



Unattended boats

The practice of divers leaving vessels unattended can be very dangerous. The Department strongly recommends that a responsible person stays on board at all times to raise the alarm if the diver is overdue or to attend to the vessel should it start to drift.

In an emergency

A 24-hour, seven-day week service operated from the Water Police Coordination Centre in North Fremantle monitors marine radio channels 27MHz channel 88, VHF channels 16 and 67 distress and calling frequencies.

Fremantle Hospital at Alma Street Fremantle, coordinates the treatment of all cases of civilian diving accidents. Call (08) 9431 3333 and immediately state that the call is about a diving related accident.

Before diving you and your buddy should:

- Inform** a friend of your dive site and your estimated time of return.
- Establish** entry and exit points and techniques.
- Choose** a course to follow, taking currents and other factors into consideration.
- Consult** dive tables, agree on a maximum time and depth limit.
- Establish** and review communication procedures and revise hand signals.
- Agree** on an air pressure for returning to the surface, usually 50 bar.
- Decide** what to do if separated.
- Discuss** what to do in an emergency.

Further information

For further information about diving contact your nearest Department office:

Metropolitan

- Marine Safety Hotline..... 1300 863 308
- Fremantle..... 9216 8999
- Email:..... marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au
- Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/imarine

Regional

- Broome..... 9192 0200
- Karratha..... 9159 6900
- Exmouth..... 9949 2079
- Carnarvon..... 9941 1830
- Geraldton..... 9956 0111
- Bunbury..... 9792 6666
- Albany..... 9892 7333
- Kalgoorlie..... 9022 5999
- Esperance..... 9076 2100

Caution Diver Below



MARINE
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Diving is increasingly popular in Western Australia with tens of thousands of people involved in SCUBA (*Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus*) and Hookhah diving each year.

Regulations are in place to ensure the safety of divers. However, as the State's marine authority the Department of Transport recommends divers and skippers be extra cautious and adopt a number of recommended practices to further enhance safety and preserve lives on the water.

The following information is provided to help divers and skippers share the water safely.



Diving flag

A boat with divers working from it must carry the appropriate day or night signals. The daytime signal for divers is an International Code Flag "A". The flag must be at least 750mm long and 600mm wide. Divers operating without a vessel, for example from a jetty, must also display the International Code Flag "A" of the same minimum size.



You can choose to show this flag from a buoy, in which case the minimum size must be 300mm in length and 200mm in width. The flag must be clearly visible to all vessels operating in the vicinity.

By night the diver's vessel, as well as appropriate lights such as an anchor light, must show three all-round lights in a vertical line: the top and bottom lights red, the middle one white.

People engaged in night diving without a vessel must display a yellow-orange flashing light that can be seen from a minimum distance of 200 metres.

As a dive flag is only a visual indication to other vessels and will not automatically prevent other craft from venturing into a dive area, it's recommended divers always listen out for other craft before surfacing, and surface as near to, their vessel as possible.

Vessels to keep clear

All vessels must keep at least 50 metres clear of boats, buoys or areas showing diving signals.

Where it is not possible to keep 50 metres clear or when in the vicinity of a diving signal, all vessels must proceed at safe speed and with due caution until well clear and keep a good look-out for persons in the water.



All vessels must navigate so as to avoid injury to the diver or interference with the vessel or floating object.

The Department recommends where possible skippers maintain a distance of more than 100 metres from a vessel or buoy displaying a dive flag.

Diving near commercial lobster pots

It should be noted that if an International Code Flag "A" is within 50 metres of commercial lobster fishing pots, then the fishing operator has the legal right to go about their business.