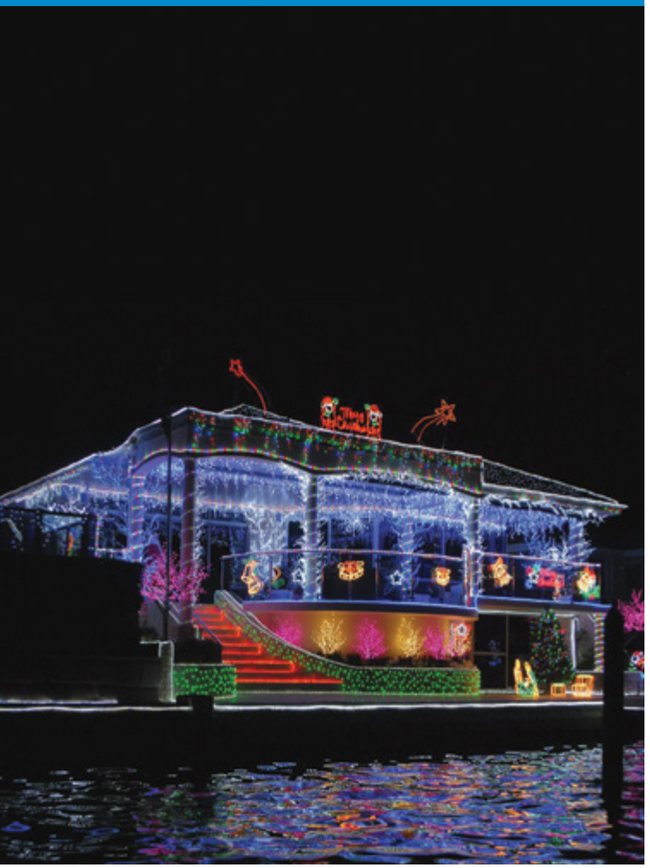
Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Transport**
and Major Infrastructure

Mandurah
Canal Navigation
Marine Safety



Cover photo: Courtesy MAPTO

YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE

November 2026

Navigation lights

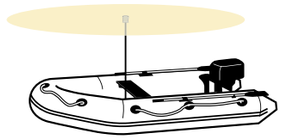
Navigation lights are required to be displayed from sunset to sunrise. Check that your navigational lights are working and are correct for your type of vessel.

Vessels may be inspected by authorised officers before and during a trip. Vessels with no navigational lights or deficient ones may be fined and will be directed to the nearest launch ramp.

Vessels are not to display any lights that cause interference or confusion to the required navigation lights or other vessels. Vessels can't display spot lights at any time while navigating.

Vessels under 7 metres with a maximum speed of less than 7 knots

Power vessels of less than 7 metres in length whose maximum speed cannot exceed 7 knots shall exhibit a clearly visible, all round *(360°)* white light and if possible, separate or combined sidelights.

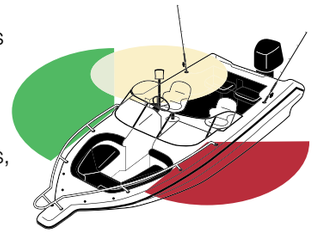


Vessels under 12 metres

Power vessels of less than 12 metres in length shall exhibit:

i) separate or combined sidelights and an all round white light; or

ii) separate or combined sidelights, a masthead light and a stern light *(see figure i)*.



Masthead or white all round light shall be positioned at least 1 metre above the sidelights.

Vessels 12 metres to 20 metres

Power vessels of more than 12 metres in length but less than 20 metres in length shall exhibit:

i) a masthead light, separate sidelights and stern light; or

ii) a masthead light, combined sidelights and stern light.

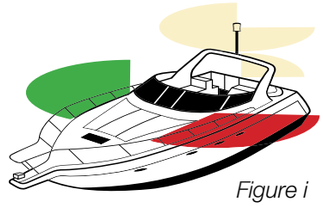
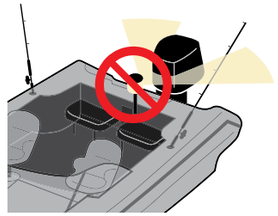


Figure i

The masthead light shall be positioned at least 2.5 metres above the gunwale. Combined sidelights shall be positioned at least 1 metre below the masthead light.



