

Lifejacket requirements in South Australia

New regulations relating to wearing lifejackets will come into effect from 1 December 2017 and all boaters need to know what to do to make sure that they, and their crew comply.

Special provisions for children

When a lifejacket is required to be worn by children less than 12 years of age or 40 kg, the lifejacket must not be of the type that inflates.

Motor boats less than 4.8 metres in length:

Everyone on board the vessel must wear a lifejacket suitable for their area of operation and activity, at all times when underway or at anchor.

Boats 4.8 metres to 12 metres in length - with or without an engine:

Children of or under 12 years of age must wear a lifejacket at all times when on the open deck, at all times when underway or at anchor.

In circumstances of heightened risk, each occupant in the open area of a vessel of not less than 4.8 m but not more than 12 m in length must, at all times while the vessel is underway or at anchor, wear a lifejacket level 100 or above in unprotected waters or a level 50 or 50S in semi-protected or protected waters.

- When operating alone
- When operating after sunset or before sunrise
- When the boat is disabled
- When crossing an ocean bar
- At times of restricted visibility
- When in an area subject to gale, storm force, hurricane force, thunderstorm or severe weather warning from the Bureau of Meteorology
- When reasonably directed to do so by the master of the vessel.

Tender vessels

If a motor vessel is a tender to another vessel the occupants must wear a lifejacket in accordance with the requirements set out above, in accordance with the boat length.

Dragon boats

When operating in unprotected waters all persons aboard must wear a lifejacket level 100, or level 50.

When operating in semi protected waters or protected waters, a level 100, 50 or 50S.

Other craft

Surf ski's, Paddleboards, including Stand-up paddleboards when operating on Protected Waters all persons aboard must wear a lifejacket of level 100, 50 or 50S.

When operating in semi protected waters more than 400 metres from shore, a level 100 or level 50.

It is important that each person on board has an approved lifejacket suitable for the activity and area that they intend to boat in. If unsure go to www.ondeck.sa.gov.au

The waters in South Australia are divided into 3 categories, which influence the type of lifejacket required – dependent on the activity.

PROTECTED WATERS

Inland waters other than Lakes Alexandrina and Albert - Level 50s or higher – depending on the activity

- Boating – 50S or higher
- Personal water craft (PWC) – level 50 or 50S only
- Water-skiing – Level 50 or 50S
- Stand up paddleboard, canoe, kayak, surf-ski or surfboard – 50S or higher

SEMI PROTECTED WATERS

Waters inshore of a line 2 nautical miles seaward of the low water mark of a coast or of the banks of Lakes Alexandrina and Albert

- Boating – 50S or higher
- PWC – level 50 or 50S only
- Canoe or kayak – 50S or higher
- Sailboard, Kiteboard
 - < 400 metres from shore – 50S or higher
 - > 400 metres from shore – 100 or higher

UNPROTECTED WATERS

Waters greater than 2 nautical miles seaward of the low water mark of a coast or of the banks of Lakes Alexandrina and Albert

- Boating – level 100 or higher
- Canoe, kayak, rowboat – Level 50 or higher with whistle attached

Level 150

A level 150 (also referred to as PFD Type 1) provides greater buoyancy support when a higher level of performance is needed.

- May be inflatable and if so must be serviced every 12 months or in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Designed to keep you in a 'face up' floating position
- Suitable for general boating in all waters
- Not to be worn on PWC



Level 100

A level 100 (also referred to as PFD Type 1) is designed to keep you in a safe 'face up' floating position.

- They are the minimum requirement for semi protected and unprotected waters
- They can be worn for general boating in all waters
- Not to be worn on PWC



Level 50

Level 50 (also referred to as PFD Type 2) have less buoyancy than a level 100 and will not rotate you to a 'face up' floating position.

- Normally used for sailing, kayaking, canoeing, wind surfing and on PWC



Level 50S

A level 50S (also referred to as PFD Type 3) has similar buoyancy characteristics to the level 50 but is manufactured in a wider range of colours.

- Favoured by waterskiers, wakeboarders, kayakers and canoeists
- They may also be available as a built in garment (eg waterskiing wet suit)



Make sure your lifejacket fits!

It's a good idea to try the lifejacket on in the shop before you buy it.

- Choose a lifejacket for your weight range and make sure the size/cut of the lifejacket is suitable. It should fit snugly without being confining or riding up on your body.
- Make sure the neck section does not ride up around your head.
- A crotch strap will prevent your lifejacket from sliding up around your neck and will prevent you from falling out of the bottom of the lifejacket, which is especially important for children.
- Choose a lifejacket that is appropriate for the location you will be boating in and for the activity.

Once you have purchased the lifejacket and before you go boating, put the lifejacket on and become familiar with the flotation characteristics in a controlled environment such as a swimming pool.

Get a feel for the lifejacket by moving about, swimming and floating. Try jumping from the side of the pool into the water – you will see the need for a firm, fully fitted and correctly worn lifejacket.



Lifejacket checklist

- ✓ Do you have the right lifejacket for the area you will be boating in?
- ✓ Are your lifejackets suited to your activity?
- ✓ Do you have enough lifejackets for everyone that will be on board and are they the right size?
- ✓ Are your lifejackets in good condition and maintained according to the manufacturers instructions?
- ✓ If you are boating at night, do your lifejackets have reflective tape to help others see you better? Consider fitting water activated lights to your lifejackets.

A label for a compliant lifejacket will include the following:

- Manufacturers details
- Certification information (Australian Standards)
- Year of manufacture
- Details on limitations of use
- Device level or type of lifejacket
- How to wear, care for and operate your lifejacket
- Body mass, size and buoyancy information



sa.gov.au/boatingmarine



Government of South Australia
Department of Planning,
Transport and Infrastructure

Which lifejacket do I need?

RESPECTING OUR WATERS

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Be safe. Wear it.



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