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# ***Public opinion research study on boating safety in Canada***

## **Final Report**

### **Prepared for Transport Canada**

Supplier Name: Environics Research  
Contract Number: T8053-210136/001/CY  
Contract Value: \$127,524.99 (including HST)  
Award Date: 2021-12-03  
Delivery Date: 2022-03-16

Registration Number: POR 056-21

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**Canada**

**Public opinion research study on boating safety in Canada**  
**Final report**

Prepared for Transport Canada by Environics Research

March 2022

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Cat. No. T29-172/2022E-PDF

ISBN 978-0-660-42724-9

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre *Recherche sur l'opinion publique portant sur la sécurité nautique au Canada*.

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## Executive summary

### 1. Background and objectives

Transport Canada (TC) wants to better understand what Canadians know and do regarding five key issues: lifejacket and Personal Flotation Device (PFD) use; the risks of falling into cold water; the dangers of boating under the influence; ensuring vessels have all required safety equipment; and the importance of pleasure craft licensing.

Research on recreational boaters will allow TC to:

- Better understand the profiles of recreational boaters and how to target communications efforts effectively.
- Examine and gain insight into how on water safety is understood.
- Identify opportunities to deliver and improve messaging, educational tools, educational material to Canadians on the five main areas of focus.

The results of the research will establish a baseline of data from which comparative information can be drawn in future studies on Canadians' understanding of water safety. The data will also help inform the Office of Boating Safety (OBS)'s communications, awareness and safety education efforts for 2022 and beyond.

### 2. Methodology

EnviroNics Research conducted a dual mode (online and telephone) survey of 2,237 adult Canadians who operated or were guests on boats in the past year or who intend to in the coming year. In the ten provinces, the survey was conducted online. Because the extremely small population in the three Northern territories has insufficient presence on online panels to be surveyed using an online methodology, EnviroNics also conducted a companion telephone survey, targeting 50 completions in each of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The results of these two methodologies were merged for this report.

The online survey was conducted with Canadians who are members of an online panel, from January 17-February 5, 2022. The sampling method was designed to complete interviews with Canadians age 18 and over; hard quotas were set by region (including targets for urban and rural respondents to ensure there would be sufficient responses for analysis by key points; flexible quotas were set for age and gender. The data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample is representative of this population according to the most recently available Census information (region and gender). The sample was not weighted by age, because boat users in the survey were younger than the general population, and age weighting would have skewed the data.

Target group	Total	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	Atl	Terr
# of completed interviews	2,237	260	259	133	135	500	350	450	150
% of completed interviews	100%	12%	12%	6%	6%	22%	16%	20%	7%

#### Recreational boat/watercraft operator or guest status - unweighted

Watercraft use	Operator (net)	Operator only	Both operator and guest	Guest only	Neither
Past 12 months (N=2,237)	30%	16%	15%	39%	31%
Next 12 months (N=691)	23%	8%	15%	77%	n/a

As an online survey is a non-probability sample, no margin of sampling error is reported. Although opt-in panels are not random probability samples, online surveys can be used for general population surveys provided they are well-designed and employ a large, well-maintained panel. This survey's large and carefully designed sample provides robust data for understanding the attitudes of the Canadian boater population and subgroups of interest. The telephone survey was a probability sample and the margin of sampling error on the total of n=150 telephone interviews is  $\pm 8.0$  at the 95% confidence interval. ***More information about the methodology for this survey is included in Appendix A.***

#### Notes on differences between online and telephone survey methodologies

This report provides the results of a dual-mode survey. There are well-documented differences in response patterns between online self-completion surveys and telephone surveys with a live interviewer. In general, respondents can be more emphatic or enthusiastic when speaking to an interviewer, due in part to social desirability bias, in which some respondents may answer in a way they (consciously or unconsciously) think will appear more acceptable to the interviewer. With a change to an online methodology, there will often be a decrease in the strong opinion options (i.e., fewer will say "very"), with a corresponding move to the somewhat/moderate options. In these cases, it is useful to see whether the net measures have fundamentally changed or remained stable. As well, for some questions with longer response lists, the telephone respondents were not read the options that were shown to the online respondents, which results in lower mentions among the telephone respondents.

### 3. Cost of research

The cost of this research was \$127,524.99 (HST included).

## 4. Key findings

### General summary

Canadian boaters generally have moderate levels of knowledge and awareness about key boating safety issues. Understandably, operators are more likely to consider themselves at least somewhat knowledgeable about these issues than are guests. There is good awareness about the dangers of cold water boating and of boating while intoxicated, noting a six in ten majority say they have never experienced boating with someone under the influence. About six in ten say they always using a life jacket or PFD, and over eight in ten say they definitely would wear one if asked to do so by an operator - while this is fairly high, there is clearly room for improvement in compliance. Boaters are not especially knowledgeable about three official boating documents (the *Pleasure Craft Operator Card* or PCOC, the *Pleasure Craft Licence* or PCL, and the *Pleasure Craft Registration*) or the differences between them (for example, over three-quarters think there is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence) which may require additional communications. Boaters also appear to need more information about how to ensure vessels have all required safety equipment and are well prepared for a voyage.

The following are specific findings by topic:

### *Boating characteristics*

- Canadians are about twice as likely to be a guest (64%) on a recreational vehicle as an operator (17%).
- Two-thirds (68%) report use of a motorized craft; four in ten (41%) use kayaks and one-third (34%) use canoes. Fewer report using other types of pleasure craft: paddleboards (22%), personal watercraft (like WaveRunners/Sea-Doos/Jet Skis – 15%), sailboats (13%) and rowboats or dinghies (12%).
- The bulk of powerboats are under 10 metres, with the average being 6.8 metres, while houseboats cover a range of lengths with the average being 11.4 metres. Many boaters cannot estimate the length of motorized vessels.
- Personal watercraft are the types of recreational watercraft most likely to be used often, with one in ten (11%) reporting daily use or intended use. Close to half or more say they use each type of watercraft less often than monthly.
- Two-thirds of boaters have been cruising/touring in the past year (66%) or intend to in the coming year (64%); just under half (45%) have gone (49%) or will go (37%) fishing in a boat; fewer indicate other recreational boating activities.
- From a list of seven potential locations, Canadian boaters are most likely to indicate they typically use recreational watercraft while visiting friends' or family members' cottages (41%) or while camping (27%). Around one quarter say they use watercraft at the home of a friend or family member (23%) or on vacation within Canada or other northern/colder locations (23%). Two in ten indicate they have a home on or near the water (21%), or at a cottage or recreational property they own (20%).
- Recreational boating is most likely to take place on a lake (82%). Three in ten have gone or will go boating on rivers (30%), and two in ten have gone, or will go, boating in an ocean (19%).
- One-quarter (24%) of boaters have rented a motorized boat. Four in ten (40%) have not but may in the future, and one-third (35%) have not and do not intend to.

### *Awareness of regulations*

- Three-quarters indicate being either very (22%) or somewhat (54%) knowledgeable about how to keep safe while boating; one-quarter feel they are less knowledgeable (19% not very knowledgeable, 5% not at all knowledgeable.)
- Six in ten boaters say they are either very (16%) or somewhat (43%) familiar with the formal regulations about recreational boating, and four in ten (41%) are less familiar.
- Nine in ten (89%) say they are at least somewhat familiar when it comes to the regulations around lifejackets in boats, and close to this (85%) are familiar with boating impairment regulations. Somewhat less, but still a strong majority of three-quarters (74%), are familiar with safe boat operation regulations.
- Seven in ten possess (23%), or are aware of (45%), the *Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC)*, and two-thirds each have heard of the *Pleasure Craft Licence (PCL)* (17% have, 49% heard of) or the *Pleasure Craft Registration* (14% have, 51% heard of). Around one-quarter have not heard of each of the three, and just under one in ten each are uncertain.
- Those aware of at least one of the three boating documents were asked to indicate what the difference is between the three. The top mentions are that the PCOC is for operators and allows them to drive any craft (27%) and that the PCR is required for registering a boat you own (23%). Fewer say the PCL is required to operate your own watercraft legally (14%).
- Four in ten Canadian boaters (39%) have taken a boating safety course. Over one-quarter (27%) say it was to obtain the PCOC and about one in ten (12%) say it was another type of course.
- Majorities know it is true to some extent that those operating a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry proof of competency on board (73%), and that a Pleasure Craft Operator Card is not needed if the craft has no motor (59%). Fewer know that if someone on board a vessel is being paid to operate it or pays to ride it, it is not a pleasure craft (43% think this is true, 34% think it is false, and 24% are not sure).
- Only small proportions of Canadian boaters think people who have been operating recreational boats for a long time don't need to prove their competency (11% true), or that you don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you (14%). However, a strong majority (77%) think it is true there is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence.
- Close to seven in ten (68%) can select at least one correct acceptable proofs of competency operators of motorized pleasure craft can show. The proof most selected is the Pleasure Craft Operator Card (61%), distantly followed by proof of having passed a recreational boating safety course in Canada before April 1, 1999 (29%). Close to one-quarter (23%) indicate a marine certificate from Transport Canada, and just under two in ten (18%) indicate completion of a rental-boat safety checklist obtained for a specific rental period from the rental agency. Half (49%) also indicate an incorrect "proof."
- The most used sources for boating information are friends and family (45%), followed by books and manuals online (32%), websites (23%), books and manuals in print (20%), and social media (18%).

### *Preparing vessels for excursions*

- Just over four in ten feel very (10%) or somewhat (33%) knowledgeable about what is required to prepare a recreational watercraft for a trip, while a slim majority feel less knowledgeable (33%) or not at all (19%) knowledgeable.

- Over eight in ten recognize each of three legal requirements for a boating excursion: access to lifejackets or PFDs for all (89%), ensuring equipment is on board and working (87%), and checking the vessel and lights (85%); six in ten (62%) also think reviewing a safety checklist is a legal requirement. Minorities indicate reviewing a safety checklist (41%) or making sure everyone on board is hydrated (13%) are legal requirements when they are in fact optional.

### *Lifejackets and PFDs*

- Close to half (46%) of boaters say the terms “lifejacket” and “Personal Flotation Device” or PFD refer to different things, higher than when this question was asked in 2001 (36%)<sup>1</sup>. Just over four in ten (44%) say they are the same, and one in ten (10%) are not sure.
- Those saying lifejackets and PFDs are different things are most likely to say lifejackets are something you wear (18%) or that PFDs are non-wearables like cushions or floater boards (15%). One in ten (11%) say PFDs are only for flotation. Fewer than one in ten mention other specific distinctions.
- Eight in ten say they wear a lifejacket always (59%) or sometimes (22%); one in ten say they rarely (7%) or never (2%) wear one, and another one in ten (11%) say it varies depending on the circumstances (for example, type of boat or if children are on board).
- Virtually all boaters say they would definitely (84%) or probably (14%) wear a lifejacket or PFD if they were a guest on someone else’s boat and the operator requested they wear one.
- Over six in ten (63%) say a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of the proper size has always been available to them when they have been out in a small boat or watercraft (under 6 meters or 20 feet), and an additional three in ten (29%) say it usually was. Only very small proportions say an appropriate lifejacket or PFD was not usually (4%) or never available (<1%) or are not sure (4%).
- Of a series of statements about lifejackets, boaters are most likely to agree to some extent that if the operator is wearing a lifejacket they will always wear one too (76% net agreement, 52% strongly) or that people who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible (73% net agreement, 37% strongly). Half also agree to some extent that lifejackets are uncomfortable because they are too bulky (49%). Minorities agree with three other statements; that they feel uncomfortable wearing a lifejacket when no one else is (32%), that they only wear lifejackets when there are children on the boat (15%), or that only weak swimmers need lifejackets (8%).
- Nine in ten agree (92%, 63% strongly) wearing a lifejacket is a normal part of boating. Opinion is divided about whether or not it is true there is no law that says you must wear a lifejacket, just that you need one available (41% agree, 45% disagree). Only small minorities agree with two false statements: that it is only important to wear lifejacket if the water is cold (12% agree, 87% disagree) or that people don’t need to wear a lifejacket when they believe the boat is safe (12% agree, 86% disagree).

### *Cold water safety*

- Over six in ten (63%) correctly indicate cold water (below 15 degrees Celsius/50 degrees Fahrenheit) can pose a danger in any season. Three in ten (29%) indicate winter, and two in ten each choose fall (22%) or spring (21%).

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<sup>1</sup> 2001 results are from “Canadian Boater Attitudes Toward Personal Flotation Devices,” conducted by Environics Research for the Office of Boating Safety, Canadian Coast Guard, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada



- Close to eight in ten provide at least one top-of-mind preventive measure boaters should take when the weather is cold. The most common measures are wearing life jackets (20%) and dressing warmly (15%). One in ten cite each of three other measures, including having thermal/heating supplies on board (11%), wearing a wet suit (11%), or keeping warm in general (11%). Two in ten (22%) could not provide any measure.
- A majority say it is definitely true exposure to cold air and wind while in water-soaked clothing causes hypothermia (58%); around four in ten each say it is definitely true people will lose the effective use of their fingers, arms and legs within 10 minutes of cold water immersion (41%), or that hypothermia sets in when core body temperature drops below 35.0° C (39%). Just under four in ten also think it is definitely true that cold water immersion can paralyze the muscles instantly (37%). One-quarter (23%) also think the one false statement, that immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia, is definitely true.

### *Impaired boating*

- Over six in ten boaters (63%) say they have never gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Of those who have, this has mainly been a rare occurrence (21%); 14 percent have had this happen frequently (2%) or occasionally (12%).
- Those who witnessed impaired boating even rarely are most likely to say the substance involved was alcohol (85%), followed by cannabis (35%); under one in ten say it was prescription (7%) or illegal drugs (6%).
- Close to half of those who have witnessed impaired boating indicate the person involved as the operator (10% witnessed operator only, 37% have seen both operator and guests be impaired). Four in ten (42%) have only seen impaired guests.
- The top reasons given for why someone might operate a boat while impaired are that such people think they can get away with it, due to there being a lack of enforcement (19%), or that they think it is safe to do so because there is less traffic, more open space and lower speeds than is the case with motor vehicles (18%). One in ten (11%) also think they may not be aware of the dangers involved. Fewer than one in ten give other individual reasons, including people being foolish (8%) or irresponsible (7%).
- Two-thirds (64%) think impaired boating is a serious issue in Canada, one in six (17%) think it isn't, and two in ten (20%) are not sure.

## 5. Political neutrality statement and contact information

I hereby certify as senior officer of Environics that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada, and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.



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**Supplier name:** Environics Research Group

PWGSC contract number: T8053-210136/001/CY

Original contract date: 2021-12-03

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# Introduction

## 1. Background

It has been estimated some 12.4 million adult Canadians enjoy recreational boating each year. With relatively low entry level costs and so much water to explore, it is no surprise recreational boating is a popular pastime, one that has increased significantly in the past year, as people seek out even more ways to explore the outdoors during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the high proportion of Canadians who enjoy boating, there is in fact limited existing research on boating safety in Canada, and few national data sources. Additional research is required to ensure the department is focused on issues that are truly affecting the lives of Canadians. The limited data available on this topic shows that 34 percent of water immersion deaths occur while recreational boating (Canadian Red Cross, 2020). With comprehensive data, Transport Canada can work to reduce the number of boating related fatalities occurring on the water and improve other boating safety issues.

## 2. Research rationale and objectives

Research on recreational boating in Canada is needed to properly target communications, awareness, and safety education efforts. The Office of Boating Safety needs to better understand the demographics of Canadian recreational boaters, safety issues with the types of pleasure craft they use, their level of knowledge about regulations and safety issues and where they get their boating safety related information.

Transport Canada (TC) wants to better understand what Canadians know and do regarding five key issues: Personal Flotation Device (PFD) use; the risks of falling into cold water; the dangers of boating under the influence; ensuring vessels have all required safety equipment; and the importance of pleasure craft licensing.