Check that there is nothing obscuring your vessel's navigation lights. The masthead light on many trailer boats is on an extending pole at the stern, and it does not lift high enough to be visible over the cabin top or windscreen. This is dangerous and unacceptable.

Vessels that must be registered

If your boat has a motor, or is fitted for one, it must be registered.

Tender vessels

Tender vessels are not to be used for viewing the Christmas lights.

Flares

There are severe penalties for the improper use of flares. It is an offence to use or set off a distress signal flare except in the case of an emergency.

Courtesy

Navigation of the many canals at Mandurah is increasingly busy, particularly at Christmas to view the lights on display. Canals easily become congested and skippers are required to be patient and courteous.

Contact details

Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure
Email: Ed.Boat@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: transport.wa.gov.au/imarine
Customer Contact Centre: 13 11 56

Police
Emergency: 000
Water Police: 9442 8600
Mandurah: 9581 0222
Pinjarra: 9531 1666

Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Marine Rescue Western Australia
Emergency contact: VHF 16
Marine Rescue Mandurah

Boating Weather Forecasts
Boating weather: 1300 815 916
Website: bom.gov.au

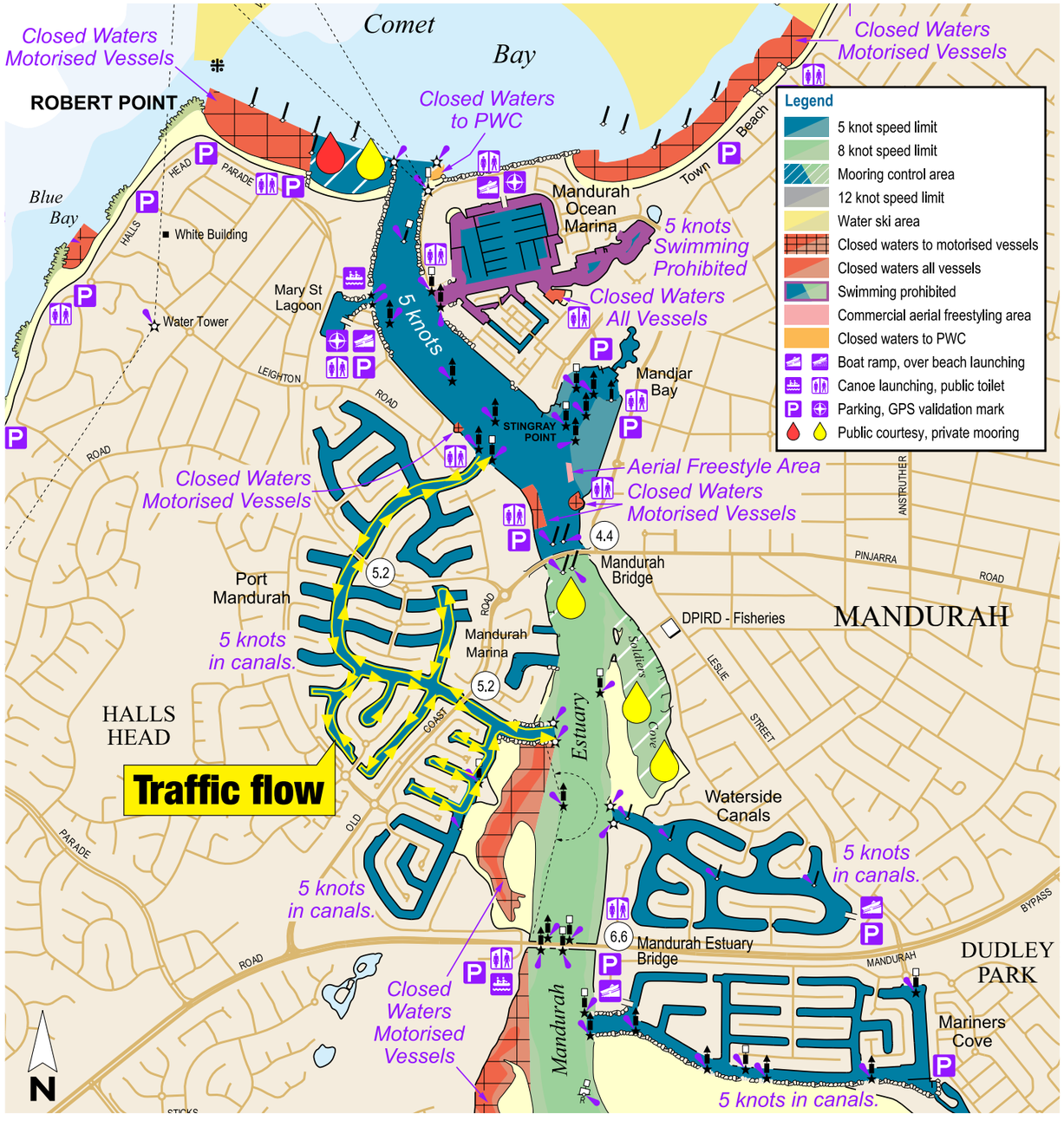
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For further information go to
transport.wa.gov.au/boatingguides
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Traffic flow

