

## WAFIC Safety Update – May 2025

(WAFIC Website: <https://www.wafic.org.au/what-we-do/access-sustainability/safety-and-training-information-02/>)

### Safety Management System – You Must Have One – By Law!

1. AMSA Marine Order 504 requires all domestic commercial vessels **must** have a safety management system (SMS).
2. Worksafe (WA) legislation requires all domestic commercial vessels **must** have a safety management system (SMS).

An SMS will demonstrate and document how you have prepared your vessel and crew to meet the '**mandatory**' general safety duties contained in both sets of legislation.

Your vessel's SMS should be based on a risk assessment of your operations. It should describe how safety, maintenance and operation is managed on your vessel.

A safety management system is not just a document – you must put it into practice, Train your employees, do practical emergency drills and document that you have done so.

The owner, operator, master, and crew of each vessel must be involved in developing and reviewing the risk assessment.

AMSA has a range of tools and resources to help you develop and assess the health of your safety management system (*clicks links underlined*):

- *Guidelines for a safety management system* - this guide provides information, checklists and templates that can guide you through developing or revising your own SMS.
  - *How to develop a safety management system* - an online step by step guide through the process of developing your SMS.
  - *Templates for a safety management system* - useful templates are available for you to download.
  - *Risk management in the national system* - a practical guide on identifying hazards, conducting a risk assessment, implementing control measures and reviewing risks as part of your safety management system.
  - *Emergency procedures flipchart* - ideas for developing and writing emergency procedures.
  - *Crewing guidelines* - appropriate crewing must be determined by the owner as a part of their general safety duties and should be documented as a part of the vessels SMS.
  - *Fishing for safety video* - watch this 16 minute video for easy to understand steps, real-world stories and experiences of why an effective SMS is essential.
  - *Planned maintenance* - learn about the importance of maintenance plans and what to include in yours.
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## Changes to Safety Management System Requirements - Commence 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025

AMSA Marine Order 504 contains all the regulatory requirements for commercial vessel operational requirements for marine safety including safety management systems (SMS).

In 2024 Marine Order 504 underwent a public review process aimed at improving the safety outcomes of the SMS requirements and making them **easier to understand, fit for purpose** and **practical** for the diverse range of commercial vessels across Australia.

**These changes come into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025.**

**In-depth information, guidance and resources to help navigate and apply the following changes is available on the AMSA website at: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/changes-safety-management-system-requirements-1-june-2025>**

- Introduction of a Simplified SMS — Owners of some vessels under 7.5 metres will be eligible for a simplified SMS. Use our online [simplified SMS tool](#) to find out if the simplified SMS applies to you.
- Fatigue management — Vessel owners will need to identify and address the risk of master and crew fatigue in the vessel's safety management system. This does not apply to Class 4 vessels (**see articles on page 3 & 4**)
- Drug and alcohol policy — Vessel owners will need to have a drug and alcohol policy in the vessel's SMS to manage the risks associated with drug and alcohol use. (**see articles on page 4 & 5**)
- Cargo and dangerous goods — Vessels undertaking cargo operations, including the carriage of dangerous goods, will need to include a procedure in their SMS outlining how they manage the specific risks.
- Key operational procedures to be covered in every SMS — Class 1, 2 and 3 vessel owners will need to have procedures covering the key vessel operations in their SMS, if relevant.
- Vessel emergency plans — Loss of propulsion and oil or fuel spills will need to be covered in the vessel's emergency plan, if relevant.
- Master and designated person responsibility statement — The master's responsibility and authority statement has been clarified to better outline their authority and there is now a requirement to set out a designated person's responsibility statement. Different rules may apply to vessels eligible to operate under a simplified SMS in certain circumstances.
- Assembly station requirements — Alternative assembly stations will only be required if reasonably practicable based on the vessel's layout, characteristics and risk assessment. Different rules may apply to vessels eligible to operate under a simplified SMS.
- Record of vessel modifications — Vessel owners will need to identify risks to vessel stability in the vessel's risk assessment and will need to maintain a record of vessel modifications impacting stability. This does not apply to Class 4 vessels and different rules may apply to vessels eligible to operate under a simplified SMS.

A range of guidance, tools and other resources are available to help implement the changes:

- Online simplified SMS tool — use this [simplified SMS tool](#) to check if you are eligible for the simplified SMS.
- Simplified SMS flowchart — download our printable flowchart to determine your eligibility for the simplified SMS.
- Guidance for developing:
  - Fatigue risk management plan
  - Drug and alcohol policy
  - Stability risk assessment and recording vessel modifications.

## New AMSA Rules to Simplify SMS Requirements – Watch Webinar!

AMSA has simplified safety management system (SMS) requirements for smaller, less complex DCVs and operations to:

- uphold or improve safety outcomes
- align better with operational needs
- reduce administrative burden.

**Note:** If you are eligible for simplified SMS and you already have a full SMS, you can choose to change to simplified SMS or keep your full SMS.

### Key changes for eligible vessels

- If the owner is also the designated person, a designated person responsibility statement is no longer required in the vessel's SMS.
- If the owner is also the master, a master's responsibility and authority statement is no longer required in the vessel's SMS.
- The risk assessment no longer needs to identify the key daily tasks performed by the master and crew.
- The mandatory procedures for vessel operations have been reduced.
- Owners are no longer required to identify an assembly station in the emergency plan.
- The mandatory details in the vessel's crew list have been reduced.

