



5.1 General Operation

- Noise Annoys – don't operate continuously in an area where houses or other boats are present
- Be aware of the environmental impact your PWC may have, and don't operate over sea grasses in shallow water
- Allow plenty of room to stop
- When near boat ramps, other vessels, and the shore, be aware of the wake your PWC puts out and minimize it by slowing to an idle
- Ensure passengers are holding on and safely accommodated before departing. The best place for passengers to hold on when facing forward is the straps of your PFD.
- If you are training a new driver and sitting behind them, connect the safety lanyard to yourself, not to them
- Practice reversing to ensure familiarity
- Practice turning at slow and higher speeds to become familiar with the craft

5.2 Propulsion

Propulsion is achieved by the engine driving a powerful pump which sucks up water from underneath the craft thru the jet pump intake grate. This water passes thru an impellor, which pressurises the water and forces it out a jet nozzle at the stern of the craft.



No-one should stand directly behind the jet nozzle within 5 metres when the craft takes off.

5.3 Controls



5.4 Maintenance

The Owners Manual of your PWC will describe important maintenance and operator features. It should be read and understood by the owner and operator(s). It is important to ensure your PWC is in good order by inspecting key features before you leave home or the ramp, mooring or wharf. The major causes of breakdown are engine failure, fuel shortage or contamination, mechanical failure and battery failure.

Check:

- Steering control to ensure working properly
- Fuel and oil supplies. Top up as required
- There is no hint of fumes in the engine compartment before trying to start the engine
- All hoods and compartment covers are attached securely
- Battery is secure and terminals clean
- The pump/intake area is free of debris
- For cracks and other damage to the hull
- The throttle is in proper working order
- The lanyard cut-off switch is in proper working order and is attached to your wrist or PFD
- Tools and tow-ropes are on board in case of break down
- Speak with your dealer regarding fitting a towing tap to prevent water ingress when being towed
- Before flushing the motor, consult your owners manual for the flushing process
- Wake or wave jumping is not recommended by most PWC manufacturers due to the possibility of back injuries

5.5 Trip Planning

Check the weather before you go out

www.bom.gov.au

- Ensure you have sufficient drinking water and fuel for the trip.
- Let a responsible person know your trip details and when you intend to return
- Make sure you know how to handle the PWC in the water conditions likely to be encountered
- Go with another PWC for backup purposes
- Be aware of speed restrictions and local rules
- Keep a lookout at all times and always look behind before you turn
- Alcohol. Waves, wind and weather multiply the effects of alcohol
- If your PWC experiences difficulties, return to shore. If this is not possible stay with your PWC until help arrives. A PWC is easier for a rescuer to see than a person in the water.
- Always exercise care, courtesy, and commonsense
- Never allow anyone to place their hands, hair or feet near the jet pump intake. Serious injury or even drowning could occur



- Keep clear of the jet nozzle and never allow anyone to stand near so as to allow jet thrust to enter body cavities as severe injury can result.



- Attach a bow line to PWC when launching from trailer

5.6 Minimum Starting Depth

Ensure the PWC is in minimum .6 metre before starting, otherwise sand and debris may be sucked up by the impellor and damage it.

5.7 Fuelling

- Fuel up on land so as to avoid spillage and polluting the waterway
- Fill slowly to avoid a spill and do not overflow
- Use absorbent material to collect any overflow.
- Never place those materials into the PWC or the water

5.8 Steering

Most PWC have a steerable nozzle at the stern through which water is forced, propelling the craft. The direction in which the nozzle is aimed is controlled by the handle bar or steering wheel. The nozzle is located at the aft end of the pump housing and the direction that it is pointed controls the direction of the exiting water. Refer to your PWC owner's manual for more specific operating instructions.

For steering control, power to the pump must be maintained. If the engine is allowed to idle or shut down during a turn all power will be lost and the PWC will continue to move in the same direction regardless of any movement of the steering controls. ie.. If you back off the throttle the steering capability of the PWC will lessen.

Give yourself plenty of room and in a safe environment become familiar with the steering features of your craft at different throttle levels.