Research on recreational boaters will allow TC to:

- Better understand the profiles of recreational boaters and how to target communications efforts effectively.
- Examine and gain insight into how on water safety is understood.
- Identify opportunities to deliver and improve messaging, educational tools, educational material to Canadians on the five main areas of focus.

The results of the research will establish a baseline of data from which comparative information could be drawn in future studies on Canadians' understanding of water safety. The data will also help inform the OBS's communications, awareness and safety education efforts for 2022 and beyond.

## 3. Report

This report begins with an executive summary outlining key findings and conclusions, followed by a detailed analysis of the results. A detailed description of the methodology used to conduct this research is presented in Appendix A. The research instrument is presented in Appendix B.

**Note: Some columns and rows may not add to 100% due to rounding or multiple mentions. Any base sizes not indicated are total sample.**

## Detailed findings

### I. Boating characteristics

#### 1. Watercraft use – past year or intent

Canadians are about twice as likely to be a guest on a recreational vehicle than an operator.

To qualify for the survey, respondents had to be adult Canadians who operated or were guests on boats or other recreational watercraft in the past year or who intend to in the coming year. Taken together, over one-third of respondents (36%) have, or will be, operators of watercraft (either solely as an operator or as both operator and guest), while close to two-thirds (64%) were or will be guests.

**Recreational boat/watercraft operator or guest status**

Watercraft use	Operator (net)	Operator only	Both operator and guest	Guest only	Neither
Past 12 months (N=2,237)	29%	15%	14%	39%	32%
Next 12 months (N=691)	22%	7%	16%	78%	n/a
<i>SUMMARY (PAST/NEXT YEAR)</i>	<i>36%</i>	<i>17%</i>	<i>19%</i>	<i>64%</i>	

Q1 *In the past 12 months, have you operated or been a guest on a recreational boat or watercraft?*

Q2 *In the next 12 months, do you intend to operate or be a guest in a recreational boat or watercraft? (BASE: Those who did not go boating in past 12 months)*

Being an operator of a recreational boat or watercraft, either in the past year or in the coming year, is higher among the following groups:

- Territories (60%)
- Men (44%, vs. 28% of women)
- Born in Canada (37%, vs. 29% born outside of Canada)
- Advanced-level swimmers (46%, vs. 28% of beginners, 36% of intermediate swimmers, and 22% of non-swimmers)

## 2. Types of pleasure craft

**Two-thirds report use of a motorized craft; four in ten use kayaks and one-third use canoes.**

Boaters were asked what types of pleasure craft they have used in the past year or intend to use in the next year, as either an operator or a guest. Boaters are most likely to report using a powerboat (59% overall, 64% of past year users and 48% of intenders). Common across operators and guests. Around four in ten boaters (past year users or intenders) report using kayaks, around one-third use canoes, and two in ten use paddleboards. Fewer report using or intending to use other types of watercraft.

**Types of pleasure craft**

Type of boat used/will use	Total	Past 12 months (n=1,546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
<i>Net: Motorized</i>	68%	73%	57%
Powerboat, motorboat or speedboat	59%	64%	48%
Pontoon boat	15%	16%	12%
Houseboat	5%	5%	4%
Kayak (including inflatable crafts)	41%	43%	39%
Canoe	34%	34%	35%
Paddleboard (including inflatable ones)	22%	23%	21%
Personal watercraft (e.g., WaveRunners/Sea-Doos/Jet Skis)	15%	17%	11%
Sailboat	13%	13%	13%
Rowboat or dinghy (not motorized)	12%	13%	11%
Not sure	5%	3%	11%

Q3 Which of the following types of pleasure craft have you used in the past year or intend to use in the next year, either as an operator or a guest?

The following provides a summary of subgroup differences in use of the top three types of watercraft:

Powerboats/motorboats/speedboats are the most used type of watercraft across almost all segments of the boater population. Their use is higher among the following groups:

- Territories (76%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (68%)
- Rural residents (65%, vs. 57% of urban)
- Household income \$150,000 and over (69%)
- Those who later in the survey say they are very knowledgeable about boating safety (72%) or who have taken the Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) course (71%)

Kayak use is higher among younger boaters (54% age 18 to 34) and decreases as age increases (down to 20% age 65 and over). Kayak use is also higher among the following groups:

- British Columbia (50%)
- Urban residents (44%, vs. 34% of rural)
- University degree (48%, vs. 32% with high school or less)
- Advanced (47%) and intermediate (43%) swimmers
- Past year operators (53%, vs. 35% guests) and intending operators (54%, vs. 34% guests)

*Canoe* use is also higher among younger boaters (41% age 18 to 34) and decreases as age increases (down to 23% age 65 and over). Canoe use is also higher among the following groups:

- Territories (52%) and Ontario (41%)
- Urban residents (36%, vs. 28% of rural)
- Men (37%, vs. 31% of women)
- University degree (41%, vs. 29% with high school or less)
- English speakers (37%, vs. 29% French speakers)
- Advanced (43%) and intermediate (34%) swimmers

### 3. Length of most-used motorized watercraft

Many powerboat and houseboat owners are unable to provide a length for the craft they use or m=intend to use most often. The average powerboat length indicated is 6.8 metres; the average boat is 11.4 metres.

Boaters who indicated they used a powerboat or houseboat in the past year, or an intention to use either of these in the coming year were asked to indicate the length of the craft (in feet or metres, converted to metres for reporting purposes). Close to half of powerboat users and almost six in ten houseboat users are unable to estimate the length of the craft. The bulk of powerboats are under 10 metres, with the average being 6.8 metres, while houseboats cover a range of lengths with the average being 11.4 metres.<sup>2</sup>

**Lengths of powerboats used/intended**

Length ranges	Total powerboat users (n=1,364)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=454)	Guest (n=570)	Operator (n=80)	Guest (n=261)
6 metres and under	25%	36%	21%	35%	16%
6 metres to 9 meters	21%	30%	19%	19%	13%
10 metres to 12 metres	4%	4%	4%	2%	2%
> 12 metres to < 24 metres	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%
24 metres or more	2%	2%	2%	0%	1%
Not sure	46%	25%	51%	43%	67%
MEAN	6.80	6.54	7.29	5.53	6.82

**Lengths of houseboats used/intended**

Length ranges	Total houseboat users (n=103)
6 metres and under	7%
6 metres to 9 meters	10%
10 metres to 12 metres	5%
> 12 metres to < 24 metres	9%
24 metres or more	11%
Not sure	57%
MEAN	11.43

Q4 You indicated you used or intend to use the following type of boat. What is the approximate length of the craft? If more than one of that type, please indicate the length of the type you use/intend to use most often.

<sup>2</sup> Several extreme outliers were removed from the data set after consultation with Transport Canada. The upper limit for the longest powerboat was set at 57 metres (185 feet); the upper limit for longest houseboat was set at 37 metres (120 feet).

#### 4. Frequency of use of watercraft

**One in ten or fewer use or intend to use any type of watercraft daily during the boating season.**

Those indicating past or intended use of each type of watercraft were asked how frequently they were or will be used, during the boating season. Frequency of use is generally fairly similar across types of watercraft. Personal watercraft are the most frequently used, with one in ten reporting daily use or intended use. Close to half or more say they use each type of watercraft less than monthly.

##### Frequency of use of watercraft (past 12 months or intended)

Type of craft (base of those using each)/Frequency	More than once a week	At least weekly	At least monthly	Less often than monthly	Not sure
Personal watercraft (n=311)	11%	16%	23%	46%	5%
Rowboat or dinghy (n=247)	7%	11%	24%	55%	4%
Paddleboard (n=462)	6%	16%	22%	52%	3%
Power boat/motorboat /speedboat (n=1,364)	6%	12%	21%	57%	4%
Canoe (n=751)	6%	11%	24%	55%	4%
Pontoon boat (n=303)	6%	9%	21%	59%	5%
Kayak (n=910)	5%	12%	29%	51%	3%
Houseboat (n=103)	4%	8%	17%	65%	6%
Sailboat (n=264)	3%	10%	20%	57%	11%

Q5 A) Approximately how frequently did you use this type/these types of watercraft in the past year, during the boating season?

B) Approximately how frequently do you expect to use this type/these types of watercraft in the next year, during the boating season?

BASES: Those who used or intend to use each type of craft

Frequency of watercraft use by type is generally quite similar across subgroups. Reporting more frequent use of most types of watercraft is higher among previous year vessel operators than among previous year guests or next year intenders (operators or guests).



## 5. Boating-related activities

**Two-thirds of boaters have been cruising/touring in the past year or intend to in the coming year; just under half have gone or will go fishing in a boat; fewer indicate other recreational boating activities.**

Boaters were provided with a list of potential recreational boating activities and asked to indicate which they had done in the past year or intend to do in the next year (multiple responses were permitted). The most commonly reported activity is cruising/touring, selected by two thirds, followed by fishing, by just under one half. Two in ten indicate powerboating, one in ten select waterskiing, and under one in ten mention other boating activities, including commuting, competitions or parasailing.

**Boating-related activities in past year or intend to do**

Activity	Total	Past 12 months (n=1,546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
Cruising/touring	65%	66%	64%
Fishing	45%	49%	37%
Powerboating	22%	25%	15%
Waterskiing	12%	16%	5%
Commuting	6%	7%	6%
Competitive boating/racing	2%	3%	1%
Parasailing	2%	3%	<1%
Flyboarding/hydro flying	1%	1%	1%
Other (1% or less each)	6%	7%	5%

Q6 Which of the following recreational boating-related activities have you done in the past year or intend to do in the next year?

Undertaking several of the most popular boating activities is higher among those most likely to boating experience, including past year operators, those who use or intend to use a motorized boat or who have rented one in the past, and those who, later in the survey, say they are very knowledgeable about boating safety or have taken a boating safety course.

Following are notable subgroup differences for the top three activities.

*Cruising/touring* is the top recreational boating activity across most subgroups but is higher among the following:

- Quebec (77%)
- Rural residents (70%, vs. 64% urban)
- Household income \$150,000 and over (73%)
- Born in Canada (67%, vs. 58% born elsewhere)

*Fishing* using recreational watercraft is higher among the following:

- Territories (76%) and MB/SK (55%)
- Rural residents (52%, vs. 42% urban)
- Men (53%, vs. 37%)
- Less than university education (50%, vs. 38% with university)
- Born in Canada (46%, vs. 53% born elsewhere)
- Child under age 16 in the home (54%, vs. 41%)
- Advanced swimmers (54%, vs. 37-43% at other levels)

*Powerboating* is higher among the following:

- Urban residents (23%, vs. 18% rural)
- Household income \$150,000 or more (28%)
- Bachelor's degree (27%)
- Advanced swimmers (19%, vs. 6-12% at other levels)

## 6. Locations where recreational watercraft are used

Four in ten Canadian boaters say they most typically use recreational watercraft while visiting the cottages of friends or family members.

From a list of seven potential locations, Canadian boaters are most likely to indicate they typically use recreational watercraft while visiting friends’ or family members’ cottages (41%) or while camping (27%). Around one quarter say they use watercraft at the home of a friend or family member, or on vacation within Canada or other northern/colder locations. Two in ten indicate they have a home on or near the water, or at a cottage or recreational property they own.

Watercraft use is similar regarding visiting friends’ cottages or while camping for past year boaters and next year intenders, but past year boaters are more likely than intenders to indicate boating at the home of friends or family, or at their own home or recreational property; intenders are more likely to indicate watercraft use on vacation in Canada or another northern location.

### Where recreational watercraft are typically used

Location	Total	Past 12 months (n=1,546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
Visiting friends’/family members’ cottages/ recreational properties	41%	41%	41%
While camping	27%	27%	28%
On vacation in Canada/other northern/colder locations	23%	21%	28%
At the home of a friend or family member	23%	26%	18%
At home (on/near water)	21%	23%	15%
At owned cottage or recreational property	20%	24%	13%
On vacation outside of Canada/southern/warm locations	16%	15%	18%
Other (2% of fewer each)	3%	4%	1%

Q7 Where do you typically use recreational watercraft or boats?

Subgroup differences for the top responses follow:

Using watercraft while *visiting the cottages or recreational properties of friends or family* is a top response across most of the country (with the exception of the Territories – 9%) and across most population subgroups. It is highest among the following groups:

- Manitoba Saskatchewan (55%, vs. 9% to 45% elsewhere)
- Urban residents (43%, vs. 34% rural)
- Past year guests (46%, vs. 33% past year operators)
- Those who used or intend to use motorized boats (44%, vs. 35%)
- Those who have not rented a motorized boat but may in the future (46%)

Using watercraft while *camping* is higher among:

- Alberta (41%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (40%, vs. 18% to 31% elsewhere)
- Younger boaters (31% under age 50, vs. 17% age 50 and over)
- Child under 16 at home (34%, vs. 25%)

Using watercraft while *on vacation in Canada/other northern location* is higher among:

- Alberta (31%) and B.C. (30%, vs. 17% to 24% elsewhere)
- Urban residents (26%, vs. 15% rural)
- Age 35-49 (30%)
- Allophones (44%) and those born outside Canada (35%)
- Non-swimmers (35%)

Using watercraft *at the home of friends/family* is higher among:

- The Atlantic region (33%), Quebec (28%) and B.C. (30%, vs. 16% to 24% elsewhere)
- Born in Canada (25%, vs. 17% born elsewhere)

## 7. Bodies of water used for boating

### Recreational watercraft are most often used in lakes.

Of three types of bodies of water, recreational boating is most likely to take place on one of the country's two million lakes. Three in ten have gone or will go boating on rivers, and two in ten go boating in an ocean. Past year boaters are more likely than intenders to report boating in rivers, but boating on lakes or oceans is similar.

**Bodies of water used for boating**

Bodies of water	Total	Past 12 months (n=1,546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
Lakes	82%	82%	82%
Rivers	30%	34%	26%
Oceans	19%	20%	17%
Other	1%	1%	1%

Q8 In what bodies of water do you go boating most often?

Boating in lakes is the top response across the country from a low of 58 percent in the Atlantic to a high of 93 percent in Manitoba/Saskatchewan. Atlantic residents are among the most likely to report boating in rivers (34%, second highest to Quebec at 39%) and, understandably, boating in oceans is highest in the Atlantic (49%) and B.C. (42%, vs. 6% to 24% elsewhere).

Boating in *lakes* is higher among the following groups:

- Speak English at home (84%)
- Those who have rented a motorized boat (90%)
- Those who later in the survey say they are very or somewhat knowledgeable about boating safety (84%) or have taken a boating safety course (86%),

Boating in *rivers* is higher among the following groups:

- Under age 65 (33%, vs. 17% 65 and over)
- Speak French at home (39%)
- Indigenous Peoples (46%, vs. 30% non-Indigenous)
- Child under 16 at home (35%, vs. 29%)
- Those who later in the survey say they are very knowledgeable about boating safety (36%) or have taken a PCOC course (39%)

Boating in *oceans* is higher among the following groups:

- Urban dwellers (21%, vs. 14% rural)
- Household income \$150,000 or more (25%)
- University degree or higher (23%)
- Born outside of Canada (28%, vs. 17% Canadian-born)

## 8. Motorized boat rental

### One-quarter of Canadian boaters have rented a motorized boat.

One-quarter of boaters have rented a motorized boat. Four in ten have not but may in the future, and one-third have not and do not intend to. Past year operators are more likely to have rented a motorized boat than are past year guests or intenders (whether operators or guests).