Watch information webinar at:

[https://email.amsa.gov.au/pub/pubType/EO/pubID/zzzz67da3179c8617110/?vid=t-8Fg8B7v\\_I](https://email.amsa.gov.au/pub/pubType/EO/pubID/zzzz67da3179c8617110/?vid=t-8Fg8B7v_I)

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## Vessel Fatigue Management – AMSA Webinar Available Online

A [survey](#) of more than 1,000 crew working across a wide range of commercial vessels in Australia found a concerning knowledge gap when it came to identifying and managing fatigue.

Of the 1,000 survey participants:

- One in three began work on a vessel already in a fatigued state
- 40% had less than six hours of sleep in any given 24-hour period
- Survey participants struggled to identify lesser-known behavioural signs of fatigue like slurred speech and risk taking
- 50% had not received any fatigue management training or guidance

This led to recent changes to AMSA regulations placing far greater emphasis on vessels having a [management plan for the fatigue of their crew](#). These changes have been set out in Marine Order 505 and to assist with understanding the requirements for managing fatigue AMSA recently held a webinar.

You can watch the 30 minute webinar at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DeDZQDevo4M>

Educating yourself, your master and crew on the impacts of fatigue, identifying fatigue and how you will manage fatigue on your vessel is of paramount importance. Including your fatigue management approach in your vessel 'safety management system' is also required. Make sure you involve your master and crew in this fatigue management system development, trial the planned approach and include crew when reviewing the system.

Particular attention needs to be paid to working at night. See some summaries of incidents due to fatigue at:

- <https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/incident-reporting/safety-lessons-marine-incident-investigation-amsa-report-no29>

- <https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/incident-reporting/safety-lessons-marine-incident-investigation-amsa-report-no8>

For other assistance and guides go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/smschanges>

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## **Fatigue Management – What is It?**

Fatigue is more than feeling tired and drowsy.

In a work context, fatigue is a state of mental and/or physical exhaustion which reduces a person's ability to perform work safely and effectively. It can occur because of prolonged mental or physical activity, sleep loss and/or disruption of the internal body clock.

Fatigue can be caused by factors which may be work related, non-work related or a combination of both and can accumulate over time.

Everyone in the workplace has a work health and safety duty and can help to ensure fatigue does not create a risk to health and safety at work.

Fatigue can adversely affect safety at the workplace. Fatigue reduces alertness which may lead to errors and an increase in incidents and injuries, particularly when:

- operating fixed or mobile plant, including driving vehicles
- undertaking critical tasks that require a high level of concentration
- undertaking night or shift work when a person would ordinarily be sleeping.

The longer term health effects of fatigue can include:

- heart disease
- diabetes
- high blood pressure
- gastrointestinal disorders
- lower fertility
- anxiety
- depression.

SafeWork Australia has created a Guide to provide practical assistance for persons in charge of a business or undertaking on how to manage fatigue to ensure it does not contribute to health and safety risks in the workplace and workplaces covered by most Work Health and Safety Acts.

It is not designed to provide information on managing fatigue in specific industries and does not replace requirements related to fatigue under other laws.

Go to: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/doc/guide-managing-risk-fatigue-work>

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## **Drug & Alcohol Policy Required on All Vessels by 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025**

From 1 June 2025, all domestic commercial vessel (DCV) operators must have a drug and alcohol policy as part of their safety management system (SMS).

This new requirement, introduced by AMSA, aims to address the safety risks associated with drug and alcohol use in the maritime industry.

What you need to do is ensure all masters, crew, and any special personnel are:

- made aware of your drug and alcohol policy,
- are assessed as fit to undertake their duties,
- are not impaired by drugs or alcohol.

Use the guidance material below to update your SMS to include a drug and alcohol policy. Developing a drug and alcohol policy is essential for compliance and safety. Make sure all personnel understand their responsibilities before 1 June 2025 to ensure a safe and responsible maritime environment.

View the guidance online: [Drug and alcohol policy - Class 1, 2 and 3](#)

Print or download the guidance: [How to develop a drug and alcohol policy - Class 1, 2 and 3 vessels PDF251.25 KB](#)

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## **Everyone Has a Legal Duty of Care relating to Drugs and Alcohol**

Everyone in the workplace has work health and safety duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*.

A person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) has a duty to protect workers from the risks associated with the use of alcohol and drugs.

As a PCBU, you must manage all health and safety risks and this might include setting specific policies for the use of drugs and alcohol.

So far as is reasonably practicable an owner must:

- ensure the health and safety of workers and others at your workplace;
- consult with workers who carry out work for the business or undertaking and who are (or are likely to be) directly affected by a health and safety matter; and,
- consult cooperate and coordinate activities with all other relevant duty holders.

All workers have a legal duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and not adversely affect the safety of others.

- Workers must ensure they arrive at work:
- fit and well enough to do their job; and,
- not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs

There are a number of reasons why it is appropriate to develop a workplace policy on alcohol and other drugs:

- A PCBU could be found in breach of the general duty to provide a healthy and safe workplace that is free from hazards if injury or harm is suffered as a result of alcohol or other drug use.
- Having and applying an alcohol and drug policy demonstrates management commitment to a healthy and safe workplace.
- Having a clearly defined policy, with supporting procedures in place, will assist the PCBU to provide a safe workplace and manage drug and alcohol related issues in the workplace.
- The existence of a policy also provides a means of informing employees and other people at the workplace about what behaviour is acceptable in relation to alcohol and other drugs in your workplace.

