



Australian Government
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

AMSA EX24

Marine Safety (Emergency service vessels) Exemption 2025

I, Kaylene Dale, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (the National Marine Safety Regulator under section 9 of the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law*), make this instrument under subsection 143(1) of the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law*.

Dated 12 June 2025

Kaylene Dale
Chief Executive Officer

1 Name of instrument

This instrument is *Marine Safety (Emergency service vessels) Exemption 2025*.

2 Duration

This instrument:

- (a) commences on 1 July 2025; and
- (b) ceases to have effect at the end of 30 June 2030.

3 Definitions

In this instrument:

direct supervision means that the person being supervised is frequently within sight and hearing of the supervisor.

emergency service organisation (or *ESO*) means an organisation:

- (a) established to provide emergency response, emergency management services or disaster relief; and
- (b) given responsibilities by a State, Territory or Commonwealth government in an emergency or disaster.

Note The responsibilities of an ESO may be set out in a State, Territory or Commonwealth emergency management or search and rescue plan or subplan.

fire service organisation (or *FSO*) means an organisation established by State, Territory or Commonwealth legislation to provide the following services:

- (a) prevention, mitigation and suppression of fires;
- (b) protection of people from dangers to their safety and health from fire;
- (c) protection of property from destruction or damage by fire.

Great Barrier Reef Region has the meaning given by NSCV Part B.

inland waters means non-tidal waters.

MAR Maritime Training Package means the latest version of the Maritime Training Package developed by Australian Industry Standards.

Note Details are available at www.training.gov.au.

Marine Order 504 means *Marine Order 504 (Certificates of operation — national law) 2024*.

Marine Order 505 means *Marine Order 505 (Certificates of competency — national law) 2022*.

Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law — see Schedule 1 to the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012*.

NSCV Part B means *Part B — General requirements of the NSCV*.

Note See section 6 of the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law*, for the meaning of *National Standard for Commercial Vessels*.

operational area has the meaning given by NSCV Part B.

personal watercraft (or *PWC*) has the same meaning as in Marine Order 504.

propulsion power has the same meaning as in Marine Order 505.

registered training organisation (or *RTO*) means a training organisation registered by any of the following:

- (a) the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA);

- (b) the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority;
- (c) the Training Accreditation Council Western Australia.

sheltered waters has the meaning given by NSCV Part B.

supporting assessor means an individual who:

- (a) performs the role of gathering evidence for assessment while under direction; and
- (b) as follows:
 - (i) meets the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) as made under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* for a person contributing to assessment under direction; or
 - (ii) has relevant maritime experience or vocational competencies.

supporting trainer means an individual who:

- (a) meets the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)* as made under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* for a person delivering training under direction; or
- (b) has relevant maritime experience or vocational competencies.

Torres Strait zone has the meaning given by NSCV Part B.

under direction means a process of oversight and guidance to ensure either:

- (a) the quality of training being delivered by a supporting trainer; or
- (b) the quality of evidence gathered by a supporting assessor.

validated assessor means a person who:

- (a) is either a validated trainer or holds assessor skill set TAESS00019 (or successor), TAESS00011 or TAESS00001; and
- (b) has been approved by a VMR or ESO or FSO to assess a person's competence to operate a vessel, or be a member of crew on a vessel, up to a specified length and operational area; and
- (c) completed the unit of competency, another unit of competency or equivalent training that is relevant to any assessment provided.

validated trainer means a person who:

- (a) meets the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)* as made under the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* for a person delivering training and assessment without direction and as if they are delivering a nationally accredited qualification; and
- (b) has been approved by a VMR or ESO or FSO to train a person to operate a vessel, or be a member of crew on a vessel, up to a specified length and operational area; and
- (c) has:
 - (i) completed the unit of competency, another unit of competency or training that is at least equivalent to any unit of competency delivered by the person; or
 - (ii) knowledge and experience appropriate for the delivery of the training.

