

# SCSL Digital Collections

## Law enforcement investigations statistics 2021

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**SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**



**LAW ENFORCEMENT  
INVESTIGATIONS  
STATISTICS 2021**



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The state of South Carolina has an abundance of water resources with 8,000 miles of rivers, 460,000 acres of lakes, and 3,000 miles of coastline. Whether it's fishing, water-skiing, hunting or pleasure boating, these resources are used every day by thousands of recreational boaters. Currently there are 339,835 recreational motorboats registered in South Carolina with thousands of new boats being registered every year.

In 1973 there were sixty-four fatalities as a result of recreational boating accidents. That same year there were only 128,000 boats registered in this state. An increase in law enforcement personnel, additional laws like the Boating Safety Act of 1996, Drew's Law, and concentrated boating education classes statewide have all combined in an effort to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities.

The information found in this report is useful in our Boating Safety Education program as a reference for stressing facts relating to careless boat operation. This information helps to impress upon each student the importance of safe boating and shows that accidents do in fact happen.

This report is published by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Investigations Section. Copies are made available to SCDNR, the news media, and concerned individuals whose efforts will make boating not only safe but enjoyable.

## **ACCIDENT REPORTING**

When a person operating a boat on the waters of South Carolina is involved in a reportable accident, they are required to notify the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. Accidents involving injury or loss of life must be reported within 48 hours; accidents in all other cases are required to be reported within 10 days. Any person violating these requirements is liable to a penalty for each violation.

Any of the following constitutes a reportable boating accident:

- A. Loss of life
- B. Injuries Incapacitating a person for more than 24 hours
- C. Injuries rendering a person unconscious.
- D. Injuries requiring medical treatment.
- E. Physical damage to boats or real property in excess of \$2,000.00.

All boating accident reports are forwarded to the Law Enforcement Investigations Section where they are reviewed by designated personnel for completeness and accuracy. Reports that are incomplete or lack pertinent information are returned with an explanation of what additional information is needed. The primary and secondary causes of the accident are determined by the information given in the report. Copies of all "reportable accident" reports are forwarded to the United States Coast Guard.

## THE PAST TEN YEARS

Year	Recreational Boating Accidents	Recreational Boating Fatalities	
2021	201	21	0*
2020	161	29	3*
2019	146	14	1*
2018	142	15	0*
2017	163	15	0*
2016	140	23	7*
2015	131	19	4*
2014	127	15	1*
2013	108	28	4*
2012	111	14	3*

2012- 454,458 REGISTERED MOTORBOATS

2021- 339,835 REGISTERED MOTORBOATS

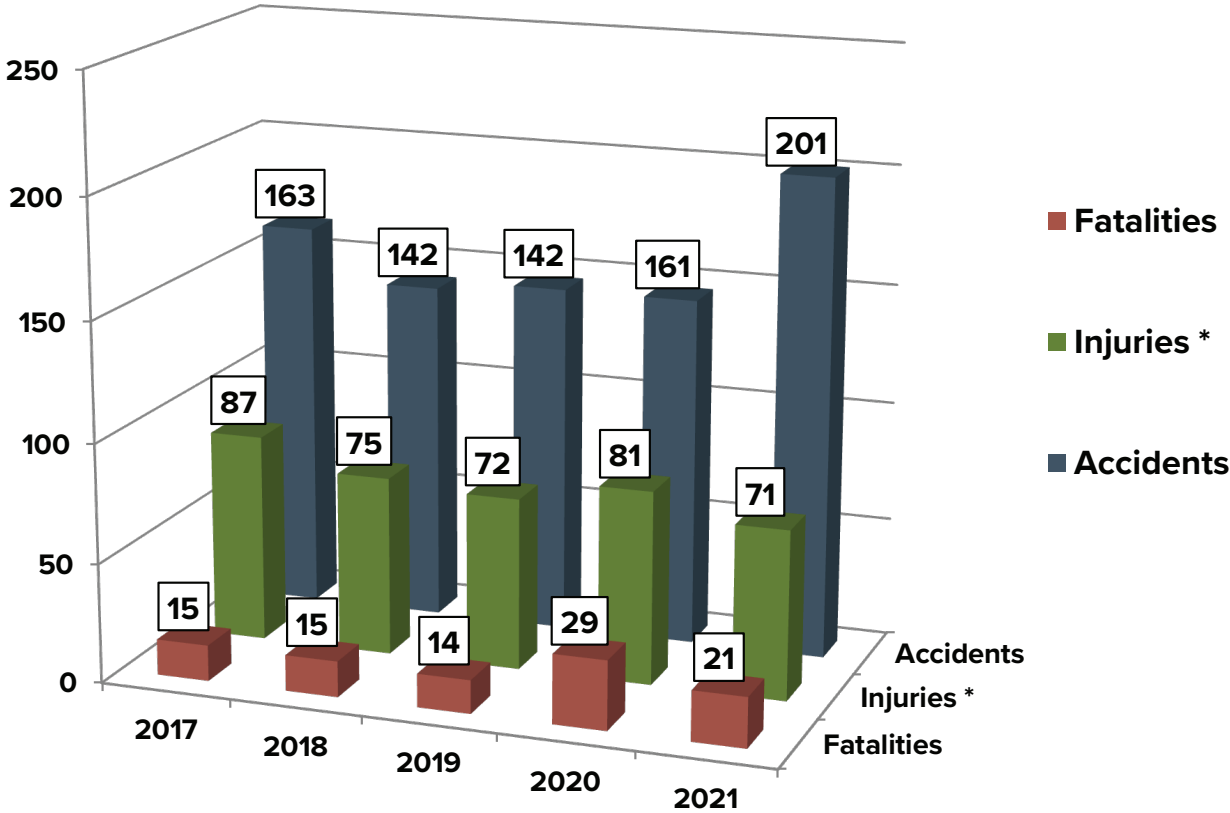
LAKES- 460,000 ACRES

RIVERS- 8,000 MILES

COASTLINE- 3,000 MILES\*

**\* Represents the number of private pond fatalities that are included in the total. Boating safety regulations are not enforced on private ponds.**

# FIVE YEAR HISTORY



\* The number of accidents with injuries.

## 2021 Boating Statistics by County

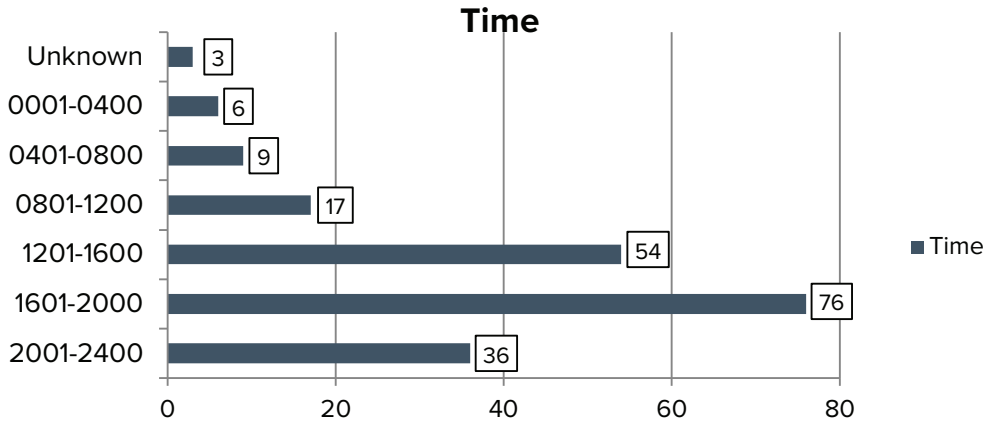
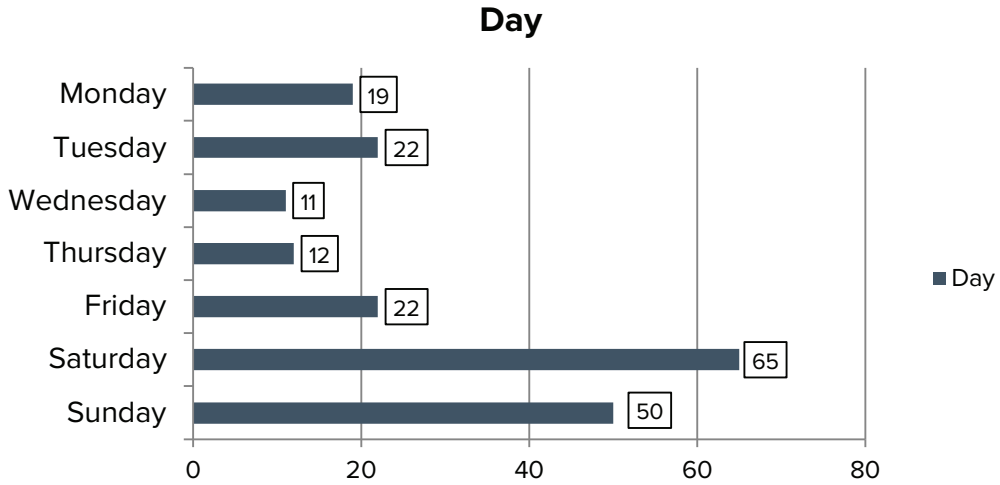
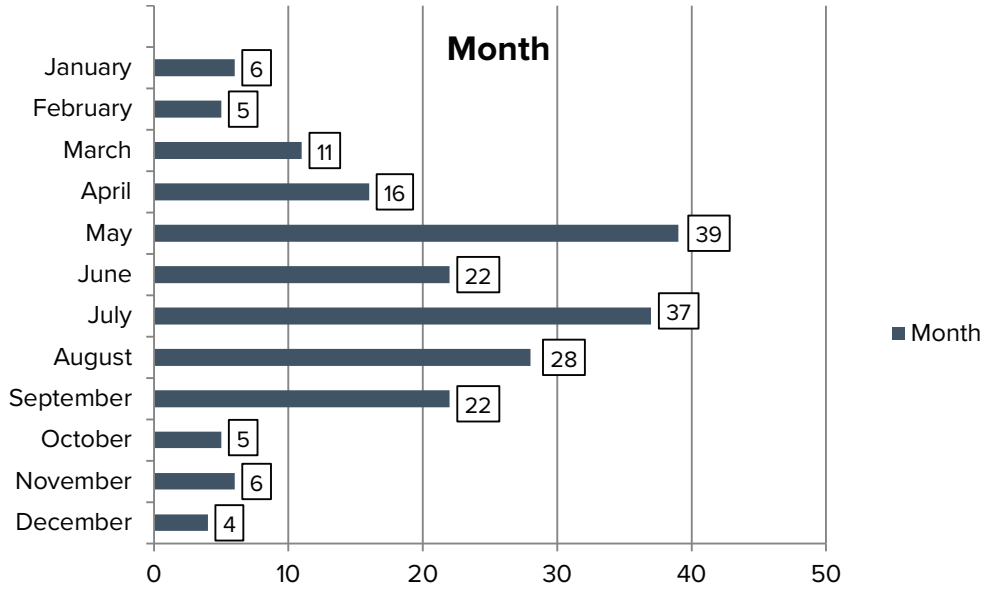
County	Boats	PWC	Accidents	Injuries	Fatalities	Vessels
Abbeville	2,315	204	1	0	1	0
Aiken	8,634	805	1	0	1	0
Allendale	318	6	0	0	0	0
Anderson	13,897	1,939	5	3	0	4
Bamberg	954	21	4	0	0	0
Barnwell	1,698	59	1	0	1	0
Beaufort	11,052	763	20	4	0	15
Berkeley	13,446	1,077	17	9	0	9
Calhoun	1,879	96	0	0	0	4
Charleston	27,246	1,409	28	7	0	40
Cherokee	2,397	166	0	0	0	0
Chester	1,848	102	0	0	0	0
Chesterfield	2,024	114	0	0	0	2
Clarendon	4,011	309	7	7	1	2
Colleton	3,815	161	4	1	1	3
Darlington	4,285	168	1	0	1	0
Dillon	1,771	98	0	0	0	1
Dorchester	7,453	596	0	0	0	0
Edgefield	1,863	141	0	0	0	1
Fairfield	1,910	256	3	1	1	5
Florence	9,962	498	1	1	0	0
Georgetown	7,570	303	10	2	2	14
Greenville	17,373	2,210	0	0	0	2
Greenwood	4,534	590	3	3	0	3
Hampton	1,426	38	1	0	1	0
Horry	18,986	2,083	38	19	4	51



