



WORKING BOATS

What's new for operators under the National System
for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety

Featuring

A BETTER SYSTEM

IT STARTS WITH
A PLAN

'SEA IN THE
BLOOD'





Welcome from the CEO

One of the most exciting industry changes we've seen this year is the introduction of the National System – a single set of safety standards for domestic commercial vessel safety applied under one piece of National Law.

The aim of this quarterly newsletter is to help keep seafarers up to date with the latest developments under the new system, and provide helpful industry advice and information.

Seafarers and commercial vessels in Australia now need only comply with one set of regulations, enabling both labour and domestic commercial vessels to pursue seasonal work patterns in the maritime industry more efficiently.

The Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety Reform came into effect on 1 July 2013. With all commercial vessels in Australian waters placed under one regulator on that date for the first time since Federation, it's permanently marked as an historic day on the maritime calendar.

I look forward to working with industry and all Australian marine safety agencies on the future operation of the National System, and to further improving our domestic commercial vessel safety standards.

Graham Peachey, CEO

AMSA SNAPSHOT

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is a statutory authority established under the *Australian Maritime Safety Authority Act 1990* (the AMSA Act).

VISION

Safe shipping, clean seas and saving lives.

MISSION

Ensuring safe vessel operations, combating marine pollution, and rescuing people in distress.

ASPIRATIONS

AMSA will:

- take the lead in maritime safety regulation, maritime environmental emergencies, and maritime and aviation search and rescue
- lead the implementation of measures promoting and giving effect to safety and environment policies, both nationally and internationally
- have strong and confident strategic partnerships with stakeholders
- be sought after as a preferred choice for career development and advancement
- support our operations and community through information systems that are reliable and up to date.

CONSULTATION

AMSA's principal consultative body is the AMSA Advisory Committee (AAC). Members of the committee include industry leaders drawn from the maritime industry and domestic commercial vessels. State and territory-based consultation groups such as the Domestic Vessel Advisory Groups (DVAG) are also utilised.

ADMINISTRATION

AMSA has offices in 20 locations across Australia serviced by over 350 dedicated regional and Canberra-based staff.



What's new with the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety?

David Marsh hooks presenting role

The toughest thing about living in Canberra for David Marsh, is being away from the water.

"Until I moved to Canberra a couple of years ago, I'd always been near the sea and been involved in a range of water activities.

"At least with this job I'm travelling to the coast a fair bit, and really enjoy that part of the job where I'm talking to various domestic commercial vessel operators about their operations."

David joined AMSA in November 2011. "My current role sees me primarily focussed on the 'roll out' of the compliance, enforcement and investigations elements of the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety."

David has a passion for volunteering, and in another life worked as a qualified helicopter rescue swimmer and was a member of a jet ski rescue team.

"These days my work attire is a bit different, but those years of building on my marine knowledge have really provided an excellent foundation for the work I'm doing now, but you never really stop learning in this industry."

A main focus of David's role is promoting changes taking effect under the National System. As part of that process, AMSA is producing a number of interesting and educational videos for time-pressed seafarers to watch, with David taking on the challenging task of presenter.

"The key is to speak with domestic commercial vessel (DCV) operators and owners to see how they've gone about complying with the National System and effectively asking them to share that information with other operators in a similar situation."

"I really enjoy the part of the job where I'm talking to various domestic commercial vessel operators."

Another major part of David's role is to review marine incident data received by the National Regulator.

"On recent travels around the country meeting with the National Regulator's compliance partners, I've been discussing the importance of capturing and analysing marine incident data.



"The National Law defines what a marine incident is, and requires that both the owner and master of a DCV involved in a marine incident, report it.

"This needs to be done within the time frames provided for by the National Law, to the National Regulator.

"It's important that incidents are reported so the National Regulator can analyse the occurrence of the incident and, if necessary, take steps to improve vessel safety and implement safety initiatives."

Whether it's communicating an initial report, or submitting a written report, these should be directed to local Marine Safety Agencies (National Regulator Delegate).

Their contact details can be found either by visiting their websites directly or by visiting the AMSA website, www.amsa.gov.au.

This web address will also allow you to access vital information on your responsibilities as an owner/master.

Head to the incident reporting page where you'll find the incident report form and a handy guidance note.

A better system

A key feature of the National System is consistency within maritime operations, with seven systems now effectively rolled into one following extensive consultation with domestic vessel operators.

There has been a great deal of effort to comply with the new National System.

