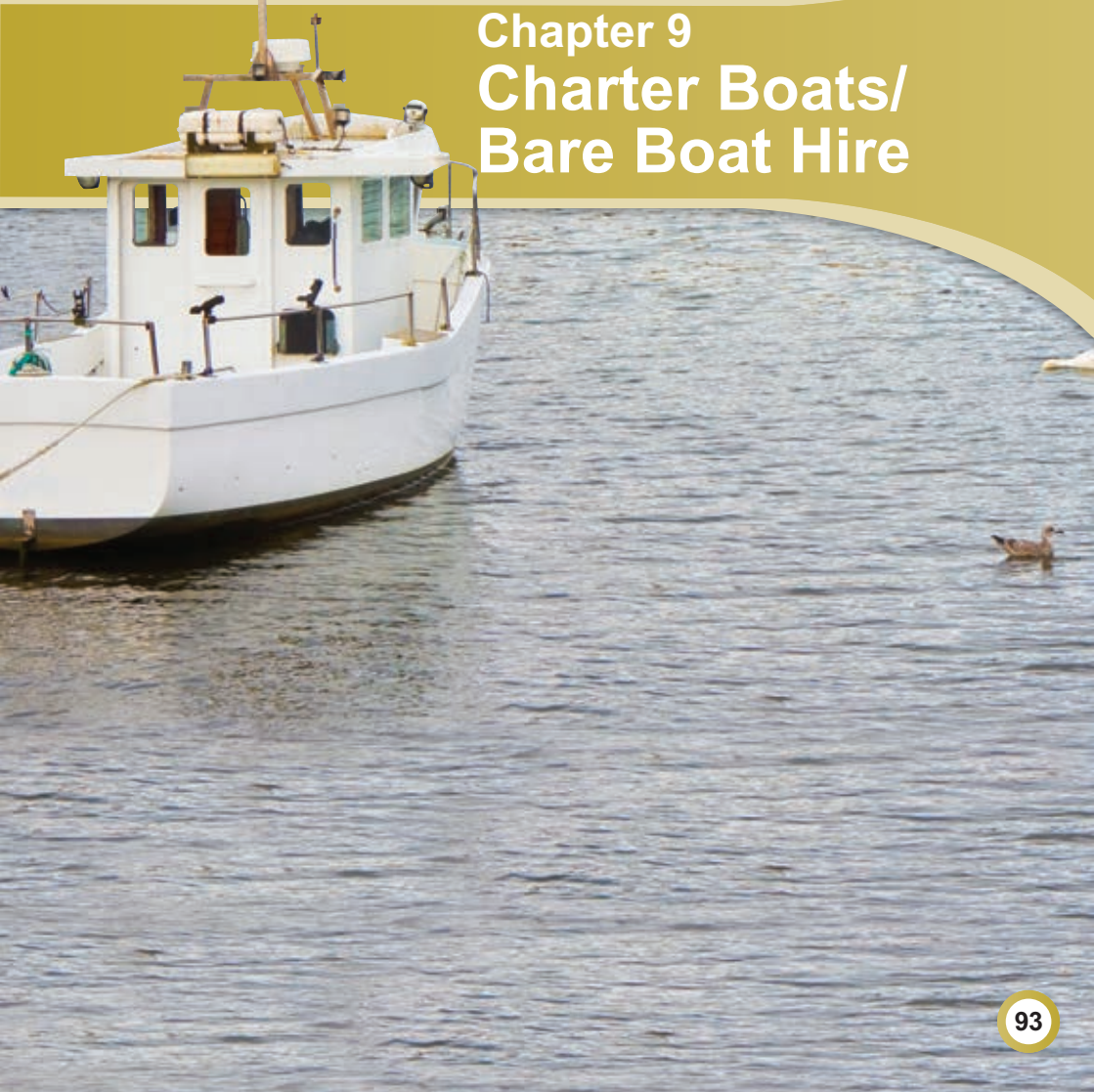




## Chapter 9 Charter Boats/ Bare Boat Hire



Craft that are supplied with a skipper and crew as part of a hire are regarded as Passenger Boats and must be surveyed and licensed by the Marine Survey Office of the IMA. Boats that are offered for hire without crew and for operation by private individuals are classed as charter or bare boat hire.

There is a range of boats available for hire to the public. Examples include:

- Cabin Cruisers transiting the Shannon waterways.
- Sail boats for use on extended coastal trips.
- Boats used for angling on inland lakes.
- Day boats for short local trips (coastal or inland).
- Sailing Dinghies.
- Windsurfers.
- Barges.

There are a number of boat charter associations whose members adhere to an agreed code of operation which covers such items as:

- Safety equipment supplied.
- Operating limitations for boats.
- Training and familiarisation for customers in handling boats.
- Emergency backup and maintenance.

Depending on the type of boat being chartered and the proposed itinerary, some operators will

require customers to prove levels of competency to the hiring company's satisfaction.

Members of the public intending to hire such craft should ask the boat company about the issues listed in sections 9.1 to 9.3.

## 9.1 Training

While some operators offer a comprehensive training scheme, including personal instruction and videos, some may not. Before departing on any boat, customers should request instruction by the owner/operator in the following items, specifically relating to the boat they are hiring:

- Engine operation, including operation of controls and basic engine checks.
- Emergency operation of boat equipment, e.g. emergency steering, alternative means of engine starting, anchoring.
- Location of all safety equipment (including PFD/lifejackets).
- Operation of safety equipment, including donning PFD/lifejacket, flares, radio, as applicable to boat type.
- Fire-fighting appliance location and use (if applicable to boat type).
- Means of pumping bilges.
- Actions in the event of running aground.
- Instruction in boat handling, including berthing alongside,

going astern, man overboard manoeuvres and recovery procedures (this should consist of a short practical demonstration).

- Details of area of operation, local weather conditions, maps/charts, Marine Notices as relevant.
- Maximum number of people/luggage that a craft may carry.
- Contact points for rescue services, radio channels and relevant mobile phone numbers.

Training courses are provided by various organisations (see Appendix 9).

## 9.2 Insurance

- Is the boat covered by insurance?

- What is the extent of the insurance cover?
- Are there any restrictions or conditions (such as suitability for use on canals or permit compliance) that apply to the insurance cover?

Non-adherence to terms and conditions of insurance may cause difficulties and result in insurance being voided.

## 9.3 Minimum safety equipment on board

All boats offered for hire without a skipper should as a minimum be fitted with the safety equipment recommended in Table E in Chapter 2 and Table F in Chapter 3, which are relevant to the area of operation of the craft.





Recreational Craft are classed into 6 categories:

- Category A – Ocean
- Category B – Offshore
- Category C – Coastal
- Category D – Inshore/Estuary
- Category E – Inland waterways including large open lakes
- Category F – Inland Waterways – open boats less than 7 m in length operating in rivers and sheltered areas on lakes in moderate weather conditions.

Hire craft in Irish waters are generally confined to Categories C, D, E and F.