5.9 Capsize

Most manufacturers have placed a decal at the rear or bottom of the craft that indicates the direction to roll the PWC to an upright position. If no decal exists, check your owner's manual. Many PWCs must be turned upright in a particular direction, or water will enter the motor causing serious damage.

5.10 Re-Boarding

When re-boarding the craft from the water, always approach the PWC from behind. Do not board whilst the engine is running to avoid the dangers of straps/ long hair etc being sucked into the impellor, and also the dangers caused by water expulsion from the jet nozzle. Pull yourself carefully aboard, making sure to keep your weight centred on the craft.

Most new craft now come equipped with a drop-down boarding ladder. Remember to reconnect the lanyard in order to start the engine.



NSW Licensing, Registration & Safety Equipment Regulations

NSW

Licensing

PWC operators must hold a NSW Personal Watercraft Licence as a separate additional licence to their Powerboat Licence. The minimum age to obtain a General PWC Licence is 16. Young Adult PWC Licences are available for persons aged from 12 to less than 16 years. A PWC licence is available for either 12 months or 3 years.

Unlicensed persons are not permitted to operate a recreational PWC.

A separate fee paid to NSW Maritime is required to obtain the PWC Licence. Licences expire if not renewed.

NB.. The Statement of Competency issued at the completion of the course is not a licence. It needs to be presented to Maritime within 12 months of course completion to obtain the licence. The Statement of Competency becomes void after 12 months and complete re-assessment is required, along with payment of an additional assessment fee.

It is a condition of every PWC licence holder to carry their PWC licence when operating a PWC and be able to produce the licence to any authorised officer. Owners of PWC must be able to identify the person driving the vessel at all times, even if the owner is not onboard the PWC at the time. PWC owners can be found guilty of an offence if they are unable to provide the identity of a person in control of their PWC.

Alcohol – the operator must be under 0.05 if aged over 18 years, and 0.00 if aged less than 18 years.

If you visit from interstate you are required to obtain a NSW PWC licence unless you hold a current PWC Licence issued by another state. Short term interstate visitors can use their boat licence equivalent, if that is all that is required to operate a PWC in their home state. (ie.. WA/TAS/SA residents).

Reporting Accidents

If a boating accident/incident occurs, it must be reported to NSW Maritime within 24 hours. Report forms are available at www.maritime.nsw.gov.au

Marine Pollution

It is an offence to deliberately discharge garbage, oil and other waste into the aquatic environment.

Registration

- All PWC's must be registered
- Registration numbers must be displayed towards the bow on both sides, at least 100mm high, clearly visible and in contrasting color to the craft. The numbers cannot be displayed on the control arm of the PWC
- Registration label must be displayed on the port side, adjacent to the letter 'N' of the registration numbers.



A PWC must have the Ride Smart sticker attached in a position in front of the operator, clearly visible to the operator at all times.

NSW

NSW Licensing, Registration & Safety Equipment Regulations

PWC Safety Equipment

PWC operators and passengers must wear an approved PFD at all times:



On Enclosed Waters either a PFD Type 1, 2 or 3

On Offshore or Open Waters either a PFD Type 1 or PFD Type 2



An Australian Standards approved EPIRB

ie.. not a Personal Locating Beacon, must be carried when operating more than 2 nautical miles off shore in open waters.

**NSW PWC Speed Limits and Distances Off**

All vessels must travel at a safe speed at all times. A safe speed is one which the vessel can be stopped in time to avoid any danger which may suddenly arise. When judging a safe speed you must consider a number of issues – visibility, other vessels, navigation hazards, wind wave and currents and the manoeuvrability of your vessel.

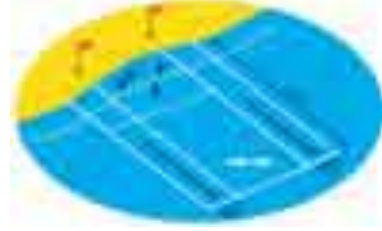
For your safety and the sake of everyone else using the water, do not exceed set speed limits.

