



Flinders
Ports

Safe on the Water

Know the rules and your responsibilities around our Ports.

www.flindersports.com.au





What recreational boaters should know...

- Commercial vessels operate 365 days a year, 24 hours a day.
- The speed of a ship or tug can be deceptive. Large vessels may travel at speeds in excess of 20 knots. It generally takes one to two kilometres for a large ship to stop (even with its engines going full astern).
- Large vessels must maintain speed to steer, and in most cases they must stay in the channel - it's the only place deep enough for them to operate. On some waterways, the channel extends bank-to-bank, so expect vessel traffic on any portion of the waterway (e.g. Outer Harbour and upper sections of the Port River).
- A ship's 'blind spot' can extend for many hundreds of metres in front of large vessels (even up to one kilometre for some vessels!).
- In rivers and port zones, a ship or tug's powerful engines can cause a smaller vessel to be pulled toward the vessel when passing alongside. This can also happen when passing close amidships of large ships.
- 'Prop' or 'Wheel' wash is a strong underwater current caused by tug or ship engines that can result in severe water turbulence hundreds of metres behind a large vessel.
- 'Bow Waves' are large surface waves caused by the bow of a ship pushing through the water. A bow wave can swamp small craft **hundreds of metres away from the ship**.
- **Never** pass closely behind a tugboat. A tug could be towing a barge, or other objects on a long submerged line. This tow line may lie low in the water and be difficult to see.
- Sailing near large vessels can be hazardous. Yacht skippers and windsurfers should know that a large vessel can 'steal your wind' - so you won't have the same ability to manoeuvre near a large vessel.
- Ships, tugboats and Port Control use VHF radio to communicate:
 - Port operations and ship-to-ship traffic is conducted on VHF Channel 6, 8 and 12.
 - Emergency communication is conducted on VHF Channel 16 within Port limits.
 - If you are unsure of your situation, or a vessel's intentions, feel free to contact them.
- Large vessels approaching bridges, bends in the channel and leaving and approaching their wharf must be lined up and committed to their approach well ahead. It is dangerous and difficult for them to change course. **For safety's sake, stay out of their path.**

What recreational boaters can do...

- **Yachts must keep clear of large vessels at all times** - even when racing. In most instances, large vessels have right of way as they may be restricted in their ability to manoeuvre or constrained by their draft.
- **Designate a lookout.** Assign one person on your boat to maintain a lookout, particularly for large vessels.
- **Understand whistle signals.** Five short blasts on the whistle indicates that the vessel is unsure of your intentions or doubts that you are taking enough action to avoid collision. Move clear of vessels sounding this signal.
- **Don't boat, jet ski, sail or windsurf in and around large vessels.** Jumping wakes, riding close alongside, or cutting under the bow of a large vessel could cause a boat or skier to be sucked through the vessels large propellers and bow or stern thrusters.
- **Avoid 'parked' or moored vessels.** Stay clear of large vessels when they are berthed at wharves or loading areas, turning areas or 'terminals'.
- **Watch for large vessels lighting at night.** Don't rely on trying to hear a vessel approaching. If you see both sidelights (red and green), you're dead ahead, and in the path of danger.
- **Use safe anchorages.** It is illegal and dangerous to tie up to navigation aids, like buoys and channel marks, and to anchor in channels.
- **Cross channels only when safe to do so.** Do not impede the passage of a vessel which can safely navigate only within a shipping channel. Endeavour to cross the channel at the shortest possible distance.
- When operating at night or in times of restricted visibility, **ensure that your boat displays appropriate navigation lights.** The radars of large vessels are limited in their ability to detect small craft and do not detect wooden or fibreglass vessels.
- **Be aware of local rules.** Restrictions and port operating rules may differ at each port. It is your obligation to be aware of any local restrictions or rules when you are boating in or near harbours and ports.



Responsibilities between vessels...

A vessel under power gives way to:

- A vessel not under command
- A vessel unable to manoeuvre easily
(including large vessels navigating in or near a channel or fairway)
- A vessel engaged in fishing
(with apparatus such as trawling gear restricting its ability to manoeuvre)
- A sailing vessel (but see below).

A sailing vessel must stay clear of:

- A vessel not under command
- A vessel unable to manoeuvre easily
(including large vessels navigating in or near a channel or fairway)
- A vessel engaged in fishing
(with apparatus such as trawling gear restricting its ability to manoeuvre).

Remember...

- Large vessels cannot alter course quickly and cannot stop quickly
- Small craft may be hard to see from the bridge of a large vessel
- Small craft should not always assume that they have been seen
- In shallow waters (such as gulf water, channels, rivers and entering harbours) large vessels may not be able to deviate from their course and small sailing craft should be prepared to avoid these large vessels and make it clear that they are avoiding them.



Contact us for more information on staying safe on the water.

www.flindersports.com.au | 08 8447 0611 | 296 St Vincent Street ,Port Adelaide, SA, 5015.