

5 minutes which can save your life!

Before going out to sea, go through your vessel Safe Operational Plan (SOP) checklist:

1. Check the weather forecast for your area.
2. Tell someone who cares where you are going and when you plan to return.
3. Make sure your boat and engine are in sound condition.
4. Take enough spare fuel for the trip.
5. Make sure the following equipment is on board:
 - anchor and rope
 - engine tools and spares
 - alternative propulsion (second engine, sail or oars)
 - baling device and shade
6. Take plenty of fresh water and some food with you (tins, high-energy snacks, green coconuts, etc.).
7. Test your VHF radio and make sure the battery is fully charged or that you have spare batteries.
8. Check that your mobile phone battery is fully charged and you have enough credit to call.
9. Put your emergency grab bag on board!

Emergency call number for your area

Small-scale fishers and small boat operators are often exposed to unforeseen problems when they venture out to sea.

This leaflet aims to promote the use of an emergency 'grab bag' to overcome such problems while at sea.

It is part of SPC's ongoing efforts to improve small boat safety in the Pacific Islands.



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

EMERGENCY GRAB BAG

THE



Saves lives at sea!

2 Manual inflatable lifejackets

Very light-weight and compact personal flotation device that may be inflated by either activating a self-contained CO² cartridge or blowing through an inflation tube.

3 Sea rescue streamer

Floating signalling device used during day-time, it lasts indefinitely and is visible for miles by airplanes.

4 Whistle

Signalling device used at night or in foggy conditions to attract the attention of nearby boats.

5 Mirror

Signalling device used during day-time to attract the attention of nearby boats as well as airplanes.

6 Rescue laser

Long-range, AAA battery-operated laser device used at night to attract the attention of nearby boats as well as airplanes; the rescue laser replaces flares or parachute-rockets (no expiry date and can be air-shipped) although the latter may still be required under national sea safety regulations.

7 Personal locator beacon

When activated the PLB transmits a signal with the beacon's ID and vessel position to the nearest search-and-rescue operation centre via satellite relay.

8 Solas strobe light

AAA battery-operated, waterproof, flashing light that is visible for miles at night and continuously indicates the distressed boat's position.

9 Batteries

AAA-size dry cell batteries used in portable electronic devices such as hand-held GPS and VHF radios, strobe light and rescue laser.

10 Hand-held VHF radio (waterproof)

Multi-channel, two-way radio (can transmit and receive), which enables boat-to-boat and boat-to-land communication; the operating range is 5-10 nautical miles in open water and distress signals should be sent on channel 16 (international calling frequency for distress messages).

1 Floating emergency grab bag

Water-proof bag used to store all of the items below; it should be of a size large enough to store additional items such as tinned food, water bottles, a knife and some fishing tackle.



11 Compass

A device used to determine geographic direction and consisting of a horizontally-mounted magnetic needle that is free to pivot until aligned with the Earth's magnetic field.

12 Emergency blankets

Very low-weight, low-bulk first-aid blanket made of heat-reflective plastic sheeting; it reduces the heat loss in a person's body and because of its large, metallic and radar-reflective surface, it can be used as an improvised signalling device by drifters if the sun is shining, and as a reference point for searchers.

13 Mobile phone

Useful communication tool in areas with adequate mobile phone coverage; does not allow boat-to-boat communication with unidentified/unknown boats and, from a legal/regulatory point of view, does not replace the VHF radio.

14 Hand-held GPS

Navigation device that uses the Global Positioning System (GPS) and relies on a network of satellites to give the user's geographical position; it increases the safety of boat operators navigating at night or with poor visibility and, in a distress situation, the exact geographic position of the vessel is known and can be given to the rescue team using the VHF radio or mobile phone.

15 Medical kit

Box or bag containing medical supplies and tools to give emergency medical treatment to a sick or injured person on board.

16 Sea anchor or drogue (125 cm)

Device, usually made of canvas, deployed upwind of the vessel to keep the vessel heading into the wind and to slow its drift; unlike conventional bottom anchor, the sea anchor can be deployed at any depth.