#### If ever rented a motorized boat

Rented motorboat	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
Yes	24%	36%	19%	27%	18%
<i>Net: No</i>	74%	63%	79%	72%	79%
May in future	40%	31%	43%	41%	43%
Do not intend to	35%	32%	36%	31%	36%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	2%	3%

Q9 *Have you ever rented a motorized boat?*

Having rented a motorized boat is a minority across the country, from a low of 14 percent in the Territories to a high of 37 percent in B.C. Renting motorized boats is higher among the following groups:

- Urban dwellers (27%, vs. 13% rural)
- Men (30%, vs. 18% of women)
- Allophones (42%)
- Non-Indigenous Peoples (24%, vs. 16% of Indigenous Peoples)
- Child under 16 at home (30%, vs. 22%)
- Advanced-level swimmers (30%)

## II. Awareness of regulations

### 1. Self-assessed knowledge about how to keep safe while boating

Three-quarters say they are at least somewhat knowledgeable about how to keep safe while boating.

Boaters were asked to rate how knowledgeable they feel they are about how to keep safe while boating. Three-quarters indicate they are either very (22%) or somewhat (54%) knowledgeable; one-quarter feel they are less knowledgeable. Past-year operators are more likely than intending operators, or guests in either period, to say they are very knowledgeable about boating safety; intending operators are also more likely than intending guests to be at least somewhat knowledgeable.

#### Self-assessed knowledge about boating safety

Knowledge about boating safety	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>Net: Knowledgeable</i>	76%	91%	74%	81%	60%
Very knowledgeable	22%	41%	15%	19%	11%
Somewhat knowledgeable	54%	50%	59%	62%	50%
<i>Net: Not knowledgeable</i>	24%	9%	26%	19%	38%
Not very knowledgeable	19%	7%	21%	14%	30%
Not at all knowledgeable	5%	2%	5%	5%	8%

Q10 How knowledgeable would you say you are about how to keep safe while boating

A majority in all regions rate themselves as being at least somewhat knowledgeable about boating safety, though this is lower in Quebec (66%) than elsewhere (75% in B.C. up to 95% in the Territories). Being at least somewhat knowledgeable is lowest among those age 18 to 34 (71%) and increases as age increases (to a high of 87% age 65 and over).

The following groups are the most likely to say they are at least somewhat knowledgeable about boating safety:

- Rural residents (82%, vs. 74% urban)
- Men (80%, vs. 72% of women)
- Less than university education (79%, vs. 72% with a degree or higher)
- Speak English at home (79%, vs. 68% who speak French and 61% who speak other languages)
- Born in Canada (79% vs. 61% born elsewhere)
- Child under age 16 in the home (80%)
- Advanced swimmers (88%)
- Those who have boated in a motorized boat (79%) or who have rented a motorized boat (86%)
- Those who have taken a safe boating course (97% PCOC course, 92% other course)

## 2. Self-assessed knowledge about formal regulations about recreational boating

Six in ten say they are either very or somewhat familiar with the formal regulations about recreational boating.

Boaters were also asked to rate their level of familiarity with the *formal regulations* about recreational boating. Six in ten are either very (16%) or somewhat (43%) familiar with these, and four in ten are less familiar. Past year boat operators are significantly more likely than others to indicate being familiar with regulations; intending guests have the least familiarity.

### Self-assessed knowledge about formal boating regulations

Familiarity with boating regulations	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>Net: Familiar</i>	59%	80%	54%	57%	42%
Very familiar	16%	34%	9%	15%	6%
Somewhat familiar	43%	46%	46%	42%	36%
<i>Net: Not familiar</i>	41%	20%	45%	43%	56%
Not very familiar	29%	16%	33%	31%	37%
Not at all familiar	12%	4%	12%	11%	19%
Not sure	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	2%

Q11 How familiar would you say you are about the formal regulations about recreational boating?

At least slim majorities of most subgroups say they are “very or somewhat” familiar with formal regulations concerning recreational boating, with the following being the exceptions:

- Intend to go boating as guests in the coming year (42%)
- Those who did not use or do not intend to use a motorized boat (49%, vs. 63% who have)
- Those not very or at all knowledgeable about boat safety in general (8%)
- Those who have not taken a boating safety course (40%)
- Those who are not sure if lifejackets and PFDs are the same or different (35%)
- Speak language other than English or French at home (45% familiar)
- Born outside of Canada (47%, vs. 61% born in Canada)
- Beginner swimming level (45%) and non-swimmers (40%), compared to advanced swimmers (74%)

Being at least somewhat familiar with the formal regulations are highest among the following groups:

- Territories (71%)
- Rural residents (68%, vs. 56% urban)
- Men (67%, vs. 50% of women)
- Ages 65 and over (69%)
- Apprentice/college/some university education (66%)
- Indigenous Peoples (70%, vs. 58% non-Indigenous)



### 3. Familiarity with official recreational boating regulations

At least three-quarters say they are very or somewhat familiar with the official regulations for three specific aspects of boating, with lifejacket use and impairment having higher familiarity than safe operation.

Boaters were asked to indicate their level of familiarity with the official regulations governing three specific aspects of recreational boating. Nine in ten say they are at least somewhat familiar when it comes to the regulations around lifejackets in boats, and close to this are familiar with boating impairment regulations. Somewhat less, but still a strong majority of three-quarters, are familiar with safe boat operation regulations.

As with other regulation questions, familiarity is higher among past year boat operators than past year guests or intenders (operators or guests).

#### Familiarity with official recreational boating regulations

Regulation and familiarity	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<b>Lifejackets in boats</b>					
<i>Net: Familiar</i>	89%	95%	87%	88%	85%
Very familiar	58%	70%	53%	58%	50%
Somewhat familiar	31%	25%	34%	30%	35%
<i>Net: Not familiar</i>	10%	4%	13%	12%	13%
Not very familiar	8%	3%	10%	8%	10%
Not at all familiar	2%	1%	2%	4%	3%
<b>Impairment while boating</b>					
<i>Net: Familiar</i>	85%	92%	83%	85%	78%
Very familiar	57%	68%	54%	61%	49%
Somewhat familiar	28%	24%	29%	24%	30%
<i>Net: Not familiar</i>	14%	7%	16%	14%	20%
Not very familiar	10%	5%	11%	10%	14%
Not at all familiar	5%	2%	6%	4%	6%
<b>Safe operation of boating</b>					
<i>Net: Familiar</i>	74%	90%	70%	72%	63%
Very familiar	32%	51%	26%	38%	18%
Somewhat familiar	42%	38%	44%	34%	45%
<i>Net: Not familiar</i>	25%	10%	30%	27%	35%
Not very familiar	18%	7%	22%	23%	24%
Not at all familiar	6%	2%	7%	4%	11%

Q13 How familiar would you say you are with official regulations about the following aspects of recreational boating?

Being at least somewhat familiar with regulations around all three aspects of boating is higher among in the Atlantic region and the Territories, among rural residents, and those age 50 or over, those born in Canada, motorized boat users/ intenders or renters, and intermediate or advanced swimmers. Familiarity is also linked to having taken a safe boating course. Men are more likely than women to be familiar with the regulations around impairment while boating or safe boat operation, but familiarity with lifejacket regulation is similar by gender.

#### 4. Boating document awareness

At least two-thirds of boaters have at least heard of each of three specific boating documents; the *Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC)* is the document most likely for boaters to personally have.

Canadian boaters were asked if they are aware of, or personally have, three documents related to boating. Seven in ten possess, or are aware of, the *Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC)*, and two-thirds each have heard of the *Pleasure Craft Licence (PCL)* or the *Pleasure Craft Registration*. Around one-quarter have not heard of each of the three, and just under one in ten each are uncertain.

In all cases, operators are more likely than guests to have the document personally, and guests are more likely to have heard of it but not have it personally, or to have never heard of it.

##### Boating document awareness

Boating document awareness	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<b><i>Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC)</i></b>					
<i>Net: Aware</i>	69%	80%	68%	73%	57%
I have this personally	23%	48%	14%	24%	9%
Heard of this but do not have one personally	45%	31%	53%	49%	48%
Never heard of this	23%	14%	24%	21%	32%
Not sure	8%	6%	8%	6%	11%
<b><i>Pleasure Craft Licence (PCL)</i></b>					
<i>Net: Aware</i>	66%	69%	69%	63%	58%
I have this personally	17%	37%	10%	15%	5%
Heard of this but do not have one personally	49%	32%	59%	48%	53%
Never heard of this	24%	18%	22%	26%	32%
Not sure	10%	13%	8%	11%	10%
<b><i>Pleasure Craft Registration</i></b>					
<i>Net: Aware</i>	65%	71%	69%	56%	56%
I have this personally	14%	32%	9%	9%	4%
Heard of this but do not have one personally	51%	39%	60%	47%	52%
Never heard of this	23%	17%	22%	30%	31%
Not sure	11%	12%	9%	14%	13%

Q14 Which of the following documents are you aware of, or personally have?

Having a PCOC personally ranges from a low of 16 percent in Alberta to a high of 28 percent in Quebec; having a PCL ranges from a low of 8 percent on the Territories to a high of 20 percent in Quebec. Having a Pleasure Craft Registration is statistically similar across the country. Men are more likely than women to report having each of the three documents.

Having each of the documents is higher among the following groups:

*PCOC*

- Rural residents (30%, vs. 21% urban)
- Household income \$80,000 and over (28%, vs. 19% under \$80,000)
- College/some university/apprentice (27%)
- Speak French at home (30%)
- Born in Canada (26%)
- Child under 16 at home (28%)
- Intermediate (25%) and advanced (32%) swimmers

*PCL*

- Rural residents (22%, vs. 15% urban)
- College/some university/apprentice (22%)
- Born in Canada (18%)
- Intermediate (18%) and advanced (25%) swimmers

*Pleasure Craft Registration*

- College/some university/apprentice (18%)
- Intermediate (14%) and advanced (23%) swimmers

## 5. Perceived difference between boating documents

Those aware of boating documents are most likely to say the PCOC is for drivers and permits operation of any boat, that the PCR is required for registering an owned boat, and that the PCL is required to operate an owned boat legally.

Those aware of at least one of the three boating documents were asked to indicate to the best of their knowledge what the difference is between the three, without prompting. Over six in ten give at least one response. The top mentions are that the PCOC is for operators and allows them to drive any craft (27%) and that the PCR is required for registering a boat you own (23%). Slightly fewer say the PCL is required to operate your own watercraft legally (14%). Ten percent or fewer mention other individual differences. Past year operators are the most likely to mention the PCOC is for the driver, that the CR is for registering an owned craft, or that a license number/plate is affixed to the boat.

### Perceived difference between boating documents – top responses (3% or more)

Differences between documents	Total aware of documents (n=1,734)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=584)	Guest (n=676)	Operator (n=123)	Guest (n=351)
PCOC is for the driver/allows operation of any boat/craft (own/rental/commercial boat/craft)	27%	32%	23%	23%	28%
PCR is required for registering own boat/craft at the government/has full information about the boat/craft	23%	29%	20%	23%	21%
PCL required to operate own boat/craft legally	14%	12%	14%	16%	15%
A licence number/plate is affixed on the boat/craft as a proof of registration	10%	15%	7%	8%	9%
PCR is required to prove ownership of the boat/craft	8%	9%	5%	11%	12%
PCL is issued by the government to the owner/is a prove of ownership of the boat/craft	7%	8%	6%	10%	7%
PCOC means having the required training/course/ understand rules of safety/can operate boat safely	7%	10%	5%	9%	6%
PCL is required when driving large/long boats/crafts with high horsepower/10 HP or more	4%	6%	4%	7%	2%
PCOC/PCL can operate commercial boats/crafts for businesses/revenue	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
PCOC is for the driver/PCL & PCR are for the boat/craft	4%	5%	3%	6%	2%
Required to drive a boat/craft	3%	4%	4%	2%	1%
Don't know	38%	29%	44%	32%	41%

Q15 To the best of your knowledge, what is the difference between a Pleasure Craft Operator Card, a Pleasure Craft Licence and a Pleasure Craft Registration?

BASE: At least aware of one official boating document (n=1,734)

Responses are generally similar across subgroups, with a few notable differences.

- Those in rural regions are more likely than those in urban locations to say the PCR is required for registering an owned boat (31%, vs. 21%), that the PCL is required to operate an owned boat legally (18%, vs. 12%), or that a licence number/plate is affixed on the boat as proof of registration (14%, vs. 9%).
- That the PCOC is for the boat operator is highest among those with post-graduate education (32%), those born in Canada (28%, vs. 19% born elsewhere).
- Saying the PCR is required for registering an owned boat ranges from a low of 21 percent in Ontario to highs of 30 percent in the Atlantic region and 40 percent in the Territories.
- Being able to state any differences is higher among those who are very or somewhat knowledgeable about boat safety, and those who have taken the PCOC course.

## 6. Have taken a boating safety practices program or course

Four in ten have taken a boating safety program or course, with over a quarter saying it was to obtain the PCOC.

Four in ten Canadian boaters have taken a boating safety course (including two-thirds of past year operators). Over one-quarter say it was to obtain the PCOC and one in ten say it was another type of course. Having taken a PCOC course is highest among past 12 month boat operators (57%); intending operators are also more likely to have taken any course than are intending guests.

### Have taken a boating safety practices program or course

Took boating safety course	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>Net: Yes</i>	39%	68%	30%	38%	19%
Yes, to obtain my Pleasure Craft Operator Card	27%	57%	17%	25%	9%
Yes, another type of course	12%	12%	12%	13%	10%
No	61%	32%	70%	62%	81%

Q16 Have you ever taken part in a program or course where you learned about safe boating practices or skills?

Having taken the PCOC course is a minority of those who have used or intend to use a motorized boat (31%) or who have rented a motorized boat (40%). Taking the course is linked to being very familiar with boating safety (59%).

Having taken the PCOC course is a minority but higher among the following:

- Rural residents (33%, vs. 25% of urban)
- Men (35%, vs. 19% of women)
- Apprentice/college/some university (32%)
- Born in Canada (29%, vs. 16% born elsewhere)
- Child under 16 in the home (31%, vs. 26%)
- Advanced swimmers (36%)

**7. Truth of statements about boating documents (true statements)**

Majorities of boaters know it is true that those operating a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry proof of competency on board, and that a Pleasure Craft Operator Card is not needed if the craft has no motor. Just over four in ten know payment to operate or ride in a boat means it is not a pleasure craft.

Boaters taking the survey online were shown statements about boating documents and asked the extent to which they consider each to be true or false. Majorities know it is true to some extent that those operating a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry proof of competency on board (73%), and that a Pleasure Craft Operator Card is not needed if the craft has no motor (59%). However, there is less consensus on the statement that if someone on board a vessel is being paid to operate it or pays to ride it, it is not a pleasure craft: just over four in ten think this is true, one-third think it is false, and one quarter are not sure either way.

**Truth of statements about boating documents (true statements)**

*Base: Online respondents*

Truth of boating document statements	Total (n=2,087)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=606)	Guest (n=824)	Operator (n=145)	Guest (n=512)
<b><i>People who operate a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry on board proof they are competent to operate it</i></b>					
<i>Net: True</i>	73%	74%	72%	71%	73%
Definitely true	36%	41%	35%	28%	34%
Might be true	37%	33%	37%	44%	40%
<i>Net: False</i>	11%	15%	9%	12%	8%
Might be false	7%	8%	6%	8%	6%
Definitely false	4%	7%	3%	4%	3%
Not sure	16%	11%	19%	17%	18%
<b><i>You don't need a Pleasure Craft Operator Card if the pleasure craft has no motor</i></b>					
<i>Net: True</i>	59%	66%	56%	57%	56%
Definitely true	25%	34%	22%	25%	19%
Might be true	34%	32%	34%	32%	37%
<i>Net: False</i>	24%	22%	24%	26%	25%
Might be false	14%	10%	16%	18%	15%
Definitely false	9%	12%	8%	8%	9%
Not sure	17%	12%	20%	17%	20%
<b><i>If someone on board a vessel is being paid to operate it or if someone pays to ride it, it is not a pleasure craft</i></b>					
<i>Net: True</i>	43%	49%	42%	35%	38%
Definitely true	16%	22%	14%	11%	14%
Might be true	27%	27%	28%	24%	25%
<i>Net: False</i>	34%	32%	31%	37%	38%
Might be false	19%	15%	19%	18%	22%
Definitely false	15%	16%	12%	19%	16%
Not sure	24%	19%	27%	28%	23%

Q17 Please indicate if you think the following statements are true or false.  
 BASE: Online respondents (n=2,087)

Past year operators are more likely than past year guests to indicate these statements are *definitely* true; guests are more likely than operators not to know. Past year operators are also more likely to think these are definitely true than are those intending to operate a boat next year. Thinking each of the three true statements are definitely true is also linked to having taken a PCOC course or to indicating one is very or somewhat knowledgeable about boat safety.

