

POLICY STATEMENT

NO. 6.17.00

Issued By: The Office of the Chancellor

Coordinated By: Red River Watershed Program
College of Sciences

Effective: July 1, 2008

Revised: April 1, 2009

Subject: Water Vessel Safety Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to develop procedures to ensure the safe operation of water vessels in the course of University business and also to comply with all applicable rules and regulations. The policy has been developed in accordance with R.S.39:1543.1, state regulations concerning the safety of water vessels. The policy is applicable to all students, faculty, and staff at the University. The policy covers all water vessels owned, leased, rented, or otherwise used for the University.

II. DEFINITIONS

Authorization / Operator History Form- This form shall be maintained by the agency on each employee who operated a vessel on a regular basis. The form includes: date of authorization, the type of vessel the employee may use, and information on the vessel operator's record.

Boating Accident- A water vessel accident can include, but is not limited to, capsizing, collision with another vessel, flooding, fire, explosion, and disappearance of the vessel other than by theft. A water vessel is considered to be involved in a boating accident whenever the occurrence results in damage by or to the water vessel or its equipment, results in injury or loss of life to any person, or results in the disappearance of any person from on board under circumstances that indicate the possibility of death or injury.

Capsizing- When a vessel overturns and the bottom becomes uppermost, except in the case of a sailboat, which will normally lie on its side.

Careless Operation- Operation of any watercraft in a careless or heedless manner so as to be grossly indifferent to the person or property of other persons or at a rate of speed greater than will permit exercise of reasonable care to bring the watercraft to a stop within the assured clear distance ahead.

Flooding- Filling with water, regardless of method of ingress, but retaining sufficient buoyancy to remain upon the surface.

High Risk Operator- High risk operators are those individuals having three or more convictions, guilty pleas, and/or nolo contendere pleas for moving vessel violations or individuals having a single conviction, guilty, plea, or nolo contendere plea for operating a vessel while intoxicated, careless operation, reckless operation, negligent homicide, or similar violation including any civil case for which negligence has been proven within the previous twelve month period.

Negligent Homicide- Operation of any watercraft at an immoderate rate of speed or in a careless or negligent manner causing the death of another.

Reckless Operation- Operation of any watercraft in such a manner as to endanger the life, limb, or damage the property of any person.

State-owned/leased/hired Vessel- Any water vessel owned, leased, and/or rented by the Sate of Louisiana

Water Operator Record (WOR)- Record containing history of boating violations and accidents maintained by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (Enforcement Division) on each operator in the State of Louisiana.

Water Vessel- Every type of watercraft, other than a seaplane, on the water used or capable of being used as a means of transportation. Private vessels commandeered in an emergency situation will be included in the definition of a water vessel.

University Water Vessel Coordinator: The individual who has been designated as responsible for management of the LSUS Water Vessel Safety Program, usually the Director of the Red River Watershed Management Institute.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Operator Authorization

Any student worker or employee of the University must be authorized to operate any water vessel on University business. A water vessel may be used for University business only if it is owned, leased, or rented by the University. Any other privately owned, rented, or leased water vessel cannot be used to conduct University business.

To become officially authorized to operate a water vessel on University business the following steps must be completed:

1. All University water vessel operators must submit a completed Water Vessel Authorization / Operator History Form to the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee. A copy of this form is attached to this policy.

2. Upon receiving the completed authorization / operator history form, the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee will request an operator history report from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). The LDWF will provide any convictions or guilty pleas related to boating associated with that operator. The operator record from the LDWF is reviewed to ensure that the operator is not a high risk operator.
3. All University water vessel operators must attend a Louisiana Boating Safety Course offered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF). A copy of the boating safety course completion certificate must be submitted with the Authorization / Operator History Form to the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee.

Upon completion of these three steps, the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee will review the operator history report to ensure that the operator is not a high risk operator. If the operator does not fall into the high risk category then that person will be an authorized operator and may operate water vessels for the University. A list of authorized operators will be kept on file with the Loss Prevention Coordinator and updated with any changes.

B. High Risk Operators

Faculty, staff, and students identified as high risk operators will not be allowed to operate a water vessel on University business. The operator history report provided by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) will be used to identify if operators are high-risk operators. The operator accident history will be reviewed prior to authorizing new operators and an accident history will be reviewed for all operators annually.

