

TITLE: MARINE INCIDENT REPORTING	
Guideline Number: LS1472	Issue Date: 3 / October / 2007
Issue Status: 1.0	

PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines on the recording and reporting of marine incidents by lifesaving services and their lifeguards.

SCOPE:

This Guideline applies to the following:

- All government authorities and agencies and those organisations responsible for the management and operation of coastal environments; and
- Those organisations experienced in public safety and responsible for the provision of public safety services.

For example:

- Coastal/marine park authorities and managers
- Lifesaving service providers
- Lifeguards and lifeguard supervisors

This Guideline applies to coastal environments, including ocean coastline and saltwater waterways that open to the oceans surrounding Australia.

GUIDELINE DESCRIPTION:

1.0 Lifeguard incidents

- 1.1 Lifesaving powercraft are recognised by state and territory governments as marine vessels. Therefore, state and territory regulations should be adhered to in the case of the following occurring:
 - a. Damage to any marine vessel, e.g. collision
 - b. A near collision
 - c. Any injury caused to a person by a marine vessel
 - d. Any death by injury caused to a person by a marine vessel
- 1.2 A marine incident report **should** be completed for all of the above incidents. Failure to do so within 24 hours is a breach of the law and a penalty will apply as detailed below.
- 1.3 Lifeguards have a responsibility to operate within the state and territory guidelines and regulations. Not to do so can jeopardise marine safety, causing injury or death, and render the operator and club liable to criminal prosecution and civil litigation.
- 1.4 Lifeguards should know who the government-delegated authority for boating and small craft rules and regulations in their state or territory is, and as such who has the power to videotape and issue to any driver any infringements.
- 1.5 As a licensed operator, the licensed lifeguard should ensure that he or she is abiding by the law. Any fines imposed should be the responsibility of the operator. The lifesaving service should not be held responsible for unsafe operations

conducted by any employee or club member or cover any costs incurred through infringement fines.

2.0 Non-lifeguard related marine incidents

2.1 All states in Australia have Marine Acts that require owners and operators of vessels to report marine accidents and incidents to the police and/or the marine safety authority, in particular in the following instances:

- If, as a result of an accident involving a vessel, any person is injured or dies or any property is damaged or destroyed, the person in charge of the vessel must report, in person and without delay, full particulars of the accident to the nearest police station.
- The owner or master of a commercial vessel that is involved in an accident must report, in writing and without delay, to the marine safety authority full particulars of the accident.
- The owner or master of a commercial vessel that is involved in an incident in which any vessel or person is placed at risk of damage or injury must report, in writing and without delay, to the marine safety authority full particulars of the incident.

2.2 A maximum penalty may be imposed on owners and operators who fail to report an accident or incident.

2.3 The Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) has a Confidential Marine Reporting Scheme under the Navigation (Confidential Marine Reporting Scheme) Regulations 2004 (<http://scaletext.law.gov.au/html/pastereg/3/1831/top.htm>) with the aim to improve safety in Australian waters by enabling the ATSB to receive, assess and act on confidential reports to prevent or reduce the risks of marine accidents.

DEFINITIONS:

Incident means ‘something that happens or occurs, usually in conjunction with something else’.

Lifeguard means ‘an appropriately trained and qualified individual who volunteers or is employed at bathing beaches, pools, etc. to prevent drowning, provide injury prevention and response services, and to save people from drowning’.

Lifesaving service means ‘an organised and structured service comprised of lifeguards and appropriate rescue and first aid equipment supported by a coordinated backup team’.

Marine means ‘of the sea or ocean’.

REFERENCES:

Australian Coastal Public Safety Guidelines

- LS1470: Routine activity recording and reporting

Confidential Marine Reporting Scheme, Australian Transport Safety Bureau,
<http://www.atsb.gov.au/marine/cmrs/index.cfm>

Guidelines for safe recreational water environments. Volume 1 – Coastal and fresh waters. World Health Organization, Geneva, 2003.

Incident Report Log, Surf Life Saving Australia.

Lifeguard Service Operating Procedures Version 1, Surf Life Saving Queensland, February 2005.

Surf Life Saving Australia, 2003. Surf lifesaving training manual, 32nd edition. Elsevier Australia Pty Ltd.

APPENDICES:

Nil