The following are the groups most likely to feel each true statement is ***definitely true***:

*People who operate a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry on board proof they are competent to operate it:*

- Quebec residents (46%, vs. 29% to 36% of others)
- Rural residents (42%, vs. 34% urban)
- Ages 65+ (50%, vs. 30% ages 18-34 and 37% ages 35-64)
- Indigenous boaters (49%, vs. 36% non-Indigenous)

*You don't need a Pleasure Craft Operator Card if the pleasure craft has no motor*

- Quebec residents (30%, vs. 14% to 26% of others)
- Men (28%, vs. 21% women)
- Ages 50+ (32%, vs. 21% ages 18-34 and 24% ages 35-49)
- Advanced-level swimmers (32%)
- Have rented a motorized boat (33%, vs. 23% who have not)

*If someone on board a vessel is being paid to operate it or if someone pays to ride it, it is not a pleasure craft*

- Rural residents (21%, vs. 14% urban)
- Men (21%, vs. 14% women)
- Ages 65+ (32%, vs. 11% 18-34 and 16% 35-64)
- Advanced-level swimmers (22%)



### 8. Truth of statements about boating documents (false statements)

Majorities know it is false that long-time recreational boat operators do not have to prove competency, or that you don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you. However, it is widely believed – by over three-quarters- there is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence.

Only very small proportions of Canadian boaters think two false statements are true: that people who have been operating recreational boats for a long time don't need to prove their competency (11% true), or that you don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you (14%). However, a strong majority (77%) think it is true there is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence.<sup>3</sup>

#### Truth of statements about boating documents (false statements)

Base: Online respondents

Truth of boating document statements	Total (n=2,087)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=606)	Guest (n=824)	Operator (n=145)	Guest (n=512)
<b>People who have been operating recreational boats for a long time don't need to prove their competency</b>					
Net: True	11%	11%	11%	10%	9%
Definitely true	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%
Might be true	8%	8%	9%	8%	7%
Net: False	79%	79%	78%	80%	80%
Might be false	17%	14%	18%	22%	18%
Definitely false	62%	66%	61%	58%	62%
Not sure	10%	9%	11%	10%	11%
<b>You don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you</b>					
Net: True	14%	16%	14%	9%	12%
Definitely true	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%
Might be true	10%	12%	10%	6%	9%
Net: False	75%	74%	74%	77%	77%
Might be false	22%	16%	25%	27%	23%
Definitely false	53%	59%	49%	50%	54%
Not sure	11%	10%	12%	14%	11%
<b>There is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence</b>					
Net: True	77%	73%	78%	79%	77%
Definitely true	45%	47%	44%	52%	43%
Might be true	32%	27%	34%	26%	34%
Net: False	10%	14%	8%	9%	7%
Might be false	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Definitely false	5%	9%	2%	4%	3%
Not sure	14%	12%	14%	13%	16%

Q17 Please indicate if you think the following statements are true or false - BASE: Online respondents (n=2,087)

<sup>3</sup> The survey did not probe about why people have this misconception, but two possibilities are confusion with the PCOC, or thinking there is a service fee associated with obtaining the licence.

For these three false statements the differences between past year operators and others are not marked, and they are as likely as others to think there is a fee for the PCL. Thinking each of the three false statements are definitely false is also linked to having taken a PCOC course or to indicating one is very knowledgeable about boat safety.

The following are the groups most likely to feel each false statement is **definitely false**:

*People who have been operating recreational boats for a long time don't need to prove their competency*

- Rural residents (67%, vs. 61% urban)
- Age 35+ (66%, vs. 56% age 18-34)

*You don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you*

- Rural residents (59%, vs. 51% urban)
- Apprentice/college/some university (57%)
- Born in Canada (55%, vs. 41% born elsewhere)
- Used/will use motorized boat (56%, vs. 46%)

*There is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence*

- Rural residents (8%, vs. 3% urban)
- Men (6%, vs. 3% women)
- Age 65+ (11%)

## 9. Proof of competency for motorized pleasure craft

**Around seven in ten boaters can name at least one correct acceptable proof of competency for operators of motorized pleasure craft, with six in ten selecting the PCOC; half indicate an incorrect proof, notably the Pleasure Craft Licence.**

When asked to identify acceptable proofs of competency operators of motorized pleasure craft can show, close to seven in ten can select at least one from a list of six (of which four were correct and two incorrect – multiple choices were permitted). The proof most selected is the Pleasure Craft Operator Card, chosen by six in ten, distantly followed by proof of having passed a recreational boating safety course in Canada before April 1, 1999, by three in ten. Close to one-quarter indicate a marine certificate from Transport Canada, and just under two in ten indicate completion of a rental-boat safety checklist obtained for a specific rental period from the rental agency. Just under half incorrectly indicate a Pleasure Craft Licence from Transport Canada is proof of operator competency.

Being able to indicate any correct proof of competency is higher among past year operators than others; past year guests and intending guests or operators are more likely than previous year operators to say they do not know.

### Acceptable proof of competency for motorized pleasure craft

Proof of competency	Total (n=2,237)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>Net: Correct</i>	68%	77%	66%	68%	60%
Pleasure Craft Operator Card accredited by Transport Canada	61%	72%	58%	60%	54%
Proof of having passed a recreational boating safety course in Canada before April 1, 1999	29%	33%	26%	30%	27%
Marine certificate from Transport Canada	23%	26%	23%	20%	21%
Completed rental-boat safety checklist obtained for a specific rental period from the rental agency	18%	23%	18%	15%	13%
<i>Net: Incorrect</i>	49%	48%	50%	53%	49%
Pleasure Craft Licence from Transport Canada	48%	48%	48%	53%	48%
A note from the boat owner	2%	1%	4%	1%	2%
Not sure	27%	16%	30%	27%	35%

Q18 Which of the following are accepted as proof of competency for operators of motorized pleasure craft?

This was an open-ended question for residents of the Territories who were surveyed by telephone and, as a result, they were less likely to be able to cite correct proofs than those who were shown a list online. Still, four in ten were able to name a correct proof top-of-mind: most often the PCOC (23%) or proof of passing a safety course prior to April 1, 1999 (14%). One-third gave an incorrect proof, namely the PCL (35%). Note as well that residents of Nunavut and the Northwest Territories are not required to have proof of operator competency.

Identifying at least one correct proof is highest among the following groups:

- Quebec residents (77%, vs. 41% to 66% of others)
- Rural residents (73%, vs. 66% urban)
- Men (72%, vs. 64% of women)
- Age 50+ (74%, vs. 66% under age 50)
- Born in Canada (69%, vs. 61% born outside of Canada)
- Advanced swimmers (74%)
- Used/will use motorized boat (71%, vs. 62%)
- Have rented a motorized boat (73%, vs 68%)
- Those very knowledgeable about boating safety (69%)
- Those who would definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked by the operator (66%)

## 10. Sources of information about boating

The most used sources of information about boating are friends and family. Online books/manuals. Websites, and printed books/manuals.

Boaters were given a list of seven potential sources of information (and permitted to enter others) and asked which they use. Multiple responses were permitted. The most used sources for boating information are friends and family, followed by books and manuals online, websites, books and manuals in print, and social media. One in ten or fewer use other sources, notably government websites and searching Google.

Those who were guests on boats in the past year are more likely than past year operators to rely on friends/family for boating information. Past year operators are more likely than past year guests to use more formal sources (books/manuals in print or online, websites including government sites). Source differences are less marked between intending operators and guests.

### Sources of information about boating

Information source	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
Friends/family	45%	41%	50%	38%	44%
Books/manuals - online	32%	41%	30%	34%	25%
Websites	23%	28%	19%	25%	24%
Books/manuals - print	20%	28%	16%	26%	13%
Social media	18%	17%	19%	15%	16%
Federal/provincial government websites for boating/safety rules/regulations	10%	12%	7%	6%	12%
Google search for boating information/websites	9%	9%	8%	9%	9%
Magazines - online	6%	6%	6%	13%	6%
Magazines - print	6%	8%	5%	3%	4%
Other	6%	4%	1%	6%	2%
I don't look for/need information on boating	19%	1%	<1%	2%	1%

Q12 Where do you look for information about boating?

There are a few subgroups patterns in mentions of boating information sources:

- Territorial boaters, who were surveyed by telephone and not read a list of sources, are less likely to mention the responses that were shown to online boaters, and more likely to just indicate they get information from websites (44%), government websites (23%) and Google searching (27%).
- Men are more likely than women to indicate as sources online books/manual, print books/manuals (25%), and online manuals (9%).
- Using *friends and family* as a source of information is higher in the Atlantic (49%), among those aged 18-29 (50%), and Allophones (61%).
- Using *books/manuals* (online or in print) is higher among those who have rented motorized boats, those who took a safe boating course (PCOC/other), and those very knowledgeable about boat safety.

### III. Preparing vessels for excursions

#### 1. Self-assessed level of knowledge about preparing boats for a trip

Just over four in ten are at least somewhat knowledgeable about how to prepare boats for a trip, but only one in ten feel very knowledgeable.

Boaters were asked to rate how knowledgeable they feel they are about what is required to prepare a recreational watercraft for a trip. Just over four in ten feel very or somewhat knowledgeable, while a slim majority feel less knowledgeable.

Seven in ten past year operators rate themselves as being at least somewhat knowledgeable about preparing for boating excursions; intending operators are more likely to provide this rating than are those who intend to be guests.

**Self-assessed level of knowledge about preparing boats for a trip**

Knowledge about preparing boats for a trip	Total	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>Net: Knowledgeable</i>	43%	71%	34%	46%	24%
Very knowledgeable	10%	25%	4%	11%	4%
Somewhat knowledgeable	33%	46%	30%	35%	20%
<i>Net: Not knowledgeable</i>	52%	27%	60%	49%	70%
Not very knowledgeable	33%	19%	37%	33%	41%
Not at all knowledgeable	19%	8%	22%	16%	29%
Not sure	5%	2%	6%	5%	6%

Q19 How knowledgeable would you say you are about what is required to prepare a recreational watercraft for a trip?

Owing to the social desirability bias inherent in the telephone survey methodology, Territorial residents are more likely than those surveyed online to rate themselves as being at least somewhat knowledgeable (80%, vs. 37%, vs. 49%). Being knowledgeable about trip preparation is linked to higher levels of knowledge about boat safety in general and having taken a safe boating course. Feeling they are at least somewhat knowledgeable about preparing for a boating trip is higher among the following groups:

- Rural residents (48%, vs. 41% urban)
- Men (54%, vs. 32%)
- Age 35 and over (48%, vs. 35%)
- Apprentice/college/some university (50%)
- Indigenous Peoples (54%, vs. 42% non-Indigenous)
- Born in Canada (45%, vs. 32% born elsewhere)
- Child under 16 at home (47%, vs. 41%)
- Advanced level swimmers (61%)
- Used/intend to use motorized boat (48%, vs. 32%)
- Rented motorized boat (61%)

## 2. Perceptions of legal requirements for boating excursions

Over eight in ten recognize each of three legal requirements for a boating excursion (access to lifejackets or PFDs for all, ensuring equipment is on board and working, and checking the vessel and lights); six in ten also think reviewing a safety checklist is a legal requirement.

Boaters were shown (or read) a list of six things to do to prepare for a boating trip and asked if each is required by law or optional. Close to nine in ten say the three legally required preparations are in fact required by law. Six in ten also feel reviewing a safety checklist is also a legal requirement, and four in ten think this about checking the weather. A majority of seven in ten are aware making sure everyone on board is hydrated is optional.

### Perceptions of legal requirements for boating excursions

Requirement/Perception of legal requirement	Required by law	Optional	Not sure
Ensuring everyone is wearing /has access to lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	89%	5%	6%
Ensuring all required equipment is on board/good working condition. <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	87%	6%	7%
Checking the vessel and lights <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	85%	7%	8%
Reviewing a safety checklist <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	62%	26%	12%
Checking the weather <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	41%	49%	11%
Making sure everyone on board is hydrated <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	13%	72%	16%

Q20 To the best of your knowledge, are the following required by law or optional when preparing for a boating excursion?

Majorities across the country and subgroups of the boating population recognize the three real legal requirements. That all three are legally required is higher among rural residents, those who are very or somewhat knowledgeable about boating safety, those who have taken the PCOC course, and those who would definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD is asked to do so by a vessel operator.

## IV. Lifejackets and PFDs

### 1. If lifejackets and PFDs are the same thing or different

Close to half of boaters say the terms “lifejacket” and “Personal Flotation Device” or PFD refer to different things, higher than the proportion saying this in 2001.

Boaters were asked if the terms “lifejacket” and “Personal Flotation Device” or PFD refer to the same thing, or if there are differences between the two. Close to half (46%) say these are different things, notably higher than when this question was asked in 2001. Just over four in ten say they are the same, and one in ten are not sure.

Knowing lifejackets and PFDs differ is higher among operators than guests.

#### If lifejackets and PFDs are the same thing or different

Lifejackets vs PFDs	Total 2001* (n=4,020)	Total 2022 (n=2,237)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
			Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
Same	58%	44%	43%	46%	37%	45%
Different	36%	46%	53%	43%	49%	42%
Not sure	6%	10%	4%	11%	14%	13%

Q21 In your opinion, do the terms “lifejacket” and “Personal Flotation Device” or PFD refer to the same thing, or are there differences between the two?

\*2001 results are from “Canadian Boater Attitudes Toward Personal Flotation Devices,” conducted by Environics Research for the Office of Boating Safety, Canadian Coast Guard, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Thinking the terms denote different things is similar across the country (44% to 51% and 65% in the Territories) but lowest in Quebec (36%), where a majority feel they are the same thing (54%).<sup>4</sup> That they are different is higher among the following groups:

- Intermediate (46%) and advanced level swimmers (52%)
- Very (49%) or somewhat (48%) knowledgeable about boating safety
- Have taken the PCOC (53%) or another type of safety course (58%)

<sup>4</sup> The terms used in French were « gilet de sauvetage » et « vêtement de flottaison individuel » ou « VFI »



## 2. How lifejackets and PFDs differ

The main ways boaters feel lifejackets and PFDs differ are that lifejackets are wearable, that PFDs are cushions or other non-wearables, and that PFDs are just for flotation.

Those who indicated the terms lifejackets and PFDs refer to different things were asked to say how they differ, without prompting. Close to two in ten say it is because lifejackets are something you wear, and around one in seven say PFDs are non-wearables like cushions or floater boards. One in ten say PFDs are only for flotation. Fewer than one in ten mention other differences. The responses are roughly similar to those given in a survey about PFDs conducted in 2001, although more in that study spontaneously said lifejackets will ensure you stay face up in the water, or that PFDs will not do that.