If a person appears affected or impaired by alcohol or drugs, the PCBU has an obligation to make sure the person or any one else at the workplace is not put at risk.

- If a policy exists for this situation, it should be followed. In the absence of a policy, the PCBU should determine the most appropriate course of action, which may include making arrangements for the person to get home safely.

- It should not be assumed that any observed impairment is caused by alcohol and/or other drug use. Other impairment factors may include fatigue, medical conditions, chemicals, heat, noise and symptoms of work-related stress.

More information go to: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/duties-relating-drugs-and-alcohol>

For info on vaping in the workplace go to: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/vaping>

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## Who is Responsible for Emergency Procedures and Testing Procedures

Under WA work health and safety legislation, the person conducting a business or undertaking **must ensure that there is an emergency plan in place** to protect anyone on the premises in the event of an emergency.

Emergency plans procedures must be developed in consultation with workers – master, crew and shore based support.

In developing a plan, consideration should be given to the range of potential emergencies that could plausibly affect the workplace.

The following is a [brief checklist](#) of the requirements for the person who has control of a vessel or control of the access to or egress from a vessel:

- An emergency plan for a vessel should be in your safety management system and include:
    - a risk assessment and development of agreed emergency procedures,
    - testing of the emergency procedures with all crew
    - information, training and instruction to relevant workers in implementing emergency procedures, including use of emergency equipment.
  - Procedures to cover locating persons on the vessel during emergency procedures, notifying emergency services, medical treatment and effective communication.
  - **Ensure emergency procedures are practised on the vessel at reasonable intervals during a season, especially when new crew join the vessel.**
  - The procedures should allow people to safely move within the vessel and passages for the purposes of movement are always kept free of obstructions.
  - Lifejackets are provided, maintained and crew trained in their use.
  - Fire extinguishers should be located and distributed in accordance with Australian Standard, AS 2444-2001: Portable fire extinguishers and fire blankets in galleys.
  - Training is provided on all emergency procedures and safety equipment to all people who will be required to help manage the emergency – on the vessel and onshore.
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## Marine Safety Incidents – April 2025

To see all incidents reports go to: [https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/incident-reporting/2024-monthly-domestic-commercial-vessel-incident-reports?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=monthly-marine-incidents#msdyntrid=Z7gjhSXOebAKgx\\_Wne-EiYnIPERx4lvT0GjcbhwOck](https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/incident-reporting/2024-monthly-domestic-commercial-vessel-incident-reports?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=monthly-marine-incidents#msdyntrid=Z7gjhSXOebAKgx_Wne-EiYnIPERx4lvT0GjcbhwOck)

AMSA has also summarised various incidents and outlined findings and recommendations to provide other vessel owners and operators with the opportunity to learn from marine safety incidents that have taken place.

Go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/marine-incident-reporting/monthly-safety-lessons-domestic>

To submit an incident report to AMSA go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/form19>

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## **Certificate of Competency Required for all Commercial Vessel Operators**

AMSA Marine Order 505 requires all domestic commercial vessels to have relevant certificates of competency to operate.

Certificates of competency (tickets) are vital to ensuring that operators have the required training and experience to take responsibility of the lives and safety of their vessel, passengers and crew. This includes resolving issues before they go wrong and responding quickly in case of an emergency.

The [type of certificate of competency](#) required depends on the size of the vessel, the power of the engine and the area of vessel operation.

A New South Wales domestic commercial vessel operator was recently convicted and fined \$9,000 by the Court for operating without the required deck and engineering certificates of competency. The operator was initially issued an infringement notice, which was not paid and resulted in AMSA enforcement action.

Operators should ensure they have their required certificates of competency and that your details are up to date.

Check which tickets are required for your operation:

[https://www.amsa.gov.au/qualifications-training/domestic-certificates-competency-cocs?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=general](https://www.amsa.gov.au/qualifications-training/domestic-certificates-competency-cocs?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=general)

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## **Removal of Machinery Guarding Costs Company \$875,000 over Death of Worker**

A WA salt processing company has been fined \$875,000 over the death of a worker after pleading guilty to failing to provide and maintain safe plant at the workplace and, by that failure, causing the death of a worker.

This is the first prosecution for a breach leading to a fatality under the new WA *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*, since it took effect in March 2022.

The worker, an experienced plant operator, died when he was caught in the mechanism of a salt pit conveyor.

The guard for this part of the conveyor was not in place at the time of the incident and the investigation found that even when in place, the guard was not always securely fixed and could be removed without the use of a tool.

The investigation was not able to determine when the guard had been removed, however did identify that on occasion a problem arose with the conveyor belt slipping and operators sometimes placed cardboard between the drive drum and the conveyor belt to keep the equipment operating - and this involved removing guarding.

The managers were aware of the use of cardboard to address the conveyor belt slipping.

WorkSafe Commissioner Sally North said the case was a tragic reminder of the importance of ensuring that effective guarding and isolation procedures are in place for all equipment with hazardous moving parts, specifically conveyors. Nip points or entrapment points on conveyors must be guarded, and those guards must be effective and well maintained.

Where any task requires a person to enter a hazardous area, such as close to a nip point, an isolation and lock out process is required.

WorkSafe has a *Code of Practice: Managing risks of plant in the workplace* that provides practical guidance to effectively manage plant related risks.

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## **Maritime Training Products Aligned with new AMSA Marine Order 505**

Skills Ministers endorsed maritime training products which have been aligned with the recently revised AMSA Marine Order 505 which deals with domestic commercial fleet competency qualifications (tickets).

