



WAFIC Safety Update – January 2026

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

AMSA Proposes Change to Rules for Carrying Observers on Fishing Vessels

Fisheries management agencies sometimes place observers on commercial fishing vessels to monitor operations and undertake research.

AMSA is proposing new certification rules for vessels to carry fishery observers to comply with safety and certification requirements.

AMSA has agreed to a consultation closing date of 31st January 2026.

AMSA considers observers to be **‘special personnel’** as defined in Part B (General Requirements) of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV).

The new rules AMSA propose are that **before** you allow an observer on board, you must:

- check that the total number of people on board, including the observer, will not exceed the maximum number of people allowed (under the certificate of survey, certificate of operation, Exemption 02, Exemption 40 or specific exemption permit)
- confirm you will still have appropriate crewing numbers (you cannot replace appropriate crew with an observer)
- **ensure the table on the vessel’s certificate of survey or approval allows for the carriage of ‘special personnel’ and that this number is not exceeded.** (see **‘transitional period’ note below**)
- Existing vessels that do not hold a Certificate of Survey or non-survey permit must not exceed the maximum number of persons permitted on the vessel.

Transitional period

AMSA is aware that many fishing vessels may not currently have a certificate of survey or other certificate/permit that allows ‘special personnel’ on board.

AMSA is providing a **‘transitional period’** to allow industry time to update their vessel survey certificates or permits as follows:

- **Certificate of Survey holders:** if your certificate does not permit the carriage of special personnel, **you will need to apply to include special personnel numbers when your Certificate of Survey is next due for renewal.**
- Exemption 02 or Exemption 40 holders: if your approval does not permit the carriage of special personnel, you will need to apply to vary the approval to include special personnel numbers before 30 June 2030. You can apply to vary an approval by submitting an AMSA form 579 (Exemption 02) or AMSA form 523 (Exemption 40).

In the meantime, you may continue to carry fishery observers provided all other requirements outlined in the guidance material are met. This includes ensuring that the maximum number of people that the vessel is certified to carry is not exceeded.

Operators will also need to check their vessel is safe to carry an observer.

- Have you conducted a risk assessment to make sure it is safe to allow an observer on board?
- Did the risk assessment consider the maximum number of persons that the vessel is certified to carry? (See vessel certification requirements below)
- Is your safety management system (SMS) up to date and does it cover observers?
- Have you considered how the carriage of an observer may impact the safe loading of equipment and cargo?
- Is all required safety equipment on board and in working order?
- Have you inducted and trained the observer and recorded this in your SMS?
- Have you recorded an observer's presence on board in the vessel's logbook?

AMSA has agreed to a consultation closing date of 31st January 2026.

Please send comments direct to AMSA (email: Regulation@amsa.gov.au)

OR

Send comments **by 24th January 2026** to allow us to consolidate industry response to AMSA.

| | | |
|-------|------------------|--|
| SIA | Jacky Cartwright | Safety@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au |
| WAFIC | Brett McCallum | brett.mccallum@westnet.com.au |

AMSA National Compliance Plan – 2025-26

Every year AMSA undertakes a range of compliance activities with focus areas informed by the analysis of marine incidents, inspections, deficiency data and subject matter expert input, to address emerging risks to maritime personnel, vessel safety and the environment.

The 2025-26 AMSA National Compliance Plan outlines the **priority activities** for the year ahead **to help industry understand what AMSA will focus on and why.**

Key areas of interest in 2025/26 will be:

- Safety management system implementation - especially onboard inductions and emergency drills training
- Safe vessel operations, with continued focus on MO504 phase 2 implementation – focus will be education not enforcement.
- Lithium ion-battery installations as a fire/explosion hazard.
- Hazardous gases national safety campaign – education and focused inspections.
- Person overboard safety education.
- Joint inspections with Workplace Health and Safety jurisdictions – developing approaches.

Link: <https://www.amsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-07/2025-26-National-Compliance-Plan.pdf>

Changing the Safety Culture in the Fishing Industry – One Lifejacket at a Time

Watch the real life story of a major WA fishing company changing it's safety culture and ask yourself are you going to make the change too!

