For answers to:

Boating Safety questions
Boat safety Inspections
Boat Masters License

Call Maritime Affairs
SLASPA
Manoel Street
Castries
Tel: 453-2855 / Fax 4530889

SLASPA
SAINT LUCIA AIR AND SEA PORTS AUTHORITY



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MARITIME AFFAIRS

personal watercraft

SAFE BOATING HINTS

Welcome Aboard!

Whether you own a personal watercraft (PWC), or you're just renting one for a few hours, you have just become a member of Saint Lucia's growing boating community. As a boater, you should know your vessel, know the law, and know some basic rules of boating safety and etiquette before you get out on the water. Your PWC is classified as a boat; therefore you must abide by the same operation and equipment laws as other boaters. Even if you are an "old hand" at boating, the Saint Lucia Maritime Affairs (SLASPA) wants you to have a safe and enjoyable time on the water and recommends that you read the information offered here. Please join the Department and other boaters in helping to make boating safer for everyone.

Personal Watercraft Defined: A personal watercraft is defined as motorboats less than 16 feet in length that are powered by jet pumps, not propellers, where the persons stand, kneel, or sit on, rather than inside the boat. Its use is subject to all local regulations governing the operation of powerboats of similar size. In addition, there are special laws solely for the operation of personal watercraft in Saint Lucia. Power Craft Ordinance.

Boating Safety Education

Familiarize yourself with your vessel before operating it on the water.
Preparation should include these steps:
Read the owner's manual. If available, take advantage of the dealer's educational program on vessel operation.
Practice starting and stopping the engine safely.
Learn the local rules governing boating and the "rules of the road" before boarding your watercraft.

Age Requirements

It is an infraction for a person under 16 years of age to operate a motorboat of more than 15 horsepower. Any person who permits a person under the age of 16 to do so is also guilty of an infraction.

License

No person shall within the territorial waters operate any power-craft unless such power-craft is validly licensed

Required and Recommended Equipment

Under St. Lucia law, any person aboard a personal watercraft, or being towed behind a vessel, MUST wear a Personal Flotation Device (LIFE JACKET)

When planning even a short day on the water, check your life jackets for fit and serviceability.

FIRE EXTINGUISHER on board and readily accessible. ,



WEAR YOU R LIFE JACKET-- IT'S YOU R FRI END FOR LI FE!

Safety Tips

Along with the use of appropriate protective equipment, the use of common sense and courtesy will enhance your time on the water. Following are some tips:

▲ Check your equipment, fuel level and weather conditions before you start.

▲ Let someone on shore know where you will be heading and when you will return.

▲ Watch for hazards, floating and submerged obstructions, tidal conditions, and observe local boating regulations.

▲ Go slowly near shore and drive defensively in congested areas, where collisions most frequently occur.

▲ Always look around for other traffic before beginning turns.

▲ Avoid sudden course changes near other boaters or swimmers.

▲ Never operate between a skier and the ski boat; a moving tow line can cut like a knife. The display of a red or orange flag by boaters indicates a skier or equipment in the water.

▲ Avoid overexposure to sun and cold water. Quit before fatigue sets in.

▲ Never venture out on the water during a storm; if a storm threatens, proceed to a safe location at once.

▲ Attempt to perform tricks only in controlled areas or in sparse traffic on adequately wide expanses of water.

▲ Seek your dealer's advice on the best method of disabling your PWC when stored or unattended to prevent children or other unauthorized persons from starting the engine.

Don't leave your PWC up for grabs!

Noise Restrictions

Operators should reduce speed while heading out or returning to shore in order to re-

Display of Numbers

Numbers must be painted or permanently attached to each side of the forward half of the vessel. With the exception of the vessel registration number, no other letters or numbers may be displayed nearby.