### How lifejackets and PFDs differ (top mentions – 4% or more in 2022)

*BASE: Those who say PFDs are different than lifejackets*

Lifejackets vs PFDs	Total 2022 (n=1,056)	Total 2001* (n=1,458)
Lifejacket is something you wear/vest/jacket	18%	16%
PFDs are cushions/floater boards/foam	15%	12%
PFDs are just for flotation	11%	9%
Lifejackets will ensure you are face up in the water	7%	23%
PFDs are more comfortable/smaller/lighter	6%	3%
PFDs is a generic term that includes life jackets	6%	2%
PFDs are not worn	5%	3%
Life jackets keep you afloat even if you are unconscious	5%	0%
Different in shape/looks/material/size	5%	0%
PFDs will not ensure you are face up in the water	4%	14%
Different in the way they fit/are worn	4%	4%
Life jacket is safer/more protective in emergencies	4%	0%
PFDs are air filled/inflatable/activated by falling in water	4%	0%
Not sure	16%	11%

Q22 In what ways are Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) different from lifejackets?  
BASE: Those who know PFDs are different than lifejackets

\*2001 results are from "Canadian Boater Attitudes Toward Personal Flotation Devices," conducted by Environics Research for the Office of Boating Safety, Canadian Coast Guard, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Saying *lifejackets will ensure you remain face up* is highest in the Territories (20%). Saying *a lifejacket is something you wear* is fairly similar across the country, but lowest in Quebec (4%) and highest in Alberta (28%). It is also higher among the following:

- Urban dwellers (21%, vs. 11% rural)
- Men (22%, vs. 15% women)
- Those who have not taken a boating safety course (24%)

### 3. Lifejacket or PFD use – typically or in the future

Six in ten say they always wear/will wear a lifejacket or PFD when they go boating.

Boaters were asked how often they typically wear, or will wear, a lifejacket when they go boating. Eight in ten say they wear a lifejacket at least sometimes, and six in ten say they always wear one. Only one in ten say they rarely or never wear a lifejacket or PFD and another one in ten say it varies depending on the circumstances. Those intending to go boating in the next year are more likely than those who went boating in the previous year to indicate life jacket or PFD compliance.

#### Lifejacket or PFD use – typically or in the future

Lifejacket/PFD use	Total	Past 12 months (n=1,546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
<i>Net: More frequently</i>	81%	78%	86%
Always	59%	53%	70%
Sometimes	22%	25%	16%
<i>Net: Less frequently</i>	9%	11%	4%
Rarely	7%	8%	3%
Never	2%	2%	1%
It could vary depending on the circumstances (e.g. type of boat, if children are boating)	11%	12%	10%

Q23 **Boaters:** How often do you typically wear a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) when you go boating?  
**Intenders:** How often will you wear a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) when you go boating?

Indicating lifejackets/PFDs are *always* be worn is a majority across the country and all subgroups of the boating population, but higher among the following:

- Age 35 and over (62%, vs. 53% age 18-34)
- Household income \$40,000 to under \$80,000 (64%)
- Born outside of Canada (65%, vs. 57% born in Canada)
- Beginner (66%) and non-swimmers (68%, vs. 55% of intermediate and 57% of advanced swimmers)
- Those only using/intending to use non-motorized boats (63%, vs. 56% using motorized vessels)

#### 4. Lifejacket or PDF wear if requested by operator

Virtually all boaters would at least probably wear a lifejacket if requested to do so by the vessel operator; over eight in ten would definitely wear one in that case.

Boaters surveyed online were asked if they would wear a lifejacket or PFD if they were a guest on someone else’s boat and the operator requested they wear one. Virtually all would at least probably do so and over eight in ten say they definitely would. Past year boaters are somewhat more likely to say they probably would, while next year intenders are more likely to say they definitely would wear a lifejacket or PFD if requested to do so.

**Lifejacket or PDF wear if requested by operator**  
*Base: Online respondents*

Lifejacket/PFD use if requested by operator	Total (n=2,087)	Past 12 months (n=1,430)	Next 12 months (n=657)
<i>Net: Would wear it</i>	98%	98%	98%
Definitely wear it	84%	81%	89%
Probably wear it	14%	17%	8%
<i>Net: Would not wear</i>	2%	2%	1%
Probably would not wear it	1%	2%	1%
Definitely would not wear it	<1%	<1%	<1%
Not sure	1%	<1%	1%

Q24 *If you were a guest on somebody else’s boat and the person in charge of the boat asked you to put on a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD), would ...?*  
 BASE: Online respondents (n=2,087)

Definitely wearing a lifejacket or PFD if requested to do so by a boat operator is a strong majority across the country and all subgroups; the following are the most likely to say they definitely would:

- Rural residents (87%, vs. 82% urban dwellers)
- Women (87%, vs. 80% men)
- Age 50-64 (91%)
- Household income \$40,000 to under \$80,000 (88%)
- University degree or higher (86%)
- Non-swimmers (91%)
- Those who think the terms lifejacket and PFD mean the same thing (87%)

## 5. Lifejacket or PFD availability

Over nine in ten boaters say a lifejacket or PFD of the proper size has always or usually been available to them when they have been out in a small boat or watercraft.

Boaters were asked to think about when they have been out in a small boat or watercraft (under 6 meters or 20 feet), and then asked how often a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of the proper size was available to them. Over six in ten (63%) say this was always the case, and an additional three in ten say it usually was. Only very small proportions say an appropriate lifejacket or PFD was not usually or never available (4%) or are not sure (4%).

Past year boaters are more likely than those intending to go boating in the next year to say an appropriate lifejacket or PFD has always been available to them; the latter are more likely to say they are not sure.

**Lifejacket or PFD availability**

How often a lifejacket/PFD of the proper size has been available	Total	Past 12 months (n=1, 546)	Next 12 months (n=691)
<i>Net: Available</i>	92%	93%	89%
Always available	63%	65%	59%
Usually available	29%	28%	30%
<i>Net: Not available</i>	4%	4%	5%
Not usually available it	4%	3%	5%
Never available	<1%	1%	<1%
Not sure	4%	3%	7%

Q25 Thinking about when you have been out in a small boat or watercraft (under 6 meters or 20 feet), how often was a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of the proper size available to you?

Majorities across the country and boater subgroups say appropriate lifejackets or PFDs are *always available* to them. Saying this is lowest among those age 18 to 34 (51% - this group is the most likely to say usually) and increases as age increases, up to 76 percent of those age 50 and over. The following are the most like to say lifejackets or PFDs are *always available* to them:

- Territories (80%, vs. 57% to 65% of others)
- Non-Indigenous Peoples (64%, vs. 58% of Indigenous Peoples)
- Those using or intending to use motorized boats (65%, vs. 58% who only use non-motorized boats)
- Those very knowledgeable about boating safety (77%) or who have taken the PCOC course (72%)
- Those who would definitely use a lifejacket or PFD if asked to do so by the operator (69%)

## 6. Level of agreement with statements about lifejackets

From a series of statements, boaters are most likely to agree to some extent that if the operator is wearing a lifejacket they always wear one too, and that people who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible. They are least likely to agree that only weak swimmers need lifejackets.

Boaters taking the survey online were shown a series of statements about lifejackets and asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with each. They are most likely to agree to some extent that if the operator is wearing a lifejacket they will always wear one too (76% net agreement, 52% strongly) or that people who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible (73% net agreement, 37% strongly). They are least likely to agree that only weak swimmers need lifejackets. Half also agree to some extent that lifejackets are uncomfortable because they are too bulky. Minorities agree with three other statements; that they feel uncomfortable wearing a lifejacket when no one else is (32%), that they only wear lifejackets when there are children on the boat (15), or that only weak swimmers need lifejackets (8%).

### Level of agreement with statements about lifejackets

*Base: Online respondents*

Agreement level	Total (n=2,087)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=606)	Guest (n=824)	Operator (n=145)	Guest (n=512)
<b><i>If the operator is wearing a lifejacket, I always wear one too</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	76%	73%	75%	86%	79%
Strongly agree	52%	48%	49%	57%	58%
Somewhat agree	25%	25%	26%	29%	21%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	21%	24%	21%	12%	18%
Somewhat disagree	13%	16%	13%	7%	11%
Strongly disagree	8%	9%	8%	5%	7%
Not sure	3%	3%	4%	1%	3%
<b><i>People who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	73%	67%	73%	82%	79%
Strongly agree	37%	33%	34%	44%	45%
Somewhat agree	36%	34%	39%	38%	34%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	24%	32%	24%	18%	18%
Somewhat disagree	19%	23%	19%	11%	15%
Strongly disagree	6%	8%	5%	7%	4%
Not sure	2%	2%	3%	<1%	2%
<b><i>Lifejackets are uncomfortable because they are too bulky</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	49%	46%	51%	51%	47%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	10%	5%	8%
Somewhat agree	40%	37%	42%	47%	40%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	49%	53%	46%	48%	50%
Somewhat disagree	24%	25%	25%	23%	24%
Strongly disagree	24%	24%	27%	25%	26%
Not sure	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%

Agreement level	Total (n=2,087)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=606)	Guest (n=824)	Operator (n=145)	Guest (n=512)
<b><i>I feel uncomfortable wearing a lifejacket when no one else is</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	32%	30%	35%	33%	29%
Strongly agree	9%	10%	10%	6%	7%
Somewhat agree	23%	21%	25%	27%	22%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	66%	67%	63%	65%	70%
Somewhat disagree	24%	27%	23%	18%	25%
Strongly disagree	42%	40%	40%	47%	45%
Not sure	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%
<b><i>I only wear a lifejacket if there are children on the boat</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	15%	20%	15%	12%	10%
Strongly agree	5%	7%	4%	3%	4%
Somewhat agree	10%	13%	11%	9%	6%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	82%	78%	81%	88%	86%
Somewhat disagree	22%	21%	23%	19%	23%
Strongly disagree	60%	57%	58%	69%	64%
Not sure	3%	2%	4%	<1%	3%
<b><i>Only weak swimmers need lifejackets</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	8%	12%	8%	6%	4%
Strongly agree	3%	5%	3%	3%	1%
Somewhat agree	5%	7%	5%	4%	2%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	91%	87%	90%	93%	94%
Somewhat disagree	12%	12%	13%	9%	9%
Strongly disagree	79%	76%	77%	84%	85%
Not sure	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	2%

Q26 Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about lifejackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFD).  
 BASE: Online respondents (n=2,087)

Overall agreement with these statements is generally similar across subgroups, with no clear response patterns emerging. Quebecers are less likely than others to agree they always wear a lifejacket if the operator is wearing one, but it is still a two-thirds majority (64%, vs. 79% to 84%). The following groups are the most likely to agree to some extent with each statement:

*If the operator is wearing a lifejacket, I always wear one too*

- Born outside Canada (82%, vs. 75% born in Canada)
- Next year boating intenders (81%, vs. 74% past year boaters)
- Would definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked (81%, vs. 56% less than definite)

*People who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible*

- Age 50 and over (79%, vs. 71% under age 50)
- Urban dwellers (75%, vs. 68% rural residents)
- Past year guests (73%, vs. 67% past year operators)
- Born outside Canada (80%, vs. 72% born in Canada)
- Next year boating intenders (80%, vs. 70% past year boaters)
- Non-users of motorized boats (79%, vs. 71% motorized boat uses/intenders)
- Would definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked (78%, vs. 50% less than definite)

*Lifejackets are uncomfortable because they are too bulky*

- Age 18-64 (51%, vs. 35% 55+)
- Women (54%, vs. 43% men)
- Rural residents (54%, vs. 47% urban dwellers)
- Born in Canada (51%, vs. 39% born outside Canada)
- Less than very knowledgeable about boating safety (51%, vs. 40% very knowledgeable)

*I feel uncomfortable wearing a lifejacket when no one else is*

- Age 18-49 (35%, vs. 24% age 50+)
- Not very knowledgeable about boating safety (40%)
- Would probably/not wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked (47%, vs. 29% who would definitely wear one)

*I only wear a lifejacket if there are children on the boat*

- Age 18-49 (16%, vs. 11% age 50+)
- Speak French at home (19%, vs. 14% who speak English and 5% of Allophones)
- Indigenous Peoples (2%, vs. 14% non-Indigenous)
- Born in Canada (16%, vs. 9% born outside Canada)
- Less than university education (17%, vs. 12% with a degree)
- Past year boaters (17%, vs. 11% next year intenders)

*Only weak swimmers need lifejackets*

- Age 18-49 (10%, vs. 4% age 50+)
- Men (11%, vs. 5% women)
- Advanced level swimmers (12%)
- Past year boaters (10%, vs. 4% next year intenders)

## 7. Level of agreement with statements about lifejackets

Nine in ten boaters agree to some extent wearing lifejackets is a normal part of boating; four in ten agree there is no law saying you must wear a lifejacket, only one needs to be available. A strong majority of close to nine in ten disagree with false statements about lifejackets.

Boaters were asked to indicate their level of agreement with four statements about lifejackets. Nine in ten agree to some extent (over six in ten strongly) that wearing a lifejacket is a normal part of boating. Opinion is divided about whether or not it is true there is no law that says you must wear a lifejacket, just that you need one available (41% agree, 45% disagree). Only small minorities agree with two false statements: that it is only important to wear lifejacket if the water is cold (12% agree, 87% disagree) or that people don't need to wear a lifejacket when they believe the boat is safe (12% agree, 86% disagree).

### Level of agreement with statements about lifejackets

*Base: Online respondents*

Agreement level	Total (n=2,237)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<b><i>Wearing a lifejacket is a normal part of boating</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	92%	89%	91%	96%	97%
Strongly agree	63%	57%	61%	64%	71%
Somewhat agree	29%	32%	29%	32%	25%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	7%	11%	8%	3%	3%
Somewhat disagree	6%	9%	6%	2%	2%
Strongly disagree	1%	2%	2%	2%	<1%
Not sure	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
<b><i>There is no law that says you must wear a lifejacket, just that you need one available</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	41%	54%	39%	39%	29%
Strongly agree	15%	24%	12%	12%	9%
Somewhat agree	26%	30%	26%	27%	20%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	45%	37%	48%	48%	51%
Somewhat disagree	17%	13%	18%	16%	18%
Strongly disagree	29%	23%	29%	32%	32%
Not sure	14%	10%	13%	13%	21%
<b><i>It is only important to wear lifejacket if the water is cold</i></b>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	12%	15%	14%	7%	6%
Strongly agree	6%	7%	6%	4%	4%
Somewhat agree	6%	8%	8%	3%	2%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	87%	85%	84%	91%	92%
Somewhat disagree	13%	15%	13%	15%	10%
Strongly disagree	74%	70%	71%	77%	82%
Not sure	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%



Agreement level	Total (n=2,237)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=681)	Guest (n=865)	Operator (n=160)	Guest (n=531)
<i>You don't need to wear a lifejacket when you believe the boat is safe</i>					
<i>Net: Agree</i>	12%	16%	13%	8%	7%
Strongly agree	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Somewhat agree	10%	13%	11%	8%	5%
<i>Net: Disagree</i>	86%	83%	85%	90%	91%
Somewhat disagree	24%	24%	25%	24%	23%
Strongly disagree	64%	59%	60%	66%	67%
Not sure	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%

Q27 For each of the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about lifejackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)

Agreement levels are generally similar across the country and across boater population subgroups; *strong agreement* with key statements is higher among the following groups:

*Wearing a lifejacket is a normal part of boating*

- Territories (81%)
- Age 50 and over (71%, vs. 56% 18-34)
- Next year intending guests (71%)

*There is no law that says you must wear a lifejacket, just that you need one available*

- Born in Canada (16%, vs. 10% born elsewhere)
- Advanced (20%) and intermediate (15%) swimmers
- Past year boat operators (24%)
- Very knowledgeable about boating safety (31%)
- Took PCOC course (28%)

## V. Cold water safety

### 1. Seasons in which cold water is a potential danger to boaters in Canada

Close to two-thirds of Canadian boaters recognize that cold water is a potential danger in all seasons.

Recreational boaters were provided a list of seasons and asked in which of these cold water (below 15 degrees Celsius/50 degrees Fahrenheit) poses a potential danger to boaters in Canada; multiple responses were offered, except “all of the above,” “none of the above” and “not sure” were single mentions. Over six in ten correctly note cold water can pose a danger in any season. Three in ten indicated winter, and two in ten also chose fall or spring.