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22YZ7Rso8A0&t=351s>



AMSA is seeking feedback on their proposed changes to NSCV Part C4 - Fire Safety Standards for Domestic Commercial Vessels.

Comments close on 6th February 2026

[NSCV Part C4](#) sets the design, construction and installation standards for fire protection **on new and certain transitional vessels**, including:

- vessel categorisation
- passive and active fire safety systems
- fire safety planning and documentation
- protection for machinery and enclosed spaces
- additional measures for electrical energy storage systems

The proposed changes impact owner/operators and designers and builders of new construction domestic commercial vessels (DCV) and certain transitional vessels.

Transitional vessels:

AMSA has advised that the application of the new NSCV C4 (once it is finalised and approved) to “certain transitional vessels” follows the [transitional provisions](#) in Marine Order 503. The requirements are contained in Schedule 1 and schedule 2 of [MO503](#). Schedule 1 contains the “vessel changes” and schedule 2 the “standards for transitional vessels”

The amendment to C4 does not change the working of MO503, however review of these current provisions in the National Law shows that for certain “transitional changes” to existing vessels, NSCV Part C4 may be applied in part or in full to transitional vessels, hence the flagging of application to “certain transitional vessels” in the consultation.

The workings of schedule 1 and 2 are a little complex but AMSA is happy to clarify a specific context for stakeholders on request @ steve.whitesmith@amsa.gov.au

NSCV C4 was last reviewed in 2018. These updates are aimed at making DCV fire safety standards contemporary and aligned with today's technology

These updates address safety concerns, including inconsistencies in current fire safety requirements and lithium battery risks.

AMSA invites you to share your feedback to help ensure the proposed changes are clear, practical, and fit for purpose.

Key proposed changes include updates to (see attachments 1 & 2):

Lithium-ion battery installations

- Add a new chapter to introduce fire safety requirements for electrical energy storage (EES) spaces for lithium battery installations

Categorisation of spaces

- Add a new “medium machinery space” category for machinery spaces over 10 m³ that fall below the “machinery space” thresholds
- Define fire risk categories for spaces containing portable equipment utilising lithium-ion batteries and powered by petrol engines

Smoke detectors, alarms and fire extinguishers

- Require interconnected photoelectric smoke alarms in accommodation spaces, stairways, corridors and escape routes on certain vessels
- Provide suitable fire extinguisher alternatives to 30B foam and 12 kg dry powder extinguishers

Fire resisting divisions, deck finish materials and wood-fire heaters

- Updates to fire resisting division requirements including definitions, termination height above keel, and requirements for fuel tank boundaries in high-risk spaces
- Specify fire performance benchmarks for deck finishes, linings, ceilings, and doors
- Clarification of treatment of wood fire heaters

Dangerous goods

- Resolve outdated National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC) references and clarify fuel carriage for tenders and vessel use

Administrative updates

- Editorial changes to make sure the standard is accurate and current, including removing outdated references

All changes are presented in further detail in a consultation package for your consideration at: https://www.amsa.gov.au/proposed-changes-fire-safety-standards-domestic-commercial-vessels-nscv-c4?utm_source=Swift&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NSCV_C4

Consultation closes 6th February 2025

AMSA Guide to Routine Service of Fire Protection Systems and Equipment

AMSA encourages frequent inspection of fire equipment.

Routine service of fire protection systems and equipment requires six monthly inspections of **portable fire extinguishers** (Australian Standard 1851-2012).

This guidance applies to owners of DCVs who are required to comply with the National Standard for Commercial Vessels, Part C Section 4 – Fire Safety (NSCV Part C4).

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify the requirements for the inspection of water, foam, and dry chemical (stored pressure) portable fire extinguishers onboard domestic commercial vessels.

Fire equipment/appliances such as water, foam and dry chemical stored pressure portable fire extinguishers should be in good order at all times and readily available for use.

An Accredited Marine Surveyor or Marine Safety Inspector may in the course of their duties conduct safety equipment checks on a vessel to ascertain the status and condition of fire equipment/appliances. The onus is on the owner/ operator to ensure that they maintain fire equipment/ appliances in accordance with their statutory obligations.