Lettering must be in plain, vertical black characters of not less than 3 inches in height

Notification of Changes to a numbered Vessel

The owner of a PWC must notify the Maritime Division if

Δ The vessel is transferred, destroyed, abandoned, lost, stolen or recovered

Δ The certificate of number is lost, destroyed or the owner's address changes

If the certificate of number becomes invalid for any reason, it must be surrendered to the issuing authority

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN SAINT LUCIA WATERS

Δ WE ALL HAVE A DUTY TO PROTECT MARITIME ACTIVITIES

Δ TAKE A MOMENT TO LEARN WHAT LAWS ARE APPLICABLE TO YOU AND YOUR OPERATIONS

Δ IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN BOATING ETIQUETTE, KEEP AN IDLE SPEED TO REDUCE WAKE, NOISE AND TURBIDITY

Δ KNOW YOUR OPERATING AREAS FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS, FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION, AND FOR YOUR PERSONAL WATERCRAFT'S PROTECTION

Distress Call Procedures

1. Make sure radio is on
2. Select Channel 16
3. Press/Hold the transmit button
4. Clearly say: MAYDAY MAYDAY MAYDAY
5. Also give:

- Vessel Name and/or Description
- Position and/or Location
- Nature of Emergency
- Number of People on Board
- Release transmit button
- Wait for 10 seconds – If no response Repeat "MAYDAY" Call.

False Distress Alerts

It is unlawful to intentionally transmit a false distress alert.

Pyrotechnic Devices



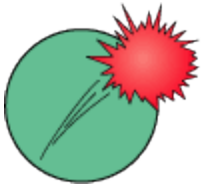
Red Flare



Parachute Flare



Orange smoke Signal



Red Meteor



Orange Flag



Floating Orange Smoke Signal

Common Causes of Accidents

Operator Inattention: Unfortunately, some PWC operators have not familiarized themselves with safe boating rules, and have contributed to use conflicts and accidents on Saint Lucia waters. Operator inattention is one of the main causes of boating accidents. PWCs are capable of quick acceleration and can operate at high rates of speed, with a high degree of maneuverability. Maintain a proper lookout by watching ahead and to the sides at all times. Accidents and near-accidents have caused nationwide concern for improved safety in PWC operation.

When combined with sun, wind and water, the effect of alcohol and other drugs is heightened. Any person who, while his ability to operate a power-craft is impaired by alcohol or a drug, operates a power-craft within the territorial waters of this Island, shall be guilty of an offence.

Rules of the Road – Right-of-Way

Meeting and Crossing Situations: When two vessels meet head-on, neither has the right-of-way. Both vessels should alter their courses to starboard (right) so that they will pass on the port (left) side of each other. In a crossing situation with another vessel, the vessel on the right has the right-of-way, as with cars at an intersection. If there is a vessel on your right, you must "give way" or yield. The vessel on your right should hold its course and speed until you are clear of one another.

Overtaking Situations: A vessel approaching another vessel from the stern (from behind) and overtaking it must keep out of the way of the overtaken vessel. The vessel being overtaken should hold its course and speed. In general, fishing vessels and vessels under sail have the right-of-way. Follow these basic rules of the road, except when a departure from them is necessary to avoid immediate danger.

Restrictions

Speed is limited by law. The maximum speed is 5 MPH for motorboats within 100 feet of a bather (but not a water-skier), and within 200 feet of a bathing beach, a swimming float, a diving platform or lifeline, a passenger landing being used, or a landing where boats are tied up. The Maritime Affairs may set speed limits in addition to those listed above. Restrictions such as specialize areas may be imposed by local authorities. It is your responsibility to check with authorities to become familiar with the regulations and ordinances particular to areas where you operate.

Operating a PWC at night **(from sunset to sunrise) is illegal** even if the PWC is equipped with the proper navigational lights. In addition, the law requires a person operating a person operating a PWC equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard-type engine cutoff switch to attach the lanyard to his or her person.

Operating while suspended

Any person who operates a power-craft within the territorial waters of this island while he is prohibited by an order is liable to a fine of $500 or six months imprisonment

duce noise. Some personal watercraft owners have modified their exhaust systems, resulting in increased noise Not only does this annoy fellow boaters, but the increased noise may keep the operator from hearing horn signals and sounds of impending danger, such as other fast-moving boats, distress signals, etc. In addition to increased noise and subsequent risk of fines, exhaust system modifications can lead to the voiding of the manufacturer's warranty and reduced engine performance. Please be considerate of others on the water.

Towing a Skier
To tow a skier behind your PWC legally, you must have an observer ABOVE the age of 16 , in addition to the operator. You may not operate a PWC or tow a skier between sunset and sunrise. Each person on board, including the skier, must wear a LIFE JACKET. The operator is responsible for making sure that the ski flag is displayed to indicate: a downed skier; a skier in the water preparing to ski; a ski line extended from the vessel; or a ski in the water around the PWC.

