



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

MARINE SAFETY ALERT

Inspections and Compliance Directorate

September 29, 2025
Washington, DC

Safety Alert 17-25

PARASAIL OPERATIONS: INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

A parasailing accident over Memorial Day Weekend 2022 resulted in the death of an adult and serious injuries to two children when their parasail struck a bridge. While operating during a period of forecasted inclement weather, the Master of a parasailing small passenger vessel was unable to recover the three aloft passengers when the hydraulic winch could not overcome forces from high winds. As the Master believed the vessel was at risk of capsizing, he cut the towline. The vessel's crew was then ineffective at deflating the runaway chute after jumping from the vessel into the water, which nearly resulted in the additional loss of a crewmember.

The Coast Guard continues to investigate parasailing casualties, many of which stemmed from a failure to properly monitor changing weather conditions. As emphasized in Coast Guard Marine Safety Alerts [05-11](#) and [07-13](#), continuous weather monitoring is critical for safe parasailing operations and timely cessation before weather impacts arise.

The American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard F3099-23: Standard Practices for Parasailing provides guidance on weather limitations for parasailing operations. According to ASTM Standard F3099-23, parasail operations shall not be conducted when current observed weather conditions in the area of operations include: sustained wind speed greater than 20 mph, ground visibility less than 0.5 miles, thunderstorms within 7 miles, wind gusts with a differential greater than 15 mph of the sustained wind, or wind gusts exceeding 25 mph.



A subsequent Coast Guard concentrated inspection campaign revealed differing industry opinions on preventing and responding to parasailing emergencies. Despite these varied perspectives, well-documented procedures and regular crew training remain the most effective means of ensuring adequate safety during both routine and emergency operations. ASTM Standard F3099-23 offers parasail operators guidance on procedures and training that reflects an industry benchmark. Parasail manufacturers further contribute to safety by providing equipment standards and associated training for proper use.

The Coast Guard **strongly recommends** that parasail vessel owners and operators:

- Review ASTM Standard F3099-23 and consider incorporating it into routine practices and procedures.
- Continuously monitor weather conditions noting the formation of squalls, thunderstorms, and weather fronts that are expected to pass through the intended operational area. Cease operations well before such weather conditions impact parasailing operation.
- Have well documented procedures and routinely conduct crew training to ensure proficiency in responding to emergencies such as towline breaks, winch failures, propulsion failures, and any other concerns that impact crew and/or passenger safety.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the operating parameters of the parasailing equipment and prioritize participation in available industry training opportunities related to parasailing.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. Developed by U.S. Coast Guard Sector Key West and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis. Questions may be sent to HQS-SMB-CG-INV@uscg.mil.