Note The RTO Standards are administered by ASQA, Training Accreditation Council Western Australia and Victoria Registration and Qualifications Authority.

volunteer marine rescue organisation (or **VMR**) means an organisation:

- (a) established for the primary purpose of undertaking activities related to marine search, rescue, or public safety; and
- (b) given responsibilities by a State, Territory or Commonwealth government in circumstances of an emergency or disaster.

Note The responsibilities mentioned in paragraph (b) may be set out in a State, Territory or Commonwealth emergency management or search and rescue plan or subplan.

4 Application

- (1) This instrument applies to a person undertaking duties or performing functions on a vessel mentioned in subsection (2).
- (2) Subject to subsection (4), this instrument applies to a domestic commercial vessel that is operated by an organisation used in connection to the following purposes or activities:
 - (a) search;
 - (b) rescue;
 - (c) emergency or disaster response;
 - (d) fire-fighting;
 - (e) mitigating threats to public safety;
 - (f) any other incidental activity.
- (3) The activity for paragraph (2)(f) includes:
 - (a) transporting individuals or equipment to and from incidents;
 - (b) training of volunteers or employees to ensure the safe operation of the vessel;
 - (c) promoting public awareness;
 - (d) supporting response to any pollution incident or potential pollution incident.
- (4) The vessel must be operated as follows:
 - (a) by an organisation that is:
 - (i) an ESO; or
 - (ii) an FSO; or
 - (iii) a VMR; and
 - (b) without consideration.

Note for paragraph (b) This exemption does not apply if a vessel is operated for fee for service or as a commercial activity. However, the organisation operating the vessel is permitted to accept unsolicited donations or government funding.

5 Exemption — certificates of competency

(1) Subject to the conditions mentioned in subsection (2), a person is exempt from the requirement to hold a certificate of competency under the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law* if:

- the person undertakes duties or performs functions on a vessel subject to section 4; and
- the duties are undertaken or the functions are performed either:
 - without consideration; or
 - by a worker of a volunteer organisation.

Note 1 This exemption applies to crew competency requirements only. Operators must also ensure that a vessel is operated within the limits of its certification.

Note 2 During a multi-agency exercise, the master or crew from an ESO, VMR or FSO may undertake duties or perform functions on another ESO, VMR or FSO vessel if the operator of that other vessel is satisfied the individual meets the requirements of Exemption 24. Under Marine Order 504, the operator has responsibility for ensuring crew meet competency requirements that apply including Exemption 24.

Note 3 A worker includes a volunteer or an employee.

(2) The person must:

- be at least 16 years old; and
- meet the medical and eyesight requirements that:
 - are determined by the operator of the vessel; and
 - take into account any guidance provided by the National Regulator on medical or eyesight requirements; and
- tell the operator of the vessel, in writing, about any long term or permanent medical condition that is likely to affect the person's ability to undertake the person's duties; and
- undertake duties or perform functions mentioned in Schedule 1 only if the person meets the competency, training and assessment requirements mentioned in Schedule 2 for the particular duties or functions; and
- meet any requirements of the operator of the vessel for on-going training.

(3) For duties or functions mentioned in Schedule 1 that are undertaken or performed on a vessel operated by a VMR — an alternative to paragraph (2)(d) is holding certification attained from that organisation, issued before 1 July 2018, that demonstrates competence to operate the vessel and undertake the duties or perform the functions.

6 Exemption — certificates of operation

(1) Subject to the condition mentioned in subsection (2), the owner of a vessel is exempt from paragraph 6(4)(f) of Schedule 1 of Marine Order 504 to the extent that it requires a certificate of competency to be held by the master or any crew of the vessel.

(2) The National Regulator may conduct an evaluation to ensure that training requirements mentioned in this instrument are being met.

Note When evaluating an organisation, the National Regulator may require it to give evidence to show that units of competency (or equivalent) are being delivered in accordance with this instrument. When determining whether to carry out an evaluation, the National Regulator may take into account any previous audit or evaluation of the organisation undertaken by another organisation such as ASQA.

Schedule 1 Duties or functions of persons

(subsections 5(2), 5(3) and 6(1))

1 Command of vessel operating in inland waters or PWC

The person commands:

- (a) a vessel operating in inland waters; or
- (b) a PWC.