Remember, a ski rope can cut like a knife; do not permit it to cross the path of another skier. Local ordinances may restrict the time of day or the area where skiing is allowed; check with your waterway operator.

Reasonable and Prudent Operation
Saint Lucia law states that no person shall operate any craft in a reckless or negligent manner so as to endanger the life, limb or property of any person. Some examples are:
Navigating a vessel, skis, or other devices between a towing vessel and its tow or tows.
Operating under the influence of intoxicants or narcotics.
The following actions constitute unsafe operation: Jumping or attempting to jump the wake of another vessel within 100 feet of that vessel; spraying down another person or vessel; operating at a rate of speed and proximity to another vessel so that either operator is required to swerve to avoid a collision.

Know before you go!

Boating Accidents

Operators involved in a boating accident or collision must give assistance to other persons involved; give their names, addresses, and boat registration information to any injured person or to the owner of any damaged property; and in the event a person dies or disappears, notify the Marine Police Unit and the Dept. of Maritime Affairs, by the quickest means possible.

When to File a Written Accident Report: In the event of an accident, the owner or operator of a boat must file a **written** report with the Marine Police Unit and submit a copy to the Department of Maritime Affairs (SLASPA) within 12 hours. Boating Accident Report forms may be obtained from the Dept. of Maritime Affairs.

Safety Checks and Tests	Yes	No	N/A
Test Marine Radio (voice call)			
Test Steering (free movement)			
Test Bilge Pump			
Check Fuel System for any leaks			
Check Electrical System			
Check Gauges (i.e. batteries)			
Check Fuel Amount			
Ensure Anchor is ready for use			
Ensure passengers know Emergency Procedures and Equipment Location			
Everyone put on a Lifejacket to check for proper fitting.			
Check the Weather Forecast			

Recommended Equipment	Yes	No	N/A
VHF Marine Radio			
Anchor and Tackle			
Tool Kit			
First Aid Kit			
Mirror			
Cellular Phone			
Binoculars			

Minimum Required Equipment	Yes	No
State Registration Documentation		
State Numbering Displayed		
Certificate of Documentation		
Lifejackets (PFDs) - one for each person		
Visual Distress Signals		
Fire Extinguishers (fully charged)		
Sound Producing Device(s)		
Navigation lights		

Propeller Blades Warning

Never forget the danger to persons in the water that boat propellers can inflict. Statistics indicate that most propeller injuries and fatalities involve open motorboats 16 to less than 26 feet in length and are due to operator inattention, inexperience, and carelessness. Remember to shut off your engines when approaching swimmers. When engines are running, alert swimmers to stay clear of the stern. Propeller guards are not suitable for all types of boats. Therefore, the best and safest course of action to take when people are in the water near your boat—Shut off your engines!



People in the water can be severely injured or killed

STAYING AFLOAT

It is common belief that someone dressed in heavy clothing or waders will sink immediately if they fall overboard. This is not true. Air trapped in clothing provides considerable flotation, and bending the knees will trap air in waders, providing additional flotation. To stay afloat follow these rules:

- Remain calm, do not thrash about or try to remove clothing or footwear. This leads to exhaustion and increases the loss of air that keeps you afloat.
- Keep your PFD on.
- Keep your knees bent.
- Float on your back and paddle slowly to safety

Registration

Your PWC must be registered and numbered according to Saint Lucia law.

How to Register: Apply to register your PWC at the office of the Maritime Affairs (SLASPA). Upon receipt of the required information and fees, Maritime Affairs will issue you a Certificate of Number, a Certificate of Ownership, and a Safety Inspection Certificate. The registration number is the number beginning with "SL" shown on the certificates. The Certificate of Number must be available for inspection on the vessel when it is being used on the water.

Display of Numbers and Stickers: Proper display of the registration stickers next to the SL number is required to permit enforcement officers to determine, without stopping you, that your vessel is currently registered. Numbers and stickers must be affixed on each side of the forward half of the vessel, on a non-removable portion of the hull.

Help make Saint Lucia Boating Safe for Everyone!

