

Boat Ramp Surveys Report 2010



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Acknowledgement

Surveys conducted were the result of a team effort. Environment Waikato Harbourmasters and Environment Waikato volunteer Honorary Enforcement Officers provided time and assistance in undertaking surveys during the summer holiday period. We wish to thank all those involved for their contributions.

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Abstract

Environment Waikato has surveyed skippers of recreational vessels at various boat ramps in the Waikato region over the past four years. The purpose of collecting this information is to provide the Navigation Safety Programme with trend information on compliance and education gaps in relation to provisions of the Waikato Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2009 (bylaw) and promoted safe boating best practices.

Harbourmasters and volunteer honorary enforcement officers surveyed 834 vessel users at 17 boat ramps across the Waikato region.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Environment Waikato has surveyed skippers of recreational vessels at various boat ramps in the Waikato region over the past four years.

- In 2007, a one-off survey was completed to identify the effectiveness of national Personal Flotation Device (PFD) campaigns.
- In 2008, a larger survey was undertaken to obtain trend specific data on boating safety behaviours.
- 2009's survey was similar to that of 2008, with minor variations on the questions asked.
- The questions in this year's survey had minor changes. Also, PFDs were sighted this year rather than asked if they were carried.

1.2 Background

Navigation safety rules are set out in Part 91 of the Maritime Transport Act 1994. The Waikato Regional Council Navigation Safety Bylaw 2009 (bylaw) provides more detailed rules and regulations for boating in the Waikato region. The bylaw is required to be consistent with Part 91.

Safe boating best practise is promoted through a number of organisations including Environment Waikato and Maritime New Zealand (MNZ). Methods of promotion include advertising, print resources (including the safe boating essential guide) and events.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose for gathering survey information is to provide Environment Waikato's Navigation Safety Programme with trend information on compliance and education gaps in relation to provisions of the bylaw and promote safe boating best practices.

1.4 Methodology

Harbourmasters and volunteer honorary enforcement officers surveyed vessel users at 17 boat ramps across the Waikato region (refer to Appendix A). A larger number of surveys were undertaken on the Coromandel Peninsula. This is due to the large number of boat users on the Coromandel at the time of year the survey was conducted. A copy of the survey form is attached in Appendix B.

1.5 Limitations

The detail within this report is indicative of boat ramp users in the Waikato region. Those surveyed using the boat ramps were predominantly trailered power-driven vessels. Therefore, the findings in this report are indicative of that category of user.

Weather conditions and the varied dates that the surveys were undertaken may have impacted the types of skippers surveyed.

The dates of the survey (refer to Appendix A) meant a large proportion of those surveyed were holiday makers.

A small number of survey forms were incorrectly completed, which has meant information gaps. Information gaps have been taken into account and the total number of respondents may be less than 834 in some questions.

2 Results

2.1 General

- 834 vessels were surveyed at 17 boat ramps
- Margin of error = 3.3%

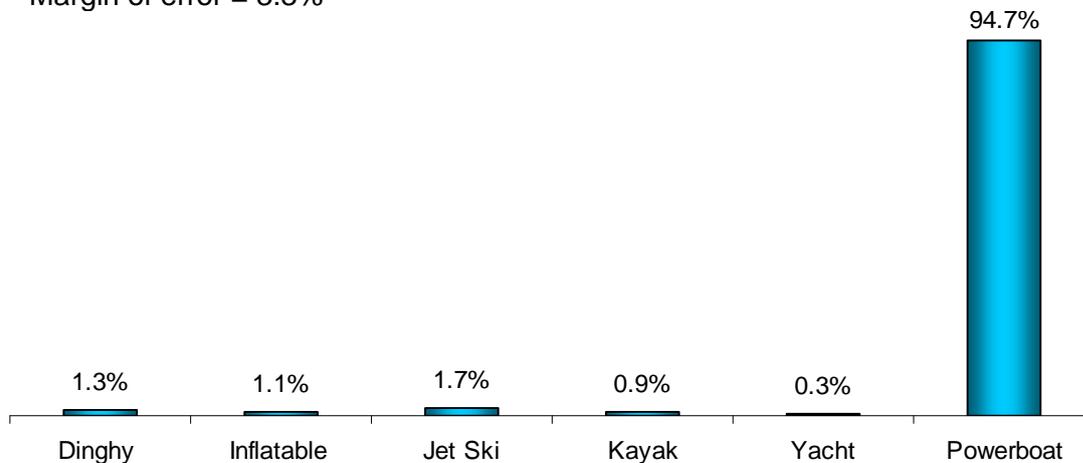
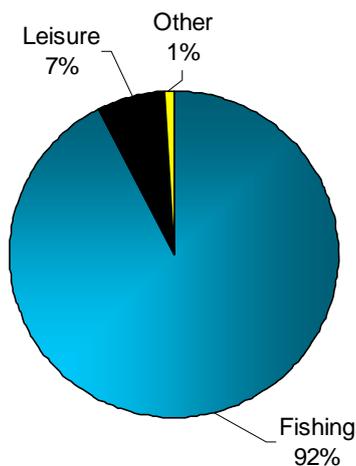