**Seasons when cold water is a potential danger to boaters in Canada**

Cold water danger seasons	Total	BC (n=260)	AB (n=259)	MB/SK (n=268)	ON (n=500)	QC (n=350)	ATL (n=450)	TERR (n=150)
Winter	29%	26%	22%	19%	30%	33%	31%	4%
Fall	22%	16%	14%	17%	22%	29%	22%	10%
Spring	21%	18%	16%	16%	20%	28%	21%	7%
Summer	4%	2%	5%	2%	5%	4%	3%	5%
All of the above	63%	67%	68%	75%	62%	55%	62%	86%
Not sure	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	3%	2%

Q28 During what seasons do you think cold water (below 15 degrees Celsius/50 degrees Fahrenheit) poses a potential danger to boaters in Canada?

Awareness that cold water can pose a risk in *any* season is a majority across the country, but highest in the Territories (86%) and Manitoba/Saskatchewan (75%) and lowest in Quebec (55%); Quebecers are the most likely to indicate spring (28%) or fall (29%). Knowing cold water is dangerous in all seasons is higher among the following groups:

- Rural (72%, vs. 60% urban)
- Age 35 and over (71%, vs. 49% under age 35)
- Household income \$80,000 and over (67%, vs. 56% under \$80,000)
- College or more education (66%, vs. 50% high school or less)
- Non-Indigenous Peoples (65%, vs. 51% Indigenous)
- Born in Canada (64%, vs. 55% born outside of Canada)
- Those who definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD is asked by a boat operator (66%, vs. 44% who probably would or would not).

Knowing cold weather can be dangerous in any season is *not* higher among those who claim to have higher levels of boat safety knowledge.

## 2. Top-of-mind preventative measures when water is cold

The most mentioned preventive measures for boating in cold weather are wearing lifejackets and dressing warmly/thermal layers

Close to eight in ten provide at least one top-of-mind preventive measure boaters should take when the weather is cold. The most common measures are wearing life jackets (20%) and dressing warmly (15%). One in ten cite each of three other measures, including having thermal/heating supplies on board, wearing a wet suit, or keeping warm in general. Fewer mention other individual measures. Two in ten are unable to say.

### Top-of-mind preventative measures when water is cold (Top mentions – 3% or more)

Measure	Total
Wear a life jacket/have life jackets for all	20%
Dress warmly/thermal layers/not heavy clothing	15%
Warming/thermal/reflective blankets/heating pads/hot water bottles on board	11%
Have/wear a wet suit	11%
Keep warm/prevent succumbing to hypothermia	11%
Extra warm clothing/towels	7%
Don't go boating in cold weather/if water is icy/in case of a storm	6%
Have PFDs on board	6%
Check weather/temperature/waves/icy waters conditions	4%
Have first aid/emergency/safety kits/rescue equipment on board	4%
Drive carefully/avoid isolated areas/know route/avoid capsizing	3%
Have/wear a floating suit	3%
Be prepared/preventative measures/have a safety plan/plan your trip in advance	3%
Don't swim/go into water/avoid falling in the water	3%
Give itinerary to someone (e.g. destination, route, expected return date)	3%
Don't know	22%

Q29 What, if any, preventative measures should boaters take when the water is cold, and why?

Mentions are quite similar across the boater population. Residents of the Territories are more likely than others to mention dressing warmly or in layers (26%, vs. 12% to 18% elsewhere). Women are more likely than men to mention either wearing lifejackets (23%, vs. 16%) or having warming equipment on board (13%, vs. 9%). Those saying they are very knowledgeable about boat safety are more likely than others to mention a number of measures, including wearing a life jacket, dressing warmly, having PFDs on board, knowing the route, having a floating suit, or having a safety plan/being prepared.

### 3. Truth of statements about cold water boating

Majorities of boaters say it is at least somewhat true that exposure to cold air and wind while in water-soaked clothing causes hypothermia, that hypothermia causes loss of use of extremities within 10 minutes, that it sets in when core temperature is below 35° C, and that immersion in cold water can instantly paralyze muscles.

Boaters were shown five statements about hypothermia and asked to indicate the extent to which each is true or false. Majorities of from about six in ten to nine in ten indicate each is at least somewhat true, even the false statement that immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia.

A majority of close to six in ten say it is definitely true exposure to cold air and wind while in water-soaked clothing causes hypothermia; around four in ten each say it is definitely true that people will lose the effective use of their fingers, arms and legs within 10 minutes of cold water immersion, or that hypothermia sets in when core body temperature drops below 35.0° C. Just under four in ten also think it definitely true cold water immersion can paralyze the muscles instantly. One-quarter also think the one false statement, that immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia, is definitely true.

**Truth of statements about cold water boating**

If statements about cold water boating are true or false	Net true	Definitely true	Might be true	Might be false	Definitely false	Not sure
Exposure to cold air and wind while in water-soaked clothing causes hypothermia (TRUE)	92%	58%	34%	3%	1%	4%
You will lose the effective use of your fingers, arms and legs within 10 minutes of cold water immersion (TRUE)	84%	41%	44%	6%	2%	8%
Hypothermia sets in when core body temperature drops below 35.0° Celsius (TRUE)	78%	39%	39%	6%	2%	15%
Immersion in cold water can paralyze your muscles instantly (TRUE)	78%	37%	41%	10%	5%	7%
Immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia (FALSE)	57%	23%	34%	21%	13%	8%

Q30 Please indicate if you believe the following statements are true or false.

While responses are generally similar across most subgroups, there are a few notable differences. Men are more likely than women to say three statements are definitely true: that there is effective loss of extremities within 210 minutes, that hypothermia sets in when the core body temperature drops below 35° C, and that immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia.

Thinking all statements are definitely true is higher among those over age 35, those who say they are very knowledgeable about boat safety, who have taken a PCOC course and those who would definitely wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked (even the false statement).

## VI. Impaired boating

### 1. If have ever gone boating with impaired person

Close to two-thirds of boaters say they have never gone boating with someone who was impaired.

Boaters were asked how often, if ever, they have gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Over six in ten (63%) say this has never happened and two percent are unsure. Of those who have, this has mainly been a rare occurrence. Only two percent admit to this happening frequently.

**Frequency of boating with impaired person**

Frequency of boating with impaired person	Total	18-34 (n=714)	35-49 (n=789)	50-64 (n=425)	65+ (n=255)
<i>Net: More frequently</i>	14%	15%	17%	10%	8%
Frequently	2%	3%	2%	2%	-
Occasionally	12%	12%	14%	8%	8%
<i>Net: Less frequently/never</i>	84%	83%	83%	86%	92%
Rarely	21%	19%	21%	25%	24%
Never	63%	64%	62%	61%	68%
Not sure	2%	2%	1%	4%	<1%

Q31 How often, if ever, have you gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol?

Having never gone boating with an impaired person is the dominant response across subgroups. Having done so at least occasionally is a minority, but somewhat higher among, the following groups:

- Age 35-49 (17%)
- Born in Canada (15%, vs. 9% born outside Canada)
- Child under age 16 in the home (17%)
- Those who have rented a motorized boat (22%)
- Those who have taking a safe boating course (18% PCOC course, 21% other course, vs. 11% who did not take a course)
- Those who would probably or would not wear a lifejacket or PFD if asked (31%, vs. 10% who would definitely comply)

## 2. Substances observed during boating

Alcohol is by far the most observed substance boaters report having seen be part of boating.

Those who frequently, occasionally, or rarely have gone boating with an impaired person (n=813) were asked what substances they have witnessed being used while boating. A list of five substances was provided, with an opportunity to write in others. Over eight in ten (84%) indicate it was alcohol.

**Substances observed during boating**  
**Base: Those who observed substance use while boating**  
**(multiple responses were permitted)**

Substances observed	Those observing substance use during boating (n=813)
Alcohol	84%
Cannabis	35%
Prescription drugs	7%
Illegal drugs	6%
Other	1%
Not sure	10%

Q32 What substances have you seen be involved with boating?

BASE: Those who have gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol (n=813)

Alcohol is the most observed substance across the country and all subgroups, but is higher among the following groups:

- B.C. (95%)
- Age 50+ (93%, vs. 81% younger)
- Household income \$80,000 and over (88%, vs 77% under \$80K)
- University degree (90%, vs. 80% with less education)
- Non-Indigenous Peoples (87%, vs. 79% Indigenous Peoples)
- No child under 16 in the home (86%, vs. 79%)
- Used/will use a motorized boat (87%, vs. 77%)

Mentions of other substances are generally similar across subgroups; cannabis is mentioned by those in B.C. (53%) and the Territories (57%).

### 3. If impaired person was boat operator or guest

Almost half who have witnessed impaired boating have seen operators be impaired; four in ten have only seen impaired guests.

Close to half of those who have witnessed impaired boating indicate the person involved as the operator (10% witnessed operator only, 37% have seen both operator and guests be impaired). Four in ten have only seen impaired guests.

Past year boat operators are more likely than past year guests to have witnessed operator impairment, or both operators and guests. Past year guests are more likely than past year operators to have seen only impaired guests. Intending operators and guests respond similarly to each other.

**If impaired person was boat operator or guest**  
**Base: Those who observed substance use while boating**

Impaired person(s) was/were...	Total (n=813)	Past 12 months		Next 12 months	
		Operator (n=282)	Guest (n=341)	Operator (n=49)	Guest (n=141)
<i>Net: Operator</i>	46%	54%	41%	45%	41%
Vessel operator	9%	10%	8%	11%	8%
Both operators and guests	37%	43%	33%	34%	33%
Guest	42%	38%	49%	36%	37%
Not sure	12%	9%	10%	19%	22%

Q33 *Have you seen an impaired person be... ?*  
 BASE: Those who have gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol (n=813)

Having seen a boat operator be impaired is higher among the following:

- Territories (71%)
- Rural residents (54%, vs. 43%)
- Age 35-49 (52%)
- Past year operators (54%)
- Very knowledgeable about boating safety (53%)

#### 4. Reasons people might not follow impaired boating laws

The most common reasons given for why people might choose to go boating while impaired are that they are hard to catch/not enough enforcement, that they might think it is safe (lower speeds, less traffic on the water) or that they are not aware of the dangers involved.

All boaters, whether or not they have personally witnessed impaired boating were asked why some people who would not operate a motor vehicle while impaired might think it is okay to operate a boat after using alcohol or drugs. The top reasons are that such people think they can get away with it, due to there being a lack of enforcement, or that they think it is safe to do so because there is less traffic, more open space and lower speeds than is the case with motor vehicles. One in ten also think they may not be aware of the dangers involved. Fewer than one in ten give other individual reasons, including people being foolish or irresponsible. One in ten do not provide a reason.

##### Reasons people might not follow impaired boating laws (Top mentions – 5% or more)

Reason	Total
Think they are hard to catch/not enough police on waters/less enforcement	19%
Think it is safe on the boat (e.g. less traffic, more open space, lower speed...)	18%
Think it is safe/not aware of dangers associated	11%
They are foolish/idiots/ignorant/stupid	8%
Don't consider road and water safety the same/boats are considered safer than cars	7%
They are irresponsible/careless/selfish/dangerous people	7%
They are overconfident/think they are capable of operating the boat safely	6%
Not in the right mindset to think clearly/rationally/are under drug/alcohol influence	6%
They are in vacation mindset/want to party/have fun	6%
Boating is associated with recreation/leisure/relaxation	5%
Arrogance/having it their way/feeling above the law	5%
It is dangerous/shouldn't be done/it is similar to impaired driving	5%
Not sure/refused	11%

Q34 *Some people who would not operate a motor vehicle while impaired might think it is okay to operate a boat after using alcohol or drugs. Why do you think people might not follow laws about impaired boating?*

Responses are generally similar across subgroups. Thinking people boat while impaired because there is not enough enforcement/hard to be caught is higher among the following:

- Rural residents (25%, vs. 17% urban)
- Household income \$80,000 or more (23%, vs. 15% under \$80,000)
- Born in Canada (20%, vs. 14% born elsewhere)
- Past year operators (23%)
- Very or somewhat knowledgeable about boating safety (21%, vs. 14% with less knowledge)



## 5. If impaired boating is a serious problem in Canada

Two-thirds of boaters feel impaired boating is a serious problem in Canada, under two in ten do not think it is, and two in ten are unsure how serious it is.

All boaters were asked if they think impaired boating is a serious issue in Canada or not. Two-thirds think it is, one in six think it isn't, and two in ten are not sure. That it is a serious issue is the dominant response across the country, although somewhat lower in Alberta (51%) and B.C. (58%) than in other regions of the country.

### If impaired boating is a serious problem in Canada

If impaired boating is serious	Total	BC (n=260)	AB (n=259)	MB/SK (n=268)	ON (n=500)	QC (n=350)	ATL (n=450)	TERR (n=150)
Yes, serious	64%	58%	51%	66%	66%	69%	63%	68%
Not, not serious	17%	15%	22%	13%	16%	18%	15%	20%
Not sure	20%	27%	27%	21%	18%	13%	21%	13%

Q35 Do you think impaired boating is a serious problem in Canada, or not?

Saying impaired boating is a serious problem is a majority across all subgroups, but highest among those who speak French at home (69%), those who think lifejackets and PFDs are not the same (67%) and those who would definitely wear a lifejacket if asked to do so by a boat operator (66%) than those who probably would or would not (54%).

## Appendix A: Methodology

Per the Statement of Work (SOW), the research consisted of an **online survey** of adult Canadian boaters (operators and guests) in the 10 provinces, and a **telephone survey** in the three territories, utilizing a similar questionnaire (some questions were asked only in the online survey).

### Sample design and weighting

The qualifying population for this research was Canadians age 18 and over who were pleasure craft operators or guests in the past year or who intend to in the coming year. For the purposes of this survey, the respondents did not need to personally own a pleasure craft. Targets were also set to ensure a distribution of interviews in urban and rural locations within each province; for the purpose of this survey, rural was defined as a small town, rural area less than 200 km from a major urban centre, or a remote area (more than 200 km from a major urban centre).

In the ten provinces, the survey was conducted online. Because the extremely small population in the three Northern territories has insufficient presence on online panels to be surveyed using an online methodology, Environics also conducted a companion telephone survey, targeting 50 completions in each of Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. The results of these two methodologies were merged for this report.

The study used a disproportionate sample distribution by region, to ensure locations with smaller populations (e.g., the Atlantic Region) had sufficient sample for analysis. There was also a larger than normal sample of interviews in the Atlantic Region; this was a practice in previous boating surveys due to the prevalence of recreational boating in the region.

The following table shows the number of completed interviews by jurisdiction:

Interviews by jurisdiction	Total	BC	Alberta	SK	MB	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic	Territories
# of completed interviews	2,237	260	259	133	135	500	350	450	150
% of completed interviews	100%	12%	12%	6%	6%	22%	16%	10%	7%
% of Canadian population	100%	14%	11%	3%	4%	38%	24%	7%	<1%

As the online survey utilized an opt-in panel, it is a non-probability survey and no margin of sampling error should be calculated. The telephone survey was a probability sample utilizing industry-standard RDD techniques; the margin of sampling error on the total of n=150 telephone interviews is  $\pm 8.0$  at the 95% confidence interval.

## Questionnaire design

Transport Canada provided Environics with examples of similar surveys to use as reference material for the study design. Environics designed a questionnaire in consultation with Transport Canada to ensure its research objectives were met. Upon approval of the English questionnaire, Environics arranged for the questionnaire to be translated into French by professional translators.

Environics' data analysts programmed the questionnaires, then performed thorough testing to ensure accuracy in set-up and data collection. This validation ensured that the data entry process conformed to the surveys' basic logic. The data collection system handles sampling invitations, quotas and questionnaire completion (skip patterns, branching, and valid ranges).

Prior to fieldwork, a soft launch pretest was conducted with 63 Canadians (39 English, 24 French). Standard government-accepted probing questions on comprehension and appropriateness of language were asked at the end of each pretest interview, and Transport Canada was given the pre-test results for review prior to full launch. Environics also conducted a pretest with 10 residents of the territories in English. The online questionnaire averaged 16 minutes to deliver online, and 27 minutes by telephone. It was determined the telephone study would continue without cuts provided respondents were advised of the potential length.

