

Boat Safety Standards

Under the Memorandum of Understanding that took effect from 1 April 2024, the participating navigation authorities have re-affirmed the current Boat Safety Standards set out below.

Whilst these Boat Safety Standards apply equally to all vessels licensed or registered by the participating navigation and harbour authorities, the application of the Examination Checking Procedures administered by Boat Safety Scheme Limited does vary between private and non-private vessels.

Permanently installed fuel systems and fixed engines

1. All permanently installed fuel systems and fixed engines must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risks of explosion, or of fire starting or spreading.
2. Fuel filling arrangements must prevent any overflow from entering the interior of the vessel.
3. All fuel filling points must clearly identify the fuel in use.
4. Marking must be provided to identify the location of fuel system emergency shut-off devices, or their means of operation, which are not in open view.
5. All permanently installed fuel systems must be designed, installed and maintained to ensure fuel-tight integrity.
6. All permanently installed fuel tanks and fuel system connections must be accessible for inspection.
7. The pressure systems of steam-powered installations must have a current inspection certificate issued by a recognised competent person.

Electrical systems

8. All electrical systems must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risks of explosion or of fire starting and spreading.
9. All electrical systems must be capable of being safely and quickly disconnected from their power source(s) in an emergency.
10. Control and emergency devices, or their means of operation, must be marked when not in clear view, or when their function is not clear.
11. All battery compartments containing unsealed or open-vented batteries must be adequately ventilated to prevent a build-up of a flammable mix of gases.

Electrical propulsion systems

12. All motors, controller equipment and charging equipment relating to electrical propulsion must be adequately ventilated.

Outboard and portable combustion engines and portable fuel system

13. All portable and outboard engines and portable fuel systems must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risks of explosion, or of fire starting and spreading.
14. All spare petrol must be stored in a way that minimises the risk of fire and explosion.
15. All portable and outboard engines with integral petrol or LPG tanks, and all portable petrol tanks, must be stored in a way that minimises the risks of fire, or explosion when not in use.

Fire extinguishing and escape

16. All vessels must carry specified fire-fighting equipment.
17. All fire-fighting equipment must be in good condition and kept readily accessible for safe use in an emergency.

LPG systems and equipment

18. All LPG systems must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risks of explosion, or of fire starting and spreading.
19. All LPG containers and high-pressure components must be secured in a position where escaping gas does not enter the interior of the vessel.
20. All LPG systems must be designed, installed and maintained to ensure gas-tight integrity.
21. All LPG system connections and flexible hoses must be accessible for inspection.
22. All LPG control and shut-off devices, or the means to operate them must be readily accessible.
23. LPG shut-off valves, or their means of operation, must be marked when not in clear view, or when their function is not clear.
24. All LPG systems must have a suitable means to test that the system is gas-tight.

Appliances and flues

25. All appliances must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risks of explosion, or of fire starting and spreading.
26. All liquid-fuelled appliances must have an emergency shut-off valve located at a safe distance from the appliance.
- 27a LPG and liquid-fuel burning appliances installed from 3 Jan 2000. All burners and pilot lights shall be fitted with a device that automatically shut off the fuel supply if the burner flame fails.
- 27b -LPG and liquid-fuel burning appliances installed before 3 Jan 2000. Burners on catalytic appliances, appliances with continuously-burning flames and pilot light burners shall be fitted with a device that automatically shuts off the fuel supply if the burner flame fails.

28. All appliance flues must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risk of fire.
29. All fuel and power supply systems for appliances must meet these navigation authority requirements where relevant.

Pollution prevention

30. Any leakage of oil from engine equipment must be contained and prevented from being avoidably discharged overboard.
31. Bilge pumping and toilet systems must be designed, installed and maintained in a way that minimises the risk of avoidable pollution.