Figure 1: Vessel types surveyed

- Powerboats were the most surveyed vessel at 94.7%.



- 92% of those surveyed were fishing.
- Leisure category includes towing skiers and biscuits.
- Fishing category includes divers.

Figure 2: Activity type

2.2 Personal flotation devices (PFD)

2.2.1 PFD aboard

- 3% of those surveyed said they did not have any PFD's aboard
- 6.3% of persons surveyed were not carrying sufficient PFD's for the number of people aboard.

2.2.2 Children wearing PFD's

- 43% of children sighted were not wearing PFD's when departing boat ramps.
- Instructions for the boat ramp survey specified a child as being someone who looked under the age of 12.
- Weather conditions when the survey was conducted were variable. Visual assessments of weather are included in appendix B.

2.3 Communications

2.3.1 Number communications carried

Table 1: Number of communications carried

	Zero	One	Two	Three	Four
Totals	19	100	248	336	129
Percentage	2.3	12.1	29.6	40.5	15.5

- 2.3% did not carry the compulsory one form of communication
- 14.4% carried fewer than the recommended two forms of communications.

2.3.2 Number of communications carried by coast

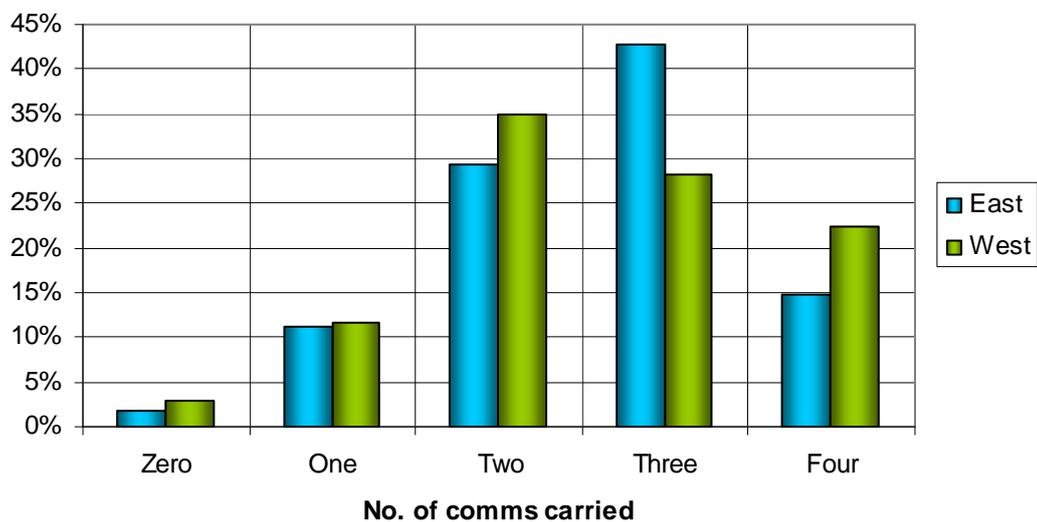


Figure 2: Number of communications carried – East versus West coast

2.3.3 Communication types carried

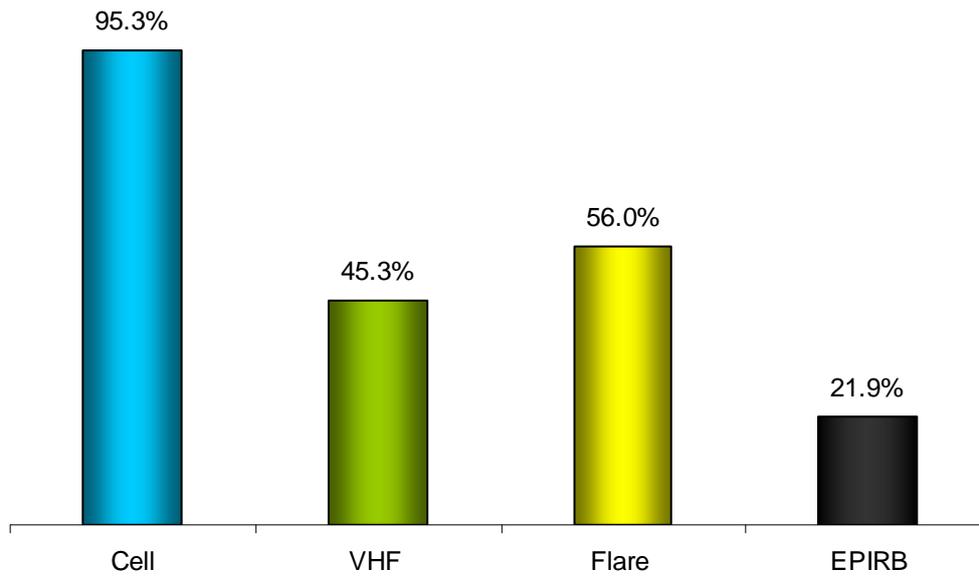
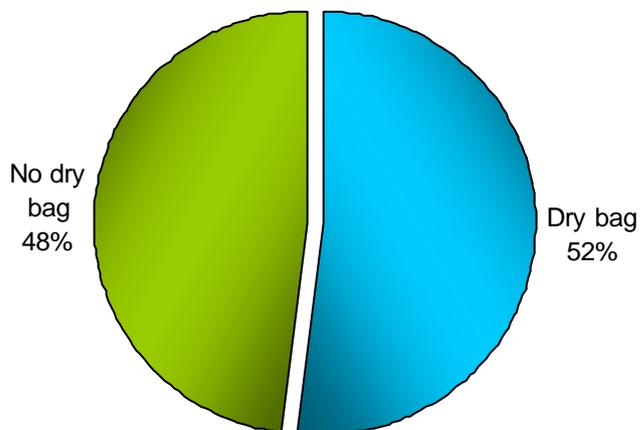


Figure 3: Communication type carried

- Cell phones were the most commonly carried form of communication.

2.3.4 Cellphone in dry bag



- 48% of persons surveyed did not carry their cell phone in a dry bag.