High risk operators are those individuals having three or more convictions, guilty pleas, and/or nolo contendere pleas for moving vessel violations or individuals having a single conviction, guilty, plea, or nolo contendere plea for operating a vessel while intoxicated, careless operation, reckless operation, negligent homicide, or similar violation including any civil case for which negligence has been proven within the previous twelve month period.

Previously authorized operators must report any change in their high risk status to the environmental health & safety department within five business days of the change. Any ticket or citation must be reported within five business days of receipt. If previously authorized operators do not report changes in their high risk status they may be subject to disciplinary action once the violation is discovered. A change in risk status would be being arrested, cited, and convicted, etc. of any of the above listed offenses. All authorized employees who receive a conviction for a violation is required to retake the Boat Louisiana or other recognized course within 90 days of a conviction.

The Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee will notify in writing any high-risk water vessel operator and their department head or supervisor concerning the findings indicated in the operator history record. Once an operator has been classified as a high risk operator, they will not be allowed to operate water vessels on University business for at least one year after the latest conviction, guilty plea, or no contender plea. If the operator does not report the violation to the Environmental Health and Safety Department then the period of one year will begin from the time the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee was made aware of the violation.

High risk operators can reapply to the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee after one year to be authorized operators. The Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee will review a recent operator accident history report from the LDWF. Additionally, the high risk operator must take the boater safety course again.

C. Boating Safety Course

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) offers courses in Shreveport/Bossier City throughout the year. Contact the local LDWF office for further scheduling information. Additionally the course, "Boat Louisiana", is available on the internet (www.boat-ed.com/la/index.htm). Courses offered by the US Coast Guard and US Power Squadron may be acceptable. Please contact the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee to verify if these alternative courses are acceptable.

The course must be taken within three months of initial employment or enrollment for new operators. Authorized operators are required to repeat the course once every three years. It is the responsibility of the operators to schedule and complete the course. A copy of the certificate of completion should be turned into the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee upon completion of the course. It is recommended that employees begin reviewing the schedule and plan to attend the course six months prior to the required date. If the course is not repeated within the required three year period the employee will no longer be allowed to operate water vessels until the course is retaken.

D. Water Vessel Inspection

In order to ensure safety, all equipment must be inspected regularly. All boats that are owned, leased, or rented to the University shall be inspected monthly, using the attached form. This inspection will be performed by the department the water vessel is assigned to and will be documented on the attached inspection form. Additionally operators should conduct a safety inspection prior to each use of the boat.

E. Accident Reporting

A water vessel accident can include, but is not limited to, capsizing, collision with another vessel, flooding, fire, explosion, and disappearance of the vessel other than by theft. A water vessel is considered to be involved in a boating accident whenever the occurrence results in damage by or to the water vessel or its equipment, results in injury or loss of life to any person, or results in the disappearance of any person from on board under circumstances that indicate the possibility of death or injury.

All accidents should be reported to the University Police and the Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee as soon as practicable but no later than 24 hours after the accident. Water vessel accidents that result in death or injury to anyone must be reported to the LDWF within 48 hours. Accidents involving property damage in excess of \$200.00 should be reported to LDWF within five days. All water vessel accidents should be reported using the Operator Boating Incident Report form. A copy of this form shall be included on board each boat maintained by the University. The supervisor of the individual having the accident shall review the report within 2 days of the accident and shall attempt to make a determination of whether the accident was preventable. The supervisor will submit the report, the Authorization/ Operating history form, and the Water Operator Record to the agency head or their designee for review. Disciplinary action may be considered for an accident where there was improper use of a vessel.

A boating accident /Investigation Report (DWF-BIR-005) for each accident shall be completed and submitted to LDWF.

The State of Louisiana provides insurance coverage for bodily injury and property damage. An Employer First Record of Injury (LDOL-WC-1007) shall be completed and forwarded to the Office of Risk Management Worker's Compensation Unit when an employee is injured.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

Department Heads or Designees are responsible for implementation of the Water Vessel Program and shall stress the importance of the Program to all affected employees. Department Heads or Designees are responsible for reviewing operator records and identifying employees (via a signed, dated annual list) who shall be authorized to operate state vessels.