The regulatory and licensing requirements in MO505 aim to enable seafarers to meet the highest standards of competence and safety in their roles and help safeguard the integrity and effectiveness of maritime training, benefitting both the industry and the seafaring community.

The revised Marine Order 505 (Certificates of Competency – National Law), came into force from 1 January 2023 and introduced 5 new certificates of competency:

- Coxswain Grade 3 Near Coastal
- Master <45m Near Coastal (replaces Master <35m, which will be phased out)
- Master <100m Near Coastal (replaces Master <80m, which will be phased out)
- Sailing Master Coastal
- Sailing Master Offshore.

These revisions also phased out 3 old certificates of competency, which are no longer issued:

- Master <35m Near Coastal (replaced by the new Master <45m Near Coastal)
- Master <80m Near Coastal (replaced by the new Master <100m Near Coastal)
- Mate <80m Near Coastal (replaced by the existing Master <24m Near Coastal)

The resulting qualifications framework and guidelines provide national consistency, improved qualification pathways, and better safety outcomes for Australian seafarers and domestic commercial vessel operators.

In response to MO505, AMSA and stakeholders requested that training products for Near Coastal job roles be reviewed to reflect licensing and regulatory requirements.

The revised training products include:

- a new Skill Set to support the Coxswain Grade 3 licensing category, facilitating occupational mobility for existing maritime workers
- a new Unit of Competency: Command and manage a voyage on a vessel up to 45 metres (Near coastal)
- merging of the Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Master Inland Waters) with the Certificate III in Maritime Operations (Master up to 24 metres Near Coastal)
- updated qualifications, Skill Sets and Units of Competency for Near Coastal job roles to reflect MO505 licensing and regulatory requirements
- incorporation of Electronic Charting System (ECS) requirements into existing products

*What does this mean for industry?*

The revised training products are now compliant with Marine Order 505 and International Maritime Organization (IMO) guidelines.

To support the delivery and implementation of the revised training products guides have been updated to assist assessors, trainers, RTOs and enterprises containing comprehensive lists of all products in the Training Package.

The endorsed Training Package products will soon be available on [training.gov.au](https://training.gov.au).

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## Starlink Does Not Meet National Remote Vessels Communication Laws

AMSA has advised that 'Starlink' does not meet the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) communication requirements for vessels operating in remote areas, or beyond VHF Limited Coast Station areas of coverage.

AMSA says satellite GMDSS systems have greater functionality and reliability.

Starlink does not meet the requirements of NSCV Part C7B for GMDSS systems or Satellite Telephones.

There are requirements in Part C7B for mounting, source of charging, lighting & handsfree operation that rely on dash mounted equipment – not mobile phones linked to Wi-Fi.

AMSA will be reviewing NSCV Part C7B as part of the 2025/26 Regulatory Program. During this process the consideration of HF radio alternatives will be considered and consulted on through Technical Advisory Groups and public consultation.

Many in industry have shared positive experiences with Starlink. AMSA acknowledges that developments in this space are ongoing and affirmed that any alternatives to HF radio will continue to be explored through Technical Advisory Groups and broader public consultation.

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## New AMSA Exemptions to Simplify Process To Obtain Certificate of Survey

AMSA has introduced new exemptions to provide a simplified process **for certain vessels** to obtain a certificate of survey and operate as domestic commercial vessels (DCVs), including vessels with minor non-conformances or vessels built to *Navigation Act 2012* (Navigation Act) requirements.

These new exemptions commenced on 1 March 2025.

An update on these exemptions was included in the March RSC regulatory program update paper but the direct links to the in-force exemptions were not available at that time. These are now provided below.

The exemptions cover the following scenarios:

Exemption instrument	Scenarios
Updates to Exemption 07 – Marine Safety (Temporary operations) Exemption 2024 (EX07)	<p><u>A vessel with minor non-conformances that has been identified during an initial or renewal survey</u>, but which is safe to operate in the circumstances.</p> <p><u>An existing vessel that has 'triggered' the transitional vessel provisions in Marine Order 503 (MO503)</u>, but is not yet compliant with the transitional standards in MO503. The vessel must be safe to operate in the specific circumstances.</p>
NEW Exemption 49 – Marine Safety (Domestic commercial vessels — compliance with international standards) Exemption 2024 (EX49)	<p><u>A vessel built to Navigation Act requirements</u>, such as a regulated Australian vessel (RAV) that is transitioning to be a DCV.</p>

The updates to EX07 enable transitional and non-transitional vessels to continue to operate up to a maximum period of 12 months, while undertaking work to rectify non-conformances with the applicable standards in MO503.

The exemption is only available where a surveyor has conducted an initial or renewal survey and considers that any non-conformance will not jeopardise the safety of the vessel or any person on board the vessel.

An approval is required from AMSA and a surveyor must provide a survey report that meets the criteria in the exemption. For more information, please see sections 6 and 7, Division 2, of the [updated EX07 here](#).

The new EX49 introduces a simplified process for vessels built to Navigation Act requirements to operate as DCVs, provided the vessel continues to meet the technical standards as required for a RAV. Operators do not need approval for this exemption but will need to meet the eligibility conditions and apply for a certificate of survey. For more information, please see the [new EX49 here](#).

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## **Rocket Parachute Flares Recall**

The Kokusaid Kakoh company has issued a safety recall for its Rocket Parachute Flares KP-16 affecting flares manufactured between February 2021 and July 2024.

The Flares are recalled due to performance concerns related to altitude and burning time when fired.