Figure 4: Cell phones in a dry bag

2.3.5 Cellphone in dry bag by coast

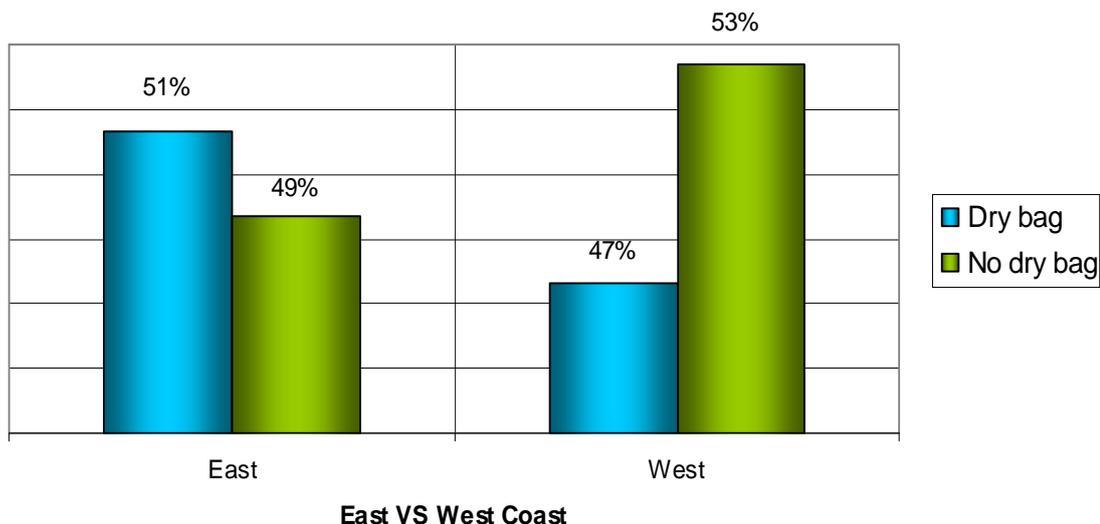


Figure 5: Cell phones in dry bag by area

- West coast respondents were less likely to carry cell phones in a dry bag.

2.4 Weather checked

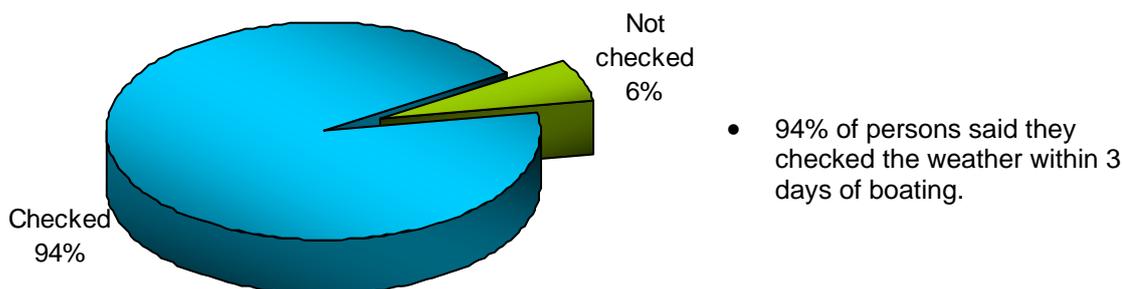


Figure 6: Weather checked

- 94% of persons said they checked the weather within 3 days of boating.

2.5 Residential location

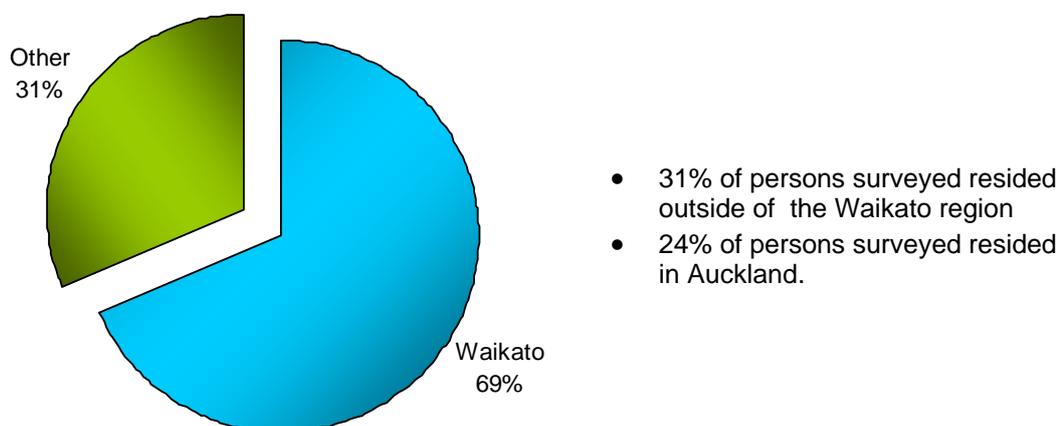


Figure 7: Residential location

- 31% of persons surveyed resided outside of the Waikato region
- 24% of persons surveyed resided in Auckland.