Water, foam and dry chemical stored pressure portable fire extinguishers are fitted with a pressure gauge to indicate the operable range.

In accordance with the standards AMSA accepts that the six monthly checks of water, foam, and dry chemical (stored pressure) portable fire extinguishers (as required by AS 1851) may be conducted by a member of the vessel crew *who has a current Certificate of Competency (other than General Purpose Hand)*.

Note: This does not apply to other extinguisher types, including wheeled extinguishers, which will require servicing by accredited or licensed persons.

The six monthly inspection of water, foam, and dry chemical stored pressure portable fire extinguishers by a crew member should be documented, preferably in the vessel log/record book with the date of the inspection and the name and qualification of the crew member who undertook the inspection, as evidence of compliance.

If a vessel record book/log book is not required (by survey), then a signed and dated maintenance record should be kept.

The applicable checks are shown in Attachment 1 (Inspection and Records) of the guide.

Alternately, the owner/operator of a vessel may choose to engage an accredited or licensed service provider to service fire equipment/appliances. The service provider will supply a service certificate stating compliance with AS 1851. The owner/operator should retain this service document as evidence of compliance.

An accredited or licensed service provider is required to complete the service and inspection for fire equipment/appliances that require 12 monthly and five yearly service and inspection under AS1851. Accredited Marine Surveyors or Marine Safety Inspectors will have need to sight a service certificate from a service provider stating that the fire extinguishers/appliances have been serviced in accordance with AS 1851.

Full guide go to: https://www.amsa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-11/amsa707_inspection_of_portable_fire_extinguishers.pdf

WorkSafe (WA) Releases Draft Safety Code of Practice for Person Overboard

The WA Work Health and Safety Commission ***is inviting public submissions*** on the [draft Code of practice: Person overboard – prevention and response](#).

Submissions close 5.00 pm AWST on Friday 20 March 2026.

This Code updates the 2010 'Man Overboard: Prevention and Response' guidelines developed under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* and incorporates new requirements introduced by the recently promulgated *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WHS Act).

It will assist those who manage or own a business to meet the requirements of the WHS Act and related regulations in relation to work carried out on commercial vessels.

The code will also provide guidance on:

- safe systems of work to prevent person overboard situations
- effective emergency measures to minimise the risks of injury, harm or death in the event of a person overboard incident
- risk management processes to address potential hazards and risks in relation to a person overboard situation.

A code of practice applies to anyone who has a duty of care in the circumstances described in the code.

In most cases, following an approved code of practice would achieve compliance with the health and safety duties in the WHS laws in relation to the subject matter of the code.

Like regulations, codes of practice deal with particular issues and do not cover all hazards or risks that may arise. The health and safety duties require duty holders to consider all risks associated with work, not only those for which regulations and codes of practice exist.

Codes of practice are admissible in court proceedings under the WHS Act and WHS General Regulations. Courts may consider a code of practice as evidence of what is known about a specific hazard, risk, risk assessment or risk control and may rely on the code in determining what is reasonably practicable in the circumstances to which the code of practice relates.

Your comments in regard to this draft CoP would be greatly appreciated.

Please use the cover sheet and [feedback template](#) to submit your comments direct to Worksafe through email at: wspublications@lgirs.wa.gov.au.

Submissions close 5.00 pm AWST on Friday 20 March 2026.

Please send copies of your submission/comments to brett.mccallum@westnet.com.au for inclusion in a WAFIC submission by COB 13th March 2026.

Ensure Compliance with the Safety Rules to Protect Your Insurance

Non-compliance with government regulations such as AMSA and Worksafe may be a reason to decline an insurance claim.

Depending on the policy wording, there may be avenues for an insurance company to decline a claim based on non-compliance with regulatory bodies.

The laws are designed to promote all fishing vessels are operated safely and responsibly.

WorkSafe WA Announces New Cyclone Warnings System

Given the uncertainty and unpredictability of damage created by individual cyclones, [persons conducting a business or undertaking](#) (PCBUs) in cyclone sensitive regions are urged to apply extreme caution with regard to exposing workers to the dangers associated with cyclone risks, particularly along the northwest coast.

