

# **Uniform Shipping Laws Code 2008**

## **Section 1: Introduction, Definitions and General Requirements (SA)**

This is not the official version of the Uniform Shipping Laws Code.  
The official version is that last published by the Australian Government Publishing Service,  
Canberra, copies of which can be obtained from the National Marine Safety Committee.

## SECTION 1

### Introduction, Definitions and General Requirements

This Section is divided into five Parts as follows:

- Part 1 Preliminary
- Part 2 Definitions
- Part 3 Operational Areas and Classification of Vessels
- Part 4 General
- Part 5 Submission of Information
- Part 6 Fast Craft

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*

**PART 1 - PRELIMINARY**

1. For convenience of presentation and application these Uniform Requirements have been produced in Sections, each dealing with an appropriate area of control. Each Section shall always be read in conjunction with this Section-'Introduction, Definitions and General Requirements' and such other Section or Sections to which a special reference may be made.

These include:

Collision Regulations

Construction-consisting of the following sub-Sections:

- A Preliminary
- B Structural Strength
- C Watertight Sub-division of Passenger Vessels
- D Watertight Sub-division of Class 2 and Class 3 Vessels
- E Passengers, Passenger Accommodation, Guard Rails and Bulwarks
- F Structural Fire Protection
- G Design Loadings
- H Aluminium
- I Copper Nickel Alloy
- J Ferro-Cement
- K Fibre Reinforced Plastic
- L Steel
- M Timber

Crew Accommodation

Emergency Procedures and Safety of Navigation Engineering

Equipment, Machinery and Materials Qualifications and Manning, Trading Vessels

Fire Appliances

Hire and Drive Vessels

Life Saving Appliances

Load Lines

Mercantile Marine

Miscellaneous Equipment

Radio Equipment

River Murray Traffic Regulations

Qualifications and Manning, Fishing Vessels Stability-consisting of the following sub-Sections:

- A Preliminary
- B Simplified Presentation of Stability
- C Stability Criteria

Surveys and Certificates of Survey

2. Unless expressly provided otherwise, the provisions of this Code apply to new vessels. For vessels the keels of which were laid or reached a similar stage of construction on or before 31 December 1991, the Authority may determine the extent to which the Code provisions in force on that date are required to be met.

*(Amendment dated 15 August 1995)*

4 *Section 1(SA)*

- 2a. Where Parts, Sections, Subsections and Chapters of the *National Standard for Commercial Vessels* (NSCV)
- have been adopted by Amendment List 6, and
  - reference Parts, Sections, Subsections and Chapters of the NSCV which have not been adopted by Amendment List 6,
- such references should be replaced by the equivalent Sections, Sub-Sections, Parts and Clauses of the USL Code.
- 2b. Where Sections, Sub-Sections, Parts and Clauses of the USL Code
- have not been replaced in Amendment List 5 or Amendment List 6, and
  - reference Sub-Sections, Parts and Clauses which have been replaced by reference to the NSCV,
- such references should be replaced by the equivalent Parts, Sections, Subsections and Chapters of the NSCV.
- 2c. Where two or more Sections of the USL Code impose duplicate, overlapping or conflicting requirements which are inconsistent, the requirements contained in the Section (as amended) most recently adopted by the Australian Transport Council prevail.

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*

**PART 2 - DEFINITIONS**

3. The definitions set out in clause 4 of this Section shall have the same meaning when used in reference to any Section of these Uniform Requirements unless the contrary intention appears.
- 3a. For Section 1, Section 5 Sub-Section F, Section 9, Section 10 Parts 2 and 4 and Section 13 the definitions of –
- (a) Clause 4 of this Section of this USL Code do not apply, and
  - (b) Clause 1.8 of Part B of the NSCV (that replaces Parts 3 and 4) apply.

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*

4. The following terms shall have the meanings set against them respectively:

*Accommodation Space* - Passenger spaces, corridors, lavatories, cabins, offices, crew spaces, shops, isolated pantries and lockers and similar spaces.

*Approved* - Approved by the Authority

*Authority* - The statutory marine authority of the Commonwealth of Australia or of a State or Territory within the Commonwealth.

*Breadth* - The maximum breadth measured amidships

- (i) in the case of a metal hull-to the moulded line of the frame; and
- (ii) in the case of any other hull-to the outer surface of the hull.

*Cargo Space*-All spaces appropriated for cargo including trunks leading to such spaces.

*Classed Vessel*-A vessel in respect of which there is in force a Classification Certificate.

*Classification Certificate*-A certificate issued by a Classification Society which records the classification accorded to a vessel by that society.

*Classification Society*-An association approved for the survey of vessels.

*Commercial Vessel*-A vessel which is not used solely for pleasure or recreation and the use of which is made, allowed or authorised in the course of any business or in connection with any commercial transaction and subject to any State legislation and includes any Government vessel other than one under the control of the Minister for Defence.

*Control Station*-Includes those spaces in which the vessel's radio or main navigating equipment or the emergency source of power is located or where the fire recording or fire control equipment is centralised.

*Crew Space*-Accommodation provided for the crew of a vessel not being accommodation which is also used by or provided for the use of passengers.

