterate safety instructions and verbal reminders when guests are using dive ladders, especially in inclement weather.
12	Emergency medical equipment	Boats should have a first-aid kit, an emergency oxygen unit, and other required life-support equipment, as appropriate given the distance from help and the level of care you are qualified to give. Medical equipment should be unexpired, checked and serviced regularly, and logged monthly.
13	Emergency oxygen	All dive operators should have an emergency oxygen kit onboard. Consider the occupant capacity of your vessel and ensure that you have enough oxygen to last the duration of emergency travel between the dive site and nearest qualified care. Be aware that more than one diver may be injured. Kits should be inspected prior to each outing to ensure the oxygen cylinder is full and all components are operational. Kits should be regularly serviced, monitored for expiration dates and have sufficient spares of important components (masks, seals, etc.).
14	Fluids	All vessels should have adequate drinking water on board. Dive professionals and crew should be trained in the recognition and prevention of dehydration and ensure frequent hydration by all onboard.
15	Equipment security	All equipment should be securely stored to prevent it from falling onto and potentially injuring crew or customers, and to prevent equipment damage or loss.

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16	Sunlight and exposure	Eye and skin protection should be provided to the crew and customers to prevent sunburn or temporary blindness. Depending on the duration of the charter, providing shade may be advisable.
17	Dive computers and planning	Operators should ensure that dive computers (or gauge, timer and appropriate schedule) are available and utilized by all divers. The maximum dive time and depth for each site should be established before divers enter the water.
18	Capsize line and dry boxes	This is applicable especially to smaller vessels, in case they capsize. Water-tight containers should include essential items that can't get wet (e.g., flares, survival gear, communication devices, emergency equipment, etc.)
19	Grab lines	Small grab lines are appropriate for smaller vessels not fitted with ladders. Tag lines are useful tools for almost any sized vessel. These should be visible and equipped with a buoy to keep them afloat. Monitor tag lines and consider making their attachment points adjustable, as changing currents can position the tag line in places unsafe for divers to be (e.g. underneath the boat).
20	Boat hook	Boats should have a boat hook of a length suitable for securing divers or others in the water.
21	Tool kit	Boats should have a tool kit appropriate to the vessel (e.g., including a pump on vessels that have any inflatable parts).
22	Spares kit	Boats should have a spares kit that includes all parts required to ensure a safe return to shore.
23	Boat license and registration	Boats should have all appropriate licenses, registrations, permissions, park or reserve permits, and any other documents that may be required. Waterproofing or dry-storing these documents is recommended.