A cyclone contingency plan should form an integral part of a vessel's safety management system.

Operators of a fishing business should ensure their workers understand the procedures to follow if a cyclone threatens, while emergency plans should include advice from DFES and relevant regional emergency planning groups for each site locations.

For more information: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/cyclone-emergency-preparation-planning-and-preparedness>

Western Australia has new cyclone warnings.

We're no longer using the old blue, yellow, red alert system.



ADVICE

An incident is active.
Be aware and keep
up to date.



WATCH AND ACT

There is a possible threat.
Take action now
to stay safe.



EMERGENCY WARNING

There is a threat
to lives and homes.
Take immediate action.

Have You Got the Right Safety Equipment On-Board?

Having the right safety equipment on board gives you and your crew the best chance of survival if something goes wrong.

Before heading out, check that you have everything you need on your vessel, that it's easily accessible, and has been well maintained.

The safety equipment you need depends on your class of vessel, and how you operate.

AMSA provides safety equipment lists for:

- Class 1, 2 and 3 surveyed vessels
- Non-survey vessels
- Non-survey fishing vessels operating in warm waters and within 2 nautical miles of land
- Non-survey beach fishery vessels operating anywhere in Australia
- Tenders.

Go AMSA safety equipment lists: [Your safety equipment | Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#)

New AMSA Online Portal for Applications for Near Coastal Tickets.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has extended an early invitation to WAFIC members to use **myAMSA** – the new online application portal for Near Coastal certificates of competency.

You can [access myAMSA via this link](#) from midday on Wednesday, 25th June 2025 at which point it will be live on AMSA's website.

AMSA has been developing this online application portal for Near Coastal certificates of competency with the goal of saving seafarers time by **enabling seafarers to apply online for their tickets** – instead of having to travel to an Australia Post outlet to apply in person.

myAMSA uses the Australian Government's Digital Identity verification app, [myID](#), to allow seafarers to securely log into their **myAMSA** account. If seafarers don't have a myID app, they can go to the myID website to [get set-up](#). It's quick and easy.

While **myAMSA** is currently a beta (test) product, all transactions in the portal are legitimate. All applications received through **myAMSA** (beta) will be processed. If approved, a Near Coastal certificate of competency will be issued in the mail.

As a beta product, AMSA is eager to hear what Near Coastal seafarers think of myAMSA.

Feedback is crucial to refining the portal, and the experience of Near Coastal seafarers will help shape future updates and improvements to myAMSA which will be fully released later this year.

Contact for feedback: Chris Battel, AMSA on chris.battel@amsa.gov.au

Eligibility:

- Seafarers need to be ready with all their documentation to submit a Near Coastal certificate of competency application through myAMSA beta from Wednesday 25th June.
- They'll also need a myID which is the Australian Government's Digital Identity app that will securely verify their identity upon logging them into myAMSA for the first time.
- If they are an existing seafarer with an AMSA record, they'll also need their AMSA ID on hand (displayed on the back of a certificate of competency card).

For further information go to: [myAMSA help and feedback | Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#)

Read more [about myAMSA beta](#) on AMSA's website.

AMSA Webinars

Hazardous gases on domestic commercial vessels



AMSA held a webinar on 27th November 2025 in regards to safety with 'hazardous gases' on domestic commercial vessels. This webinar is now available for access on the AMSA website.

What you'll learn:

- How to assess hazardous gases in your [safety management system](#).
- Owner/operator responsibilities under [Marine Order 504](#).
- Risks associated with carbon monoxide, hydrogen sulphide and carbon dioxide.

Exhaust fumes from vessel engines, generators, appliances and sewerage systems produce gases that are toxic and highly explosive. Without proper controls, these can lead to poisoning, explosions or fires.

AMSA received a lot of questions during the webinar session and are preparing responses for circulation as soon as possible.

