"A drogue is fundamental to lake fishing success in Tasmania!"

- Jim Allen

A drogue is a device that enables you to moderate the drift speed of the boat. This drifting technique originated on the reservoirs in UK and Ireland. The lakes of these countries are very much like ours in Tasmania and if the fish are hard to locate there is no better fishing technique than this as it enables you to cover large areas of water in a controlled manner.

Jim Allen, has fished Tasmania's highlands for 40 years and shares his thought on drogues.

'I was first introduced to the drogue when Peter Hayes donated one of his original designs. For the first time I had some resemblance of control over the drift. It was made from a very tough material and the rectangular shape proved a significant advance over the many home made jobs that were around. A combination of floats and weights keep it at the right attitude in the water, and by adjusting the length of the bow and stern rope you could sail across the wind rather than just drift directly down wind.

'In heavy wind it improves stability of the boat, but in light conditions it is often preferable to NOT use a drogue and cover more territory. It can be advantageous to cover water reasonably quickly looking for fish, so don't always put it out. If you do come onto some fish have it ready to drop over the side.

'I often observe what I consider an overuse or misuse of the drogue. I see it deployed as a matter of routine even in the lightest winds. In conditions such as this the drift slows to an almost stalling speed and some drogues sink.

'However I will set a drogue to slow the drift, particularly over a weed bed where past experience tells me fish are holding. It is wise to spend the most time in an area where the fish are.

'The drogue should allow some water to pass through as this stabilises it. Importantly it should be set to achieve a drift following a shore or foam line by adjusting the bow or stern line with minor adjustments on your motor.

'Over the years the Peter Hayes' drogue became 'the standard'. It is made of a tough material and its rectangular in shape proved effective and durable. The combination of floats and weights kept it at the correct attitude in the water.

'However they are no longer available, and it was difficult to store in our mostly smallish boats. So I had to find a new one.

'I recently upgraded to a 4.5 metre Polycraft and installed the Mike Stevens' upgraded drogue based on the "Hayes" principal. In my opinion the upgrade is "sensational". This new drogue balances the boat and achieves perfect drifts. The soft mesh design allows for easier storage and ready deployment. They are made locally in Tasmania, so contact Mike if you want one. When deployed this drogue has the perfect balance between flotation and stability in even the most severe conditions that one can experience in the "highlands!"

'A properly set drogue is as fundamental to an enjoyable days fishing as is confidence in my fly, rod, reel and boat. Don't go fishing without one, but think about how and when, or even 'if' you deploy it.'

Jim Allen

Using your drogue.
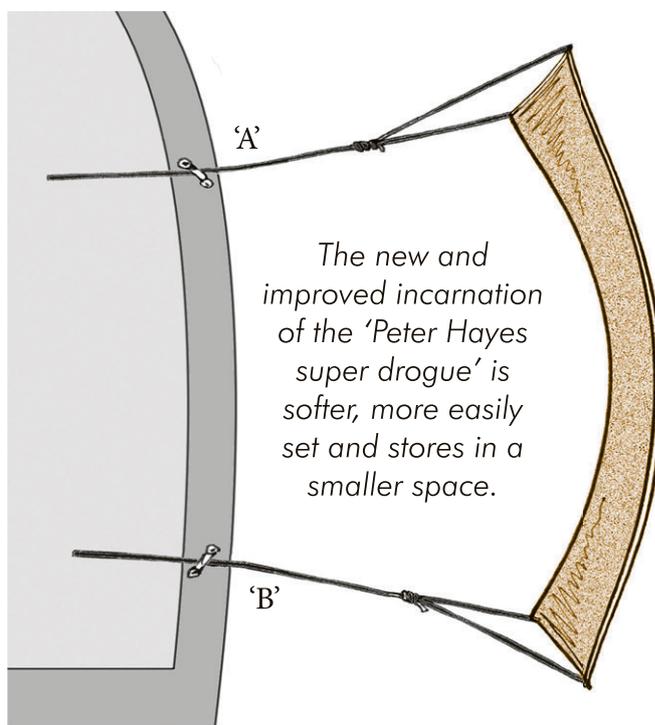
The new and improved incarnation of the 'Peter Hayes super drogue' is softer, more easily set and stores in a smaller space.

Your boat can be 'sailed' across the wind on the drogue but letting line 'A ' and/or 'B' in or out. Experiment to find the best drift as it varies between boats.

If your boat has high sides you may need to extend the lines 'A' and 'B'. Keep them as short as you can, then you can motor along slowly without the drogue tangling in the outboard.

Drogue comes with lines 'D' and 'E' attached.
You need to add lines 'A' and 'B'.
If your boat pulls the drogue to the surface lengthen 'D' or shorten 'E'.
Likewise if the drogue is going below the surface lengthen 'E' or shorten 'D'.