<b>County</b>	<b>Boats</b>	<b>PWC</b>	<b>Accidents</b>	<b>Injuries</b>	<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Vessels</b>
Jasper	1,378	66	2	0	1	0
Kershaw	4,956	543	3	0	0	2
Lancaster	3,052	339	0	3	0	0
Laurens	5,512	541	4	0	1	2
Lee	817	34	0	0	0	0
Lexington	23,969	3,190	9	8	0	11
Marion	2,378	143	2	4	0	1
Marlboro	1,026	94	1	1	0	0
McCormick	1,244	43	1	0	1	2
Newberry	4,534	528	3	4	0	8
Oconee	10,295	1,968	14	15	3	12
Orangeburg	5,720	267	1	1	0	2
Pickens	7,270	943	2	0	0	4
Richland	11,979	1,188	5	10	1	4
Saluda	2,384	316	0	0	0	4
Spartanburg	13,684	1,596	1	0	0	0
Sumter	5,804	294	2	0	0	0
Union	1,519	92	0	0	0	0
Williamsburg	2,730	71	0	0	0	1
York	10,857	1,765	6	2	0	17
<b>Totals</b>	<b>293,415</b>	<b>28,223</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>105*</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>226</b>

\* The number of persons injured.

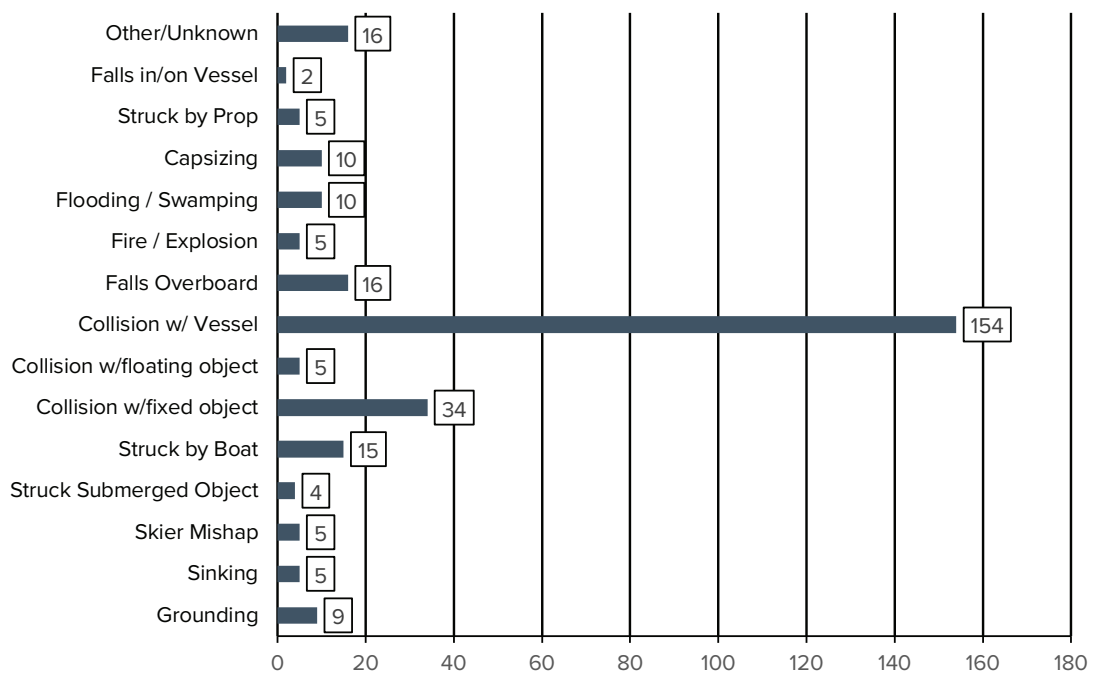
# Month, Day of the Week, Time of Day Accidents Occurred in 2021



## Statistics by Accident Type

Accident Type	#Deceased	#Injured	# Vessels
Capsizing	2	0	10
Grounding	0	10	9
Skier Mishap	0	6	5
Sinking	0	0	5
Struck by Boat	0	3	15
Struck Submerged Object	0	4	4
Other	2	2	8
Collision w/ Fixed Object	3	14	34
Collision w/ Floating Object	0	5	5
Collision w/ Vessel	1	46	154
Fall in Boat	0	1	1
Fall Overboard	10	6	16
Fire/Explosion	0	1	5
Flooding / Swamping	0	2	10
Struck by Prop	0	4	5
Fall on Vessel	0	1	1
Sudden Medical Condition	2	0	2
Unknown	1	0	6
<b>Total:</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>295</b>

**Number of Vessels in Accidents**



## Primary Causes of Accidents

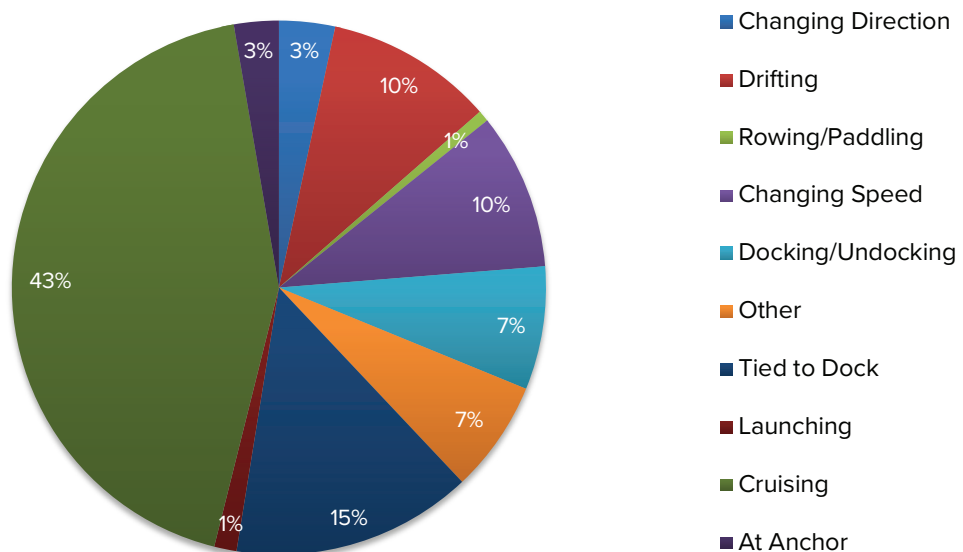
Accident Cause	Accidents	Fatalities	Injuries	Vessels Involved
Alcohol Use	4	2	3	5
Careless/Reckless	6	0	5	9
Excessive Speed	12	0	11	14
Fault of Equipment	7	3	0	7
Fault of Machinery	5	0	0	6
Fault of Hull	1	0	0	1
Hazardous Water	14	0	3	16
Ignition of Fuel/Vapor	1	0	1	1
Improper Anchoring	6	0	0	14
Improper Lights	2	0	6	4
Overloading	1	0	0	1
No Proper Lookout	51	2	45	83
Operator Inattention	32	0	13	50
Operator Inexperience	24	2	9	39
Other	5	4	1	6
Restricted Vision	2	0	0	3
Passenger/Skier Behavior	7	2	5	7
Standing/Sitting on gunwale	2	3	0	2
Unknown	4	2	0	4
Wake	2	0	1	3
Weather	13	1	2	20
<b>Total:</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>295</b>

\* Number of persons with injuries.

## 2022 Statistics by Operation

Vessel Operation	# Fatalities	# Vessels with injuries	# Vessels
Changing Speed	1	8	28
Docking/Undocking	2	2	22
Tied to Dock/Moored	0	0	43
Changing Direction	1	5	10
Cruising	7	51	128
Drifting	5	8	30
At Anchor	0	2	8
Rowing/Paddling	2	0	2
Launching	2	0	4
Other/Misc.	1	3	20
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>295</b>

### Vessels Operation at Time of Accident

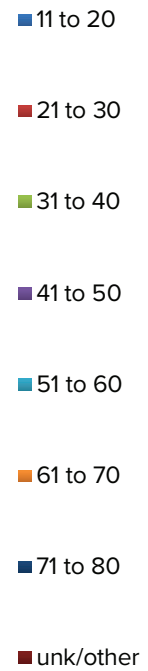
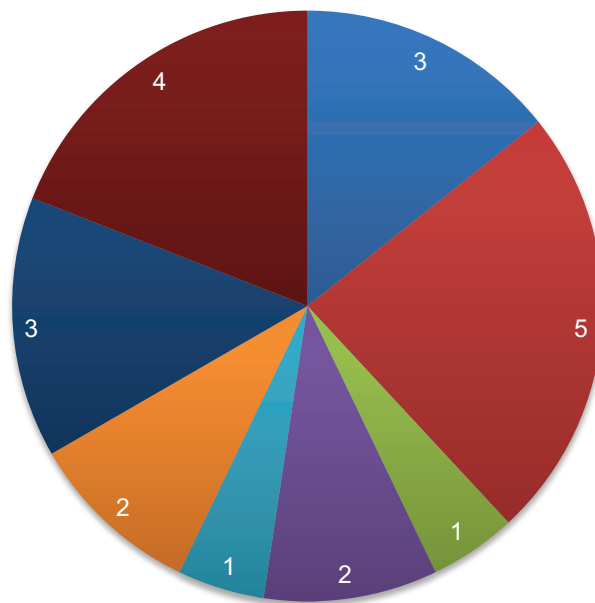