2.6 Residential location by coast

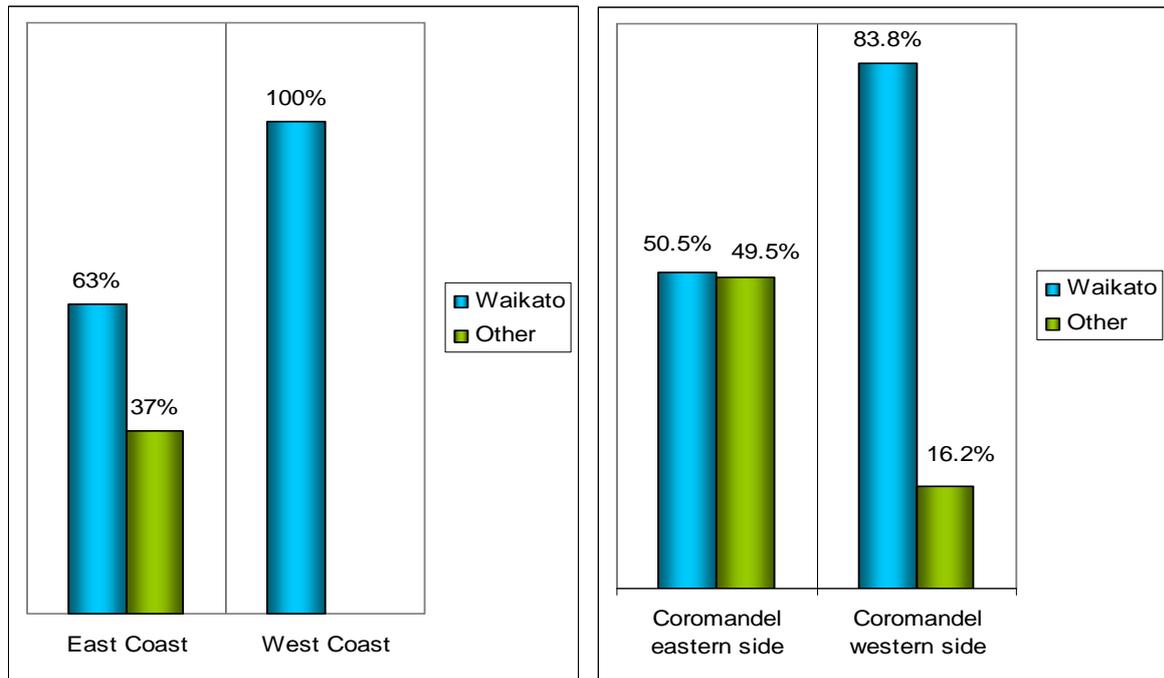
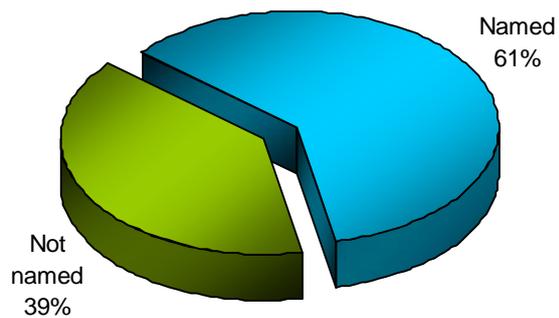


Figure 8: Residential location by area

- 37% of persons surveyed on the east coast came from outside of the Waikato region.
- 49.5% of persons surveyed on the eastern side of the Coromandel Peninsula came from the Waikato region.

2.7 Name on vessel



- 39% did not have a name displayed on their vessel.

Figure 9: Name on vessel

3 Trend information/results comparison

Results have been compared in the below table from 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 surveys.

