

Single handed operations carrying passengers

This guideline is for single handed operators that carry passengers. Other small operators carrying passengers may also find content useful.

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This document is uncontrolled if printed. Please refer to the Maritime New Zealand website for the latest version.

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1. About this guideline

This guideline is for single handed operators that carry passengers. It is intended to encourage consideration of the specific risks associated with single handed operations, including in an emergency. Content will also be relevant to other small operators.

This guideline was developed after a death on a fishing charter. Maritime NZ's investigation highlighted the risk involved in relying on passengers to contribute to an emergency response when an operation is run by a single person.

This guideline should be used in conjunction with other Maritime NZ guidance regarding Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS) and the Health and Safety and Work Act 2015 (HSWA).

Disclaimer

These guidelines provide information and explanations about the requirements set out in legislation, but are not a substitute for the law itself.

This guideline is intended to prompt consideration and increase awareness of the risks associated with single handed operations that carry passengers, particularly in an emergency. It does not necessarily cover all the risks that need to be considered in relation to a single handed operation and operators need to consider the risks specific to their operation. Operators must ensure that they meet their duties under HSWA.

maritimenz.govt.nz/rules

2. Emergency preparedness

Commercial operators need to have safety systems in place to manage the risks specific to their operation.

The Maritime NZ *MTOP guidance – template* document prompts some of the considerations that should be given to operations carrying passengers. This section of the guideline outlines possible scenarios to help drill further down. It is intended to prompt discussion and encourage robust risk identification and management.

Scenarios

Person overboard

To prepare for a person overboard scenario, ask yourself:

- How will you deal with a person overboard scenario:
 - when the vessel is at anchor, or
 - when the vessel is underway?
- Do passengers know what they need to do in either scenario?
- Have you pointed out the location of life-saving equipment? Is it accessible and easy to use?
- Have the passengers been briefed on what they need to do e.g. continuously point at the person in the water?
- How will you bring your vessel alongside a person overboard?
- How will you recover a person overboard?

Fire

To prepare for a fire scenario, ask yourself:

- Do passengers know to tell the skipper straight away if there is a fire?
- Do passengers know to avoid an enclosed space if there is a fire?
- Do they know the location of fire-fighting equipment?
- Do they know which equipment to use for which type of fire?

3. Emergency preparedness (continued)

Abandon ship

To prepare for an abandon ship scenario, ask yourself:

- Do passengers know where the lifejackets are?
- Do they know how to fit lifejackets and put them on correctly?
- Have you pointed out the location of life-saving equipment and how to use it?
- Do passengers know how to safely get off the vessel e.g. into a life raft if they need to abandon ship?
- Do passengers know what to do if they end up in the water e.g. stay with the boat, cold water huddle?

Incapacitated skipper

You may also want to consider the following when developing your safety briefing:

- Do passengers know how they can assist you if needed?
- Do passengers know how to stop/anchor the vessel if needed?
- Do they know how to call for help if the skipper can't?
- Is there a VHF radio guide that is visible to passengers?

Other factors to consider

There are other risk factors that may need to be considered when an operation is run single handed:

- Will passengers need assistance during boarding/disembarking?
- How will you make sure the vessel is well secured for boarding/disembarking and that there is always someone at the controls/able to make the vessel immediately safe if there are any issues?
- How will you make sure that passengers stay sitting/in a safe zone while securing the vessel?
- How will you ensure your vessel is secure for sea (gates and handrails closed and in place) and remains secure for sea during the voyage?
- How will you manage passengers who are standing close to the edge of the vessel while fishing?
- How will you manage passengers during a voyage if needed e.g. if they are moving around the vessel, seasick, creating distraction or consuming alcohol?
- When will you screen passengers before departing to ensure that the lifejackets on board will fit and to identify any high risk passengers e.g. small children/elderly people?

3. Safety briefing

There will be no time to give instructions in an emergency. Providing a clear safety briefing is a good way to make sure passengers know what to do in an emergency.

Your safety briefing will need to be tailored to your operation and may include, as appropriate:

- what to do in different emergency scenarios;
- the location of safety equipment and how to use it e.g. anchor, radio, lifesaving equipment;
- any no-go zones for passengers;
- any safety requirements e.g. passengers to remain seated while the vessels is underway, requirement to wear lifejackets;
- asking the passengers questions to confirm e.g. 'Who can tell me where the life ring is?', and;
- the opportunity for passengers to ask any questions.

You will need to tailor the safety briefing so that it is specific to the risks associated with your operation.

You may also want to consider the best way to communicate with passengers whose first language is not English to ensure that they understand the safety briefing, e.g. providing a written version of the safety briefing in the relevant foreign language.

Another way to prepare passengers for an emergency is by undertaking drills before or during the voyage, as appropriate.

Remember to check that you are meeting your duties under HSWA.

4. Background info - Safety management systems

Safety management systems are in place to ensure that commercial operators take responsibility for the daily safe operation of their vessels. Commercial operations carrying passengers need to comply with the relevant maritime transport operator safety system and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015.

Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS)

As part of developing a Maritime Transport Operator Plan (MTOPlan) under the Maritime Operator Safety System (MOSS), an operator will need to identify the hazards and safety risks specific to their operation. The MTOPlan will identify appropriate controls and the operator will need to ensure that everyone knows their responsibilities and follows procedure. Hazard identification and development of controls will be part of continuous improvement.

For more information about MOSS requirements, please refer to the Maritime NZ guideline *Developing an operator plan* on the Maritime NZ website:

maritimenz.govt.nz/moss

Health and Safety at Work Act 2015

The Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) sets out a framework of duties for businesses, senior leaders of businesses, workers and other people who might be present in the workplace. The guiding principle is that workers and others in the workplace should be given the highest level of protection against harm to their health, safety and welfare from work risks so far as is reasonably practicable. The duties imposed by HSWA apply regardless of the size/type of operation and the safety system under which it operates.

For more information about HSWA, please refer to the resources on the Maritime NZ website:

maritimenz.govt.nz/hswa

Other safety systems

Depending on the vessel size and/or type of operation, a different safety system may apply. Regardless of the safety system, operators must undertake a full risk assessment and put appropriate controls in place to manage the specific risks associated with their operation.

5. Contact us for help

If you need more information about the requirements for your application, visit the commercial safety section of our website.

maritimenz.govt.nz/commercial/safety

If you can't find the information you need, send us an email or contact your local maritime officer. Tell us what you need help with and remember to include your contact details (email address and phone numbers).

enquiries@maritimenz.govt.nz

Or you can phone us toll free:

0508 22 55 22

Tell us what you need help with and remember to include your contact details (email address and phone numbers).