The session provided valuable insights into the risks posed by hazardous gases onboard, including:

- ⚠ Carbon monoxide
- ⚠ Hydrogen sulphide
- ⚠ Carbon dioxide

Participants also learnt about:

- Responsibilities under Marine Order 504
- How to identify and assess hazardous gas risks
- How to incorporate these risks into a vessel's Safety Management System

This is a great opportunity for owners, masters, crew and safety managers to stay informed and ask any questions they may have.

To access webinar go to:

<https://email.amsa.gov.au/pub/pubType/EO/pubID/z6927ea457773e471/?vid=x-KIEzBFAG>





Your float-free EPIRB could save lives – but only if it works when it matters most.

Float-free EPIRBs are water-activated distress beacons fitted in a float-free bracket. They are designed to activate when a vessel capsizes to a depth of 1–4 metres. They use a hydrostatic release unit (HRU) which opens when submerged. The EPIRB floats to the surface of the water and transmits a distress signal.

Regularly check your HRU and EPIRB battery to ensure your float-free EPIRB will activate properly in an emergency and stays compliant with safety regulations.

- Check the EPIRB battery: Ensure it's in date and functional. An EPIRB battery has a fixed lifetime and should be regularly checked to ensure it transmits properly in an emergency situation. Generally, a battery will last from 5-10 years.
- Replace the HRU: Every 2 years (or as per manufacturer's instructions).
- Failure to replace the HRU and release rod after two years may result in the EPIRB not deploying correctly in an emergency. Each brand of float-free EPIRB has a specific EPIRB HRU model and replacement kit approved for installation, refer to the manufacturer instructions.
- A liferaft HRU or reusable HRU are not approved to be installed in a float free EPIRB.
- Once a float-free EPIRB has been activated, the release rod is cut in half in order to release the EPIRB to float free. It is important to ensure you replace the HRU and release rods after it has been used.

For detailed information go to: [Float-free EPIRBs - Beacons](#)

All Australian EPIRBs must be registered with AMSA. Registration is valid for two years after date of issue and must be renewed before its expiry date. Read more about [why it is important to register your beacon](#).

Don't wait until it's too late – inspect your float-free EPIRB today.

Don't ignore it - report it

Your experiences help us improve safety.



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Report your
incident to AMSA



Marine incident reporting is a shared responsibility between vessel owners, operators & crew.

It plays a vital role in providing information to make vessels safer places to work.

Reporting is essential to maritime safety as it helps paint a more informed picture of the risks affecting the industry. By reporting, you assist to develop more effective safety strategies and advice for regulators, owners, operators, and crew to avoid similar events in the future.

By sharing incident details, you help everyone to:

- respond quickly and efficiently to incidents when they happen
- understand the risks affecting vessel operations
- build a reliable safety database to inform better safety guidance materials.

Every report matters. Not just serious injuries or accidents but near misses as well.

Even if in doubt, report it.

Your experiences help shape safer practices across the industry. Together, we can strengthen safety culture and prevent future incidents.

Learn more about what to report and how to do so. Your time and effort make a real difference and can save lives.

Order your sticker (see above)

To assist owners and operators, a new sticker is available to display on your vessel to encourage reporting and increase awareness about the importance of incident reporting.

You can order a free '**Don't ignore it, report it**' sticker for your vessel using this [order form](#).

AMSA also distributes regular newsletters and alerts that address safety issues related to the outcomes of incident reports. [Subscribe now](#) to access these publications.

- [Maritime safety awareness bulletin](#)
- [Safety alerts](#)

Federal Government to Consult on Findings of Independent Reviews of AMSA

The Albanese government has advised the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Transport that they have now considered the findings from the two (2) independent reviews of AMSA carried out in 2021 and 2023 respectively.

Post the May 2025 federal election, Seafood Industry Australia met with the Department of Infrastructure and Transport and was informed that the review findings were under consideration by the Minister.

However, the focus on renewable energy transition and Maritime Emissions Reduction National Action Plan (MERNAP) took priority on the Albanese Government agenda at the time.

The government now advises it will be releasing their responses to the report findings and recommendations for public consultation in 2026.

The first independent review commenced in 2021 into whether the AMSA legislation is fit-for-purpose and was completed and submitted to the Minister in September 2023.

