



# Code of Conduct

## Charter Vessels

### Managing Passengers and Alcohol

November 2010

## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to set out guidelines for owners and masters of charter vessels used for functions on Sydney Harbour, specifically in relation to managing passengers and alcohol.

In this Code a charter vessel is a Class 1 vessel as defined in the *Commercial Vessels (Permits) Regulation 1986*.

## 2. BACKGROUND

This Code of Conduct is one of a range of government initiatives under the government's Hassle Free Nights action plan. The action plan contains a number of initiatives to help people enjoy their nights out free from alcohol related violence.

## 3. LEGISLATION

*Commercial Vessels Act 1979*

*Commercial Vessels (Permits) Regulation 1986*

*Liquor Act 2007*

*Liquor Regulation 2008*

## 4. GUIDELINES

The Code provides a guideline to assist operators of charter vessels on Sydney Harbour to reduce antisocial passenger behaviour including as passengers embark and disembark. The aim of the Code is to improve the amenity of the harbour and surrounding areas for both passengers and the broader community. The Code is aimed at owners, masters, licensees, crew, food and beverage staff and security staff.

Operators of charter vessels can promote responsible passenger behaviour particularly in the period between 8.00pm and 6.00am, by:

- Arriving at pick up points on time to minimise noise from waiting passengers.
  - Make sure you have a wharf booking. Bookings may be made online by visiting [www.maritime.nsw.gov.au](http://www.maritime.nsw.gov.au) or by calling 13 12 56.
- Identifying intoxicated passengers as they embark and refusing entry.
  - You may wish to include information in your Hire Agreement that intoxicated passengers will be refused entry.
  - The Director of Liquor and Gaming has issued Intoxication Guidelines to assist

licensees and staff in determining whether a person is intoxicated. A copy is attached.

- Having strategies in place to ensure passengers do not become intoxicated.
  - Strategies include making free water available, promoting low or mid strength drinks, providing food, slowing alcohol service, limiting the availability of high strength drinks such as shots particularly later in the evening, limiting the number of drinks that can be ordered at one time, closing the bar a set time before the cruise finishes.
  - Given the higher risks associated with being on the water, such as falling overboard, operators need to mitigate such risks.
- Ensuring bar and security staff have the skills required to identify passengers approaching intoxication and manage any passengers identified.
  - All staff serving or supplying alcohol as well as vessel security staff must have completed an approved Responsible Service of Alcohol (RSA) course and hold an RSA Certificate.
- Identifying and implementing strategies to mitigate the risk of alcohol related harm and anti-social behaviour.
  - Ensure all areas of the vessel are patrolled regularly to check passenger behaviour.
- Advising passengers to be mindful of residents and other members of the public as they disembark.
  - Direct passengers to nearby public transport locations or taxi ranks.

## **5. SYDNEY HARBOUR CHARTER VESSEL LIQUOR ACCORD**

A liquor accord is an agreement by licensees and other stakeholders in local communities which aims to improve safety in entertainment areas and reduce alcohol-related anti-social behaviour, offences and violence.

The Sydney Harbour Charter Vessel Liquor Accord was established in 2004. The Accord meets quarterly. The main issues concern intoxication levels of patrons prior to boarding and problems dealing with patrons that have pre-paid.

Should any vessel operator require more details regarding Accords or Accord membership information can be obtained at [accords@communities.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accords@communities.nsw.gov.au) or by phoning the Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing on 02 99950312.

## 6. PENALTIES

Operators are reminded that compliance inspections may be conducted and that vessels may be boarded by the Police, NSW Maritime and other agencies. Significant penalties apply for breaching the law.

The Liquor Act provides stiff penalties for licensees and staff who supply liquor to an intoxicated person. On the spot fines of \$1,100 apply or if the matter goes to court fines of up to \$11,000 apply.