## Statistics by Body of Water

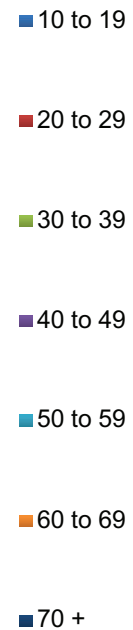
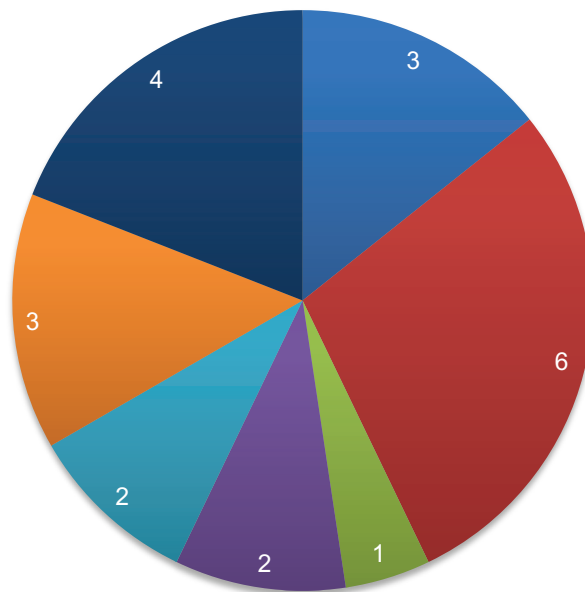
Body of Water	Accidents	Injuries	Fatalities	Vessels Involved
Ashepool River	1	0	0	2
Ashley River	6	0	0	10
Atlantic Ocean	4	1	1	6
Back River	1	0	0	2
Battery Creek	1	0	0	2
Beaufort River	3	0	0	4
Big Pee Dee River	1	1	0	1
Black River	2	1	0	2
Broad Creek	1	1	0	1
Bushey Park	1	1	0	1
Calibogue Sound	1	1	0	2
Charleston Harbor	10	2	0	18
Chechessee River	1	0	0	1
Cheehaw River	1	0	1	1
Colleton River	1	0	0	1
Cooper River	6	3	0	8
Coosaw River	1	0	0	1
Diversion Canal	1	1	0	1
Edisto River	5	0	0	5
Factory Creek	3	0	0	6
Harbor River	1	1	0	1
ICW – Little River	3	3	0	5
ICW – Myrtle Beach	20	10	3	31
ICW – Stono River	1	0	0	1
Lake Bowen	1	0	0	1
Lake Carolina	1	0	1	1
Lake Cynthia	1	0	1	1
Lake Greenwood	7	6	1	11
Lake Hartwell	8	13	1	12
Lake Jocassee	1	0	1	1
Lake Keowee	11	6	1	18
Lake Marion	10	7	1	12
Lake Monticello	1	0	1	1

<b>Body of Water</b>	<b>Accidents</b>	<b>Injuries</b>	<b>Fatalities</b>	<b>Vessels Involved</b>
Lake Moultrie	9	4	0	13
Lake Murray	15	17	0	27
Lake Paul Wallace	1	1	0	1
Lake Secession	1	0	1	1
Lake Thurmond	1	0	1	1
Lake Wateree	2	1	0	2
Lake Wylie	6	2	0	12
Little Pee Dee River	4	3	0	6
Little River	2	0	0	4
Louthers Lake	1	0	1	1
Lucy Creek	1	0	0	1
Lumber River	1	1	0	1
Mackay Creek	1	0	0	1
May River	1	1	0	1
Mosquito Creek	1	1	0	1
Murrells Inlet	1	0	1	1
New River	1	0	1	1
North Inlet	1	1	0	2
Point Comfort Creek	1	0	0	1
Port Royal Sound	1	1	0	1
Saluda River	1	0	0	1
Sampit River	1	0	0	2
Santee River	2	0	1	2
Savannah River	3	0	2	2
Shem Creek	1	0	0	3
Stono River	3	4	0	7
Thoroughfare Creek	1	0	0	2
Waccamaw River	8	5	0	10
Wando River	2	2	0	3
Wappoo Creek	3	0	0	3
Wappoo Cut	1	0	0	2
Wateree River	4	2	0	5
Winyah Bay	2	0	0	5
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>295</b>

## Fatalities By Age of Operator



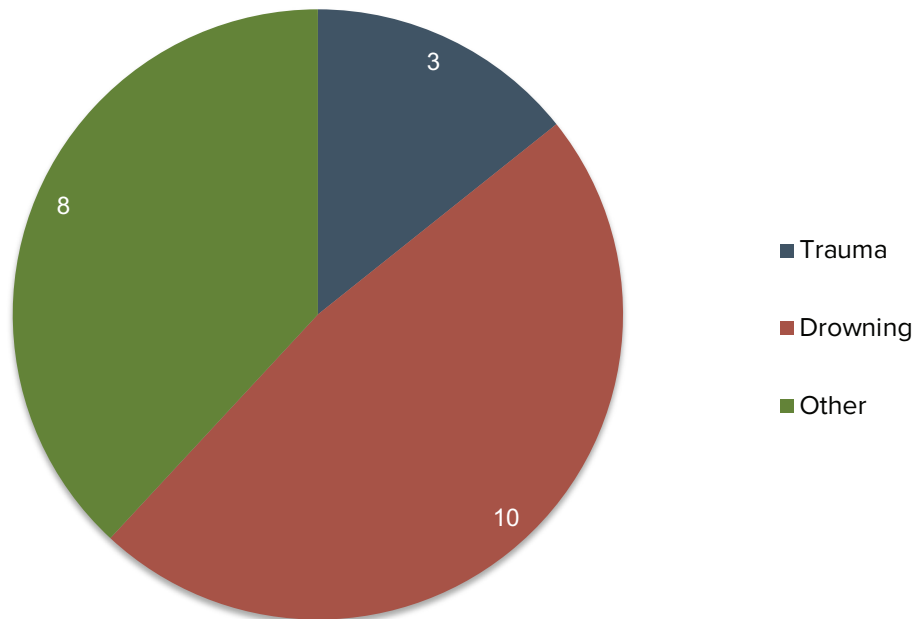
## Age of Deceased





## Statistics by Accident Type and Cause of Death

Type of Accident	Cause of Death	#Fatalities
Capsizing	Drowning	2
Collision w/Fixed Object	Trauma	2
Collision w/Fixed Object	Heart Attack	1
Collision w/Vessel	Trauma	1
Fall Overboard	Drowning	5
Fall Overboard	Medical	2
Fall Overboard	Unknown	3
Sudden Medical Cond.	Drowning	1
Sudden Medical Cond.	Heart Attack	1
Other	Drowning	2
Unknown	Pending	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>

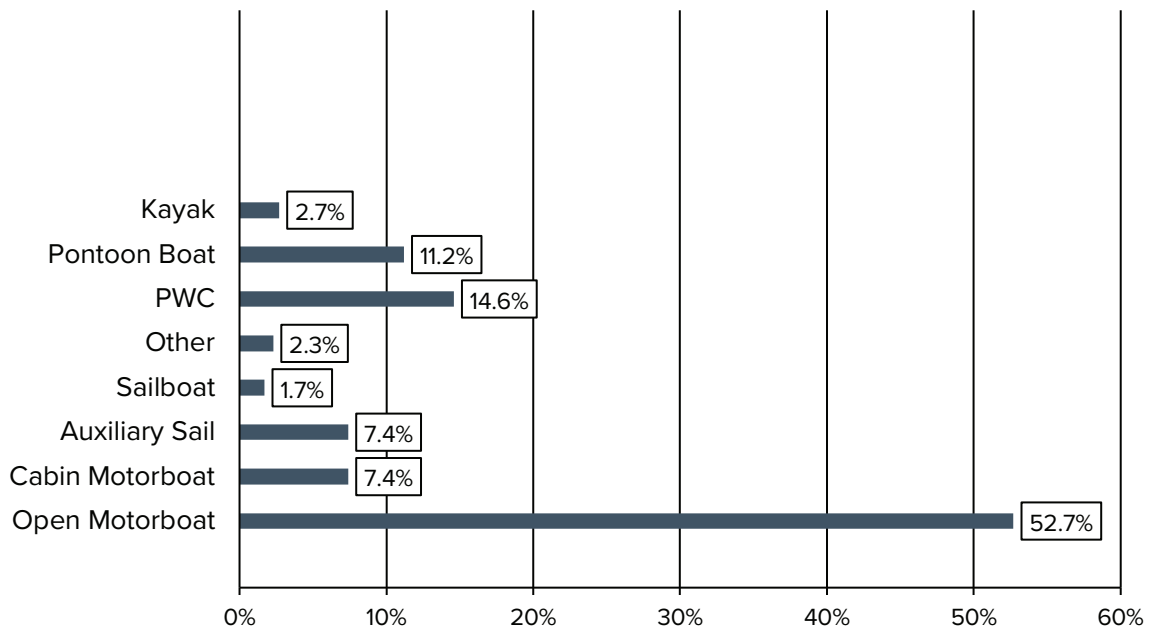


## Statistics by Type of Boat

Boat Type	# Injuries	#Fatalities	#Vessels
Open Motorboat	44	13	156
Cabin Motorboat	2	0	22
Auxiliary Sail	0	0	22
Sail Only	1	0	5
Other	0	2	6
PWC	18	0	43
Pontoon Boat	13	3	33
Kayak	1	3	8
<b>Total:</b>	<b>79*</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>295</b>

\* Number of vessels involved where injuries occurred.

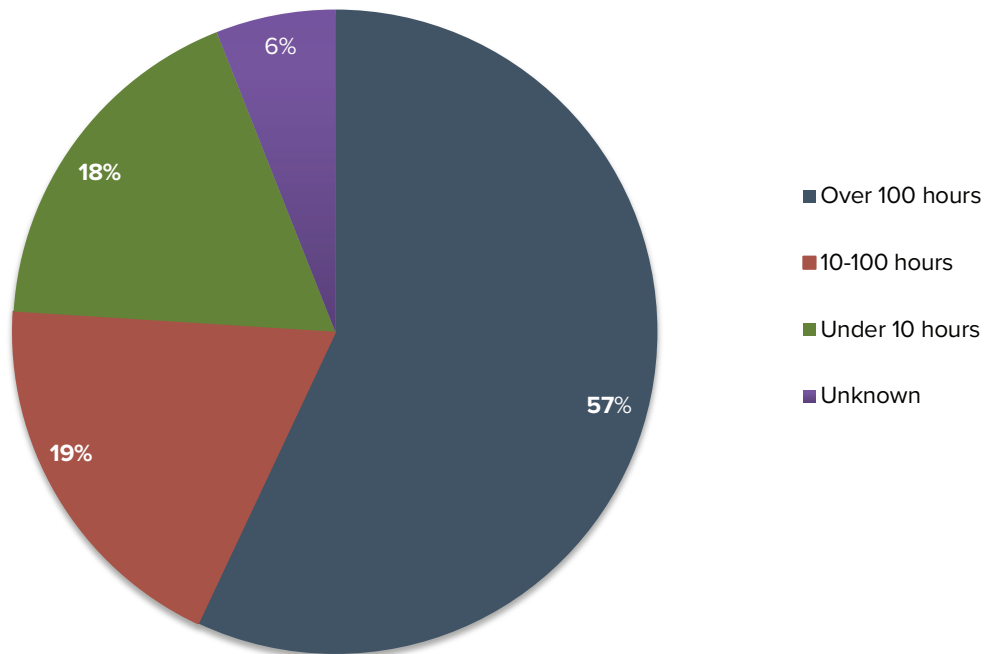
### Statistics By Type Of Boat



## Statistics by Operator Experience

Operator Experience	# Fatalities	# Injured	# Vessels
Over 100 hours	8	46	132
10 – 100 hours	4	13	45
Under 10 hours	5	11	41
Unknown	4	7	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>77*</b>	<b>232*</b>

\* Not all vessels involved had an operator.



