

Transport Canada, Marine, Office of Boating Safety Pacific  
Three-Tier Pleasure Craft Check Program

## **Introduction**

Transport Canada (TC), Marine, Office of Boating Safety (OBS)-Pacific (P) has developed and will be implementing a three-tier pleasure vessel check program in the Pacific region in 2008. A review of the regional PCCC activities indicates that the current PCCC program is not fully effective in the direct delivery of boating safety education and key messages to those boaters within the high-risk category.

## **High risk category of recreational boater**

The high-risk category of recreational boaters are those boaters who operate pleasure vessels less than 6 metres in length either powered or non-powered. These vessels are typically launched at boat ramps or found at smaller less organized marinas. This high-risk category of pleasure vessel is responsible for the majority of marine incidents and fatalities. The majority of the regional PCCC activities are completed on larger pleasure vessels at clubs and larger marinas. Boating Safety Volunteers (BSVs) for the most part have been trained and focused solely on conducting the full OBS PCCC as the primary tool when providing direct boater 'checks' and education.

## **PCCC remains the primary training tool for Boating Safety Volunteers (BSV)**

The PCCC remains the cornerstone training tool to allow a TC authorized BSV to gain or enhance their regulatory and boating safety knowledge. This knowledge gives the BSV the confidence to champion key boating safety messages while educating the recreational boater. The BSV is able to check mandatory safety equipment in a consistent manner. During these activities the BSV is able to promote their organization both regionally and within their community. Community based boating safety activities remain a key element to the overall goal and success of the TC Marine boating safety program.

## **BSVs**

The Boating Safety Program relies on the efforts of BSVs and it is recognized that their personal time is valuable and can be limited. Supporting BSVs to maximize their ability to promote boating safety through direct contact with boaters on behalf of TC Marine is both paramount and desirable.

## **Three-tier program**

The three-tier program will be incorporated into the TC PCCC training program and will be available to those checkers already trained as PCCC checkers. The three-tier program will allow for key boating safety messages and equipment checks to be offered to a better representation of pleasure vessel operators. The primary focus of the three-tier program will be the up to 8 metres in length pleasure vessels, with an emphasis on those boaters in the high-risk category.

This three-tier approach is desirable when a full PCCC is not practical or appropriate. Compared to a lengthy PCCC on a larger vessel, the new 3-tier program allows the BSV to educate more boaters (especially those in the high risk category) in the same period of time, maximizing their valuable volunteer time.

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**Tier one**

**PCCC**

- The PCCC is a valuable tool for those inexperienced boaters or those boaters who wish to have an in-depth check and educational process.
- The boater has the ability to gain considerable knowledge and information pertaining to equipment requirements, regulatory requirements, maintenance, construction standards, and optional equipment and in depth key messages etc.
- The safe boating guide and boating safety handouts are key elements to this tier.
- This tier can be very time consuming and limits the ability of the volunteer to reach a greater number of boaters.
- Information collected is of benefit to TC OBS for statistical information and trends.
- Decal is issued upon successful completion.
- This tier is of limited value when completed with the same boater and pleasure craft year after year.

**Tier two**

**Pleasure Craft Courtesy Boat Ramp Check Form**

- Only the compulsory safety carriage requirements are checked. Boaters are additionally given basic information on other requirements.
- Amount of depth and time spent can vary based on boater's interest and boat ramp activity, but process is meant to be quick and efficient.
- Practical and usefull on boat ramps.
- Permission is still granted to complete the check.
- The checking of the compulsory safety carriage equipment is not as in depth and not outside of regulatory requirements.
- Useful tool for educating those boaters who do not want a full PCCC, or when a PCCC is not appropriate.
- Key messages are incorporated into the equipment check by the BSV and are within the body of the 'check' form.
- The safe boating guide and other boating safety handouts are key elements to this tier.
- Information collected is of benefit to TC Marine for statistical information and trends.
- The boater retains a copy of the form for their own follow up and reference.
- No PCCC decal is issued.

**Tier three**

**Boater Self Check Form**

- Very effective for those boaters who feel they have no time for a check.
- Allows the BSV to get boating safety information to the disinterested or busy boater.
- BSV gives the form to the boater with the safe boating guide opened to applicable page of their type of pleasure vessel.
- Form allows the boater to verify on their own time the safety carriage requirements for their vessel, can be used a part of their pre-departure check list.
- Limited to bringing the boaters attention to the safety carriage requirements of that vessel.
- Key messages are incorporated within the form and additional handouts can be given to the boater.

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**Training**

The PCCC training course will be the standard used for the three-tier approach. A stand-alone course may be developed at a later time. Those checkers already trained and current as a PCCC checker will require a short training session, which should take no more than 1 hour. There may be the provision of in house training using a TC provided training package.

**Making a difference**

The three-tier program will allow the BSV and the recreational boater more flexibility in the process of getting 'checked' and educated. The BSV will have the ability to reach more boaters in the high-risk category and to better manage their volunteer time. It is recognized and appreciated that the efforts and dedication of BSVs contributes to the overall success of the boating safety program.

Transport Canada and the BSVs of our partner organizations continue to work collectively towards educating the recreational boater with the goal of further reducing the number of recreational boating incidents and fatalities.

Questions concerning the three-tier Pleasure Craft Courtesy Checks can be directed to Mike Mitchell.

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