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To: "Ward, Deborah L" <deborah.l.ward@hawaii.gov>
Subject: News release - DLNR CITES BOATER FOR OPERATING VESSEL WITHOUT SAFETY COURSE CARD



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 5, 2016

DLNR CITES BOATER FOR OPERATING VESSEL WITHOUT SAFETY COURSE CARD

HONOLULU -- A court appearance at Kaneohe District Court has been set on February 16 for Sai Hansen, 41, of Kailua, who was cited by the Department of

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Land and Natural Resources, Division of Conservation and Resources Enforcement (DOCARE) for operating a vessel without proof of completion of a boater safety education course approved for Hawaii. The citation was issued in the course of an ongoing investigation into a fatal boating accident in Kailua bay on January 9, 2016.

Violation of Hawaii Administrative Rule 13-244-15.5(a) may result in a fine of up to \$1,000 and/or not more than 30 days in jail. In addition to, or as a condition to the suspension of the fines and penalties, the court may deprive the offender of the privilege of operating any vessel in state waters for not more than 30 days.

Since November 2014, all individuals who operate a motorized vessel in Hawaii's State waters are required to possess a certificate of completion from a National Association of state Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) approved course on the safe use and operation of a power-driven vessel that contains a component on Hawaii waters approved by DLNR.

Boaters are required to carry their certificate on them when operating any power driven vessel propelled by a motor greater than 10 horsepower, even vessels propelled primarily by wind/sail that are equipped with an auxiliary engine. This applies in all navigable State waters from the high water mark on shore to three miles at sea.

Vessel operators must be able to show proof of certification to enforcement officers upon demand. DLNR is enforcing this requirement. Each island DOCARE district has cited boaters who did not meet this requirement, in the course of their response to boating situations. A boater in Kona was recently cited for not having the safety course certificate when his vessel went aground on Jan. 22, 2016. Oahu DOCARE issued 6 citations in 2015 to boat operators who did not possess the required boating safety course card.

DLNR'S Boating Division's goal through this rule is to improve on-the-water safety for all ocean users. The mandatory education requirement for boating on State waters is very similar in nature and intent to the licensing of drivers who operate a motor vehicle on our city streets and highways.

In the past two years about 11,500 people have completed an approved boating safety course from ten different available course providers, either free or for a modest fee. At any given time, there is an average of 15,000 boaters in Hawaii.

Although the ocean seems like a very big area, there are many times and many waterways where boats come in close proximity to other vessels, the shoreline, swimmers, divers, etc. and every operator should know the established rules of the road to avoid causing injury or death.

To view the mandatory boater safety education rule online go to <http://files.hawaii.gov/dlnr/dobor/rules/amend/Amend-13-244-15-5.pdf>

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