

Vessel Licensing

How do I keep the original license number that is on the vessel I am restoring?

By John Gullick, TSACBA Director

This is a question that I get asked quite often and there are a couple of answers but first let's make sure we are on the same page in understanding the term Pleasure Craft License.

Pleasure Craft Licenses are not to be confused with a Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC) which is an operator competency certificate required to operate any powered vessel. The Pleasure Craft License contains the ID numbers that you must purchase and attach to each side of the bow on your boat. They are accompanied by a Pleasure Craft License document, a copy of which must be kept on the boat at all times. This information is kept in a national Pleasure Craft License data base that is available to law enforcement officers so it is key in identifying stolen vessels.

A Pleasure Craft License is required for any powered vessel that has one or more motors that add up to 7.5 kW (10hp) or greater unless the boat is registered. Tenders or dinghies that are carried on board or towed behind a licensed boat must also be licensed. This document is similar to a motor vehicle ownership certificate in that it contains information about the boat, including any Hull Identification Number and its owner. It also contains a section that must be completed and submitted by the new owner when the boat is sold. It is the new owners responsibility to ensure that required vessel license information is transferred into their name and the documentation submitted to be entered into the national data base.

If you are buying a classic or antique boat from a dealer, builder or professional restorer they will usually complete and submit the required paperwork so make sure they know that you want to keep the original license number.

If the boat has been found or purchased "as is, where is" then you would check off on the licensing request form that the vessel has been "Abandoned" and indicate the original vessel license number on the form.

If you want to use an existing number from a vessel that no longer exists in its original state, then you will need to add a note to that effect to the form. If this number has not already been reused then you may be allowed to reuse it but someone doing the data entry will have to be a bit creative so provide as much information for them as you can.

Bottom line is, if you don't ask, you don't get.

Application forms are available on line from Transport Canada at www.boatingsafety.gc.ca or for pick up at your local Service Canada Centre. Applications for a Pleasure Craft License along with supporting documentation must be mailed-in for processing to the Pleasure Craft Licensing Centre:

Pleasure Craft Licensing Centre
P.O. Box 2006
Fredericton, New Brunswick
E3B 5G4

Allow at least ten (10) business days plus mailing time to process your application. Applications cannot be processed unless you provide complete information and include all required documents.

You need a bill of sale. If the vessel has already been licensed you will also need the vessel license signed off by the original owner. To transfer a license to your name, submit the following documents:

- a completed Form 84-0172E, Application for Pleasure Craft License;
- proof of ownership of the pleasure craft; and
- a signed photocopy of a valid piece of government-issued identification.

Instructions about how to fill out Form 84-0172E, Application for Pleasure Craft License, may be found on the Transport Canada Boating Safety site's How-to page. In particular, see the "To transfer a pleasure craft license" section.

If you do not have documents that prove you own the pleasure craft, you will need to make a declaration under oath stating why you cannot produce the bill of sale or proof of ownership. You can use the sample declaration form (PDF Version, 62 KB) * provided on this site or another similar document, as long as it contains all the information required.

When applying for a pleasure craft license, include a signed photocopy of your personal identification document. The Pleasure Craft Licensing centre will return the photocopy to you when they send you your license.

Your application and supporting documents must be mailed-in for processing to the [Pleasure Craft Licensing Centre](#), address above.

Regulations require you display the Pleasure Craft License on both sides of the bow, above the waterline and as far forward as is practical. The numbers and letters must be in block and at least 7.5 cm (3") high. Their colour must contrast with the background. You may choose to get a vessel license for safety reasons if your boat does not require one. This will help Search and Rescue personnel get information about your boat 7/24.

A Pleasure Craft License does not prove ownership and Service Canada and

Transport Canada cannot confirm ownership so when entering another country carry a bill of sale along with the Pleasure Craft License. Don't forget the same for tenders and dinghies. Failure to produce these documents can cause delays, trouble and possibly fines when clearing customs.