While most of the commercial vessel safety standards are well accepted and understood by operators, there is further work to be done such as updating language to make them clearer and easier to understand and more accessible to the broader nautical community.

There are tools available online to help when calculating things like propeller shaft diameters and sea service which have been very well received, and there are more help tools in the pipeline.

Since the new system was introduced at the start of July 2013, AMSA staff members have been deployed to each Australian state and the Northern Territory to help introduce the changes.

Education packages featuring information and training about the new National System will be delivered to a broad range of audiences during the transition period including:

- Marine Safety Inspectors
- persons approved to conduct risk assessments
- auditors
- surveyors
- examiners
- seafarers.

The areas of training that will be delivered through eLearning over the coming months will include the following:

- Risk Assessment and Safety Management Systems
- Domestic Commercial Vessel Surveyor Tools
- Competency Task Books and Records of Sea Service
- Seafarers' requirements within the National System.

Further information about these eLearning, face-to-face workshops and related information will be gradually uploaded to the AMSA website, www.amsa.gov.au.

AMSA continues to work with all of our National Law delegates and with industry to tackle issues as they arise.

National System staff, and our delegates in the states and the Northern Territory, look forward to further developing the National System in partnership with industry.

All interested parties are encouraged to get involved, which may start with the simple step of sending feedback via email or volunteering to sit on a reference group.

All contributions are considered and even the smallest can have major benefits – this is a once in a generation chance to influence these matters and AMSA is hoping as many industry representatives as possible will take part.

Comments on new and amended National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) standards are welcome, and a support centre has been established where further information about the National System may be obtained by phoning 1300 517 246.

More detail on standards currently under review may be found by visiting the AMSA website. www.amsa.gov.au.

The system works - It starts with a plan

The National System has had its fair share of early adopters among business, but few have been as quick out of the gate, or as informed, as Transit Systems in Queensland.

Transit operates over 30 vessels providing transport for construction workers to the three Liquefied Natural Gas plants being built on Curtis Island in Gladstone.

Transit Systems Gladstone Area Manager Rob Mitchell says the company has done its homework in anticipating changes under the new National System, and the potential business benefits it could bring.

"We have more than 30 vessels in Queensland, and we're looking to the National System to help us get more business flexibility in terms of how we set up the Certificates of Operation for our fleet.

"Obviously the more we can group similar types of vessels under a single Certificate of Operation, the better we can budget and factor in decisions about when we ultimately replace the vessels."

Working with AMSA's Brisbane office, Transit Systems has found the best solution for how to operate its new vessel, the *Bruce*, currently in its final stage of construction in China.

"We're arranging for the vessel to operate as a Registered Australian Vessel (RAV) for its voyage from China, and to be certified as a domestic commercial vessel on its arrival to Gladstone.

"There the *Bruce* will operate primarily as a RO-PAX which is a roll on roll off cargo vessel accommodating vehicle drivers as passengers.

"One of the positives I saw in those discussions was the cooperation between the different arms of AMSA to provide us with advice before we made a decision.

I'm looking forward to getting other positive results as the National System beds down."

Operational Safety

The effective management of operational safety on board a vessel is key to reducing incidents and injuries involving domestic commercial vessels (DCVs).

The National Law creates obligations on owners, masters, crew, passengers and manufacturers of commercial vessels to ensure the safety of the operation of the vessel to a level so far as is reasonably practicable.

The revised Part E Operations of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) specifies the minimum requirements for the safe operation of domestic commercial vessels in Australia.

This standard can be downloaded from the AMSA website www.amsa.gov.au.

The standard provides scaled operational requirements depending on the service category and level of risk associated with the vessel.

National System transitional requirements

A Certificate of Operation is subject to the following conditions:

- All new Class 1, 2 & 3 DCVs must comply with NSCV Part E.
- All new Class 4 vessels must comply with NSCV Part F2.

- Existing Class 1 vessels must now comply with NSCV Part E, other than crewing requirements.
- Existing Class 2 or 3 vessels must comply with NSCV Part E, other than crewing requirements, by 1 July 2016.
- Existing Class 4 vessels must comply with NSCV Part F2 by 1 July 2016.

Note: The transitional conditional requirements do not relieve owners, masters or crew of their obligations to implement and maintain a Safety Management System under the National Law.

The Safety Management System

A Safety Management System, commonly referred to as an 'SMS', is a documented systematic approach to identifying hazards and controlling risks while maintaining assurance that risk controls are effective.