## Statistics by Operator Education

Operator Education	#Fatalities	#Injuries	#Vessels
25 Ton License	0	0	3
Informal	0	12	37
Navy & USCG	0	1	2
None	10	33	101
Boat US	0	0	1
Sailing Club	0	0	2
State	2	12	26
Unknown	4	8	33
Other States	0	0	6
USCG Auxiliary	1	1	3
100 Ton License	0	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17*</b>	<b>67*</b>	<b>217*</b>

**\*Not all vessels had operators.**

## SUMMARY

In 1971 the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department began investigating accidents and keeping records. The first year, with 79,804 registered boats, there were 85 reported accidents with 45 fatalities. In 2009, South Carolina had its lowest year of fatalities on record with 11.

In 2021 there were 201 accidents reported to the Law Enforcement Investigations section, which included 21 fatalities and 71 injuries. There were 32 non-reportable boating incidents.

Boating accidents occurred in every month. Fifty seven percent of all accidents occurred on Saturday and Sunday. Sixty four percent occurred between the hours of 12:01pm and 8:00pm. In eighty six percent of all accidents, the operator was twenty years of age or older. In 26% of all accidents a criminal case was made.

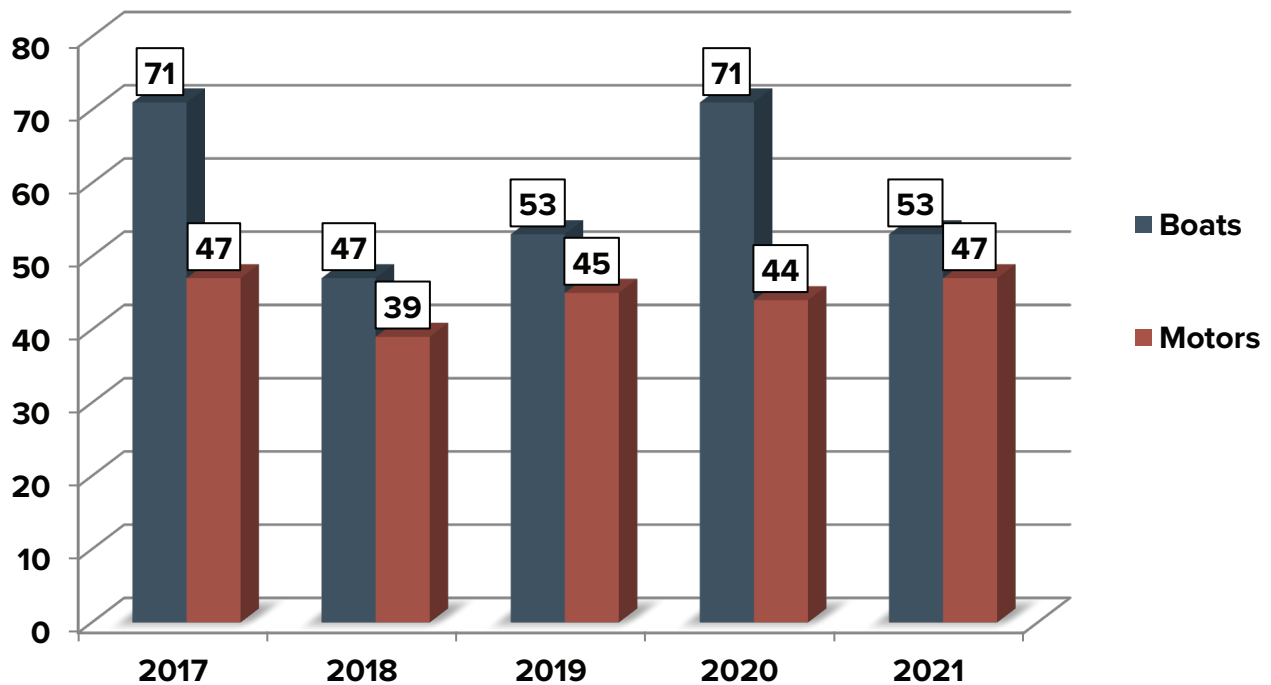
Collision with Vessel ranks as the number one type of accident. Fall overboard ranks as the number one type of fatal accident. The majority of accidents are the result of No Proper Lookout. There were 201 recreational boating accidents, with 21 percent involving Personal Watercraft.



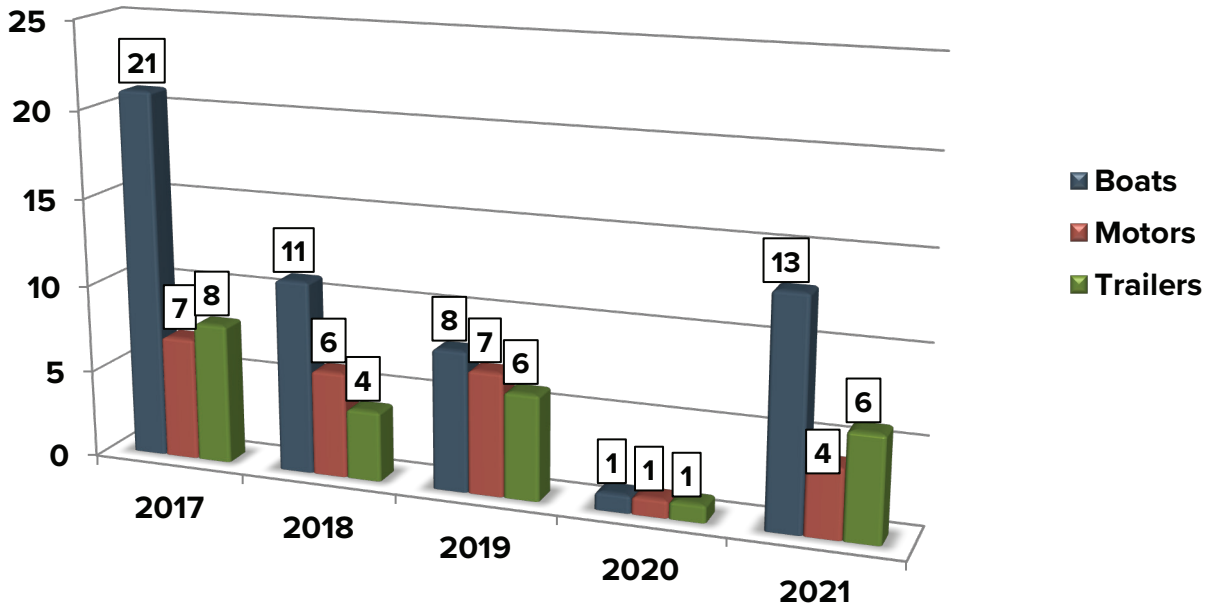
## Marine Theft Investigations Annual Report 2021

This year the Marine Theft Investigations section conducted 944 investigations. Throughout the year, investigators examined 627 boats, with 94 motors. Thirteen boats, four motors and six trailers were recovered. The total approximate values of these recoveries were \$25,904.00. These recoveries were made by SCDNR Investigators and do not include recoveries by outside agencies. During the year investigators issued 26 summons tickets and 103 warning tickets. This year a total of 53 boats and 47 motors were reported stolen in South Carolina.

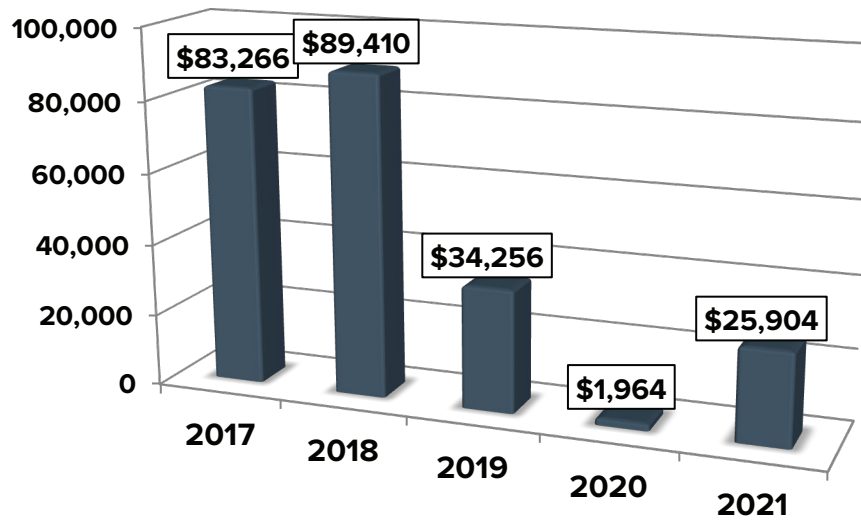
SC Registered / Titled Reported Stolen Boats / Motors