A second independent review into the financial sustainability of safety agencies, including AMSA, was completed and submitted to government in November 2023.

These reviews deal with many issues including the policies supporting 'grandfathered vessels' and the future of 'cost recovery' of AMSA services.

The major issue of interest to the commercial fishing industry was the 'grandfathering provisions' applying to vessels constructed prior to July 2013. The Independent Review panel findings and recommendations on 'grandfathering' were:

Finding 3: The current grandfathering arrangements and how the transitional standards framework is perceived to operate, act as a disincentive to safety improvements.

Recommendation 2: Safety improvements should be introduced to the current grandfathering arrangements in accordance with a phased risk-based program.

- *DCVs that would be required to be surveyed under the risk-based regulatory regime proposed under Recommendation 1, and that are subject to grandfathered survey requirements, should undergo survey inspection to assess gaps and requirements to minimum design and construction standards and comply with baseline requirements for stability, fire safety and electrical safety.*
 - *These inspections should occur over a two-to-five-year period, with higher risk vessels/operations given greater priority for early inspection*
 - *Owners should be required to rectify inspection findings within two years of inspection, except where the vessel poses a major and imminent safety risk.*
- *'Survey type' vessels that operate to grandfathered design and construction standards and that are within survey, should continue to meet the standard that applied to the vessel as at 30 June 2013 subject to also complying with baseline requirements for stability, fire safety and electrical safety.*
- *Grandfathered crewing arrangements should be allowed to continue, subject to the vessel not changing its area of operation, nature of operation or being modified. AMSA should develop an evidence base on the incidence of serious injuries and fatalities associated with these arrangements, and it should draw any new evidence to the attention of the Australian Government.*

- *Grandfathered Certificates of Competency should be improved by:*
Requiring the registration of Perpetual Certificates with AMSA. Upon registration, these certifications should be recognized by AMSA and reissued subject to Certificate holders being assessed against contemporary health and fitness standards and
Providing logbook evidence of a minimum number of hours applied each year. The minimum number of hours should be determined by AMSA in consultation with industry.
- *The Australian Government should consider establishing a Safety Improvements Package with a suite of time limited incentives to assist with inspections and attaining appropriate standards, from a sustainable funding source.*
- *The Australian Government could consider funding arrangements from a sustainable funding source to assist state and territory governments to manage higher numbers of abandoned or derelict vessels due to changes in grandfathering, if this issue arises.*

In July 2013 Mr Albanese (as federal Transport minister) and State Transport Ministers committed to introducing the ‘*grandfathering provisions*’ when transitioning maritime safety management responsibility from the states to a national system (under AMSA).

This decision recognised that many in the Australian commercial vessel fleet (including fishing vessels) were operating quite safely under their existing vessel standards, applying existing management systems and within their existing area of operation and thus should not be forced into major cost imposts to meet the various new vessel standards across jurisdictions for no measurable change in safety benefit.

At the time, June 2013, the Commonwealth and State governments agreed these arrangements should continue **unless incident evidence and data dictated the need to adopt an alternative approach.**

No such data has been forthcoming to date.

Fishing Safety & Wellbeing Committee National Workshop – Melbourne, 2025

The Seafood Industry Australia Safety & Wellbeing Committee (SWC) held a two-day national workshop on 27–28 November in Melbourne.

The workshop brought together representatives from wild-catch, aquaculture, postharvest, regulators, researchers, and workplace safety experts.

The purpose of the workshop was to test the direction of Committee program, inform SIA policy activity, strengthen collaboration across the sector, and examine the practical safety challenges that industry is experiencing across the country.

A key theme throughout the workshop was the need to strengthen safety culture across the seafood industry.

Participants highlighted that near misses continue to be normalized by many in industry especially during peak fishing periods and that new entrants often rely on informal learning rather than structured induction.

The Committee discussed options for improving safety reporting, acknowledging that operators need systems that are simple and trusted while avoiding additional administrative burden, and providing value back to industry through meaningful feedback loops.

Members emphasised that fatigue management must be supportive rather than punitive, and the focus should be on practical tools that skippers and crews can use on board.

