

Irish Whale and Dolphin Group Marine Safety Policy

This policy should be read by all skippers, captains, boat-handlers and agents of the IWDG when carrying out activities on behalf of the Irish Whale and Dolphin Group (IWDG). It is important to remember that some people carrying out activities at sea on behalf of the IWDG may have limited experience of boats or of working at sea.

Responsibility

Marine safety is the responsibility of the person handling the vessel, the IWDG and the individual who goes to sea, jointly and severance. The IWDG will appoint a cruise leader for each period at sea. This person is responsible for IWDG activities and deciding the work programme at sea including when to terminate the cruise. All IWDG individuals must respect this position but any person has the right to decline to carry out any scientific task if they do not feel comfortable carrying out such a task, but everybody (including the cruise leader) must carry out any request as directed by the skipper asks in the interest of marine safety immediately and without question. A Basic Sea Survival Course and ENGII certificate will be required for boarding certain vessels e.g. Celtic Explorer.

Licensed vessels

Only charter vessels that are licensed to carry passengers by the Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources, and carry the appropriate safety equipment, will be chartered by the IWDG. Private vessels will not be used in IWDG activities unless prior agreement by the Directors. A copy of the current insurance policy may be requested prior to a charter being ratified.

Lifejackets

Approved lifejackets must be worn at all times on vessels while on deck. While some lifejackets will be supplied by the IWDG, it's the individual's responsibility to ensure they have access to a lifejacket before joining the vessel.

Clothing

Weather conditions at sea are changeable and usually more cold and windy than on land. It is the responsibility of each individual to ensure that they are clothed appropriately and are fit to go to sea. The cruise leader may refuse to allow any person to join a cruise if they feel that the person is inadequately clothed and are unfit for duties.

Safety brief

A full safety brief should be given to all persons boarding the vessel before leaving its berth. This should include the location of lifejackets, life-raft etc. and the general behaviour expected while on the vessel. Any persons with first aid experience should make themselves known to the cruise leader.

Insurance

The IWDG have insurance cover for carrying out activities while at sea (Ref IWDG Policy No. DN. RPL 2175976, Endorsement No. Q1146). The following item reads:

It is a condition precedent to any liability of the company that, in respect of water activities, the following conditions are met; i) do not allow people into the water if they cannot swim, ii) a life jacket must be worn at all times.