### Marine Theft Recoveries 2021

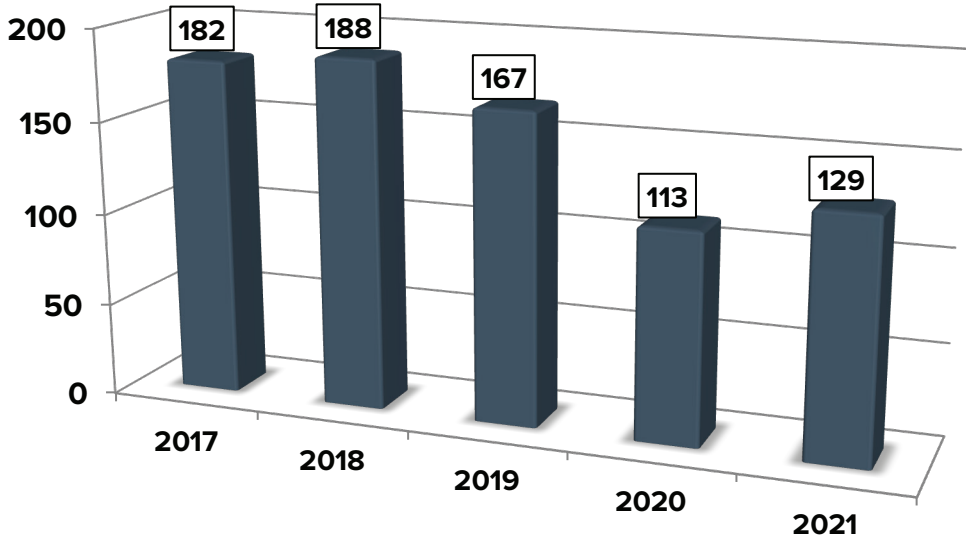


### Value of Recovered Property

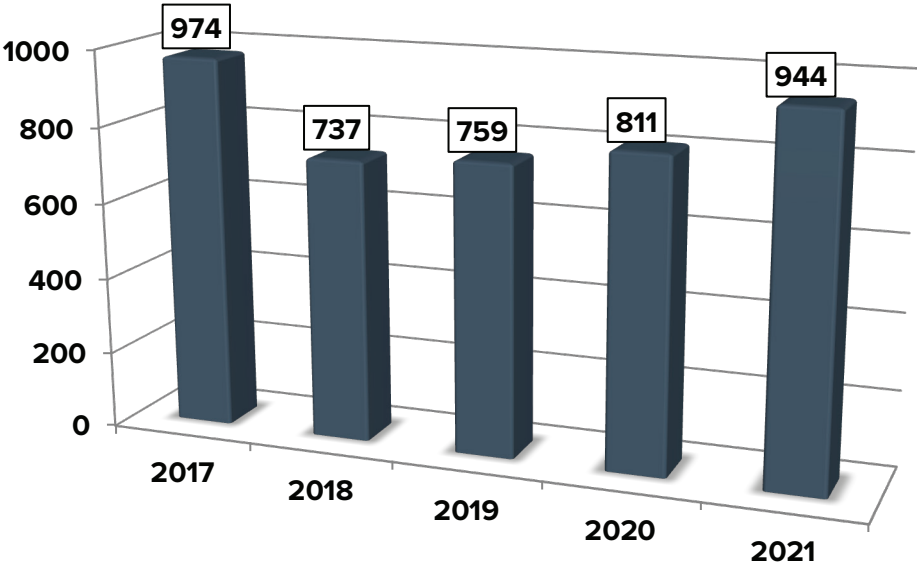


# Marine Theft 2021

## Criminal Cases Made



## Number of Investigations Conducted







## Aids to Navigation

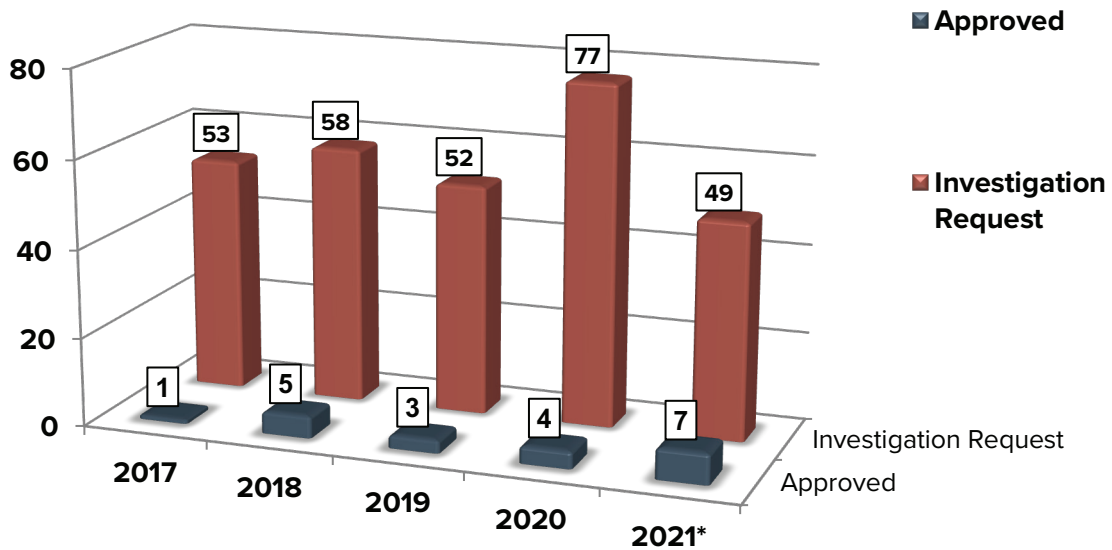
The Aids to Navigation Program requires regular monitoring and routine maintenance on 2,298 aids to navigation. There are 261 official Regulatory Zones throughout South Carolina. Incorporated into these Regulatory Zones are 624 No Wake Buoys, 768 No Wake Signs, 163 Boat Exclusion Buoys and 7 Boat Exclusion Signs. There are 736 hazard buoys that currently mark hazardous locations. The majority of these hazards are located on the inland lakes of South Carolina with almost 50% located on Lake Murray alone. In 2021 there were 153 Hazard Buoys, 183 No Wake Buoys, 39 No Wake Signs, and 59 Boat Exclusion Buoys placed across the state as part of ongoing maintenance. The Aids to Navigation staff continues to work closely with security personnel at all water treatment facilities and nuclear power stations on all the states lakes to enhance homeland security efforts. Maintenance of these Aids to Navigation required 3,282 man hours. Of these hours, 1,469 were boating hours.

During 2021, a total of 49 areas were investigated on the waters of South Carolina for regulatory zoning. There were 7 regulatory investigations that met the required consideration for permanent official zoning. The Department of Natural Resources provides official information signs stating “Slow You Are Responsible for Your Wake” to be posted in areas that do not meet the zoning consideration, 83 information signs were distributed in 2021. An increase in Boating Law Enforcement in these areas was also recommended to local officers in an effort increase safety and public awareness.

# Statewide Aids to Navigation 2021

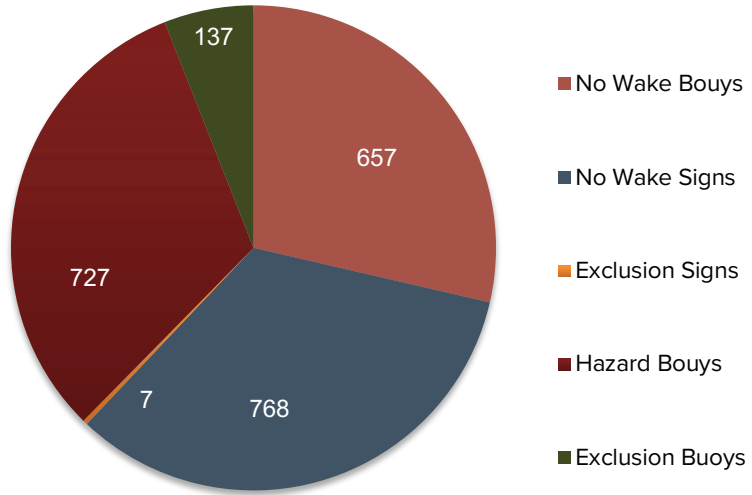
Description	Quantity
Official Regulatory Zones	261
No Wake Buoys and Signs	1,392
Hazard Buoys	736
Exclusion Buoys and Signs	170
Devices Added in 2020	26
Aids to Navigation Boating Hours	1,469
Aids to Navigation Maintenance Man-Hours	3,282

## Zoning Investigations

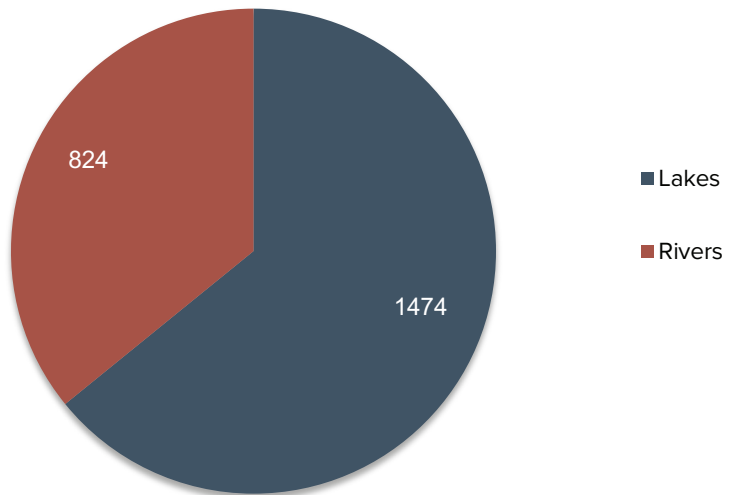


\* 7 no wake zones were approved, one of those combined two no wake zones into one, one was an extension, and one made a seasonal no wake zone permanent.

### Aids To Navigation Equipment



### Equipment Placement



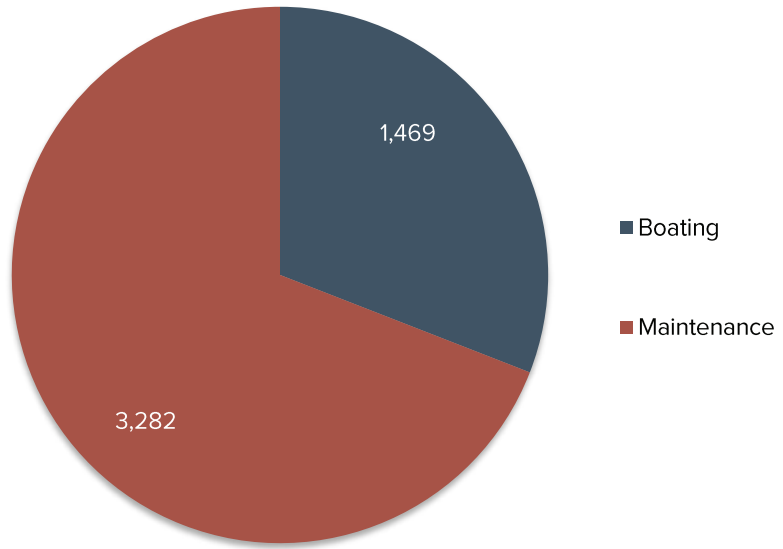
## Official No Wake and Exclusion Zones By County

County	No Wake Zones	Exclusion Zones
Abbeville	2	0
Barnwell	1	0
Berkeley	6	1
Beaufort	22	2
Calhoun	2	0
Charleston	16	1
Clarendon	17	1
Colleton	4	1
Darlington	2	1
Dorchester	3	0
Fairfield	6	0
Georgetown	6	0
Greenwood	12	3
Greenville	2	2
Horry	11	0
Kershaw	8	1
Laurens	6	3
Lexington	21	5
McCormick	0	0
Newberry	13	1
Oconee	24	4
Orangeburg	6	1
Pickens	5	1
Richland	3	1
Saluda	9	0
Spartanburg	11	5
Sumter	7	2
Union	0	1
Williamsburg	1	0
York	7	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>38</b>