Part E of the NSCV specifies the minimum requirements for the safe operation of DCVs in Australia. It defines the standards and operational requirements for particular DCV service categories.



Frequently asked questions

Q: Where is information provided about Registered Training Organisations' (RTOs) courses relating to the Certificate of Competency?

A: Further information is available through either the National System Support Centre or your local Marine Safety Agency. In relation to specific courses and their availability, you will need to contact the RTO directly.

Q: Where can I get a Certificate of Competency task book?

A: Task books may be ordered through an AMSA-approved RTO or your local Marine Safety Agency.

Q: Is sea service obtained overseas recognised by AMSA in applications for a Certificate of Competency under the National System?

A: Any qualifying sea service time accrued either domestically or overseas may be recognised at the discretion of the AMSA delegate assessing applications for a Certificate of Competency.

Q: Where can I lodge an application form for a Certificate of Competency under the National System?

A: Application forms and supporting documentation should be lodged with your local state or territory marine safety agency.

Q: Can a vessel used for commercial purposes also be used for occasional recreational purposes under the National System?

A: Yes – a domestic commercial vessel may be used for recreational purposes if approval of the operation is covered in the Certificate of Operation or an exemption for recreational use has been granted under the National System. Application forms may be found on the AMSA website, www.amsa.gov.au.

Victoria reports smooth transition to National System

As many operators of domestic commercial vessels operating in Victoria will know, Transport Safety Victoria (TSV) was responsible for the certification of vessels, safe operation and operator competency until 30 June this year.

From 1 July, AMSA became the National Regulator of domestic commercial vessels and, as a delegate of AMSA, TSV is undertaking similar roles and functions as previously, but in accordance with the new National Law.

A number of the elements of the new National Law for domestic commercial vessels are similar in focus to the previous Victorian regulatory scheme - the strong focus on safe construction and safe operation - and we expect that the transition to the new scheme will be relatively smooth.

From a TSV perspective, the first three months of the National System have gone reasonably smoothly and there has been a strong interest in the uptake of national tickets.

Local knowledge issues - Victoria

TSV would like to remind seafarers operating in Victorian waters that, in addition to the certification requirements of the national system, further certification for local knowledge of declared hazardous areas may be required.

A Certificate of Local Knowledge is required for masters in command of a vessel operating on specified waters:

- where TSV has determined that the risks due to local conditions are sufficient to justify additional approvals
- to ensure that the master is appropriately aware of those risks.

For information on local knowledge requirements, contact TSV on 1800 223 022 or visit our website, www.transportsafety.vic.gov.au.





‘Sea in the blood’

Second generation Tasmanian fisherman, Stuart Richey AM has notched up years of operating experience, setting him in good stead for his latest challenge.

The Managing Director of Richey Fishing will draw on his domestic commercial operating experience to perform in his role as the newest member of the AMSA Board, effective for three years from 1 July 2013.

“I hope to make a useful contribution as a conduit between the commercial industry and AMSA, especially with the start of the new National System.”

Stuart was involved in establishing the Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council (now the Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council), and is no stranger to representing the best interests of the fishing industry having previously held leadership positions on key industry councils and boards.

These include Director and President of the Tasmanian Fishing Industry Council, Deputy Chairman of the Australian Fisheries Management Authority, and Board member of Marine and Safety Tasmania to name a few.

Like many operators, Stuart believes the key benefit of the National System will be the smooth transition between states, both for vessels and in certification.

“That’s the big winner for industry - there are many benefits in having one standard that applies to every boat and operator in Australia.”



“ There are many benefits in having one standard that applies to every boat and operator in Australia. ”



Reporting marine incidents

The National Regulator would like to remind owners and masters of domestic commercial vessels of the importance of timely reporting of details of marine incidents that occur in the national fleet.

The new National Law requires a written report to the National Regulator within 72 hours after the owner or master of a domestic commercial vessel becomes aware of any incident involving the vessel.

Additionally, any incident involving the death or serious injury to a person, including the loss of a person from a vessel, significant damage to, or the loss of, a vessel, must be reported as soon as is reasonably practicable. These initial reports can be made to your local Marine Safety Agency through phone, email or fax.

Owners and masters should be aware that they may have other marine incident reporting obligations under other legislation in addition to their reporting obligations under the new National Law.

More information can be found at www.amsa.gov.au.



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Register / update your contact details

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www.amsa.gov.au/community/consultation/newsletter-survey

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