



# Abandoned and unwanted explosives and flares

## Collection points for unwanted marine distress flares:

### Department of Transport – Marine Safety

Phone 1300 863 308

Email [marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au](mailto:marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au)

Web [www.transport.wa.gov.au/imarine/flares.asp](http://www.transport.wa.gov.au/imarine/flares.asp)

### WA Police – Water Police

Phone 08 9442 8600

Email [police@police.wa.gov.au](mailto:police@police.wa.gov.au)

Web [www.police.wa.gov.au](http://www.police.wa.gov.au)

This publication is available on request in other formats for people with special needs.

NRS: 13 36 77

### For publication orders

Telephone: +61 8 9358 8154

Email: [RSDComms@dmp.wa.gov.au](mailto:RSDComms@dmp.wa.gov.au)

[www.dmp.wa.gov.au/ResourcesSafety](http://www.dmp.wa.gov.au/ResourcesSafety)



**DON'T TOUCH AND  
STAY ALIVE!**



Abandoned  
and  
unwanted

explosives can pose a safety and security risk to everyone. The stability of explosive materials generally degrades with age and therefore explosives need to be disposed of in a timely and safe manner. A person with little or no knowledge must never attempt to handle such items as serious injury or death could result.

This pamphlet provides information on commercial blasting explosives and other explosives, such as fireworks, railway track signals and marine distress flares.

Explosives such as bombs or improvised explosive devices are the responsibility of the Western Australia Police Bomb Disposal Squad, while military explosives are the responsibility of the Australian Defence Force. Ammunition should be handed in at the local police station and the WA Police will arrange for its safe disposal.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN “ABANDONED” AND “UNWANTED”?

*Abandoned explosives* are those discovered on public land, such as road verges, parks or rubbish tips.

*Unwanted explosives* are out of date, damaged or left over as surplus from previous projects or owners and are located on private land.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT ABANDONED EXPLOSIVES

If you find explosives abandoned in public places, you should immediately leave the area and notify the WA Police by telephoning 131 444.

**Never** examine or move an explosive. The WA Police will assess the situation and arrange for disposal.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT UNWANTED EXPLOSIVES?

If you are authorised to have explosives (e.g. licensed shotfirer, mine operator, shipping or boating company), you must responsibly dispose of any explosives that are surplus to requirements, at your own cost.

If you are not authorised to possess unwanted explosives you should take immediate steps to engage a suitably licensed and qualified person to safely dispose of them.

If you are untrained, you **must never** handle explosives, as serious injury or death could result. Instead, contact a local licensed shotfirer, fireworks operator or contractor for advice and assistance. Alternatively, a local quarry or mine site may be contacted to see whether they can assist with the explosives disposal. Explosives manufacturers are also committed to assist people as part of their cradle-to-grave product stewardship policies.

If it can be done safely (i.e. without touching), prepare a detailed description of the explosives before contacting a qualified person to assist in the disposal. Include the following information,

which may be visible on wrapping or packaging:

- type
- manufacturer
- age
- condition
- quantity.

Since the disposal of explosives is a potentially lethal operation, it **must only** be performed by licensed personnel:

- blasting explosives — holder of a shotfirer licence
- outdoor fireworks — holder of a fireworks operator or fireworks contractor licence
- other pyrotechnics — holder of a pyrotechnics (special use) licence.

Commercial shotfiring contractors are listed in the telephone directory and online (search under *shotfirers or blasting contractors and equipment*).

The Department of Mines and Petroleum does not offer a collection or on-site disposal service for unwanted explosives.

*Note: Anyone who transports explosives must comply with the Australian Explosives Code.*

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO ABOUT UNWANTED MARINE DISTRESS FLARES?

Flares can be dangerous and must be disposed of appropriately by qualified people.

Unwanted marine distress flares should be disposed of properly and in a safe manner. Do not dispose of them in a rubbish bin, at a rubbish tip, at sea or in the bush. It is also illegal to discharge a flare when not involved in an emergency, unless authorised by the Department of Transport – Marine Safety.

The flares should be handed to a nominated collection point or arrangements made for their disposal by a commercial operator. Some commercial pyrotechnic or fireworks contractors are qualified to dispose of marine distress flares.

The advice is simple:

## DON'T TOUCH AND STAY ALIVE!