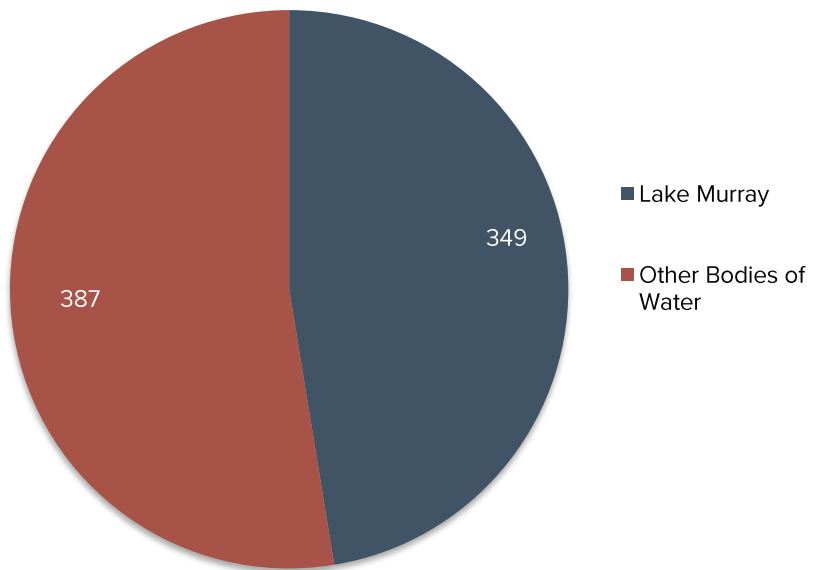
## Hazard Buoys 2021

Body of Water	Quantity
Lake Blalock	5
Lake Bowen	6
Fishing Creek Lake	2
Lake Greenwood	60
Lake Jocassee	14
Lake Keowee	114
Lyman Lake	3
Lake Marion	6
Lake Monticello	35
Lake Moultrie	6
Lake Murray	331
Lake Robinson	18
ICW – North Myrtle Beach	1
Saluda Lake	7
Savannah River	15
Stono River	1
Lake Secession	18
Lake Wateree	38
Wateree River	2
Lake Wylie	49
<b>Total</b>	<b>731</b>

### Man Hours



### Hazard Bouys

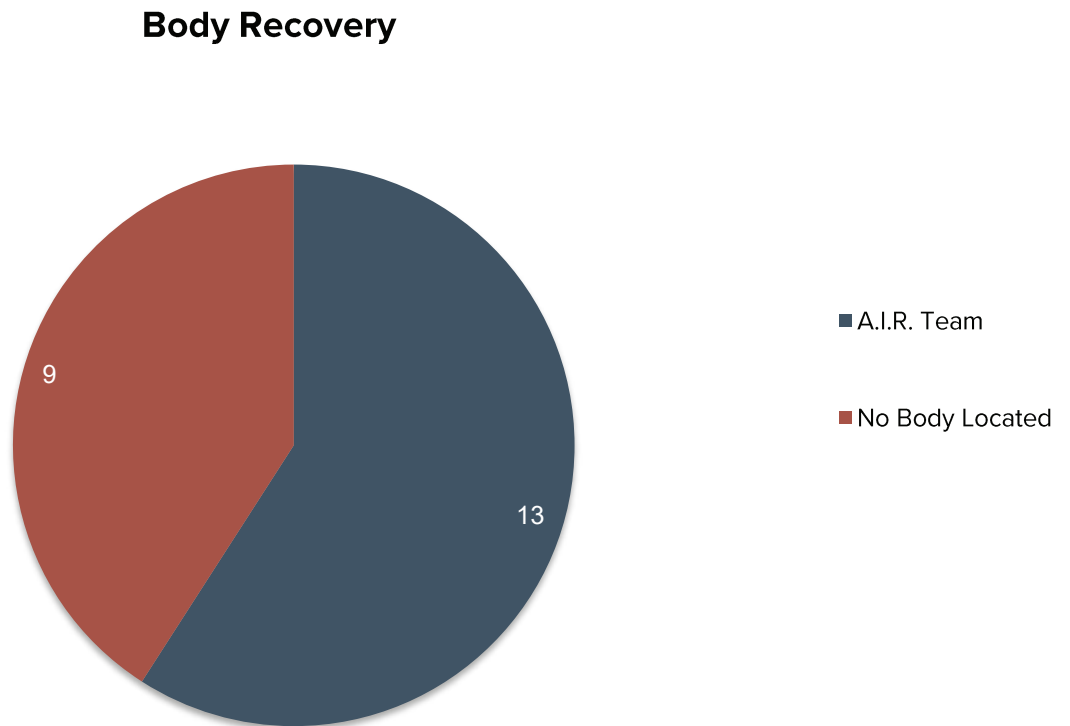


## Aquatic Investigation and Recovery (AIR)

In 2021 the AIR Team participated in 32 recovery assignments involving 22 victims. The AIR Team recovered 13 victims on these assignments and 9 bodies were not recovered by the AIR Team.

The AIR Team responded to 10 evidence assignments and recovered evidence on all 10 of the assignments.

One hundred and thirty six hours were dedicated to training this year.



## BODY RECOVERY ASSIGNMENTS

County	Body of Water	Activity
Barnwell	Pond	Fishing
Barnwell	Pond	Fishing
Richland	Broad River	Suicide
Horry	Pond	Vehicle Chase
Pickens	Lake Hartwell	Bridge Jumper
Marion	Great Pee Dee River	Fishing
Hampton	Savannah River	Fishing
Horry	Lumber River	Swimming
Horry	ICW	Boating
Laurens	Lake Greenwood	Swimming
Lexington	Lake Murray	Boating
Horry	Great Pee Dee River	Swimming
Jasper	Savannah River	Boating
Chesterfield	Lake Robinson	Missing Person
Lexington	Lake Murray	Boating
Lexington	Lake Murray	Boating
Colleton	Chehaw River	Boating
Occoneel	Lake Hartwell	Swimming
Colleton	Chehaw River	Boating
Richland	Lake Carolina	Boating
Richland	Lake Carolina	Boating
Aiken	Pond	Missing Person

### TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOVERY ACTIVITIES:

Boating **9**

Swimming **4**

Missing Person **2**

Fishing **4**

Diving/other **3**

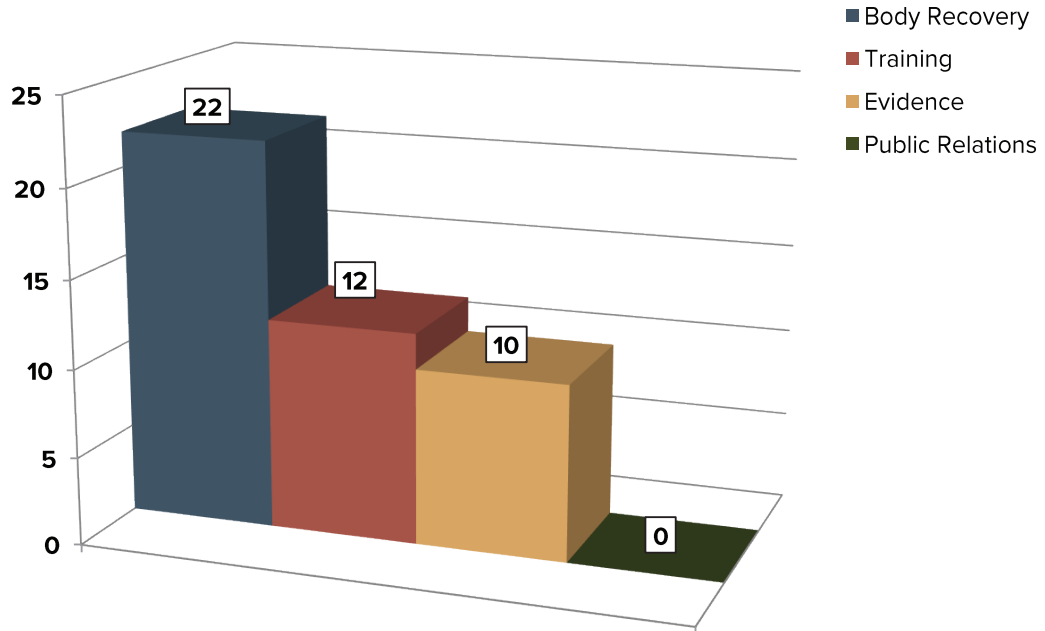


## EVIDENCE ASSIGNMENTS

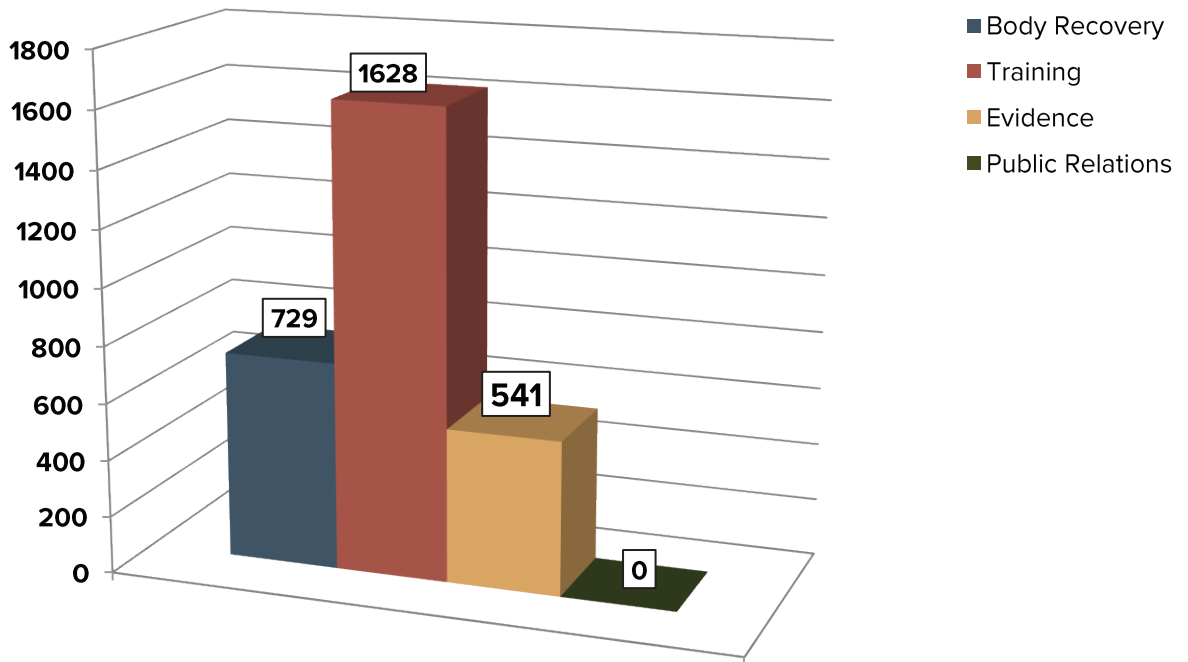
County	Body of Water	Agency
Saluda	Lake Murray	SLED
Clarendon	Pond	Clarendon County
Richland	Saluda River	W. Columbia PD
Lancaster	Catawba River	Lancaster County
Colleton	Ashepoo River	Colleton County
Richland	Lake Murray	SCDNR
Marion	Little Pee Dee River	Horry County
Clarendon	Lake Marion	Clarendon County
Hampton	Pond	SLED
Clarendon	Lake Marion	Clarendon County