There is no risk of spontaneous combustion has been identified under normal storage conditions. However, if you have these flares, you should replace them as soon as you can.

Kokusai Kakoh is offering a free replacement with Comet Red Parachute Signal Rockets (manufactured by WesCom Signal & Rescue) outside of Japan.

- Check if you have KP-16 flares manufactured between February 2021 and July 2024.
- Contact your nearest Comet distributor for a free replacement with Comet Red Parachute Signal Rockets. [Find a Comet distributor](#).

More information: [Voluntary recall notice: Concerning Rocket Parachute Flares \(Type:KP-16\)](#)

Recall: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/news-community/news-and-media-releases/safety-recall-rocket-parachute-flares-kp-16>

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## Resource to Help with Workforce Attraction and Retention in Regions

Attracting and retaining a workforce presents unique challenges in regional, rural and remote locations.

Skills Insight assists the agriculture, timber and seafood industries in improving workforce arrangements, especially in regions.

Skills Insight have commenced a project that will develop a webpage resource offering practical guidance to small and medium businesses on attracting and retaining employees in regional, rural and remote areas. It will feature information on existing workforce development pathways, along with case studies showcasing successful place-based initiatives.

A stakeholder working group is currently being established to provide advice on the development and implementation of the webpage and develop an industry needs analysis.

Consideration will be given to:

- actions to support attraction of workers to regional, rural and remote locations
- actions businesses could take to attract workers to their organisation
- actions businesses could take to attract workers to their organisation
- take to retain workers within their organisation
- resources to support inclusive practices and workforce diversity
- case studies that display successful and replicable strategies
- avenues for industry to seek external support.

The broader industry will also have the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft webpage.

Skills Insight is a Jobs and Skills Council funded by the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.

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## First Nations Aquaculture Training Tools

Aboriginal Sea Company and Skills Insight are working alongside community to develop training tools that are culturally appropriate and tailored to the needs of First Nations learners.

Aimed at supporting the growth of First Nations aquaculture enterprises, the project is focused on co-designing tools to support the delivery of existing aquaculture units on Country.

The Aboriginal Sea Company facilitated a two-day Working Group workshop in Darwin on 29 and 30 January 2025. The working group identified the key priorities and considerations for developing the training tools, including the need for adaptable approaches to meet the cultural and learning needs of different communities.

The Working Group have also provided advice on the job roles and tasks that should be supported by the training tools, based on their expertise in First Nations aquaculture initiatives.

*'By ensuring training is delivered on our land and in a way that respects our culture, we're not just teaching skills - we're opening doors to real economic opportunities for our people. Culturally appropriate and accessible education empowers our communities, allowing us to build a future that's grounded in both culture and progress' – Brian Tipungwuti, Tiwi islands.*

Next steps will see Skills Insight and the Aboriginal Sea Company continue collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and educational institutions on the next stage of the project, which includes:

- developing a job task list for community review (based on information provided by the Working Group)

- identifying appropriate training tools and assessment methods and aligning tasks with relevant units of competency
- developing community-based training tools
- final reporting.

A series of working group meetings to oversee and guide project progress have been planned for May and June of 2025.

More info: [https://skillsinsight.com.au/project/community-based-aquaculture-training-tools/?\\_cldee=XXsdoxFaooy5\\_pIF3Oqx0aCD2ZVBFIbvhwlpLakBFybWD\\_vkM7BwoaGdv-x7\\_bt9HQGYMUJRwSZDzAYVLnePfA&recipientid=contact-094688ae0f4ee911a97a000d3ae12152-b10614a0500a49e08f9dd8b681d85330&esid=552c9b6b-6c13-f011-998a-002248122f38](https://skillsinsight.com.au/project/community-based-aquaculture-training-tools/?_cldee=XXsdoxFaooy5_pIF3Oqx0aCD2ZVBFIbvhwlpLakBFybWD_vkM7BwoaGdv-x7_bt9HQGYMUJRwSZDzAYVLnePfA&recipientid=contact-094688ae0f4ee911a97a000d3ae12152-b10614a0500a49e08f9dd8b681d85330&esid=552c9b6b-6c13-f011-998a-002248122f38)

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## Proposals for Mandatory Marking of Fishing Gear & Reporting Lost Gear

Readers will recall previous articles outlining international proposals to implement ‘*mandatory marking of all fishing gear*’ and ‘*mandatory reporting of lost fishing gear*’.

These proposals are being considered within the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) of which Australia is a participant through the AMSA Environment Division.

The proposals form part of a holistic strategic approach to reducing plastic litter in the oceans. See draft Strategy [REPORT OF THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE ON ITS SEVENTY-THIRD SESSION](#)

**The expectation is that the strategy and action measures should be completed by 2030.**

The AMSA representatives have been vocal to ensure any decisions made:

- do not impose over-the-top requirements for marking fishing gear or reporting lost gear;
- protects the privacy of individual operators; and,
- does not duplicate existing reporting requirements or data sources (ie uses existing Australia domestic fisheries management reporting systems).

At the moment, the draft documentation sets out that development of mandatory goal-based measures will be under MARPOL Annex V for the marking of fishing gear and that all measures should avoid duplication **with existing measures, instruments and frameworks**.

To date the indications are positive that the data reporting requirements should not be onerous and meets existing requirements in Australia.

Part of the considerations is the development of measures for a ship-specific management plan for the gear and equipment deployed in fishing activities, including the logging of fishing gear on board a fishing vessel.

