



## 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](http://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.



## PWC Licensing, Registration and Safety Equipment Regulations

### QLD LICENSING

PWC operators must hold a Queensland Personal Watercraft Licence (QPWCL), as a separate additional licence to their Queensland Recreational Marine Drivers Licence (QRMDL). The minimum age to obtain a QPWCL is 16.

An unlicensed person may operate a PWC only if accompanied by a PWC licensed person who is able to take immediate control if required. Unlicensed operators are not permitted to tow a water skier.

The PWC licence is a life-time licence. A separate fee paid to Queensland Transport is required to obtain the PWCL.

NB.. The Statement of Competency issued at the completion of the course is not a licence. It needs to be presented to Queensland Transport within 6 months of course completion to obtain the licence. The Statement of Competency becomes void after 6 months and complete re-assessment is required, along with payment of an additional assessment fee.

Alcohol – the person in charge and whoever is driving must be under 0.05

If you visit from interstate you are required to obtain a QPWCL 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).

### Registration

- All PWC's must be registered
- Registration symbols must be displayed towards the bow on both sides, at least 100mm high, clearly visible and in contrasting color to the craft
- Registration label must be displayed on the port side, adjacent to the registration symbols



A PWC must have the following labels attached in a position clearly visible to the operator



### Safety Equipment

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

- In Smooth Water a PFD Type 2 or PFD Type 3



- In Partially Smooth and Offshore Waters a 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.



PWC operating between sunset and sunrise or at times of reduced visibility must carry a signalling device eg torch, and show navigation lights – sidelights and either an all-round white light or a stern and masthead light.

## QLD

## PWC Speed Limits and Distance Off Regulations

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.

Unless otherwise signed or designated, maximum speed on Smooth Water is 40 knots. (74 kilometres per hour.)

The following distances must be maintained, or otherwise reduce speed to 6 knots:

- 60 metres from people in the water
- 60 metres from anchored or moored boats, structures, boat ramps, jetties or pontoons
- 60 metres from shore
- 60 metres from boundary of a bathing reserve

Exceptions apply to '6 knots within the 60 metres' from the shore rule under the following conditions:

- The waterway is less than 120 metres wide, and
  - i) the PWC operator is operating the PWC as close as practical to a straight line to transit the area
  - ii) The PWC operator stays as close as practical to the centre of the waterway or a marked channel
- The PWC is being used in waterskiing/towing.

**In Coastal Waters**, freestyling or wave jumping is not permitted within 200 metres of the shore if there are dwellings within 100 metres from the shore line and these dwellings are visible to the operator.



Coastal waters do not include dams and inland waters, but do include tidal waters such as rivers and creeks.

### 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.

### Water Skiing

Normal water ski rules apply:

- PWC must have an observer, minimum age 12 years
- Operator must hold a PWC licence



### Freestyling

Freestyling is erratic and non-directional driving such as wake-jumping, donuts, figure 8's. Before you freestyle think about the impact on others, and move away from populated areas like beaches and residential areas.



There are many areas where freestyling is banned. Information on prohibited areas can be found on Maritime Safety Queensland's web site [www.msq.qld.gov.au](http://www.msq.qld.gov.au) under Waterways Managements Plans and Marine Zones.

Also refer to the EPA web site [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au) and local signage at boat ramps, and on the waterway's signs which may indicate prohibited areas.