Several regional and international destinations have restricted or banned the use of PWC's in some areas, so remember that the way you operate your boat may affect continued PWC access to your favorite waterway.

Markers

DANGER: BOATS KEEP OUT	Explanation may be placed outside the diamond	
CONTROLLED AREA This type of demarcation (vessel corridor and swimming areas) is being implemented to improve bathers safety and control the movement of PWC		
ALPHA FLAG	Required for boats engaged in diving operations and restricted in maneuverability	
DIVERS FLAG	Diver in immediate area	
MOORING BUOY	Tie-up permissible	

Operator's Responsibilities

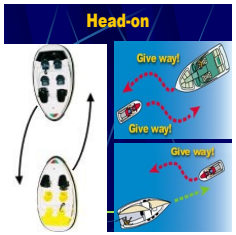
Your water fun depends on you, your equipment and other people who, like yourself, enjoy spending leisure time on, in or near the water. Lets take a look at your responsibilities:

- Δ Make sure the boat is in top operating condition and that there are no tripping hazards. The boat should be free of fire hazards and have clean bilges.
- Δ Safety equipment, required by law, is on board, maintained in good condition, and you know how to properly use these devices.
- Δ File the float plan with a relative or friend.
- Δ Have a complete knowledge of the operation and handling characteristics of your boat.
- Δ Know your position and know where you are going.
- Δ Maintain a safe speed at all times to avoid collision.
- Δ Keep an eye out for changing weather conditions , and act accordingly.
- Δ Know and practice the Rules of the Road (Navigation Rules).
- Δ Maintain a clear, unobstructed view forward at all times. "Scan" the water back and forth; avoid "tunnel" vision. Moat boating collisions are caused by inattention.

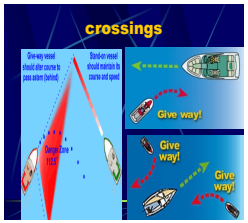
Rules of the Road

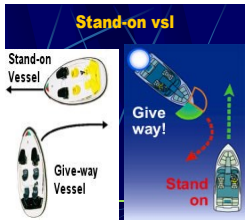
PLEASE PAY CLOSE ATTENTION!!

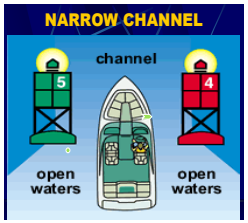












Law Enforcement

A vessel underway, when hailed by a Coast Guard vessel is required to heave to, or maneuver in such a manner that permits a boarding officer to come abroad.

Law enforcement officials may aboard and examine your vessel, whether it is numbered, unnumbered or documented. Coast Guard law enforcement personnel may also be found abroad other vessels

Pyrotechnic Devices

Pyrotechnic Visual Distress Signals must be Coast Guard Approved, in serviceable condition, and rally accessible.

- Δ They are marked with an expiration date. Expired signals maybe carried as extra equipment, but cannot be counted toward meeting this visual distress signal requirement, since they may be unreliable.
- Δ If pyrotechnic devices are selected a minimum of three are required. That is, three signals for day use and three signals for night. Some pyrotechnic signals meet both day and night use requirements.
- Δ Pyrotechnic devices should be stored in a cool, dry location, if possible.
- Δ A waterfight container painted red or orange and prominently marked '**DISTRESS SIGNALS or FLARES** is recommended.

Communications

Carry communications gear, marine **VHF-FM.** Cellular phone coverage is available in many coastal areas, **HOWEVER**, cellular phones should **NOT BE** considered a substitute for **VHF-FM** marine band radios for emergency purposes.

Aids to Navigation

Aids to Navigation are placed along coasts and navigable waters as guides to mark sea water ant to assist mariners in determining their position in relation to land and hidden dangers. Each aid to navigation is used to provide specific information.

Several aids to navigation are usually used together to form a local aid to navigation that helps the mariner follow natural and improved channels. Such aids to navigation also provide a continuous system of charted marks for coastal piloting. Individual aids to navigation are used to mark landfall from seaward, and to mark isolated dangers.

Lateral markers are buoys or beacons that indicate the port and star board sides of a route to be followed. St Lucia lateral marks the traditional 3R rule of "red, right, returning". This means, when returning from sea, keep red marks on right-hand (starboard) side to the vessel.