

# Special requirements

## Sailing vessels

The days of using sailing vessels for commercial trade at sea are long gone. In Queensland, however, there are many sailing vessels operating commercially in the tourism sector.

Working onboard a sailing vessel involves utilising a different set of seafaring skills and occupational health and safety issues compared to powered vessels. For example, crew members on a sailing vessel may be required to work at height on a tall mast.



Sailing ships generate enormous horsepower from the wind.



A crew member working on the deck of a sailing vessel should be securely clipped on with a safety harness at all times and be aware of the strain that each line is under.

## Things to be aware of on sailing vessels

- **Lines under great tension**

Don't release them suddenly and let them run through your hands as this will cause a rope burn injury. Keep a few turns on the belaying pin and cleat or winch until you are sure the tension is manageable.

- **Always know where the wind is coming from**

Sloppy helmsmanship can put the wind on the wrong side of the sails and cause them to crash to the other side of the vessel which can result in damage to the vessel and injury to crew or passengers.



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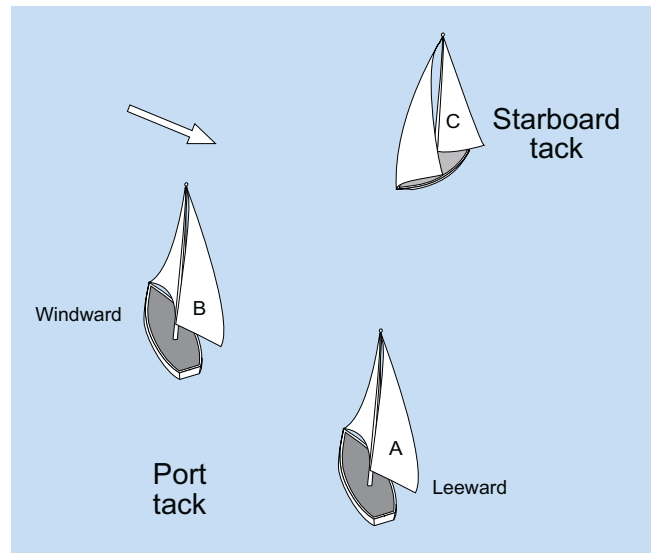


- **Know the collision regulations**

In conjunction with the Rules outlined in chapter 6, the following Rules must be followed when operating a sailing vessel.

Rule 12, Sailing vessels — starboard tack has right of way over port tack; leeward boat has right of way over windward boat.

If overtaking, Rule 13 will apply — you must give way at all times, even if the vessel being overtaken is powered.



Sailing vessels

- **Practice man overboard drills**

Keep in mind when going through the drill that a sailing vessel is not as easy to bring to a stop as a powered vessel.

- **Be particularly vigilant with regard to passenger safety**

- **The deck of a sailing ship is full of lines under tension and many high risk areas.**

## Barges and cargo conveyance

Commercial barges operate on many smooth and partially smooth waterways in Queensland.

Barges are susceptible to specific risks due to their design and the nature of the work they are engaged in.

Barges have a flat bottom and usually a low freeboard (the distance from the waterline to the uppermost continuous deck). They often have a flat deck as well, sacrificing deck camber for cargo-carrying ability.

As they are designed to carry large loads with little displacement and a shallow draft, stability considerations are important and all crew members should be trained to identify a potentially dangerous situation with regard to the distribution of weight onboard. Ultimately this is the master's responsibility, however, crew members should also be aware of a barge's specific requirements and safety hazards.

Personal protective equipment and high visibility clothing must be worn by crew members and cargo must be sufficiently secured to make sure that the barge won't capsize. Deck-edge immersion may occur if the cargo shifts and reduces the vessel's stability.

### Things to be aware of:

- Distribution and securing of cargo.
- All watertight deck hatches and doors must be closed before embarking to sea and must remain closed for the duration of the voyage.