Strengthening national advocacy and partnerships was also a significant focus.


Participants emphasised the need for clearer, more consistent safety messages across jurisdictions, clearer communication about regulations, and closer collaboration with research organisations to ensure evidence is translated into simple, practical tools.

The workshop concluded with strong consensus on key priorities for 2026:

- modernising online safety training and launching the redesigned Safety Hub Website,
- making SeSafe modules readily available and easily accessible,
- progressing the national fatigue project,
- advancing the watchkeeper competency pathway, and
- strengthening partnerships between industry, regulators, WHS authorities, and researchers.

JACKY CARTWRIGHT

Policy Officer, Safety

 safety@seafoodindustryaustralia.com.au



Upcoming AMSA Regulation Reviews in 2025-26

1. *Limited review of Certificate of Survey requirements – Marine Order 503*

Review of MO503 and its associated exemptions to address workability issues and deliver improved efficiencies for industry and AMSA.

Proposed changes include:

- removing the requirement for DCVs to have an EIAPP certificate. These requirements are now managed through Marine Order 97
- reflecting the new NSCV Part C2, including by removing references to the older watertight and weathertight integrity provisions in the USL Code
- clarifying the standards for vessels that elect to be surveyed by a Recognised Organisation and the power of the National Regulator to apply further conditions or vary conditions on certificates of survey
- the triggers for transitional vessel standards and timing for renewal surveys
- reviewing and remaking the general exemptions made under MO503 due to sunset clauses on 30 June 2025, and
- addressing minor technical, workability and drafting issues.

Public consultation on the revised marine order expected in early 2026

3. *Develop new guidance on safety requirements for low-risk battery electric propulsion*

The project will create guidelines for the safe adoption of lithium battery electric technology in vessels in specific service categories and operational areas.

Public consultation of draft amendments TBA.



AMSA Marine Order 504 outlines what is required for inclusion in a safety management system (SMS) including risk assessment and crewing requirements for domestic commercial vessels (DCVs).

Recently, Marine Order 504 underwent a review and consultation 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 DCVs across Australia.

The revised Marine Order 504 came into effect on 1 June 2025.

From 1st June 2025 all domestic commercial vessels in Australia require to amend their SMS to reflect the changes especially in relation to fatigue management and drugs and alcohol policy.

AMSA has recently circulated a reminder to industry to ensure they '**Act to Comply**' with the changes introduced on 1st June 2025 by amending their safety management systems.

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

Fatigue Management

Changes to AMSA regulations placing far greater emphasis on vessels having a vessel specific management plan for the fatigue of their crew.

These changes have been set out in Marine Order 504 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>

Drugs & Alcohol Policy

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

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](#)

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

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

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.

Watch information webinar at:

https://email.amsa.gov.au/pub/pubType/EO/pubID/zzzz67da3179c8617110/?vid=t-8Fg8B7v_I

What is a PCBU? Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking?

Everyone has a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for others in the workplace, including workers themselves.

An employer, under legislation, is known as [person conducting a business or undertaking \(PCBU\)](#).

A PCBU is **a person that conducts a business** or undertaking for profit or gain.

This can include all types of working arrangements such as:

- self-employed people and sole traders
- companies and each director in a company
- each partner within a business partnership
- unincorporated associations
- government departments, authorities and local government councils
- public corporations.

You are not a PCBU if:

- you are an elected member of a municipal council acting in that capacity
- you are a volunteer association that does not employ anyone
- you are a strata title body corporate that does not employ anyone, in relation to any common areas used only for residential purposes.

Under the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WHS Act) and regulations that came into effect in March 2022, all PCBUs have a primary duty of care to ensure the health and safety of their workers while they are at work.

In this context, workers are people engaged by the PCBU and whose activities in carrying out the work are influenced or directed by the PCBU.

This primary duty of care requires PCBUs **so far as is reasonably practicable**, to ensure health and safety for its workers by eliminating risks to health and safety.

If this is not reasonably practicable, **risks must be minimised**.

