

SAFETY ALERT

Contact: safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk

SUBJECT	PLEASURE VESSEL (IPV) CODE
Date Issued	November 2018

A notice on use of pleasure vessels (privately owned) as Race Support Boats in paddlesport races on the sea from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA). British Canoeing have worked with the MCA to allow paddlesport races to be included the code, while the code will not affect many paddlesport races, we recommend all organising committees read the guidance. If you have any queries to use the contacts below.

If you run a paddlesport race at sea and use someone's powerboat or sailing yacht as a safety boat, committee boat, or marshalling boat to support the race then you need to know about the regulations that may apply to that boat. If the support boat for your race is a Kayak, Canoe, Rowboat, Jet-ski, or Surf-ski then the regulations do not apply. If the support boat is a powerboat or sailing yacht of any size and the race is at sea then the regulations may apply but there are some checks you need to make.

The regulations, which have been in place since 1998, require that if the powerboat or sailing yacht that you use is in use outside the Pleasure Vessel definition then it officially becomes a "commercial" use and the powerboat or sailing yacht needs to comply with commercial Codes of Practice.

The Pleasure Vessel definition doesn't rely only on money changing hands so anyone using a powerboat or sailing yacht needs to check the definition and whether it applies to them.

The regulations do not stop an individual boat owner using their own powerboat or sailing yacht to support a race at sea if at the time it is used only for their sport or pleasure, or the sport or pleasure of their immediate family or friends, as long as it is on a free voyage or excursion.

For powerboats and sailing yachts which are used outside of the Pleasure Vessel definition (for example, if the boat's owner loans it to the race organisers and then has no association with its use) then the MCA has created a very simple Code of Practice called the Intended Pleasure Vessel (IPV) Code to allow people to easily comply with the regulations. The IPV Code can only be used if the boat is not already commercially certificated because it applies to boats which would normally be a Pleasure Vessel but go to sea to support a race for no more than 10 race events per year.

To comply with the Code all use of the race support boat must be within 3nm of a safe haven and within UK territorial waters. Any use outside of the scope of the Code and outside of the Pleasure Vessel definition must be fully coded to either the Blue, Yellow, Red Code or MGN280 which are the MCA's commercial standards.

The simple approach applied by the IPV Code is that a small amount of equipment is carried, the owner and the operator agree to its use under the Code and then sign a self-declaration certificate.

No survey is required. The full description of what is to be carried and checked is listed and described in Section 6 of Part 2 to the IPV Code.

The regulations (and the Code) apply to powerboats and sailing yachts supporting any racing activity at sea if it's outside of the Pleasure Vessel definition and for no more than 10 events per year so it's not just applicable to paddlesport races. The idea is that the IPV Code facilitates use of powerboats and sailing yachts inside the existing regulatory framework. It's not an attempt to create new regulations and it's not a reaction to a safety concern.

The IPV Code can be used from January 2019 and will help paddle sport race organisers make sure that the support boats used comply with the existing regulations. The support boat Operator is required by the Code to have a safety management system in place but this is only a simple document to highlight how the Code is met and how the support boat will be used safely.

Any questions on the IPV Code or the regulations mentioned in this notice can be directed to pleasurevessels@mcga.gov.uk or Tel: 02038172465 or safety@britishcanoeing.org.uk

Guin Batten - Chair
British Canoeing Safety Advisory Panel.