

Fact Sheet

July 2011

Simplified cell phone reporting for private boaters

While the law has not changed, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) has modernized its reporting requirements for pleasure craft entering Canadian waters, in an effort to make it easier for private boaters to comply with reporting requirements.

Requirement to Report

All recreational boaters are required to present themselves upon their arrival in Canada as per the *Customs Act (CA)* and *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA)*. This includes all foreign boaters entering Canada, as well as private boaters who depart Canada and enter foreign waters, and subsequently return to Canada.

This obligation exists regardless of their activities while outside of Canada or their planned activities while in Canada. Arrival in Canada occurs when the pleasure craft crosses the international boundary into Canadian waters.

This provision applies regardless of whether or not boaters drop anchor, land, enter an inland tributary or moor alongside another vessel while in foreign waters.

The only exception to the above applies to vessels that are 'in-transit' through Canada. In order to be considered "in-transit" the vessel must be proceeding directly from one point outside of Canada to another point outside of Canada. In-transit movement must be continuous, uninterrupted and without delays or stopovers. Such movement could be for reasons of the shortest route, requirement of deep waters, evading obstacles such as bridges, etc.

Revised Reporting Arrangements

Certain private boaters may now present themselves to the CBSA by calling the Telephone Reporting Centre (TRC) from their cellular telephones from the location at which they enter Canadian waters. The following groups of individuals may report by cellular phone:

- Canadian citizens and permanent residents who have not landed on U.S. soil; and
- U.S. citizens and permanent residents who do not plan on landing on Canadian soil.

Owners/operators of private boats that are strictly weaving in and out of Canadian waters but are not in transit, will be required to call the TRC only once at the time of their initial entry into Canadian waters. If this activity changes, i.e., the vessel docks in Canada or takes on new persons or goods while in foreign waters, the boater must report directly to a designated marine reporting site and call the TRC upon their arrival in Canada.

All other private boaters, including those without cellular telephones, must proceed directly to a designated marine telephone reporting site and place a call to the TRC in order to obtain CBSA clearance. This includes all vessels carrying foreign nationals (other than U.S. citizens or permanent residents).

Calling the Telephone Reporting Centre

Upon entering Canadian waters, private boaters who qualify can present themselves to the CBSA by calling the Telephone Reporting Centre (TRC) at **1-888-226-7277**. As noted above, all other private boaters, including vessels carrying foreign nationals (other than U.S. citizens or permanent residents), must proceed directly to a designated marine telephone reporting site and place a call to the TRC in order to obtain CBSA clearance.

When pleasure craft operators call the TRC, they will be required to answer a few questions regarding their trip, passengers onboard the vessel, and their declarations. It is the responsibility of the owner/operator to ensure all those onboard have [proper identification](#). After recording the information provided, the border services officer (BSO) at the TRC will make a decision on whether a verification or examination is required or not. If no examination is necessary, the officer at the TRC will provide a report number to the owner/operator. The receipt of this report number will constitute release and approval for entry into Canada.

If a verification or examination is to be conducted, the BSO at the TRC will advise the owner/operator to proceed to the closest reporting site and to ensure that all goods and passengers remain onboard until the verification team arrives. A report number will be provided by a BSO following the verification process. Owners/operators should keep their report number available during their entire stay in Canada.

Failure to Report

Failure to report may result in detention, seizure or forfeiture of the vessel and/or monetary penalties. The minimum fine for failing to report to the CBSA upon entry to Canada is C\$1,000.

Following enforcement action, all persons have the right to appeal the penalty. An independent third party reviews the elements of the seizure/action and will render a decision. To appeal a seizure or penalty, individuals must send a written submission to the Recourse Directorate of the CBSA. Consult the [Disagreements, review and appeals](#) section for more information. The appeal must be filed within 90 days of the penalty action.

Advanced Reporting Arrangements

NEXUS members can provide advance notice to the CBSA at least 30 minutes (minimum) and up to four hours (maximum) prior to arriving in Canada by calling the NEXUS Telephone Reporting Centre at 1-866-99-NEXUS (1-866-996-3987).

CANPASS members are required to provide advance notification to the CBSA at least 30 minutes (minimum) and up to four hours (maximum) prior to arriving in Canada by calling the TRC at 1-888-CANPASS (1-888-226-7277)

The CBSA is reviewing its reporting arrangements for participants in large events, such as fishing derbies, and is considering options to facilitate a more streamlined approach in these cases.