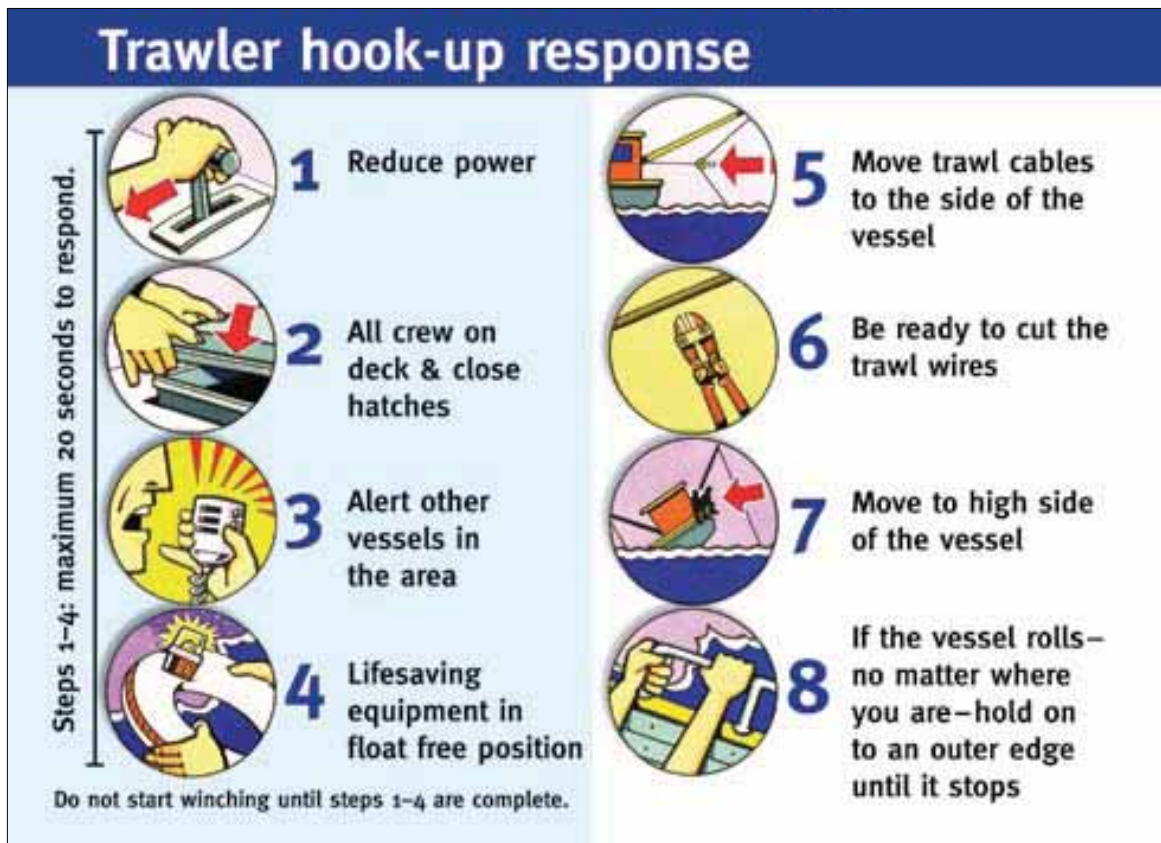
- Be aware of free surface effect — it affects barges considerably due to their box-like shape.
- Wear personal protective equipment and ensure communication between crew and master is efficient and clear.
- Watch the tidal rise and fall — barges often operate in very shallow water. If unloading on a falling tide, efficiency and teamwork is important.

## Trawlers

One of the most common causes of trawlers being lost at sea is the result of the sudden loss of stability due to an unexpected shift in the centre of gravity resulting in capsizing.

While this is sometimes due to the free surface effect of shifting weight on deck, often it is the result of a hook up — the sudden fouling of equipment around an obstruction on the sea bed. This situation is almost impossible to predict as many undersea hazards have not been charted.

All crew members should be aware of their responsibilities when responding to a hook up to ensure the procedure is executed as quickly as possible.



It is important on trawlers to have safety equipment, such as an EPIRB (pictured), installed in a float free position. This means that the equipment will float free in the event of a hook up rather than going down with the capsizing vessel.

A sudden capsizing is frightening and for those below deck the chances of survival are limited as water pours in, the lights go out and the ability to find the way out of the hull



Float free EPIRB.

is diminished by disorientation, panic and lack of air.

## Trawler person overboard response

Working on the deck of a trawler, particularly if there is a large sea running, carries the risk of a person falling overboard. A fast response time from the crew members onboard will greatly increase the chances of the person overboard being retrieved in difficult sea conditions. Maritime Safety Queensland recommends the below seven-point response to a person overboard and this procedure should be drilled regularly so that crew members know their responsibilities.



## Working alone

Even though a ship at sea with a full crew may seem confined at times, there are many cases where crew members may have to work alone, for example fishing from a dory away from the mother vessel.



### Things to be aware of

- Protection from the sun — heatstroke can cloud judgement.
- Maintain communication with the vessel and report the tender's position regularly.
- Always wear a kill switch lanyard at any time the outboard motor is operating and in gear.
- Watch the weather and remember how suddenly it can change for the worse. If in doubt, get out.
- Don't take risks — even the most sure-footed can fall overboard. Stop the boat and at the very least engage neutral gear before moving around the dory.