Go to: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/publications/pcbu-responsibilities-translated>

Safety Induction - Information, Tools, Training, Instructions and Document

Employers, also legally known as a '[person conducting a business or undertaking](#) (PCBU)'. You may be a PCBU if you are a director of a fishing company or owner of a fishing vessel.

Employers **must give** their workers the information, tools, training and instructions they need to do their jobs safely. This **must be** written in a safety management system (SMS)

This should be easy to understand and cover topics including:

- hazards and associated risks
- safe work procedures and practices including the use of personal protective equipment
- communication protocols
- emergency procedures
- workplace facilities.

Employers **must train** workers for their specific tasks in the operational situation (eg on board).

Before your workers start their jobs, it's important that they have supervised hands-on training in the tasks they'll be performing. This training must be suitable and relevant to:

- the nature of the work carried out by the worker
- the nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training or information was provided, and the control measures implemented to mitigate such risks.

Training should be tailored and fit for purpose. It should not be a 'tick the box' exercise.

Examples of work that may require higher levels of information, training, instruction or supervision are:

- working in confined spaces (eg engine rooms or freezers)
- working at heights (eg A-frame, trawl booms)
- working at riskier environments (eg at sea)
- working with hazardous chemicals
- remote or isolated work (eg at sea for long periods of time).

Employers **must provide** supervision and ongoing training.

The most important part of training is following up. Make a point to regularly observe your workers to check that they're still following safe work procedures. Conduct informal discussions or crew talks to engage with workers on specific health and safety issues. You should also encourage workers to provide feedback.

Employers **must keep** training records

You are responsible for maintaining records of the education, training and supervision for each worker. There are checklists to help you with your orientation and training programs. These checklists can serve as documentation that confirms training has taken place.

Employers **must train** Supervisors

There may be workers in your organisation that are supervising their co-workers, even though they are not referred to as a supervisor (eg master of a vessel, leading hand/mate). Before you ask any worker to take on supervisory tasks, you need to ensure they understand and have received training on a supervisor's responsibilities for health and safety.

Deckhands and other Workers Have Legal Health & Safety Responsibilities Too!

Everyone has a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for others in the workplace, including workers themselves.

A worker is any person who carries out work for a business, which can include:

- an employee (eg deckhand)
- a contractor
- a subcontractor
- a self-employed person
- an outworker who works away from their employer's premises
- an apprentice or trainee
- a work experience student
- an employee of a labour-hire company placed with the host employer
- a volunteer.

When starting a new job, you **should be given** a formal induction including:

- given a tour and induction of the workplace, including entry and exit points, staff amenities and first aid areas,
- shown the emergency evacuation point/s, be briefed on the emergency evacuation procedures and **practice these procedures regularly**,
- provided with safety equipment, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and shown when to use it, how to use and how to wear it properly,
- shown how to work safely and **trained hands-on** in how to use equipment in-situ,
- introduced to your immediate supervisor and the people you will be working with,
- given a copy of the **'safety management system'** for the workplace in which you have been inducted.

Learn more about [your rights and responsibilities](#) as a worker.

As a worker, **you have a legal duty** to:

- take reasonable care of yourself and not do anything that would affect the health and safety of others at work,
- follow safety instructions as far as you are reasonably able and notify the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) of any hazards,
- cooperate and adhere to health and safety instructions, and policies and procedures as instructed by your PCBU,
- advise your direct supervisor immediately of any concerns you may have re the safety of carrying out your work.

If you fail to comply with these duties, you can be prosecuted under section 28 of the Work Health and Safety Act 2020.

For more information, visit [Workers and others at the workplace](#).

Any person at a workplace, including customers, visitors and [volunteers](#), must be inducted by the PCBU and take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

They must also, so far as they are reasonably able, comply with any reasonable instruction provided by the PCBU in accordance with the Western Australian [work health and safety laws](#).

Compliance means:

- following operational procedures such as [safe work method statements \(SWMS\)](#)
- following relevant safety manuals and emergency procedures
- adhering to relevant codes of conduct
- understanding and following internal incident reporting processes
- wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) as instructed.

Go to: <https://www.worksafe.wa.gov.au/workers>