All vessels are to stay to the right of channels and avoid crossing channels to enter opposite canal entries. All vessels must turn right when entering and exiting the canals to avoid crossing situations and collisions.

General speed limit restrictions

It is illegal, in any navigable waters to drive a motor boat at a speed exceeding 8 knots:

- through an arch of a bridge
- in or through a mooring area;
- within 15 metres of a vessel underway;
- within 50 metres of -
  - (i) a moored vessel;
  - (ii) a person in the water;
  - (iii) a jetty or wharf;
  - (iv) a river bank or low water mark.

Wake and wash

Vessels must travel at idle speed to ensure wash is reduced and kept at a minimum.

Anchoring

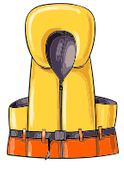
Anchoring is not permitted within the canal areas. Please keep the channels clear.

Safety equipment

- **Required:** RST, lifejackets (one suitable for each person on board, minimum level 100).
- **Recommended:** EPIRB or PLB, flares or EVDS, marine radio, fire extinguisher and a bailer/bilge.
- **Before departure:** check that your navigation lights are working, are correct for your type of vessel and carry spare bulbs/fuses.

Lifejackets

You need an approved lifejacket for each person on a registrable vessel on the water. When more than 400 metres from shore in unprotected water lifejackets must be worn by children (1-12 years) and by those on personal water craft and vessels less than 4.8 metres.



On water patrols

Marine Officers and Water Police will be patrolling the area; so if you are unsure of anything feel free to wave a patrol vessel down for assistance. In the event of an emergency, you can contact officers on Channel 16 VHF.

Alcohol

It is an offence for anyone operating or in charge of a vessel to exceed the drug and alcohol limits contained in legislation.

Recreational Skipper's Ticket

A person in charge of a recreational vessel with a motor of **6 horsepower or less** is not required to hold a Recreational Skipper's Ticket (RST).

A person in charge of a recreational vessel with a motor **greater than 6 horsepower** is required to hold an RST and carry it when boating.

Age restrictions

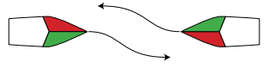
You must be 14 years or older to apply for an RST.

RST holders over 14 but under 16 years of age are restricted to operating during daylight hours at a speed less than 8 knots.

Collision regulations

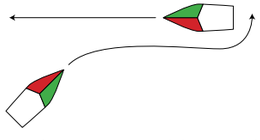
- You must keep a good lookout and be ready to give way to other vessels if necessary.
- If you must give way, do so early and make a move which will be obvious to the other vessel.
- Always keep to the right hand side of channels.
- The golden rule: "look to the right, give way to the right, turn to the right and stay to the right".

Vessels approaching head on



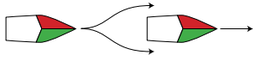
Each vessel alters course to starboard and passes port to port.

Power driven vessels crossing



The vessel approaching from the right or starboard side has the right of way. However, if the give way vessel does not give way, the vessel with right of way must take action to avoid a collision. This rule does not relieve the give way vessel of its obligation to keep clear.

Overtaking



The overtaking vessel is required to keep out of the way of the vessel being overtaken. This applies to both sail and power boats. If a sailing vessel is overtaking a power boat the sailing boat must keep out of the way of the power boat until it is past and clear.