The Australian industry has reminded authorities that the vast majority of lost fishing gear at sea is the result of illegal fishing activities and these rogue operators will not participate in any formal reporting system. The Australian industry was not wanting to be ‘loaded up’ with increased regulation and cost to manage something they already have under control and may not resolve the real problems.

The IMO working group has developed draft data requirements in the table following:

<b>Ship particulars</b>	
Name	Voluntary
Length	Mandatory
IMO number, registration or call sign	Voluntary
Type of fishing vessel	Mandatory
<b>Event particulars</b>	
Position where the fishing gear has been lost or discharged LAT XX' XX' XX" LONG XX' XX' XX"	Mandatory
Date when the gear has been lost or discharged DD/MM/YYYY	Mandatory
Time when the gear has been lost or discharged, if known	Mandatory
The reason for the discharge or loss, if known	Mandatory
Any measures taken by the fishing vessel to retrieve the gear (Open text)	Mandatory
<b>Fishing gear lost:</b>	
Fishing gear types	Mandatory
Description of the part of the fishing gear (dimensional characteristics, number of units) that was lost or discharged	Mandatory
Approximate quantity of gear lost	Mandatory
Sequential number or other identification marks of the tags attached to the lost or discharged fishing gear, if applicable	Voluntary

### ***Where to from Here?***

The Strategy (which was adopted in 2021) and the recent update to the Action Plan will remain in draft until formally adopted at the next IMO meeting in April 2026.

AMSA will brief industry sometime late 2025.

## Sharing Stories will Help Build Better Safety Culture in Fishing Industry

A series of eight (8) webinars will be conducted by the national Sea Safe programme to continue to build a culture of sharing knowledge and best practice across our industry.

The format of the one hour webinars (each month from March 2025) will focus around bringing industry people from all different areas to share their experiences and explain 'how' they tackle common themes in safety in their fishing operation.

Each session will have a panel of at least three industry people who all come with deep 'hands on' experience in improving safety in their operations and a story on the reasons why they made those improvements.

Participants being provided with a range of content including session summaries, links to further resources and clarification on regulatory requirements and advice as necessary.

The timetable at present is:

Date	Time	Heading	Content
20/03/2025	2.30 - 3.30pm	Inductions and Drills	What others in industry do to induct new starters?
1/05/2025	2.30 - 3.30pm	Keeping safety alive	From the toolbox (tacklebox) chat to other activities - what real
12/06/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	Digital dealings and/or operations	Experiences from large and small operators who've gone digital with safety
17/07/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	Training people (and yourself!)	So much to train on after induction - how do you keep skilling and upskilling
21/08/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	Risk assessment - an admin task or business strengthener? of angles	Tips and how to's from a range
18/09/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	Psychological Safety - What is it? How does it make a difference to safety?	New rules and ways to use this tool to improve business performance
16/10/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	PPE - the last line of prevention	Who is using what and how?
20/11/2025	3.30 - 4.30pm	Health and Fatigue	Keeping people healthy and preventing fatigue

### Format

10 mins	Introductions
20 mins	Panellists - 5 mins each on what they do in this area
20 mins	Questions to panellists (pre-set and audience)
10 mins	Tools, wrap up (including relevant links/legislation etc), Feedback survey

Sea Safe would love to hear from you to:

- Suggest any specific content/stories for any topic above
- Put your hand up to be a panellist at one or more session
- Introduce/point me to anyone you think would be a great panellist on a topic
- Point me to any other resources or research on any topic

Contact Jo Marshall (0408 008 344) / [jo@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au](mailto:jo@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au)

Jasmin Kelly (0411 430 838) / [jasmin@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au](mailto:jasmin@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au)

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## Thrive in 2025 - 50 events in 50 days!

Starting in February, Stay Afloat kicked off *50 Events in 50 Days*. The goal of this campaign is to bring communities together to celebrate the strength and resilience of our seafood industry.

Up to \$1,000 in funding is available for catering and event costs.

To plan an event or to get involved, reach out to the WA Stay Afloat co-ordinators at [wa@stayafloat.com.au](mailto:wa@stayafloat.com.au)



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## Sea Safe - Capturing Industry Safety Stories

The safety and wellbeing of our people is paramount. With foundations in peer-to-peer learning, the Sea Safe program brings advice and tips directly from those who know best—our industry.

SIA has launched a series of safety stories across social media and [seasafeoz.com.au](https://seasafeoz.com.au)

In the latest video, Kevin shares simple yet vital safety tips to help protect yourself and your crew on the water.

Let's work together to keep our industry safe and strong.

To share your safety story or to get involved in becoming a seafood safety advocate, contact Jo Marshall at SIA, mobile [+61 408 008 344](tel:+61408008344) or email [jo@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au](mailto:jo@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au), or visit the [Sea Safe website](#).

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## Invite Stay Afloat or SeaSafe Crew to attend your team or association meeting.

A short training session or update presentation, ranging from five minutes to an hour. If your agenda is full, we're also happy to set up a table at the back of the room to chat with attendees or offer support during breaks.

Contact your WA Stay Afloat/SeaSafe co-ordinators at [wa@stayafloat.com.au](mailto:wa@stayafloat.com.au) to discuss.

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## Wellbeing workshop series: *Hand Me the Oxygen Mask*

Wellbeing Program, Jo Marshall, in partnership with Women in Seafood Australasia (WISA), will deliver eight in-person workshops across various cities and regional hubs. These workshops will focus on identifying and managing stress and preventing burnout.