The Water Vessel Coordinator or Designee shall plan, organize, direct, and control the Water Vessel Program for the agency, ensuring that:

- Policies and procedures are established and implemented
- Training courses ("Boat Louisiana" course) taken by operators are documented and that the operators course status is reviewed annually
- Operator records are requested, reviewed, and maintained
- Authorization /Operating History Forms are signed and dated by the agency head/designee
- All accidents are reported

- Employees meet all the requirement to be authorized to operate a water vessel

Water Vessel Operators’ Supervisors:

- Shall provide time for each employee that needs to be authorized to operate a water vessel to attend the “Boat Louisiana” course or other require training
- Shall ensure that all vessels and vessels’ accessories provided to water vessel operators fit for their intended purpose
- Shall ensure that all water vessel policies and procedures are followed
- Shall submit reports within the required time frame
- Shall allow only authorized employees to operate water vessels on state business
- Shall assist in conducting accident investigations

Employees

Only authorized employees, those individuals who have successfully competed the authorization process (see above), shall operate state-owned/leased/hired water vessels for state business. Employees shall only operate the type of vessel for which they are authorized. Employees who are authorized to operate such vessels shall be responsible for the safe operation of those vessels. Operators shall report any unsafe condition, accident, or citation received involving a state-owned/leased/hired water vessels to their supervisor or designee

V. RECORD KEEPING

Documentation required to become an Authorized Operator (Authorization form, training documentation, and operator history report) shall be maintained by the Water Vessel Coordinator for five years. Inspections must be retained for three years. An annual report of the authorized operators and summary of all inspections must be submitted to the Loss Prevention Coordinator, who shall maintain the report for three years.

APPROVED

Michael T. Ferrell
Michael T. Ferrell, Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs

April 3, 2009
Date

Vincent J. Marsala
Vincent J. Marsala, Chancellor

April 3, 2009
Date

Appendix A
Louisiana State University in Shreveport
Water Vessel Safety Inspection Form

Date: _____ Boat Description: _____

Inspector's name: _____

Boat Registration: # _____

Water Vessel Inspection					
ITEM		YES	NO	N/A	Comments
1	Are there enough Personal Flotation Device (PFD) for the maximum number of persons as indicated on the USCG identification tag? If the boat has no USCG tag, then it should have no less than 1 PFD for each occupant in the vessel.				
2	Are the PFDs rated for adults?				
3	Are the PFDs in good condition?				
4	Is there a copy of the registration on board?				
5	Does the registration number show clearly when the boat is floating in the water?				
6	Is the LDWF registration number clearly posted on each side of the boat in 3" block letters that differ from the boat color?				
7	Is there a copy of the boating accident report form on board?				
8	Are the boat lights working properly? For night operations the boat must have a bow light that is red and green and a stern light with a white reflector.				
9	Is a current, charged fire extinguisher on board?				
10	Is there a length of marine grade rope not less than 20 feet on board and in good condition?				
11	Is there a sound signaling device (e.g. air horn) on board?				
12	Is there a flare on board?				
13	Is there a communication device (e.g. radio on board?				
14	Does the fuel tank/fuel system have any leaks?				
15	Is the fuel tank well ventilated? Make sure the vent hoses are clear.				

16	Does the steering device work properly? (Check cables, lubrication, etc.)				
Water Vessel Trailer Inspection					
ITEM		YES	NO	N/A	Comments
1	Do all the trailer lights work properly? Check this prior to towing on public roads.				
2	Are trailer tires in good condition? (check for adequate tread, dry rotting, proper inflation)				
3	Are the trailer tire fenders attached and in good condition?				
4	Does the trailer tongue work properly?				
5	Does the trailer hitching mechanism work properly?				

Louisiana State University in Shreveport
Water Vessel Safety Inspection Form

ITEM		YES	NO	N/A	Comments
6	Are the safety chains in good useable condition?				
7	Do the wheel bearings have good grease seals?				
8	Does the trailer have a visible license plate?				
9	Are the license plate and trailer registration available and up to date?				
10	Is the towing vehicle properly equipped to tow the trailer?				
11	Does the towing vehicle have an adequate hitch to tow the boat?				
12	Is the lighting system from the towing vehicle compatible with the lighting system for the trailer? Do all lights work properly?				
Other Water Vessel Safety Issues Identified by the Inspector					
ITEM		Comments			

Inspector's Signature

Date