

WEATHER BRIEF

Set out below are some statements which may help users of this chart to understand and anticipate the more severe weather conditions which affect the area.

SUMMER

A light southerly wind early in the morning after a period of hot weather is often followed by a fresh or strong SW or S wind which may persist well into the night. Fresh SE winds are normally associated with rising pressures and change quickly to directions between S and SW when the sea breeze develops. Easterly winds which are fresh or strong overnight usually moderate in the late morning and afternoon but may freshen quickly again in the evening. Rapidly falling pressures sometimes occur in the low pressure trough along the West Coast and may quickly produce fresh or strong NE/NW winds during the morning. These winds usually change to the NW or W after several hours and moderate. Convective cloud which is causing showers can also produce squalls all year round, particularly near thunderstorms. A decaying tropical cyclone accompanied by strong winds can reach this area from the vicinity of North-West Cape in 24-36 hours. These occurrences are infrequent but most likely in March.

WINTER

Steadily falling pressures usually indicate the approach of a cold front. The resulting winds normally strengthen from the NE or N at first, moderate as they back to the NW and then freshen ahead of the front. When the depression associated with a front is well to the south, winds will usually change quickly to the SW after passage of the front. If strong or gale force NW winds precede a front they will usually be westerly immediately after its passage and later change to the SW. Steady or falling pressures in the 6-12 hours after the passage of a front usually indicate the approach of another front or depression. When the pressure continues to fall below 1014 mb in the mid-winter months there is a high probability that a strong cold front will arrive in the following 24 hours. Thunderstorms and squalls may occur during the passage of a cold front and also in the cold air from the SW or S following the front. Middle or high cloud from the NW which is increasing in speed may indicate the imminent arrival of a cold front. Fast moving low cloud from any direction may, if viewed from a sheltered location, indicate stronger winds over exposed waters.

RADIO WEATHER SERVICE (For local waters)

Weather is available via facsimile, telephone (including mobile), Internet, Seaphone and INMARSAT. Although some Perth commercial and National radio stations broadcast warnings and marine weather forecasts, primary access of information should be via one of the following: Facsimile - simply set your machine in poll receive mode and dial 1902 935 290 and you will receive a copy of the current products directory. Telephone - for Perth local water warnings call 1900 955 350 and for Western Australian general warnings call 1900 955 371.

Internet - go to the Bureau of Meteorology web site at <http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/wa> and follow the links to information required. Coastal weather forecasts are prepared by the Bureau of Meteorology and broadcast as follows: From WNW Weather Australia West at Wiluna on 2035, 4149, 6230, 8113, 12082 and 16583 kHz on a 24 hour, 7 day week basis. VHF Channels 16 and 67 at 0716 and 1918 hours W.S.T. by the WA Water Police.

LEEUVIN CURRENT

The Leeuwin Current is most predominant during May - August with a surface current generally less than 1.0kn. It has an average width of 30 nautical miles and extends to a depth of approximately 200 metres, carrying warm, low salinity water from the North West Shelf area along the continental shelf south to Cape Leeuwin and then east into the Great Australian Bight. For details of currents generally refer to R.A.N. Australia Pilot to the West.

EPIRBs (Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon) 406MHz

All recreational vessels operating more than 2 nautical miles from the mainland shore or more than 400 metres from an island located more than 2 nautical miles from shore are required by law to carry an EPIRB 406.

If an EPIRB 406 is activated by accident, contact the Rescue co-ordination Centre in Canberra on (02) 6230 6811 (24 hours) or Freecall 1800 641 792 or Water Police Base on (08) 9442 8600 or the nearest marine radio station as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT POINTS ABOUT EPIRBs

Ensure your EPIRB 406 container is not cracked or showing signs of damage and batteries are within shelf life. Use the test switch at least once a month to verify power. Keep it accessible, in the cockpit or less than an arm's length away in the companionway and ensure that it cannot be accidentally activated by movement.



NAVIGATION LIGHTS

All vessels under way or at anchor must display an unobscured 360° white light between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

DIVERS FLAG

Vessels engaged in diving operations shall exhibit at all times, the International Code flag 'A'. All other craft are to keep at least 50 metres clear. Divers engaged in operations may display the International Code flag 'A' from a personal buoy. During night time a boat must show the International lights that 'a vessel is restricted in her ability to manoeuvre'. These are three lights in a vertical line, the top and bottom are red with the middle being white. If diving at night without a vessel you are required to display a flashing orange light that can be seen from a minimum distance of 200m.

BASIC RULES OF THE WATERWAYS

POWER MEETS POWER

- When two power boats are approaching head on, or nearly head on, each must alter course to starboard and pass on each other's port side.
- When a vessel is crossing your bow from starboard to port, that vessel has right of way and you should keep clear. Stop or reduce speed and pass under his stern. (Give way to the vessel on your right).
- When overtaking another vessel, the vessel being passed has right of way and you must always keep clear of that vessel.
- When a vessel is crossing your bow from port to starboard you should maintain course and speed so you have the right of way. If the other vessel does not give way, you should take all action to avoid a collision.
- When in a narrow channel keep to starboard.
- It is an offence for any vessel to be moored or anchored in any channel or fairway, unless that vessel is in distress. Large and deep draughted vessels have restricted manoeuvrability. Small craft must keep well clear of these vessels at all times and must not hamper the larger vessel's progress.

SAIL MEETS SAIL

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