The final survey questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

## Survey administration

The online survey was conducted from January 17-February 5 and the telephone survey from January 20-February 6, 2022. The final average survey lengths were 15 minutes for online and 22 minutes by telephone.

Environics assumed overall responsibility for all aspects of the survey fieldwork. The survey was conducted according to the following steps:

- Environics programmed and hosted the online survey on a secure server. All data were stored on Canadian servers and Canadian back-up servers located and only accessible in Canada, and physically independent from all other databases, directly or indirectly, that are located outside Canada.
- Invitation e-mails including a unique URL link (to ensure only one version of the survey is accepted per respondent) were sent to panel members.
- Technical support was provided to online survey respondents as required. Steps were taken to assure (and also guarantee) complete confidentiality and anonymity of survey responses.
- Recruitment to the telephone survey was attempted with residents of the three northern territories via industry-standard random digit dialing (RDD) techniques). Up to eight attempts were made to reach a contact before replacing a telephone number.
- All survey responses were electronically captured as they were submitted and combined into an electronic data file that was coded and analyzed (including open-ended responses).

For this assignment, the telephone survey of residents of the north was subcontracted to Telepoll, a field house located in Toronto, Ontario. Telepoll uses state of the art Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI) technology. Field supervisors monitored the calls at all times to ensure accurate interviewing and recording of responses. A minimum of ten percent of each interviewer's work was unobtrusively monitored for quality control in accordance with government and industry standards. All respondents were offered the opportunity to complete the survey in their official language of choice.

All research work was conducted according to best practices in the industry, such as the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Online Surveys (<http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/rop-por/enligne-online-eng.html>) and the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research – Telephone Surveys (<https://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/rop-por/telephone-eng.html>), as well as applicable federal legislation (Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, or PIPEDA). Environics is a founding member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and registered the survey with CRIC's Research Verification System, which permits the public to verify a survey call, inform themselves about the industry and/or register a complaint. For more information about CRIC: <https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/>

### **Data coding and tabulation**

Following data collection and prior to analysis, data analysts performed a data-cleaning and validation process, in accordance with the highest industry standards. Open-ended question data were coded and Environics designed banner tables in consultation with the project authority. Data tables were submitted in CSV format.

The data from this survey are statistically weighted to ensure the sample is as representative of this population as possible according to the most recently available Census information (region and gender). Age was not weighted as the boating community skews younger than the general population and weighting up the 60+ respondents would result in extreme weighting, which could distort the results.

### **Notes on differences between online and telephone survey methodologies**

There are some typical differences in response between online self-completion surveys and telephone surveys with a live interviewer. In general, respondents can be a bit more emphatic or enthusiastic when speaking to an interviewer, due in part to social desirability bias, in which some respondents may answer in a way they (consciously or unconsciously) think will appear more acceptable to the interviewer. With a change to an online methodology, there will often be a (usually small) decrease in the strong opinion options (i.e., fewer will say "very"), with a corresponding move to the somewhat/moderate options. In these cases, it is useful to see whether the net measures have fundamentally changed or remained stable. As well, for some questions with longer response lists, the telephone respondents were not read the options that were shown to the online respondents, which results in lower mentions among the telephone respondents.

## Completion results

The completion results for the online and telephone methodologies are presented in the following tables.

### Online survey contact disposition

Disposition		N
Total invitations	(c)	100,839
Completed	(d)	2,087
Qualified respondent break-off	(e)	584
Disqualified	(f)	2,300
Did not respond	(g)	90,207
Quota filled	(h)	5,661
<b>Contact rate</b> = (d+e+f+h)/c		11%
<b>Participation rate</b> = (d+f+h)/c		10%

### Telephone survey contact disposition

Disposition	N
Total sample dialled	7,162
<b>UNRESOLVED NUMBERS (U)</b>	3,004
Busy	261
No answer	1,172
Voicemail	1,571
RESOLVED NUMBERS ( <i>Total minus Unresolved</i> )	4,158
OUT OF SCOPE ( <i>Invalid/non-eligible</i> )	2,099
Non-household	34
Not-in-service	2,056
Fax/modem	9
<b>IN SCOPE NON-RESPONDING (IS)</b>	1,746
Refusals – business	273
Refusals – respondent	975
Language barrier	149
Callback missed/respondent not available/ill	334
Break-offs (interview not completed)	15
<b>IN SCOPE RESPONDING (R)</b>	313
Disqualified	161
Quota filled	2
Completed	150
<b>RESPONSE RATE</b> [R / (U + IS + R)]	6.18%

## Respondent profile

The following table presents the weighted distribution of survey participants by key demographic and other variables.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Total sample %</b>
<b>Age</b>	
18-24	16
25-34	21
35-44	27
45-54	19
55-64	6
65+	11
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	51
Male	49
Other	<1%
<b>Education</b>	
High school or less	17
Apprentice/college/some university	39
University graduate/post-graduate	43
<b>Indigenous status</b>	
Indigenous	5
Non-Indigenous	87
Prefer not to say	9
<b>Total annual household income</b>	
Under \$40,000	12
\$40,000-<\$80,000	15
\$60,000-<\$80,000	14
\$80,000-<\$100,000	14
\$100,000-<\$150,000	20
\$150,000 or more	16
Prefer not to say	11
<b>Community size (self-reported)</b>	
Rural	24
Urban	76
<b>Language spoke most at home</b>	

English	78
French	25
Other	4

### Non-response bias analysis

The table below presents a profile of the final sample, compared to the actual population of Canada (2016 Census information). As is the case with most surveys, the final sample underrepresents those with high school or less education, which is a typical pattern for public opinion surveys in Canada (e.g., those with more education are more likely to respond to public opinion surveys). In this survey it is noted boaters skew younger than the general Canadian population.

### Sample profile

Profile	Sample*	Canada (2016 Census)
<b>Gender (18+)</b>		
Male	51%	49%
Female	48%	51%
<b>Age</b>		
18-34	33%	29%
35-49	36%	24%
50-64	20%	26%
65+	12%	21%
<b>Education level<sup>α</sup></b>		
High school diploma or less	19%	35%
Trades/college/post sec no degree	39%	36%
University degree	43%	29%

\* Data are unweighted and percentaged on those giving a response to each demographic question.

<sup>α</sup> Actual Census categories differ from those used in this survey and have been recalculated to correspond. Statistics Canada figures for education are for Canadians aged 25 to 64 years.

## Appendix B: Quantitative research instrument



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**Transport Canada / Transports Canada**  
**Public opinion research study on boating safety in Canada**  
**FINAL Questionnaire**

*Online survey conducted with n=2000 Canadian boaters/intenders (operators/guests)  
+ companion telephone survey of 150 in North;  
15-minute average length*

---

**TELEPHONE INTRODUCTION**

Hello/Bonjour, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from Environics Research, a public opinion research company, on behalf of the Government of Canada.

Would you prefer I continue in English or French? Préférez-vous continuer en français ou en anglais? (**IF NEEDED:** Je vous remercie. Quelqu'un vous rappellera bientôt pour mener le sondage en français.)

**RECORD** Language of interview

- 01 Anglais
- 02 Français

We are conducting a study to find out what people think about issues facing Canada today. Please be assured that we are not selling or soliciting anything. The survey is voluntary and your responses will be kept entirely confidential and anonymous. This survey is registered with the national survey registration system and will be administered in accordance with the Privacy Act. This study has been registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's national survey registration system and will take up to 24 minutes to complete, depending on your responses.

[IF ASKED: This study has been registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's (CRIC's) Research Verification Service so that you may validate its authenticity. If you would like to enquire about the details of this research, you can visit CRIC's website: [www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca](http://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca). If you choose to verify the authenticity of this research, you can reference project code 20220112-EN014.

[IF ASKED: Environics' privacy policy is available online at <https://environics.ca/about-us/privacy-policy/>

< PROGRAMMING NOTE: SURVEY TO BE PROGRAMMED IN ACCESSIBLE FORMAT.>

**IF LANDLINE SAMPLE:** We choose telephone numbers at random and then select one person from each household to be interviewed. To do this, we would like to speak to the person in your household, 18 years of age or older, who has had the most recent birthday. Would that be you?" [IF THAT PERSON IS NOT AVAILABLE ARRANGE CALLBACK]

**IF CELLPHONE SAMPLE:** Are you at least 18 years old?

**IF CELL PHONE SAMPLE ASK A**

A Are you in a safe place to talk – for example not operating a motor vehicle?

Yes [RE-INTRODUCE YOURSELF, IF NECESSARY]  
 No [ARRANGE CALLBACK DATE/TIME]

---

**WEB LANDING PAGE**

Please select your preferred language for completing the survey / Veuillez sélectionner la langue dans laquelle vous préférez répondre à ce sondage.

01–English / Anglais

02–Français / French

Welcome to this survey being conducted by Environics Research Group, an independent research company, on behalf of Transport Canada; it will take about 15 minutes of your time.

We are conducting a study to find out what people think about issues facing Canada today. Your participation is entirely voluntary and all of your answers will be kept completely confidential and anonymous. If you wish to verify the legitimacy of this research, get information about the survey industry or to ask technical questions about this survey, please contact Environics at [helpdesk@environics.ca](mailto:helpdesk@environics.ca).

This study has been registered with the Canadian Research Insights Council's (CRIC's) Research Verification Service so that you may validate its authenticity. If you would like to enquire about the details of this research, you can visit CRIC's website: [www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca](http://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca). If you choose to verify the authenticity of this research, you can reference project code 20220112-EN014.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

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< **PROGRAMMING NOTE: Please prioritize accessibility; no carousels** >

## Screening

[IF LANDLINE RECORD REGION FROM SAMPLE]

[IF CELL PHONE SAMPLE OR ONLINE ASK C]

A In which province or territory do you live?

**PHONE: DO NOT READ LIST**

**ONLINE – DROP DOWN LIST:** *Select one only.*

Newfoundland and Labrador	1
Prince Edward Island	2
Nova Scotia	3
New Brunswick	4
Quebec	5
Ontario	6
Manitoba	7
Saskatchewan	8
Alberta	9
British Columbia	10
Yukon	11
Northwest Territories	12
Nunavut	13

### IF ONLINE ASK

B. Which of the following best describes where you live?

*Select one only.*

01 - A major urban centre	<b>URBAN</b>
02 - A suburb	<b>URBAN</b>
03 - A medium sized town	<b>URBAN</b>
04 - A small town	<b>RURAL</b>
05 - A rural area (less than 200 km from a major urban centre)	<b>RURAL</b>
06 - A remote area (more than 200 km from a major urban centre)	<b>RURAL</b>

C. In what year were you born?

**RECORD YEAR – TERMINATE IF UNDER 18 (MIN VALUE 1900, MAX VALUE 2003]**

**C2 IF RESPONDENT DECLINES TO PROVIDE A PRECISE BIRTH YEAR:** Would you be willing to indicate in which of the following age categories you belong?

**PHONE: READ UNTIL CATEGORY REACHED**

**ONLINE – DROP DOWN LIST:** *Select one only.*

01 – 18 to 24
02 – 25 to 34
03 – 35 to 44
04 – 45 to 54
05 – 55 to 64
06 – 65 and over
99 – Prefer not to say

D How do you identify your gender?

**PHONE IF NECESSARY/SHOW ONLINE:** *Gender refers to current gender which may be different from sex assigned at birth and may be different from what is indicated on legal documents.*

**PHONE: DO NOT READ LIST EXCEPT TO CLARIFY**

01 – Female

02 – Male

03 – Non-binary

98 – Other (**DO NOT SPECIFY**)

99 – Prefer not to say [**SINGLE MENTION**]

**SHOW ONLINE, READ TO ALL:** In this survey, the word “guest” is used to refer to anyone who is on board a non-commercial boat or other type of recreational watercraft but is *not* the person operating it.

1. In the past 12 months, have you operated or been a guest on a **recreational** boat or watercraft?

**[SHOW ONLINE, IF ASKED ON TELEPHONE:** Recreational watercraft include powerboats, sailboats, personal watercraft, canoes, kayaks, row boats, paddleboards, dinghies, pontoon boats, and so on. Please do not include any commercial boats like cruise ships, commercial fishing vessels or ferries.]

01–Yes, I have operated a boat

**SKIP TO Q3**

02–Yes, I have been a guest on a boat

**SKIP TO Q3**

03–Yes, both as an operator and as a guest

**SKIP TO Q3**

04–No, I have not operated nor been a guest on a watercraft in the past year

2. **IF 04 AT Q1 ASK Q2:** In the **next 12 months**, do you **intend** to operate or be a guest in a **recreational** boat or watercraft?

*Please select one*

01–Yes, I will likely operate a boat

02–Yes, I will likely be a guest on a boat

03–Yes, I will likely be both an operator and a guest on a boat

04–No, I do not intend to operate or be a guest on a boat

**IF 04 AT Q2, THANK AND TERMINATE****Main survey*****Boating characteristics***

3. Which of the following types of pleasure craft have you used in the past year or intend to use in the next year, either as an operator or a guest?  
*Select any that apply*

**[SHOW ONLINE, READ ON TELEPHONE]**

- 01 – Canoe
- 02 – Kayak (including inflatable crafts)
- 03 – Powerboat, motorboat or speedboat
- 04 – Rowboat or dinghy (not motorized)
- 05 – Sailboat
- 06 – Personal watercraft (e.g., WaveRunners/Sea-Doos/Jet Skis)
- 07 – Paddleboard (including inflatable ones)
- 08 – Houseboat
- 09 – Pontoon boat

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

- 99 – Not sure **[SINGLE MENTION]**

4. **IF 03 - POWER BOAT OR 08 - HOUSEBOAT ASK Q4:** You indicated you used or intend to use the following type of boat. What is the approximate length of the craft?

**SHOW ONLINE, IF ASKED ON TELEPHONE:** if more than one of that type, please indicate the length of the type you use/intend to use ***most often***.

**RECORD FOR EACH AS APPLICABLE**

- A) POWERBOAT: \_\_\_\_\_ metres **OR** \_\_\_\_\_ feet **OR** 99 - Not sure
- B) HOUSEBOAT: \_\_\_\_\_ metres **OR** \_\_\_\_\_ feet **OR** 99 - Not sure

5. **IF ANY YES TO Q1 AND ANY 01-09 AT Q3:** A) Approximately how frequently did you use [TEXT SUBSTITUTION: **IF ONLY ONE:** this type of watercraft/**IF MORE THAN ONE:** these types of watercraft] in the past year, during the boating season?

**IF ANY YES TO Q2 AND ANY 01-09 AT Q3:** B) Approximately how frequently do you expect to use [TEXT SUBSTITUTION: **IF ONLY ONE:** this type of watercraft/**IF MORE THAN ONE:** these types of watercraft] in the next year, during the boating season?

*Select one response for each*

**TELEPHONE: READ ANSWER CATEGORIES FOR A, REPEAT AS NEEDED FOR B-I**

**ONLINE: SET UP AS GRID - SHOW ONLY ITEMS SELECTED AT Q3**

	More than once a week	At least weekly	At least monthly	Less often than monthly	Not sure
A. Canoe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Kayak (including inflatable ones)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Power boat, motorboat or speedboat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D. Rowboat or dinghy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E. Sailboat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F. Personal watercraft (e.g., WaveRunners/Sea-Doos/Jet Skis)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G. Paddleboard (including inflatable crafts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H. Houseboat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I. Pontoon boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**SHOW ONLINE, READ TO ALL:** In this survey, to keep things brief, we will refer to “boating” - please know this is referring to the use of all types of recreational watercraft/pleasure craft.

6. Which of the following recreational boating-related activities have you done in the past year or intend to do in the next year?