# 2021 DIVING OPERATIONS

## Diving Assignments



## Man Hours



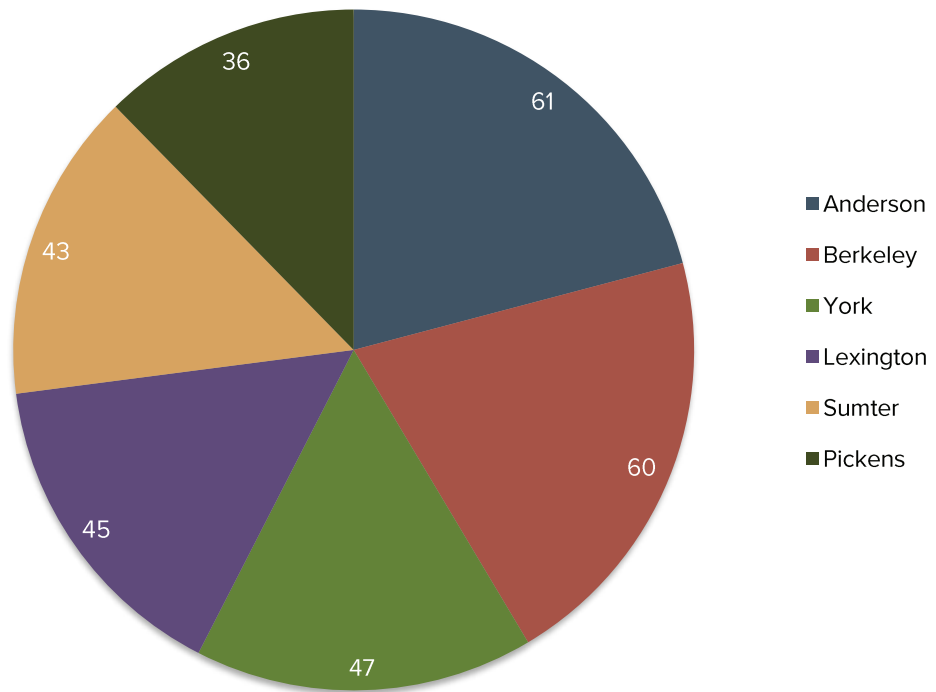
## 2021 MARINE EVENTS

A total of 518 marine events were held in 2021 on the waters of South Carolina. Below is a break-down by county, total of events in each county, body of water and number of events held on each body of water.

County	Events	Body of Water	Per Body of Water
Abbeville	4	Lake Secession	4
Aiken	3	Savannah River	3
Anderson	61	Broadway Lake	1
		Lake Hartwell	49
		Lake Russell	11
Bamberg	8	Edisto River	8
Beaufort	22	Beaufort River	8
		Broad River	2
		Calibogue Sound	9
		May River	1
		Port Royal Sound	2
Berkeley	60	Cooper River	48
		Lake Moultrie	12
Charleston	35	Atlantic Ocean	1
		Bohicket Creek	4
		Charleston Harbor	24
		Cooper River	1
		Folly River	1
		ICW / Mt. Pleasant	2
		McClellanville	1
		ICW / James Island	1
Calhoun	1	Lake Marion	1
Cherokee	1	Lake Whelchel	1
Clarendon	4	Lake Marion	4
Colleton	10	ACE Basin	1
		Atlantic Ocean	3
		Edisto River	6
Darlington	3	Lake Robinson	1
		Black Creek	1
		Lake Robinson	1
		Pee Dee River	1

<b>County</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Body of Water</b>	<b>Per Body of Water</b>
Dorchester	1	Ashley River	1
Fairfield	4	Lake Monticello	4
Florence	1	Lynches River	1
Georgetown	13	Murrells Inlet	7
		Sampit River	6
Greenwood	31	Lake Greenwood	29
		Laurens Lake	2
Horry	13	Atlantic Ocean	1
		Pee Dee River	5
		North Myrtle Beach	2
		Waccamaw	7
Jasper	1	Harbour River	1
Kershaw	27	Lake Wateree	27
Lexington	45	Lake Murray	45
Marion	1	Little Pee Dee	1
McCormick	21	Clarks Hill	21
Newberry	10	Lake Murray	10
Oconee	13	Lake Jocassee	13
Pickens	36	Lake Hartwell	14
		Lake Keowee	22
Saluda	1	Lake Murray	1
Spartanburg	1	Lake Bowen	1
Sumter	43	Lake Marion	32
		Santee River	11
York	47	Lake Wylie	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>518</b>		

# 2021 Marine Events (Top Counties)



# Boating Safety Action Force

The Boating Safety Action Force (B-SAF) is a team of 26 officers that travel the state at the request of the Law Enforcement Region Captains working boating safety saturation patrols on major holidays and for special water events. The B-SAF team provides additional Law Enforcement efforts with an emphasis on alcohol detection.

The B-SAF team works 10 scheduled patrols a year, accounting for 21 days on the water, utilizing up to five boats per patrol with two officers to a boat.

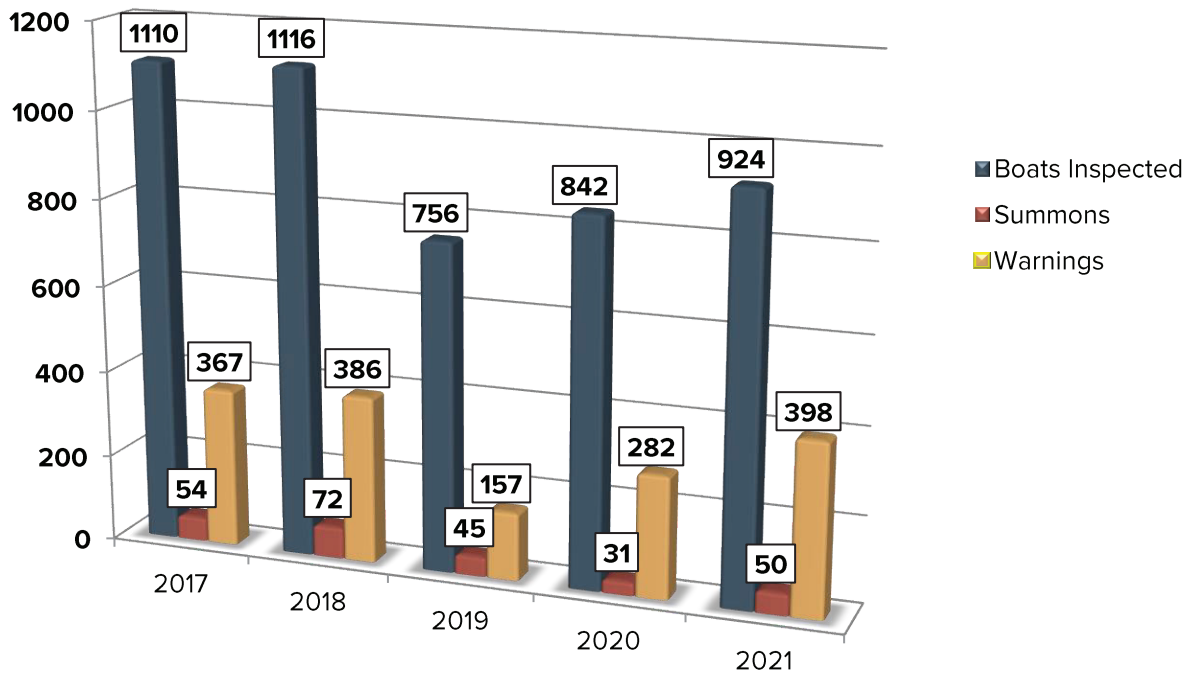
This year the B-SAF team worked 14 days on the water for a total of 6 patrols utilizing an average of 4 boats per patrol. One BSAF event on Lake Murray was cancelled. A total of 924 boats were checked and 8 boat operators were tested for BUI at the B.A.T Mobile (mobile data master). The B-SAF Team issued 8 summons tickets for BUI as well as 50 summons tickets and 398 warning tickets.

**\*The following pages include a breakdown of: patrols and days on patrol; contacts, cases and warnings made; and number of negligent operations and PFD cases.**



# Boating Safety Action Force 2021

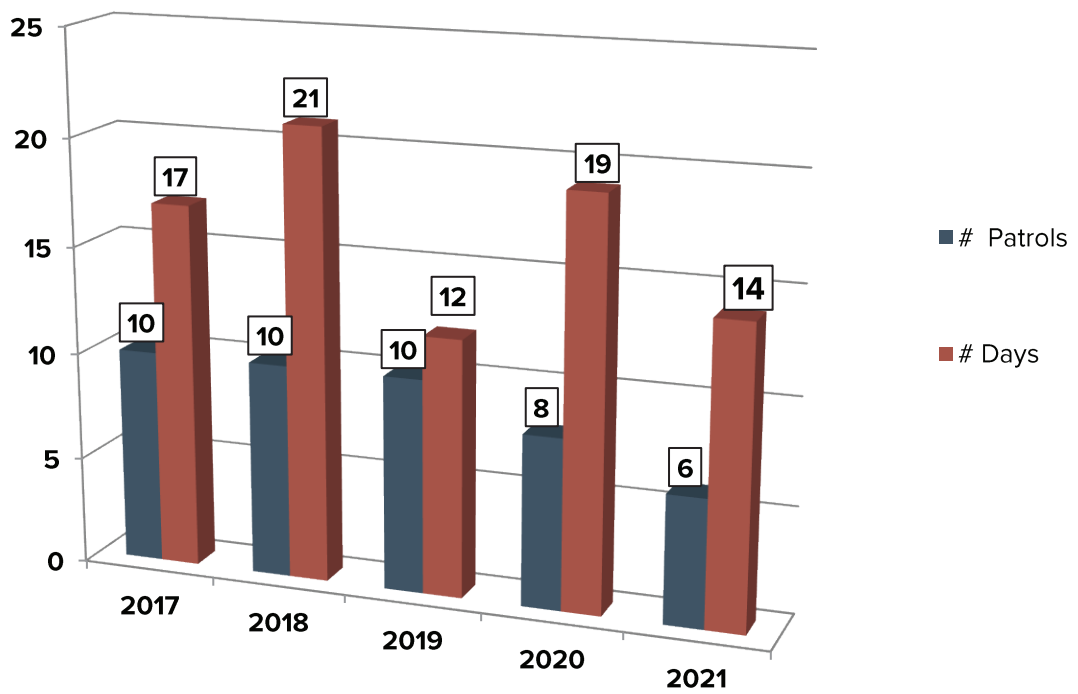
Year	Boats Inspected	Cases	Warnings
2021	924	50	398
2020	842	31	282
2019	756	45	157
2018	1116	72	386
2017	1110	54	367



