

28 August 2002

Immediate Use

AMSA SUPPORTS CORONIAL REPORT ON FISHING BOAT CREW LOSS

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority fully endorses the findings of the coronial report into the loss of three men from the *Margaret J* fishing vessel, handed down in Burnie, Tasmania.

AMSA Chief Executive Officer, Clive Davidson said that AMSA accepted the Coroner's report while recognising the continuing impact of the April 2001 incident on the relatives of the deceased men.

"This has been an extremely difficult time for the families and I again wish to express on behalf of AMSA our sympathy for their loss in such circumstances", he said.

"AMSA is always mindful of the human side of search and rescue and takes these responsibilities seriously."

Mr Davidson welcomed the Coroner's recommendations for strengthening national search and rescue arrangements and for vessel safety generally.

"While the Coroner found that, based on the information available, an appropriate search was conducted, his report highlighted the need for a closer working relationship with the Tasmanian Police."

"AMSA and the Tasmanian Police have already instituted a regular consultation process to enhance cooperative arrangements between us."

"Earlier this year, we jointly convened a public forum in Launceston involving volunteer and community organisations to identify areas where search and rescue coordination could be strengthened," Mr Davidson said.

AMSA has been consulting for some time with its search and rescue counterparts in the States and Territories to develop consistent arrangements for sharing of search and rescue responsibilities.

Mr Davidson said AMSA had also taken corrective action to improve search and rescue administrative procedures.

He said the importance of vessels carrying satellite-detected distress beacons was well known.



