

## WAFIC Safety Update – June 2025

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

### 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>

The key changes to be introduced include:

- *Introduction of a Simplified SMS* — Owners of some vessels less than 7.5 metres will be eligible for a simplified SMS. Use the AMSA 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**)
- *Key operational procedures to be covered in 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.

Go to: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/changes-safety-management-system-requirements-1-june-2025>

**NOTE: See more articles below to assist with guidance on the new rules.**

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## **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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## 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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## 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 – Its 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>

## **New Teaching Resources for Students Looking at a Seafood Career**

Seafood Industry Australia have announced a range of teaching resources added to the Seafood Careers website as they build the site into full operation.

In the school resources section there are lesson plans, videos, posters and other pieces of kit which can be used in schools. These have been broken down by jurisdiction to accommodate how teachers and careers advisors will be looking for them.

<https://seafoodcareers.com.au/school-resources>

SIA has also profiled work experience opportunities broken up into age demographic.

<https://seafoodcareers.com.au/work-experience-opportunities>.

And lastly, information is listed on excursions and incursions by jurisdiction.

<https://seafoodcareers.com.au/excursions-and-incursions>. T

SIA recognise there are gaps where they are still missing programs, activities and resources across all jurisdictions so if you know of other programs that are missing please get in contact with Julie Petty: [jp@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au](mailto:jp@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au)

## **Worksafe Code of Practice: Electrical risks in the workplace**

Worksafe WA has released a new Code of practice providing practical guidance on managing electrical risks in the workplace.

It applies to all workplaces, (including fishing vessels), where a person has management or control of electrical equipment and installations or carries out electrical work on or near energised electrical equipment.

<https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/publications/managing-electrical-risks-workplace-code-practice>



## Hay Processing Company fined \$595,000 over Lack of Machinery Guarding

A hay processing company in regional WA has been fined \$595,000 (plus \$5510) in costs after pleading guilty to failing to provide and maintain a safe workplace and causing serious harm to a worker.

In January 2023 a employee hand operating a small hay press climbed through an unguarded area onto the press's conveyor belt to rearrange some hay bales that had become twisted in front of a chamber in which hay bales were cut in half.

He was pushed by the mechanical arm that pushes hay bales into the cutting chamber and his leg became trapped in the chamber and was fractured. He also suffered an injury from removal of his glove.

The conveyor belt did have interlocked gates on the opposite side from where this incident occurred. Opening these gates automatically stopped the conveyor belt.

However, workers had previously accessed the conveyor belt while it was moving by reaching over the conveyor belt and pushing the twisted hay bales. This was faster and more convenient than walking around to the other side of the conveyor to open the interlocked gates.

The company had not installed guarding despite a 2022 external safety review warning about the risk posed by the unguarded area of the conveyor belt. The company did not have a documented safe work procedure for addressing blockages on the conveyor belt.

WorkSafe Commissioner Sally North said it was disappointing to continue to see incidents involving insufficient guarding of machinery, particularly conveyor belt and that this case should serve as a reminder that a thorough risk assessment should be undertaken in all areas of a workplace, and engineering controls such as guarding as well as safe work procedures put into place to reduce or eliminate any risks present.

She urged employers to ensure that all workers are aware of machinery related risks and trained in how to do their work safely.

The code of practice "*Safeguarding of machinery and plant*" is available on WorkSafe's website.

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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 – May 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-EiYnlPERx4lvT0GjcbhwOck](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-EiYnlPERx4lvT0GjcbhwOck)

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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## 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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## 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.

## **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](https://www.accc.gov.au/).

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](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/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](https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/work-health-and-safety-act-2020) (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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## 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=JgwrrKEwqNs>

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.

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| Further information contact Steve Whitesmith, <a href="mailto:Steve.Whitesmith@amsa.gov.au">Steve.Whitesmith@amsa.gov.au</a> , 0408 976 282. |
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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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