Register through <https://womeninseafood.org.au/seafood-women-s-wellbeing-series>

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## Additional Mental Health First Aid training dates announced

As part of Stay Afloat's ongoing commitment to education and training, the first six months of 2025 online Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) courses have been scheduled and added to our online calendar. These courses aim to support mental health and wellness in our seafood communities.

For more information and to register. <https://www.stayafloat.com.au/mhfa-training-calendar/>

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## Safety Recall – Lifejackets with Halkey Roberts 3F Single Point Manual Inflators

The Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC) has issued a safety recall for certain Life Jacket Solutions (LJS) and Marlin lifejackets fitted with Halkey Roberts 3F Single Point Manual Inflators.

This is due to a safety defect that may prevent proper inflation, posing a drowning risk.

The affected products are:

- Life Jacket Solutions (LJS) – Model numbers: T150M, G150M, B150M, WB100, PR150M, SRSS150.
- Marlin – Model number: MK150.

*What you should do:*

- ✓ Check if your lifejacket contains the affected inflator.
- ✓ Stop using the lifejacket if it is affected.
- ✓ Return the lifejacket to the place of purchase for a full refund.
- ✓ Contact your retailer for more information.



**Check the grey plastic part of the inflator for the marking “V96000 Halkey Roberts ®” with a manufacture date between 4 June 2021 and 15 April 2024 (laser printed in MM/DD/YY format).**

The inflator may incorrectly indicate that the lifejacket is ready for use, even if the gas cylinder is empty, removed, or not properly connected.

This means the lifejacket may fail to inflate when needed creating a life-threatening safety hazard.

For further details, visit the [ACCC website](#).

Or <https://www.amsa.gov.au/news-community/news-and-media-releases/safety-recall-halkey-roberts-3f-single-point-manual>

## **Make sure you Chat with your Crew About Safety – It's Law!**

Having conversations with your crew lets you gain first-hand knowledge and experience that will help build a healthy and safe workplace on your vessel.

Your crew will be much more engaged in the process if they understand the safety objectives and their ability to have input and their role in achieving these objectives. This makes everyone safer and can also foster trust in management and lead to improved productivity.

Consulting with workers and their representatives on health and safety matters is also a legal requirement under work health and safety laws. Given the importance of consultation in contributing to work health and safety, the [Work Health and Safety Act 2020](#) (WHS Act) prescribes a general duty on PCBUs to consult.

Consultation can occur in different ways depending on what suits your workplace and your workers. The best way to consult with your workers will depend on:

- the size of the business and how it is structured – *a single vessel or fleet operation*
- the way work is arranged and where your workers are located – *home port each day or away in remote areas for multiple days*
- what best suits your workers - *ask how they would like to be consulted*
- the complexity, frequency and urgency of the issues that require consultation.

Consultation is a collaborative process between the vessel owner or [person conducting a business and undertaking](#) (PCBU) and the master and crew. It involves allowing crew to raise issues, sharing information about work health and safety and ensuring that views of workers are considered when making decisions about health and safety for the vessel.

More info: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/consultation-and-worker-representation>

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## **Confined Spaces – Safety Management on Vessels**

A confined space includes any enclosed or partially enclosed space that:

- is not designed or intended primarily to be occupied by a person,
- is, or is designed or intended to be, at normal atmospheric pressure while a person is in that space,
- is, or is likely to be, a risk because of the atmosphere, contaminants or smothered.

Confined spaces pose dangers because they are usually not designed to be areas where people work – engine rooms, freezers, anchor lockers, net storage areas.

Confined spaces often have poor ventilation, which allows hazardous atmospheres to develop quickly, especially if the space is small. The hazards are not always obvious and may change from one entry into the confined space to the next.

A person must be on standby to assist in the immediate vicinity outside the designated confined space preferably in direct communication with the person inside.

The risks of working in confined spaces include loss of consciousness, impairment, injury or death from:

- immediate effects of airborne contaminants
- fire or explosion from the ignition of flammable contaminants
- difficulty rescuing and treating an injured or unconscious person
- oxygen deficiency
- falls from a height

- environmental factors – eg extremes in temperature
- poor lighting
- poor communication and,
- manual handling.

Worksafe (WA) has guidance material on 'confined spaces to assist operators on how to manage the risks associated with confined spaces in the workplace.

Go to: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/publications/confined-spaces-code-practice>

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## **AMSA General Exemptions to Expire on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

On 30 June 2025, the following National Law general exemptions will expire and will not be reissued:

- [Exemption 13 – Marine Safety \(Wildlife or other sightseeing\) Exemption 2020](#)
- [Exemption 18 – Marine safety \(Sail\) Exemption 2020](#)
- [Exemption 21 – Marine Safety \(Operator vehicular ferry-in-chains\) Exemption 2020](#)
- [Exemption 25 – Marine Safety \(Old certificates of competency—local restrictions\) Exemption 2020](#)
- [Exemption 33 – Marine Safety \(Sailing vessels with motor propulsion\) Exemption 2020](#)

These exemptions are no longer needed due to:

- the 2022 changes to Marine Order 505 (Certificates of Competency – national law) 2022 (MO505). Go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/about/regulations-and-standards/new-marine-order-505-certificates-competency-commencing-1-january>
- because arrangements can be appropriately managed through other National Law pathways such as compliance with general requirements or specific exemptions (SPEX).

Current exemption holders will need to take the necessary steps to prepare before the expiration date to avoid any disruption to operations.