*Depth*-The moulded depth measured at the middle of the measured length from the base line to the top of the freeboard deck beams at the side of the vessel.

For the purposes of this definition, the base line is the line of the top of the keel where a plate keel is fitted. In the case of a timber or composite vessel, the top of the keel shall be read as a reference to the lower edge of the keel rabbet.

In the case of a vessel which has a bar keel or in which the form at the lower part of the midship section is of a hollow character, or thick garboards are fitted, the top of the keel shall be read as a reference to the point where the flat of bottom continued inwards cuts the side of the keel of the vessel.

In each case the base line shall be horizontal when extended transversely.

*(Amendment dated 4 March 1997)*

*Examiner*-A person appointed by the Authority to conduct examinations of the kinds specified by the Authority.

*Existing Vessel*-A vessel which is not a new vessel.

*Fishing Vessel*-A vessel used or intended to be used for catching fish, whales, seals, walrus or other living resources of the sea but excluding any vessel:

- (a) engaged in harvesting or transportation of algae or aquatic plants; or
- (b) that is primarily a carrier or mother vessel.

*Measured Length* - apply the definition from Clause 1.8 of Part B of the NSCV.

(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)

*Master*-A person having command or charge of a vessel.

*Nautical Mile*-The International nautical mile of 1852 metres.

*New Vessel*-A vessel the keel of which is laid or which is at a similar stage of construction on or after the coming into force of the applicable provisions. In this definition similar stage of construction means the stage of construction of the vessel at which-

- (a) construction identifiable with the particular vessel has begun; and
- (b) a portion of the vessel, having a mass of not less than-
  - (i) 50 tonnes; or
  - (ii) one per cent of the estimated mass of all structural material of the vessel as proposed to be completed,

whichever is the less, has been fabricated and finally assembled.

*Open Vessel*-A vessel which has no weathertight deck for the whole or part of the length of the vessel e.g. a rowing boat with open bottom boards or a half cabin vessel with a cockpit aft fitted with loose deck panels.

*Owner*-In relation to a vessel means any person exercising or discharging or claiming the right or accepting the obligation to exercise or discharge any of the powers or duties of an owner whether on his own behalf or on behalf of another and includes a person who is the owner jointly with any other person or persons and the manager or secretary of any body corporate or company.

*Passenger*-Any person other than-

- (i) the master and the members of the crew or other persons employed or engaged in any capacity on board a vessel in the business of that vessel; and
- (ii) a child under one year of age.

*Passenger Vessel*-A vessel which carries or is certified to carry more than twelve passengers.

*Permit*-Written permission for limited duration giving conditional acceptance of a special operation of a vessel.

*Radio Surveyor*-A person appointed by the Authority to be a radio surveyor.

*Service Space*-Spaces used for galleys, main pantries, stores (except isolated pantries and lockers), mail and specie rooms, workshops other than those forming part of the machinery spaces and trunks to such spaces.

*Special Personnel*-All able bodied persons having some knowledge of safety procedures and handling of safety equipment on board who are not directly-or indirectly-paying passengers, carried on board a vessel in connection with the special purpose of the vessel, or because of the need to be on board because of special work being carried out on the vessel, and who are not members of the crew engaged in navigation, engineering or maintenance of the vessel or attached to the vessel to provide services for other persons on board.

*Superstructure*-A decked structure, including a raised quarter deck, on the freeboard deck extending from side to side of the vessel or with the side plating of the structure not being inboard of the shell plating by more than 4 per cent of the breadth of the vessel.

Where, in pursuance of the above, a lower deck is specified as the freeboard deck of a vessel, any part of the hull which extends above the deck so specified shall be deemed to be a superstructure.

*Surveyor*-A person appointed by the Authority to be a surveyor.

*Tanker*-A cargo vessel constructed or adapted for the carriage of bulk fluid cargoes.

*Tons*-In relation to the grading of vessels means gross tonnage.

*Unclassed Vessel*-A vessel that is not a 'Classed Vessel'.

*Unmanned Machinery Space*-A decked propulsion machinery space which under normal operating conditions is not occupied or is intermittently occupied.

*Vessel*-Any ship or boat or any other description of vessel used in navigation.

### **PART 3-OPERATIONAL AREAS AND CLASSIFICATION OF VESSELS**

Vessels must comply with the [National Standard for Commercial Vessels \(NSCV\) Part B, General Requirements](#), in addition to the following specific provisions:

5.2 Sheltered Waters

The definition of Sheltered Waters is replaced by the definition contained in the NSCV Part B Chapter 1, Clause 1.8 (which in part replaces Parts 3 and 4 of the USL Code).

**6. Classification of Vessels shall apply to all Sections of these Uniform Requirements as follows:**

Vessel classifications are replaced by the service categories contained in the NSCV Part B Chapter 3 (which in part replaces Parts 3 and 4 of the USL Code).

With the following Note 2 added to Table 2 of the referenced NSCV Part B:

**NOTES:**

2. In all parts of this USL Code, other than in Section 1, Section 5 Sub-Section F, Section 9, Section 10 and Section 13, 'Hire and Drive Vessels' are classified as Class 1F.