Table 2: Results comparison by year

	2007	2008	2009	2010
Zero PFD carried aboard vessel	-	-	3%	3%
Insufficient PFD carried for the number of persons aboard vessel	3.6%	9%	7%	6.3 %
Children not wearing lifejackets when leaving the boat ramp	-	26%	29%	43 %
Zero communication devices carried	-	5%	4%	2.3%
Zero communication devices carried – West Coast	-	-	19%	3%
Zero communications devices carried – East Coast	-	-	2%	2%
Less than two forms of communication devices carried - whole region	-	22%	18%	14.6%
Less than two forms of communication devices carried – West Coast	-	-	34%	11.6%
Less than two forms of communication devices carried – East Coast	-	-	18%	14.6%
Cell phone <u>not</u> carried in a dry bag	-	-	60%	48%
Cell phone <u>not</u> carried in a dry bag – West coast	-	-	-	53%
Cell phone <u>not</u> carried in a dry bag – East coast	-	-	-	49%
Weather not checked prior to boating	-	-	12.7%	6%
Residing outside of the Waikato region	-	30%	34%	31%
Sample size – West coast – residing outside Waikato	-	-	26%	0%
Sample size – East coast – residing outside Waikato	-	-	56%	37%
Sample size – Total	1121	819	783	834

Note: items questioned over the past for years has changed and increased ‘ – ‘ is indicative of results not available.

4 Summary

4.1 General

Nearly 95% of vessels surveyed were power-driven vessels. 92% of the total surveyed were going out fishing. Therefore, the findings are particularly relevant to the behaviours of power-driven vessel users, fishing.

4.2 Personal flotation devices (PFD)

PFD use and carriage was assessed through two means, firstly carriage of PFD's and secondly children wearing PFD's when leaving the boat ramp.

4.3 Carriage of PFD

Clause 2.1 of the Bylaw and Part 91.4(1) of the Maritime Transport Act (MTA 2008) requires carriage of sufficient PFD's for the number of people aboard. 3% of those surveyed did not carry any PFD's aboard and 6.4% did not carry sufficient PFD's for the number of persons aboard. These results are consistent with previous results when the margin of error (MOE) is taken into account. The proportion of compliance (over 90%) indicates this is an enforcement issue rather than education.

4.4 Wearing of PFD

MNZ resource the Safe Boating Essential Guide 2010 (SBEG) recommends that lifejacket/PFD's are worn at all times when in a vessel 6 metres or less. Part 91 does not specifically state when a PFD should be worn. The SBEG states that children should wear life jackets at all times.

The bylaw requires that persons must wear PFD's in situations of heightened risk. A child is considered to be in "a heightened risk situation" and should wear a PFD at all times when boating.

43% of children were sighted as not wearing PFD's when leaving the boat ramp. This result indicates a lack of awareness.

4.5 Communications

Three areas of communications were assessed; number of communication options carried, type of communication carried and cell phones in dry bags.

The bylaw requires that at least one form of appropriate communications is carried that provides the ability to communicate to land based parties at all times of the journey.

MNZ's SBEG recommends that two reliable forms of communications are carried as essential safety equipment when boating.

2.3% of skippers carried no forms of communications; this number has positively reduced over the past three years. There was a minor difference in west and east coast behaviour.

14.4% of skippers did not carry the recommended two forms of communications.

Cell phones were the most commonly carried form of communication. Carriage of cell phones may not be viewed as a conscious safety decision as "around 85% of the adult population carry a mobile phone" (www.nzma.org.nz).

MNZ recommends that cell phones are carried in a dry bag. The bylaw states that skippers using vessels under 6 metres must have communications that are able to be fully submersed.

48% of persons surveyed did not carry their cell phone in a dry bag. This is a large proportion and indicates a need for more education.

4.6 Weather

The SBEG recommends that skippers always check the weather before going out.

94% of respondents said they checked the weather within 3 days of boating. This is a positive response.

4.7 Name on vessel

Vessel identification is a requirement in the bylaw.

39% of vessels did not have a name displayed. Vessel ID requirement in the bylaw comes into force July 2010. There is a need to increase awareness of this requirement.

4.8 Residential location

Boaties are known to be a transient community, with skippers travelling from a variety of areas to boat along New Zealand's coastlines.

31% of respondents said that they resided outside of the Waikato region, and overall 24% of respondents came from Auckland.

The East coast had a higher proportion of persons boating from outside of the region and the eastern side of the Coromandel had even higher numbers with 49.5% of persons surveyed coming from outside of the Waikato region. Indicating further need to ensure boaties from outside of the Waikato region are provided with Waikato region boating information.

