

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ST. LOUIS DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS
1222 SPRUCE STREET
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI 63103-2833

CEMVS-SO

Regulation
No. 385-1-1

31 May 2001

SAFETY
WATER VESSEL STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE: To establish a standard procedure to ensure that operators of water vessels less than 26 feet in length take necessary precautions to prevent serious injury and/or property damage.
2. APPLICABILITY: This regulation applies to all offices in the St. Louis District that have employees who operate USACE water vessels less than 26 feet in length.
3. REFERENCES:
 - a. EM 385-1-1, Safety and Health Requirements Manual, 3 Sep 96.
 - b. ER 1130-2-500, Partners and Support, Work Management Guidance and Procedures, 27 Dec 96.
 - c. EP 1130-2-500, Partners and Support, Work Management Guidance and Procedures, 27 Dec 96.
 - d. ER 1130-2-550, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Policies, 15 Nov 96, and CH 1, 1 Oct 99
 - e. EP 1130-2-550, Recreation Operations and Maintenance Policies, 15 Nov 96, and CH 1, 1 Oct 99
 - f. ER 385-1-91, Safety - Training, Testing, and Licensing of Boat Operators, 30 Sep 94.
 - g. ER 750-1-1, Material Maintenance Policies, 30 Jan 97.
 - h. DP 750-1-1, Maintenance of Supplies and Equipment, St. Louis District Maintenance Plan, 9 Mar 98.

i. CESO-E Memorandum Dated 9 Mar 00, Subject: USACE Policy Guidance for the Use of Type III and Type V Manual and Manual-Auto Inflatable Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).

4. POLICY: It is the policy of the Corps that all employees who operate USACE boats/vessels less than 26 feet in length be trained, tested, and licensed in accordance with this policy and all applicable regulations. Employees who operate USACE boats/vessels will do so in a safe and prudent manner and in accordance with recognized federal, state, and local laws and standards.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. Motorboat Licensing Instructor. This employee, appointed by each Operations Manager, is responsible for providing all boat training and licensing activities for small boat operators. This individual must pass the Motorboat Operators Licensing Examining Instructors Course prior to training other Operators.

b. Maintenance Manager and the Maintenance Coordinator. These individuals at each office will ensure that the required regularly scheduled vessel maintenance and the recommended maintenance procedures in the vessel operations manual are followed.

c. Vessel Operators.

(1) Operators of small boats/vessels--less than 26 feet in length--must successfully complete the 24-hour HQUSACE-approved Motorboat Operators Training Course and be licensed prior to official operation of a USACE vessel. Licensed motorboat operators will complete an 8-hour refresher course every five years to retain the license. This course is not required for those who have a valid U.S. Coast Guard license.

(2) Operators will inspect vessels for proper equipment and operating condition by completing the Motorboat Equipment and Trip Condition checklist (Appendix A) prior to departure. Operators will not allow a vessel to depart until the required equipment is on board and the vessel is in proper operating condition.

(3) Operators must notify the Project Maintenance Manager and the Maintenance Coordinator if any vessel condition warrants immediate attention.

6. REQUIREMENTS:

a. All persons on board USACE vessels must properly wear a Type III, Type V or better, US Coast Guard Approved, International Orange PFD. Wearing Type III PFDs or better is highly recommended. In cold weather conditions, a Type V float coat or flotation full body suit may be worn. Type V inflatable PFDs are prohibited in accordance with reference g.

b. The number of Type I, II, or III PFDs on board each vessel will equal the carrying capacity plus one child size PFD.

c. In the following circumstances a qualified employee or individual shall be assigned to assist with deck duties. A qualified person is any individual who has established, to the satisfaction of the operator of the vessel, that they possess the physical and mental capability of adequately performing any potential deck duties.