With the following Notes 1 and 2 added to Table 4 of the referenced NSCV Part B:

**NOTES:**

1. In all parts of this USL Code, other than in Section 1, Section 5 Sub-Section F, Section 9, Section 10 and Section 13, 'Hire and Drive Vessels' are classified as Class 1F.
2. State and Territory Authorities may deem 'Hire and Drive' vessels in Service Categories 4C, 4D and 4E to be Class 1F vessels.

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*



**PART 4-GENERAL**

Vessels must comply with the [National Standard for Commercial Vessels \(NSCV\) Part B, General Requirements.](#)

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*

## PART 5-SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION

### 14. Preliminary Information, Plans and Specifications to be Submitted

14.1 When a vessel is to be built or an existing vessel is to be purchased or substantially altered and any doubt exists as to whether these Uniform Requirements shall apply or which certificates will be required, the office of the Authority should be contacted, by the owner or intending owner, as soon as possible. The basic information necessary for initial assessment by the Authority is as follows:

- (a) vessel Identification, e.g. name or construction number if any;
- (b) Name of owner or intending owner;
- (c) Hull construction material;
- (d) Principal dimensions of vessel;
- (e) Nature of the service in which the vessel will be engaged;
- (f) Intended area of operations of the vessel;
- (g) Gross tonnage(s) or estimated lower and upper limits of gross tonnage(s);
- (h) Whether the vessel is to be classed or is classed and if so the name of the Classification Society and details of the Classification;
- (i) Whether the vessel will hold or holds a Load Line Certificate and/or Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate issued by a Classification Society; and
- (j) Whether the vessel, being an existing vessel, holds any other certificates relating to survey and if so the type of each certificate, its date of expiry and the name of the authority who issued the certificate.

14.2 When a vessel is to be built or an existing vessel is to be purchased, chartered or substantially altered for operations within the jurisdiction of the Authority the owner, or intending owner, shall comply with the requirements of the Survey and Certificates of Survey Section and, to ensure that the requirements of other appropriate Sections relating to the construction, equipment and outfitting of that vessel shall be met, submit appropriate information, plans and data to the Authority for assessment and approval.

14.2.1 The information submitted shall be in accordance with the following:

- (a) Information must be sufficient in detail to ensure that all the relevant requirements have been incorporated in the design. Extraneous and irrelevant information should be omitted where practicable. Written material shall be submitted in the English language.
- (b) Where any doubt exists, as to the information required to be submitted, clarification should be sought from the Authority.
- (c) Print outs should be clear, easy to read and properly identified.
- (d) The number of copies submitted shall be sufficient to permit the retention of two by the Authority.
- (e) Where a design is amended, subsequent to the initial submission, every plan, specification, etc, affected by the alteration, shall be amended accordingly and the date of amendment recorded. As necessary revised copies shall be forwarded immediately to the Authority.
- (f) Drawings and plans should be submitted according to one or more of the following scales: 1:1, 1:2, 1:5, or multiples of 10 thereof.

14.2.2 The extent of the information to be submitted will be dependent on classification and size of the vessel. The following may be used as a general guide:

- (a) All the information nominated in sub-clause 14.1 unless such information has previously been submitted in accordance with that sub-clause
- (b) the general arrangement plans
- (c) the construction plans, including transverse and longitudinal section
- (d) the lines plan
- (e) plans, specifications or data sheets to cover:

- (i) the scantlings of all members, including methods of fastening
  - (ii) the details of the closing devices
  - (iii) the bilge pumping arrangements
  - (iv) the details of the oil fuel system, including tanks, filling and venting arrangements, piping and valves
  - (v) where applicable, the arrangements for the loading, carriage and discharge of liquid cargoes
  - (vi) the structural fire protection arrangements and fixed fire appliances
  - (vii) the details of the rudder and stern frame, propeller brackets, engine and thrust seatings, propeller shafting, bearings and couplings, steering gear and alternative method of steering
  - (viii) where applicable, the welding schedule, the laminating schedule or the plastering programme
  - (ix) electrical equipment and wiring.
- (f) the preliminary stability information; and
- (g) such further plans, information and data as the Authority may require to determine the proper construction, machinery, equipment and safety of the vessel.

**PART 6-FAST CRAFT**

- 15.** A vessel that is a fast craft, as defined in Section 1 Parts 3 and 4, shall comply with the requirements of the USL Code as modified by following parts of the NSCV, as applicable:

**Part F, Special Vessels**

**Section 1, Fast Craft**

**[Subsection A, General Requirements](#)**

**[Subsection B, Category F1 Fast Craft](#)**

**[Subsection C, Category F2 Fast Craft](#)**

In the application of the NSCV Part F Section 1, references in that Section to other Parts, Sections, Subsections and Chapters of the NSCV shall be replaced by the equivalent Sections, Sub-Sections, Parts and Clauses of the USL Code.

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*

**APPENDIX A**

Refer to the [National Standard for Commercial Vessels \(NSCV\) Part B, General Requirements](#) Annex A,  
Methods for Establishing Measured Length

*(Amendment dated 1 October 2008)*