# Boating Safety Action Force 2021

Year	# Patrols	# Days
2021	6	14
2020	8	19
2019	10	12
2018	10	21
2017	10	17

Patrols / Days

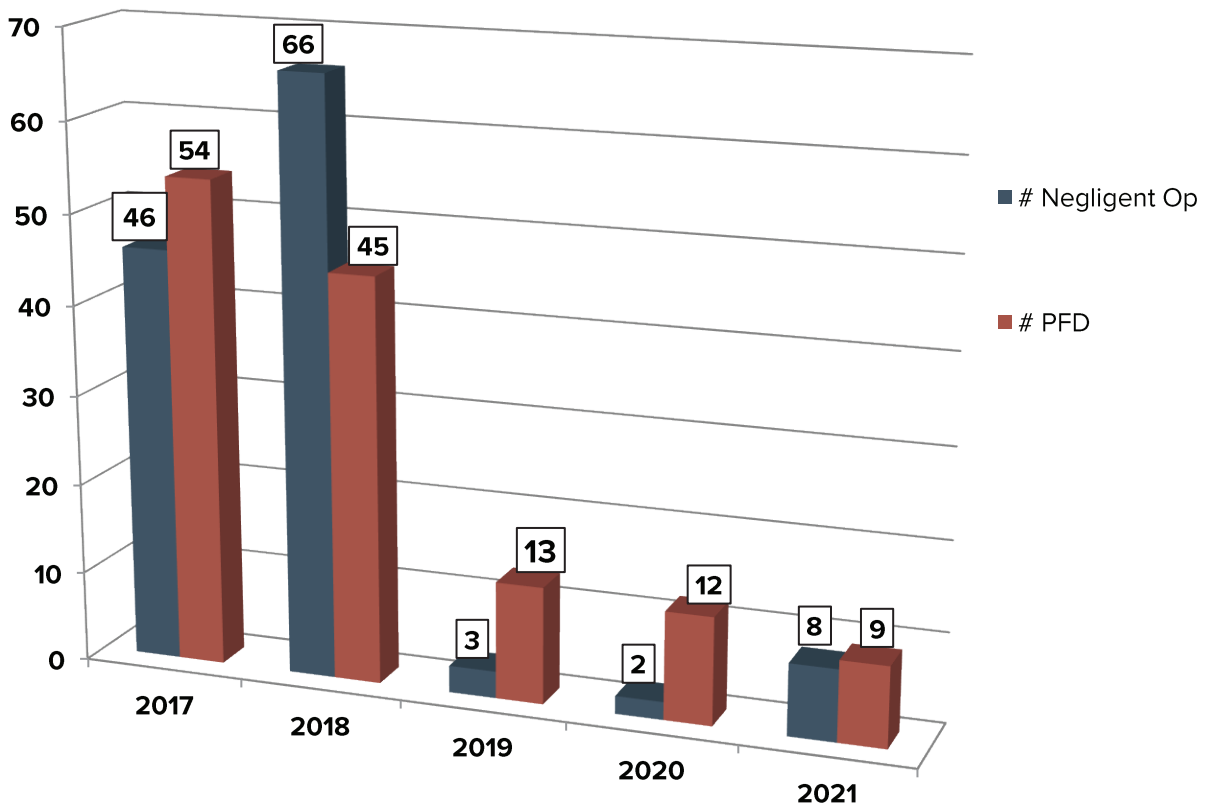




# Boating Safety Action Force 2021

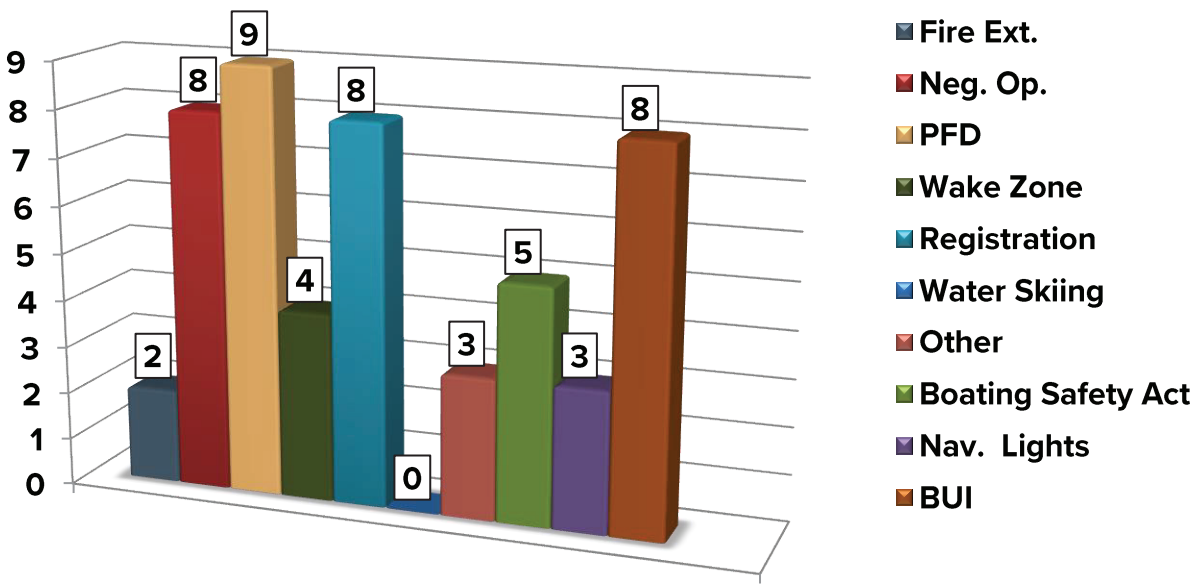
Year	# Negligent Ops	# PFD
2021	8	9
2020	2	12
2019	3	13
2018	66	45
2017	46	54

Negligent Operations / PFD Cases Made

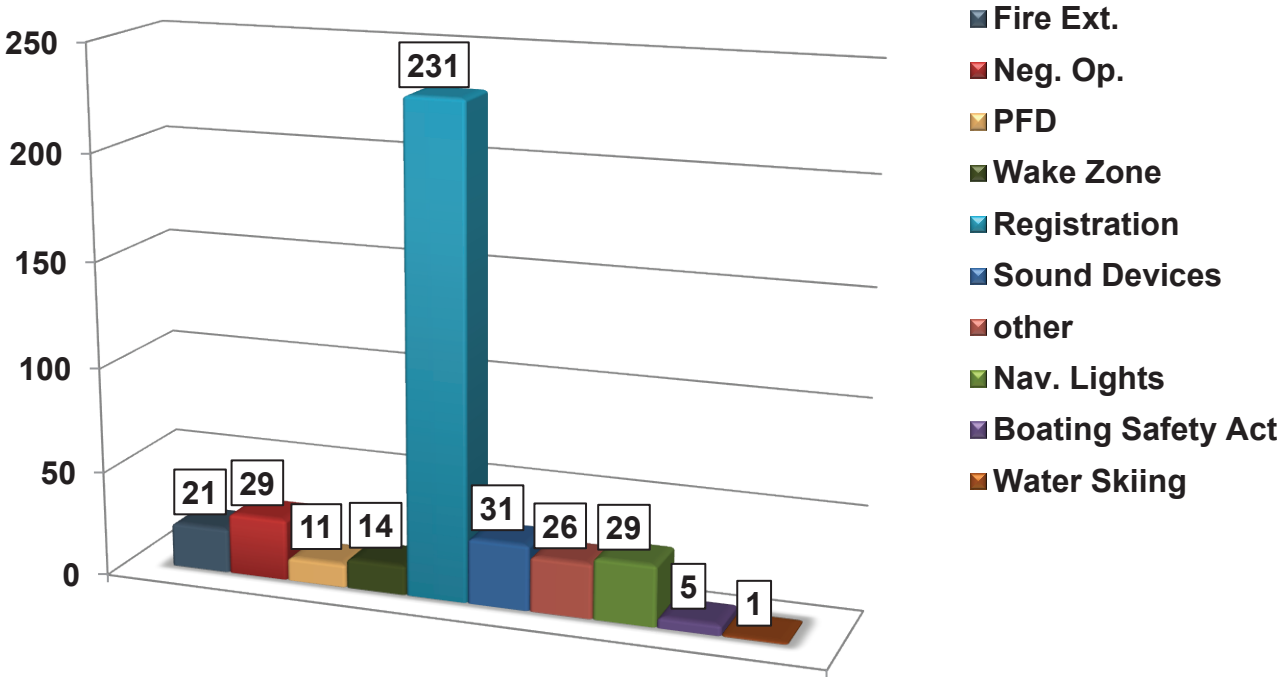


# Boating Safety Action Force 2020

## Summons Tickets



## Warning Tickets



# ABANDONED BOATS

In 2008, South Carolina passed legislation to identify abandoned vessels, their owners and to impose penalties for those responsible for abandoning their vessels on State waters.

The SCDNR Law Enforcement Investigations section is responsible for managing the abandoned boat program.

During the initial survey conducted in 2009, there were 215 boats meeting the criteria for initiating an investigation. The abandoned boat numbers continue to be a significant problem along coastal areas. Boat owners, no longer choosing to be responsible for fees associated with maintaining, storing or removing their unwanted equipment, or failing to tend to their property as required, abandon their vessels on our waterways. Some owners leave their vessel unattended for years, in the seemingly “free space” of our public waterways. These derelict vessels become significant problems for the quality, safety and aesthetics of our waterways.



After surveying waterways and lakes, files are created for each vessel identified for possible abandonment. The ownership history is researched, and the file is assigned to an investigator. The investigator posts the vessels that meet the established definition. The owner or responsible party may be identified and given an opportunity to make corrections for noted problems. If the responsible party fails to correct the problem, and, only after 45 days, may be charged with abandoning their vessel on state waters. If found guilty, the owner is responsible for the boat removal within 14 days, at his/her own expense. If the owner/responsible party is undetermined during the investigation and after 45 days, without tending the vessel, the vessel is categorized as abandoned.

In 2021, we were able to remove 8 boats from Horry County, 12 from Georgetown County, 3 from Charleston County, and 6 from Beaufort County.

In 2020, we were able to remove 19 abandoned boats from Georgetown County, 15 from Charleston County, and 9 from Beaufort County.

In December 2019, a complete coastal survey was done resulting in 143 vessels being addressed. We are continuing to locate and contact owners to determine which vessels are abandoned.

In 2018, there were 32 vessels surveyed and investigated as abandoned, 31 of those vessels were reclaimed by their owners or pending disposition, and 1 vessel was destroyed.

In 2017, as a result of Hurricane Matthew there were 53 vessels surveyed and investigated in Beaufort County resulting in 17 vessels being destroyed with 4 being returned to their owners or insurance companies. The remaining vessels were reclaimed by their owners. An additional survey was conducted, post Hurricane removals in Beaufort and Charleston counties. There were 47 vessels posted and investigated as abandoned, 40 were reclaimed by owners or removed by counties, and 7 vessels have gone through the abandoned boat process and are awaiting disposition.

The local county and city jurisdictions may remove vessels in the abandoned status category.

The combined efforts of the state and local jurisdictions will ensure our waterways will not become cluttered with abandoned vessels. The removal of these vessels will provide safe navigation for those using state waters and help in creating a higher water quality and aesthetic value, for those enjoying our water resources, while also providing a cleaner environment for organisms and wildlife that are dependent upon clean water.

