



Do I need an RST to drive a 'hire & drive' vessel?

DEFINITIONS:

Hire & drive vessel means one which is let for hire or reward which the driver uses only for recreation. It includes a vessel an accommodation provider makes available for guests or tenants to use. Hire & drive vessels can be any type of vessel, such as a houseboat, party pontoon, dinghy, electric hydrofoil, motorised surfboard, PWC, catamaran, canoe or kayak.

PWC means a personal watercraft, also known as a jetski. It includes motorised surfboards and PWC with aerial attachments such as Flyboards, Jetlevs and Jetovators.

POLICY:

A driver of a registered recreational vessel with engine power greater than 6HP must hold a Recreational Skipper's Ticket (RST).

In addition, the Department strongly recommends that a driver of a hire & drive vessel with engine power greater than 4.5kW (6HP) hold an RST, even if it's a domestic commercial vessel regulated by the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012*.

There are some exceptions:

1. The vessel is **part of a tour** led by a suitably experienced and competent guide. *or*
2. The area of the hire and drive operation is entirely within a well-defined area and **within the line of sight** of the hire & drive vessel owner, and the owner ensures:
 - a) the area of operation is communicated to the driver;
 - b) appropriate safety measures such as rescue vessels are in place to respond in a timely manner to incidents;
 - c) an appropriate safety briefing is given, covering factors such as local navigational hazards, and specific handling characteristics and limitations of the vessel being hired; and
 - d) if the vessel is a PWC, it has both a kill switch lanyard and a remotely-operated cut-out switch which is effective over the entire area of operation. *or*
3. The area of the hire and drive operation is entirely within a well-defined area **in an inland waterway** (e.g. river, lake, dam etc) but not always within the line of sight of the owner, and the owner ensures:
 - a) the area of operation is communicated to the driver;
 - b) appropriate safety measures such as rescue vessels are in place to respond in a timely manner to incidents;
 - c) an appropriate safety briefing is given, covering factors such as local navigational hazards, and specific handling characteristics and limitations of the vessel being hired; and
 - d) appropriate communication devices are available and plans are established to enable calls for assistance.

Unless all of the conditions listed in Exception 1, 2 or 3 apply, the Department strongly recommends that a driver has an RST to drive a hire & drive vessel with engine power greater than 4.5kW (6HP).