- (1) when extended trips (over four hours) including overnight trips are made from the work site,
- (2) when conditions of navigation make it hazardous for an operator to leave the wheel while underway,
- (3) when operations being performed, other than tying-in, require the handling of lines,
- (4) when operating at night or during inclement weather,
- (5) when towing, or
- (6) when performing search or rescue operations.

d. Under normal conditions a person should not operate the boat more than four continuous hours without an off-the-water break. Heat and sun contribute to less than maximum operating skill if a person operates the boat too long. Exceptions to this requirement may include search, rescue operations, and emergency operations.

e. If an office is notified of a vessel that needs towing, arrangements will be made for a commercial towing service--if available--or a USACE vessel may tow the craft to the nearest point of safety, usually to the nearest boat ramp or marina. The following criteria must be met.

(1) A responsible person in the assisted vessel must sign the towing waiver form as shown in Appendix B. This person must approve of the location and the connections tied to their vessel and the towing vessel.

(2) All those involved in the process of a vessel being towed must be wearing a properly fitted USCG approved, Type I, II, or III PFD.

f. Operators will ensure that the vessel is over one half of a tank full of fuel and oil at the end of each trip. If the vessel is stored on the water and the bilge has an automatic mode it shall be placed in the on position. The vessel must be properly tied down in a boat stall or on the trailer.



APPENDIX A -
Motorboat Equip.
& Trip Condition List
APPENDIX B -
Waiver for Vessel
Assistance

MICHAEL R. MORROW
COL, EN
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

SF

CEMVD

CEMVS-IM-P (5)

MOTORBOAT EQUIPMENT & TRIP CONDITION CHECKLIST

Operator - _____ Date _____

Fuel - Gas or Diesel, Level is _____: Oil - Level is _____

Equipment Checklist

Item	Yes	No	Item	Yes	No
Proper Fire Ext.			Binoculars (V.A.R.)		
First Responder/Aid Kit			Blood-borne Pathogen Kit (V.A.R.)		
Audible device			Fenders (2-3 each) *		
Hand-held Light			Mooring Lines *		
P.F.D's worn by all on board			Ignition kill switch*		
Rescue Throw Ring(Type IV) w/ line			Tool Kit *		
# PFDs= capacity plate plus 1 child size			Depth Finder *		
Paddle(s)			Boat Hook *		
Boarding Ladder			Towline, Waiver form & Bridle *		
Bilge Pump &/or Bailing Bucket			Extra Drain Plug *		
VHF-Radio and/or cell phone			Compass/Navigation Kit*		
Camera (V.A.R.)			Anchor and Line *		

* = Strongly recommended but not required (V.A.R.) = Visitor Assistance Requirement

Trip Condition Checklist

Item	Condition	Comments
Check trailer (lights, hitch, chain, tires)		
Inspect for External Damage		
Start Blowers		
Check Drain Plug		
Check Bilge		
Batteries & Breakers		
Check Oil (engine, transmission, VRO)		
Test Horn		
Check all Gas/Fuel Lines/Filter		
If all O.K. Start Engine		
Check for Discharge of Exhaust Water		
Check for Oil Pressure/Water Pressure		
Recheck for Water/Fuel/Gas Leaks		
Check all Gauges for Normal Readings		
Check for Forward & Reverse Gears		
Test Kill Switches		
Turn Wheel Full Right and Full Left		
Check All Electronics		
Check Navigation/Anchor Lights		
Communication Check		

Complete and file this form. Any additional comments to reverse.

WAIVER FOR VESSEL ASSISTANCE

I, the undersigned, hereby release the United States of America from any and all responsibility for damages caused in their attempt to assist me. I have requested assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's employee(s) because of vessel problems and hold him/her in no way responsible for any act as a result of his/her actions. I agree that all persons involved in this towing process will wear a properly fitted, US Coast Guard approved, Type I, II, or III Personal Flotation Device. I have personally checked and approve of the connections and locations of ties to my vessel and the towing vessel.

Signed

Date and Time

Ranger's name