



DBWA Dragon boat safety requirements

All DBWA member clubs are expected to abide by the following safety requirements. Many of these requirements are sourced from the AusDBF Australian Dragon Boat Sweeps (steerers/helms) Guidelines and Sweep Accreditation Scheme (SAS).

General Safety

1. Paddlers unable to swim 50 metres fully clothed must wear a life jacket (PFD) while on the water.
2. Boats are never to be on the water during a thunder or electrical storm.
3. Never stand on the gunwales of the boat. Sweeps must have both feet placed on the floor of boat while on the water – feet are not to be put on seat, gunwale or anywhere else except the floor of the boat.
4. No one is permitted to jump or dive out of the boat into the water, or otherwise enter the water except when landed at shore.
5. Incident reports must be completed for all accidents and incidents sustained during training and/or any DBWA sanctioned event. Incident reports are to be promptly forwarded to DBWA.

First aid

It is mandatory for all clubs to have a first aid kit available during the training sessions. As a minimum, the kit must contain the following items and be carried in the boat while it is on the water. All items, except the rope, must be in a waterproof container (preferably one that floats).

- 50 mm bandage
- Adhesive tape
- Adhesive bandages
- Tweezers
- Scissors or knife
- Exposure bag or emergency blanket; and
- 10 m of rope (6 mm diameter minimum)

Due to the limited space in a dragon boat, consider carrying the first aid kit behind the back bench in the boat or placing it where the drummer seat fits and securing it to the boat with a length of rope or twine (e.g. tie it to the eye loops used to hold the drum in place). The kit should be stored out of the way of paddlers' feet to avoid interference.

Loading boats

1. When loading from the beach, the back of the dragon boat should be in the water, with two paddlers holding the front of the boat steady.
2. Paddlers loading/entering the boat should sit in the centre of the seat ('centre off') until their buddy boards and is about to sit down.

3. When loading boats from a beach or ramp, paddlers are to load and unload from the front of the dragon boat, filling the rear of the boat first (i.e. paddlers should walk down the boat with seat ten loading first, then seat nine and so on).
4. When loading from a pontoon or jetty, paddlers should load in the middle of the boat first, then rows one and ten alternatively back to the middle of the boat (i.e. row 5, row 1, row 10, row 6, row 2, row 9, etc.). In this situation, paddlers on the water side, instead of the bow, will be required to help stabilise the boat (i.e. extend paddles in the 'paddles flat' position).

Lights

In low light conditions (e.g. dusk, dawn, night), boats must have lights when on the water. It is the sweep's responsibility to ensure the dragon boat does have lights fitted and operating. The Department of Transport regulates marine safety in Western Australia; it is the responsibility of all clubs to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

The use of LED lights is encouraged, as these lights are very bright and highly visible. Sidelights and stern lights on a dragon boat may be displayed as detailed below:

- A red sidelight on the port (left) bow, and green sidelight on the starboard (right) bow. Both lights must be visible from a distance of at least 1.6 km (1 mile). These lights may be combined in one light, provided the angle of visibility is satisfied.
- A white stern light, which must be visible from a distance of at least 3.2 km (2 miles).
- The lights must be visible at the angles indicated in Figure 1 (as viewed from above boat).
- Consider raising the stern light a metre above the gunwale, or have the sweep wear a backwards-facing light on their head, to facilitate visibility.

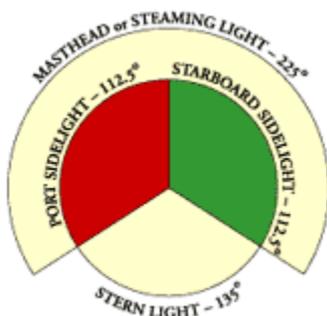


Figure 1: Orientation and visible angle of marine lights to be displayed