*Select any that apply*

**TELEPHONE: READ 01-08**

01 – Cruising/touring

- 02 – Fishing
  - 03 – Powerboating
  - 04 – Competitive boating/racing
  - 05 – Commuting (e.g., to work or shopping)
  - 06 – Waterskiing
  - 07 – Parasailing
  - 08 – Flyboarding/hydroflying
  - 98 - Other (specify)
- SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**
- 99 – Not sure [**SINGLE MENTION**]

7. Where do you typically use recreational watercraft or boats?

*Select any that apply*

**TELEPHONE: DO NOT READ EXCEPT TO CLARIFY**

- 01 – At home (that is, your home is on or near water)
- 02 – At the home of a friend or family member
- 03 – At your cottage or recreational property (as owner)
- 04 – While visiting friends'/family members' cottages/recreational properties
- 05 – While camping
- 06 – On vacation in Canada or other northern/colder locations
- 07 – On vacation outside of Canada in southern/warm locations
- 98 – Other (*please specify: \_\_\_\_\_*)

8. In what bodies of water do you go boating most often?

*Select any that apply*

**TELEPHONE: READ 01-03**

- 01 Lakes
- 02 Rivers
- 03 Ocean
- 04 Other (specify)

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 Not sure

9. Have you ever *rented* a motorized boat?

*Select one only*

**TELEPHONE: IF NO, CLARIFY IF INTEND TO OR NOT**

- 01 – Yes
- 02 – No, but I may in the future
- 03 – No, and do not intend to

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure

**Awareness of regulations**

10. How knowledgeable would you say you are about how to keep safe while boating?

*Select one only*

01 – Very knowledgeable

02 – Somewhat knowledgeable

03 – Not very knowledgeable

04 – Not at all knowledgeable

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure

11. How familiar would you say you are about the formal regulations about recreational boating?

*Select one only*

01 – Very familiar

02 – Somewhat familiar

03 – Not very familiar

04 – Not at all familiar

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure

12. Where do you look for information about boating?

*Select any that apply*

**TELEPHONE: (DO NOT READ. PROBE)** Anything else?

01 – Websites (Please specify if possible)

02 – Social Media

03 – Books/manuals - print

04 – Books/manuals - online

05 – Friends/family

06 – Magazines - print

07 – Magazines - online

98 – Other (*specify*)

99 – I don't look for/need information on boating [**SINGLE MENTION**]

13. How familiar would you say you are with **official regulations** about the following aspects of recreational boating?

**ONLINE: GRID**

*Select one for each*

a) Lifejackets in boats

b) Impairment while boating

c) Safe operation of boating

01 – Very familiar

02 – Somewhat familiar

03 – Not very familiar

04 – Not at all familiar

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure



14. Which of the following **documents** are you aware of, or personally have?

<b>SHOW IN ORDER</b>	<b>Never heard of this</b>	<b>Heard of this but do not have one personally</b>	<b>I have this personally</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
A. Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B. Pleasure Craft Licence (PCL)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C. Pleasure Craft Registration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**IF HEARD OF OR PERSONALLY HAVE ANY OF 14A, B, C ASK 15**

15. To the best of your knowledge, what is the difference between a Pleasure Craft Operator Card , a Pleasure Craft Licence and a Pleasure Craft Registration?

**OPEN**

*ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:*

16. Have you ever taken part in a program or course where you learned about safe boating practices or skills?  
*Select one only*

01 – Yes, to obtain my Pleasure Craft Operator Card

02 – Yes, another type of course

03 – No

**DO NOT SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure

17. **ONLINE ONLY:** Please indicate if you think the following statements are true or false.

<b>RANDOMIZE A-F</b>	<b>Definitely true</b>	<b>Might be true</b>	<b>Might be false</b>	<b>Definitely false</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
A) You don't need a Pleasure Craft Operator Card if the pleasure craft has no motor <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B) There is a fee to get a pleasure craft licence <b>(FALSE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C) You don't need to bring a pleasure craft licence on board with you <b>(FALSE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D) People who operate a pleasure craft with a motor over 1 HP are required to carry on board proof they are competent to operate it <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E) People who have been operating recreational boats for a long time don't need to prove their competency <b>(FALSE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F) If someone on board a vessel is being paid to operate it or if someone pays to ride it, it is not a pleasure craft <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. **TELEPHONE:** To the best of your knowledge, what are the acceptable ways someone can prove they are competent to operate motorized pleasure craft?

**USE LIST AS PRECODES; DO NOT READ**

**ONLINE:** Which of the following are accepted as proof of competency for operators of motorized pleasure craft?

*Select any that apply*

**RANDOMIZE 01-05**

01 – A **Pleasure Craft Operator Card** accredited by Transport Canada **(CORRECT)**

02 – Proof of having passed a recreational boating safety course in Canada before April 1, 1999 **(CORRECT)**

03 - A **Pleasure Craft Licence** from Transport Canada **(INCORRECT)**

04 – A marine certificate from Transport Canada **(CORRECT)**

05 – A completed rental-boat safety checklist obtained for a specific rental period from the rental agency **(CORRECT)**

06 – A note from the boat owner **(INCORRECT)**

98 – Other *(specify)*

99 – Not sure **[SINGLE PUNCH]**

**Preparing vessels for excursions**

19. How knowledgeable would you say you are about what is required to prepare a recreational watercraft for a trip?

*Select one only*

01 – Very knowledgeable

02 – Somewhat knowledgeable

03 – Not very knowledgeable

04 – Not at all knowledgeable

**SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**

99 – Not sure

20. To the best of your knowledge, are the following **required by law** or **optional** when preparing for a boating excursion?

*Please select one response for each*

<b>RANDOMIZE A-F</b>	<b>Required by law</b>	<b>Optional</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
a) Reviewing a safety checklist <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Checking the weather <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Checking the vessel and lights <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Ensuring all required equipment is on board, ready to use and in good working condition. <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Ensuring everyone on board is wearing or has access to a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) <b>(REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Making sure everyone on board is hydrated <b>(NOT REQUIRED)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Lifejackets and Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)**

*FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:*

21. In your opinion, do the terms “lifejacket” and “Personal Flotation Device” or PFD refer to the **same** thing, or are there **differences** between the two?

01 – Same thing

02 – Different things

99 – Not sure

ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:

22. **[IF DIFFERENT]** In what ways are Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) different from lifejackets?

**ONLINE - OPEN ENDED**

**TELEPHONE: (DO NOT READ. PROBE)** Anything else?

- 01 – Lifejackets are available in specific colours (yellow, orange and red)
- 02 – Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) are available in multiple colours including orange
- 03 – Lifejackets **will** ensure you are face up in the water
- 04 – Personal Flotation Devices (PFD) **will not** ensure you are face up in the water
- 98 – Other (specify)
- 99 – Not sure

23. **IF YES AT Q1:** How often do you typically wear a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) when you go boating?

**IF YES AT Q2:** How often will you wear a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) when you go boating?

- 01 – Always
- 02 – Sometimes
- 03 – Rarely
- 04 – Never
- 97 – It could vary depending on the circumstances (e.g. type of boat, if children are boating)

ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:

**ONLINE ONLY**

24. If you were a guest on somebody else's boat and the person in charge of the boat asked you to put on a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD), would you definitely wear it, probably wear it, probably wouldn't wear it, definitely wouldn't wear it?

- 01 – Definitely wear it
- 02 – Probably wear it
- 03 – Probably would not wear it
- 04 – Definitely would not wear it
- 99 – Not sure

ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:

25. Thinking about when you have been out in a small boat or watercraft (under 6 meters or 20 feet) ...

**ONLINE:** ...how often was a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of the proper size available to you?

**TELEPHONE:** ...was a lifejacket or Personal Flotation Device (PFD) of the proper size always, usually, not usually or never available to you...?

- 01 – Always available
- 02 – Usually available
- 03 – Not usually available
- 04 – Never available
- 99 – Not sure

**ONLINE ONLY**

ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:

26. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about lifejackets or Personal Flotation Devices (PFD)

<b>RANDOMIZE A-E</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
a) Only weak swimmers need lifejackets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) People who do not wear lifejackets are irresponsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) I feel uncomfortable wearing a lifejacket when no one else is	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) I only wear a lifejacket if there are children on the boat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) If the operator is wearing a lifejacket, I always wear one too	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Lifejackets are uncomfortable because they are too bulky	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

ADAPTED FROM 2001 BASELINE PFD SURVEY:

27. For each of the following statements, please indicate

**ONLINE:** your level of agreement with the following statements.

**TELEPHONE:** if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

<b>RANDOMIZE A-D</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Somewhat agree</b>	<b>Somewhat disagree</b>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
a) You don't need to wear a lifejacket when you believe the boat is safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Wearing a lifejacket is a normal part of boating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) There is no law that says you must wear a lifejacket, just that you need one available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) It is only important to wear lifejacket if the water is cold	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Cold water safety**

28. During what seasons do you think cold water (below 15 degrees Celsius/50 degrees Fahrenheit) poses a potential danger to boaters in Canada?

*Select any that apply*

- 01 – Winter
- 02 – Spring
- 03 – Summer
- 04 – Fall
- 05 – All of the above [**SINGLE MENTION**]
- 06 – None of the above [**SINGLE MENTION**]
- 99 – Not sure [**SINGLE MENTION**]

29. What, if any, preventative measures should boaters take when the water is cold, and why?

**OPEN**

30. **ONLINE:** Please indicate if you believe the following statements are true or false.

*Select one response for each statement*

**TELEPHONE:** Please indicate if you believe the following statements are definitely true, might be true, might be false or definitely false:

<b>RANDOMIZE A-E</b>	<b>Definitely true</b>	<b>Might be true</b>	<b>Might be false</b>	<b>Definitely false</b>	<b>Not sure</b>
a) Immersion in cold water always causes hypothermia <b>(FALSE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure to cold air and wind while in water-soaked clothing causes hypothermia <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) You will lose the effective use of your fingers, arms and legs within 10 minutes of cold water immersion <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Hypothermia sets in when core body temperature drops below 35.0° Celsius <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Immersion in cold water can paralyze your muscles instantly <b>(TRUE)</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Impaired boating**

**SHOW ONLINE, READ TO ALL: Just a reminder that your answers to all survey questions will be held anonymous and confidential, and your personal contact information will not be linked to them.**

31. How often, if ever, have you gone boating with someone who appeared to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol?  
*Select one only*
- 01 – Frequently
  - 02 – Occasionally
  - 03 – Rarely
  - 04 – Never
- SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**
- 99 – Not sure
32. **[IF Q31 01-03]** What substances have you seen be involved with boating?  
*Select any that apply*
- 01 – Alcohol
  - 02 – Cannabis
  - 03 – Illegal drugs
  - 04 – Prescription drugs
  - 05 – Other intoxicating substances (such as glue or aerosols)
- SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**
- 99 – Not sure
33. **[IF Q31 01-03]** Have you seen an impaired person be... ?  
*Select one only*
- 01 – The vessel operator
  - 02 – A guest
  - 03 – Both operators and guests
- SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**
- 99 – Not sure
34. Some people who would not operate a motor vehicle while impaired might think it is okay to operate a boat after using alcohol or drugs. Why do you think people might not follow laws about impaired boating?  
**OPEN**
35. Do you think impaired boating is a serious problem in Canada, or not?  
*Select one only*
- 01 – Yes, serious
  - 02 – No, not serious
- SHOW ONLINE, VOLUNTEERED TELEPHONE**
- 99 – Not sure

**Demographics**

**SHOW ONLINE, READ TO ALL: We have a few final questions about you to help us analyze the results of this survey.**

36. How would you rate your swimming skill level?

*Select one only*

- 01 Beginner
- 02 Intermediate
- 03 Advanced
- 04 Non swimmer

**ONLINE ONLY**

37. What social media platform(s), if any, might you use to learn or share information about boating?

*Select any that apply*

- 01 – Twitter
- 02 – Facebook
- 03 – LinkedIn
- 04 – Instagram
- 88 – Other, please specify:
- 99 – I do not use any social media platforms for this purpose **[SINGLE PUNCH]**

D2 What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?

PHONE: DO NOT READ LIST EXCEPT TO CLARIFY

ONLINE: SHOW 1-9

- 01 – Grade 8 or less
- 02 – Some high school
- 03 – High school diploma or equivalent
- 04 – Trades certificate or diploma
- 05 – Registered Apprenticeship or other trades certificate or diploma
- 06 – College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma
- 07 – University certificate, diploma or degree below the bachelor's level
- 08 – Bachelor's degree
- 09 – Post graduate degree above the bachelor's level

**VOLUNTEERED – DO NOT SHOW ONLINE**

99 - Don't know/Refused

D3 What language do you speak most often at home?

PHONE: DO NOT READ LIST – ACCEPT ALL THAT APPLY

SHOW 1-3 ONLINE: *Select any that apply*

- 01 – English
- 02 – French
- 97 – Another language (*Please specify*) (DO NOT CODE)

**VOLUNTEERED – DO NOT SHOW ONLINE**

99 - Don't know/Refused [SINGLE MENTION]



D4. Were you born in Canada or in another country?

- 01 – In Canada **SKIP TO QD5**
- 02 – Another country **ASK QD4B**
- VOLUNTEERED – DO NOT SHOW ONLINE**
- 99 – Prefer not to say

D4b. How long ago did you come to Canada?

- 01 – Within the past 10 years
- 02 – More than ten years ago
- VOLUNTEERED – DO NOT SHOW ONLINE**
- 99 – Prefer not to say

D5. Which of the following best describes you? Are you...?

**PHONE: READ UNTIL CATEGORY REACHED**

- 01 - First Nations
- 02 - Inuk
- 03 - Métis
- 04 - or, a non-Indigenous person
- VOLUNTEERED –SHOW ONLINE**
- 99 – Prefer not to say

D6 Which of the following categories best describes your total household income? That is, the total income of all persons in your household combined, before taxes.

**PHONE: READ LIST – STOP WHEN REACH RESPONDENT’S CATEGORY**

**ONLINE: SHOW 1-6**

- 01 - Under \$40,000
- 02 - \$40,000 to just under \$60,000
- 03 - \$60,000 to just under \$80,000
- 04 - \$80,000 to just under \$100,000
- 05 - \$100,000 to just under \$150,000
- 06 - \$150,000 and above

**VOLUNTEERED –SHOW ONLINE**

99 – Prefer not to say

D7. Are you the parent or guardian of a child or children under the age of 16?

- 01 - Yes
- 02 - No
- VOLUNTEERED –DO NOT SHOW ONLINE**
- 03 - Prefer not to say

D8 What is your six-digit postal code?

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**IF D8 SKIPPED (ALLOW SKIP) ASK D9**

D9 Could you please give the first three places of your postal code?

\_\_\_ (ALLOW SKIP)

**TELEPHONE ONLY**

This completes the survey. In case my supervisor would like to verify that I conducted this interview, may I have your first name?

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE ONLY RECORD**

CCITY. CAPITAL CITY

01 - Yes (Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Iqaluit)

02 - No

**PRETEST ONLY: ADD PRETEST PROBING QUESTIONS.**

**10 E AND 10 F ONLINE, 10 E IN NORTH**

**ENG/FRE END PAGE MESSAGES SHOWN TO RESPONDENTS**

[SHOW ALL RESPONDENTS WHO **COMPLETE/READ ON TELEPHONE**] This survey was conducted on behalf of Transport Canada, and is registered under the Federal *Access to Information Act*. Thank you very much for your participation.

[SHOW TO ALL RESPONDENTS WHO **DO NOT QUALIFY**] We're sorry. You do not meet the qualifications for this survey. We sincerely thank you and appreciate your time, dedication, and continued participation in our online surveys.

[SHOW TO ALL RESPONDENTS WHO RECEIVE **QUOTA FULL**] Unfortunately the quota has been reached for your demographic and/or region. We sincerely thank you and appreciate your time, dedication, and continued participation in our online surveys.