

## ***Christmas boating message from the General Manager Maritime Safety Queensland***

*Christmas and the summer holiday season are almost upon us with the promise of long, warm days and time off work turning boaters' minds to the water.*

*It's an enticing prospect that I don't want to cloud with too many cautionary messages.*

*That said, we in Maritime Safety Queensland have seen too many great days out on the water go tragically wrong for preventable reasons. So I'd like to make a few helpful suggestions in the interest of helping you avoid any mishaps.*

*Start by making sure your boat is in tip-top condition. Hoses, seals and cables deteriorate over time and your boat needs a regular service - try taking it to a marine mechanic.*

*Also, check all of your safety equipment. In a worst case scenario you will be relying on it to save your life or the life of someone you love, so make sure it is in good working order, in date and easy to reach.*

*Think about how you'll stay aware of the latest weather information. If it's looking a bit dicey, remember: If in doubt, don't go out! There is always tomorrow.*

*Have a plan prepared for your boat if a cyclone or storm hits your area.*

*Think about linking with your local marine rescue organisation - log in with them when leaving for your trip and log out when you return.*

*It's always good to remind yourself of the rules of the waterways. Queensland's waterways get busy over the holiday period, so consider other boaters and be courteous to them. With this in mind, are your boating skills and knowledge in need of a top-up? Would you benefit from a refresher course at your local BoatSafe training provider?*

*Remember, too, that drink driving limits apply on the water as well as on the roads, even when you are at anchor.*

*MSQ will share safety information to help people understand their risks while still having a wonderful day on their boats. Our regional staff will take every opportunity to meet with the boating public and we'll post information and videos on the MSQ and Department of Transport and Main Roads websites and social media.*

*We'll also share our messages through our boating safety partners - the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol and Water Police - who will be out in numbers over coming weeks. They'll be hoping they can simply wish boaters a cheery "g'day" as they pass, but will be watching out for boating's fatal five - speeding, alcohol and drugs, fatigue, failure to keep a proper lookout and failure to carry the right safety equipment.*

*But enough with the worry beads! Simply steer clear of these boating sins, take some of the precautions I've outlined above, stay risk-aware and those long, warm summer days on the water will be a breeze.*

*MSQ wishes you and your loved ones plain sailing for the holiday season.*