The following distances must be maintained, or otherwise reduce speed to 10 knots or less:

- 60 metres from people in the water, surf skis, canoes, and other small non-powered craft
- 30 metres from any powered vessels, structures, boat ramps, jetties or pontoons, riverbank or shore

Surf Zones & Swimming areas

A designated surf zone is defined as the area extending 500 metres out from shore between surf patrol flags or signs.



A swimming area is defined as the area extending 60 metres out from shore between signs for swimmers. PWCs are not allowed to be operated in these zones and must keep 60 metres either side of their boundaries. Local signage may indicate further PWC restrictions in an area.



PWCs may not be ridden on Sydney Harbor.

PWC OPERATING RESTRICTIONS**1. PWC EXCLUSION Zones**

The operation of a PWC is prohibited on

- Sydney Harbor, incl the waters of all tidal bays, rivers and their tributaries (includes Parramatta River, Middle Harbour and the Lane Cove River).
- Darook Park at Port Hacking
- La Perouse at Botany Bay

Check your local NSW Maritime operations centre for details.

2. PWC RESTRICTION Zones

This zone encompasses the bays, rivers and other waterways within the Sydney basin area which lies between Port Hacking, Wamberal and the Blue Mountains but does not include waters off the coast. PWC are not permitted to be used for 'irregular driving' within 200 metres of the shoreline of the above. Examples of 'irregular driving' are:

- Driving in a circle or other pattern
- Weaving or diverting
- Surfing down or jumping over or across any swell, wave or wash.

This means that PWC are required to be operated generally in a straight line within 200 metres of the shoreline.

NSW Licensing, Registration & Safety Equipment Regulations

NSW

3. All Other Navigable Waters

In all navigable waters, other than 1 and 2 above, and including all of the NSW coast, 'irregular driving' is not permitted within 200 metres of the shoreline where one or more dwellings are visible within 200 metres of that shore.

Note: Re 2 and 3 above, 'irregular driving' does not apply when a PWC is towing a waterskier or aquaplaner. However, as soon as the towing activity is finished the 'no irregular driving' rule comes into affect.

After Sunset

PWCs are not allowed to operate between sunset and sunrise in NSW, regardless of whether navigation lights are fitted.

Local Signage

Keep a good lookout for signs on the shoreline and on the water indicating other areas where PWC are banned.



Water Traffic Rules

The operator must always keep a good lookout and travel at a safe speed.

Approaching vessels head on

Each vessel alters course to starboard (right) and passes port to port (left).

Give-way (powered vessels)

Give way to vessels approaching from your starboard (right) side, they have right of way.

Overtaking

Keep out of the way of the vessel being overtaken and pass safely either side.

Give-way (non powered vessels)

Give way to sailing vessels, canoes and other passive craft.

Towing People

When towing, the operator of the PWC must:

- Hold a PWC licence
- PWC must have an observer on board, who is minimum 16 years of age, or the holder of a Young Adult licence



Distance off when towing

When towing, the operator must keep both the PWC and the people being towed at least:

- 30 metres from vessels not towing skiers, the shore, jetties, moored vessels, pump inlets and bridges
- 60 metres from people in the water regardless of speed
- No more than 3 people can be towed at once

If towing aerial equipment (eg: paraflying) keep both the vessel and the people being towed at least 300 metres from any bridge, cable, wire, pipeline or structure.

Tow-in Surfing

- Tow-in surfing is only permitted on open waters at surf breaks only where there are no paddle surfers present
- Both the operator of the PWC and the surfer must have a current PWC licence, current First Aid certificate, and wear an appropriate lifejacket when the activity is being undertaken
- The operator may not tow more than one person at a time and must give way to all other boating or ocean recreation activities
- The operator of the PWC must maintain a distance of at least 200 metres from all vessels and people in the water.
- The PWC is to be equipped with a:
 - Rescue sled
 - Second kill-switch wrapped around the handlebars
 - Two-way communication device
 - Dive mask
 - Dive fins
 - Safety knife
 - Tool kit
 - Torch
 - Quick release floating tow rope min. length 7 metres
 - Bow line min. length 7 metres



Only PWC may be used for tow-in surfing. No observer is required on the PWC provided there is compliance with these conditions at all times.