



The Hon Duncan Gay MLC

Leader of Government Business

Legislative Council

Minister for Roads & Ports

MEDIA RELEASE

8 February 2012

OPERATION BLUE WATER: OFFSHORE BOATING IN SPOTLIGHT

NSW Minister for Ports Duncan Gay today warned boaters that Boating Safety Officers were targeting offshore boating and crossing coastal bars in Operation Blue Water.

Operation Blue Water will run from this Saturday February 11 until February 19. The campaign will see Boating Safety Officers out in force.

“Going offshore or crossing a coastal bar increases the demands on you and your boat’s ability to meet the conditions,” Mr Gay said.

“In the last five years there have been 101 bar crossing incidents reported to RMS. Since January 2010, there have been 40 bar crossing incidents that have resulted in two fatalities, two serious injuries and 17 minor injuries.

“Every craft has its limits, so our message is don’t take chances.

“Ensure your boat and gear are in good working order. Tell someone where you’re going and when you’ll return, and keep checking the weather.

“Skippers heading offshore should use their marine radio to log in and off with Marine Rescue NSW. This provides a safety net to people boating offshore, as Marine Rescue NSW can record vessel movements.

“Remember, if you’re going more than two nautical miles offshore it is compulsory to have a marine radio and 406MHz Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB).”

Mr Gay said during 2011 there were three fatal incidents that occurred offshore, resulting in the loss of six lives.

“It is tragic to have lost these lives. One of these incidents, on the South Coast, resulted in the deaths of four family members including a young child.

“None of the victims of any of the offshore incidents in 2011 was wearing a lifejacket.”

In 2003 it became compulsory for each person on board a vessel crossing a bar to wear a lifejacket.

RMS offers web-cam vision of many coastal bars to help in preparing for a voyage.

This is just one part of a suite of measures being pursued by RMS to address bar crossing and boating safety in this State.

To view live footage at selected NSW coastal bars, go to <http://www.maritime.nsw.gov.au/webcams/web-cam.html>

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