AMSA commenced direct communication from 9 January 2025 to provide early visibility for exemption holders to be notified and to make necessary arrangements for the upcoming expiry of these exemptions.

As part of this advice process, exemption webpages have been updated and affected exemption holders will be contacted by direct email (where possible).

AMSA will also publish in their web news and include an article in Offshore Magazine.

For more detailed information please contact [regulation@amsa.gov.au](mailto:regulation@amsa.gov.au).

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## How to Best Maintain your EPIRB

Whether travelling by land, sea or air, a GPS-equipped distress beacon can mean all the difference in an emergency. It is important to ensure your beacon will work if you need it.

For 406MHz distress beacons, the battery expiry date is printed on the label. Periodically check the battery expiry date to ensure the beacon battery remains in-date. Beacon batteries last for approximately 5-10 years. Before your battery reaches its expiry date, you should consider the options to ensure that the beacon will transmit properly in an emergency situation.

In addition it is also important to check the beacon is functioning correctly. You can use its self-test switch. Always follow the manufacturer's guidelines to perform a self-test and for how often you should do this as over testing can drain the battery. Some manufacturers recommend testing your beacon once a month, or prior to a planned trip.

Keeping your registration details up to date helps search and rescue locate your beacon in the event of an emergency. Please keep your registration details up to date. Updating your registration is free and can be done online through the [registration system](#).

Go to: [https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/maintenance/index.asp?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=beacons](https://beacons.amsa.gov.au/maintenance/index.asp?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=beacons)

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## What Lifejacket is Right for Your Vessel?

No-one can predict what is going to happen at sea. Lifejackets are one of the most crucial pieces of equipment onboard any vessel.

Do you know what types of lifejackets are available and how they work. In Australia, lifejackets fit into 3 broad categories:

- *Automatic self-inflating* - Self-inflating lifejackets inflate automatically when they come into contact with water.
- *Manual inflating* - Manual inflation lifejackets are inflated by the wearer pulling the toggle attached to the lifejacket.
- *Foam buoyancy* - Foam buoyancy lifejackets are often used on passenger vessels needing low maintenance lifejackets for emergency situations only. These lifejackets are generally bulkier and rely on their inherent buoyancy to keep the wearer afloat.

*(Note: Inflatable lifejackets are often used by those who need the unrestricted movement provided by a slim-fit lifejacket).*

### Refer to your risk assessment

Choose a style (or styles) of lifejacket to control the operational risks identified in your [risk assessment for lifejacket wear](#).

Do you know the requirements by law for your vessel? What are the lifejacket requirements for your vessel class and operational area? If you operate in multiple operational areas, did you know you need to carry lifejackets required [for your highest category of operation](#).

Have you done a risk assessment for lifejacket use on your vessel – what type to use, where they are stored, when will they be used. Have you trained your crew on these procedures and how to use a lifejacket. Go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/lifejacketriskassess>

How to maintain your lifejackets (especially re-gassing self-inflating models) and how to store lifejackets (for ease of access)?

AMSA has developed a one-stop shop for all this information on the website.

Go to: [https://www.amsa.gov.au/safety-navigation/safety-equipment/what-lifejacket-do-i-need?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=lifejacketsafety](https://www.amsa.gov.au/safety-navigation/safety-equipment/what-lifejacket-do-i-need?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=lifejacketsafety)

AMSA has worked with commercial fishers operating to develop examples to assist operators to update their risk assessment and develop a lifejacket wear procedure that suits their operation.

These examples have been developed for each specific fishery sectors (eg trawl, pot, net).

The details provided are for general information, and on the understanding that AMSA is not providing specific advice on a particular matter. All risk assessments and lifejacket wear procedures must be tailored to vessels, taking into consideration their specific operation.

To access the examples go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/domestic-commercial-vessels/lifejackets-fishing-vessels>

Two videos to assist with the messaging to industry have been developed along this theme:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sVx03ZmDTfU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgwrKKEwqNs>

This lifejacket safety campaign is the beginning of a multi-year sustained safety initiative by AMSA to improve attitudes and safety practices around lifejacket wearing on the water.

Further information contact Steve Whitesmith, [Steve.Whitesmith@amsa.gov.au](mailto:Steve.Whitesmith@amsa.gov.au), 0408 976 282.

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## Worksafe WA to Review Man Overboard Code of Practice

Worksafe WA has indicated that they will soon commence the formation of a steering committee to review and update the Code of Practice for Man Overboard for the commercial fishing, pearling and aquaculture industries under the auspices of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*.

The existing Section 53 *Man Overboard CoP* was initially developed in 2010. [Code of practice - Man overboard: prevention and response](#).

The Code needs to be reviewed and updated given the introduction of the new WA WHS legislation in March 2022. The existing Code is a guideline only but can be referred to in court proceedings.

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## AMSA Quick Links for Vessel Safety Responsibilities

AMSA has provided a quick link for owners or operators of a domestic commercial vessel, including fishing vessels, to understand their responsibilities under the Regulations.

There are a number of practicalities you need to consider, including keeping your vessel and crew trained, safe and compliant.

Go to: [https://www.amsa.gov.au/audiences/domestic-commercial-vessel-owner-or-operator?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=general](https://www.amsa.gov.au/audiences/domestic-commercial-vessel-owner-or-operator?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=general)



Safety Management Systems: [https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/domestic-commercial-vessels/safety-management-systems?utm\\_source=amsa-update&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=general](https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/domestic-commercial-vessels/safety-management-systems?utm_source=amsa-update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=general)

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