2 Crew or deckhand

(1) The person:

- (a) assists, under the direct supervision of the person in charge of the vessel or its engines, a master or engineer with any task that may be required on board; or
- (b) for a vessel with an inboard engine — works, under the direct supervision of the person in charge of the vessel or its engines, in an engine room of a vessel with propulsion power <500 kW; or
- (c) for a vessel with an outboard engine — works, under the direct supervision of the person in charge of the vessel or its engines.

Note A person must be assessed to confirm that the person is competent to carry out the duties — see subclause 1(2) of Schedule 2.

(2) This clause does not apply to a vessel that is a vessel operating in inland waters or a PWC.

3 Command or operate to 3 nm from shore or sheltered waters

The person commands a vessel or operates the engines of a vessel that:

- (a) is <12 m long; and
- (b) is up to 3 nm from shore or sheltered waters; and
- (c) has:
 - (i) an inboard engine with propulsion power <500 kW; or
 - (ii) an outboard engine with unlimited propulsion power.

4 Command or operate beyond 3 nm from shore or sheltered waters

The person commands a vessel or operates the engines of a vessel as follows:

- (a) in a state or territory other than Queensland — up to 30 nm from shore or sheltered waters; and
- (b) in Queensland — either:
 - (i) up to 50 nm from shore or sheltered waters; or
 - (ii) within the Great Barrier Reef Region or the Torres Strait zone; and
- (c) the vessel:
 - (i) is <24 m long; and
 - (ii) has an inboard engine with propulsion power <500 kW or an outboard engine with unlimited propulsion power.

Schedule 2 Competency and training requirements

(subsection 5(2))

1 Command vessel operating in inland waters or PWC

The person must:

- (a) if the State or Territory where the vessel is operating has recreational boating operator licensing requirements — meet those requirements; and
- (b) complete training provided by the operator of the vessel on the vessel's operations.

2 Crew or deckhand

(1) The person must:

- (a) hold a current first aid certificate of at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid* or another course that the National Regulator considers to be equivalent; and
- (b) have completed the following units from the MAR Maritime Training Package, or another unit of competency or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be an equivalent:
 - (i) MARF028;
 - (ii) MARF029;
 - (iii) MARF060;
 - (iv) MARN008; and
- (c) have completed an induction provided by the operator of the vessel on the vessel's operations; and
- (d) have completed any additional units of competency or training required by the operator of the vessel; and
- (e) if a training record for the person is not maintained by the operator — maintain a record.

(2) A MAR Maritime Training Package, or other accredited unit of competency, must be delivered by an RTO.

(3) A non-accredited unit of competency, or training considered equivalent by the operator, must be delivered by a validated trainer or supporting trainer under direction of a validated trainer.

(4) A validated assessor must confirm that the person is competent to undertake the duties.

Note 1 A person requesting recognition of other units of competency, certificates or training should give the operator information about the content of the unit, certificate or training completed and evidence to show that the person has completed it. For more information on recognition of other units of competency, certificates or training — see the Australian Government website at www.training.gov.au.

Note 2 An assessment under Schedule 2 must include an assessment of competency by requiring the person to undertake a range of practical tasks relating to their duties.

Note 3 Only a validated assessor can make an assessment judgment.

3 Command or operate to 3 nm from shore or sheltered waters

Note For paragraph 5(2)(d), a person who meets the competency, training and assessment requirements set out in this clause is considered to have the equivalent competency, training and assessment requirements as those mentioned in clauses 1 and 2.

- (1) The person must:
 - (a) hold a current first aid certificate of at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid* or another course that the National Regulator considers to be equivalent; and
 - (b) have completed the MAR Maritime Training Package Coxswain Grade 2 near coastal course at certificate I level, or other units of competency or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent; and
 - (c) hold a Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (SROCP) or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent to the training required for this certificate; and
 - (d) have completed training provided by the operator of the vessel on setting up and securing a vessel towing operation; and
 - (e) have completed any additional units of competency or other training required by the operator of the vessel; and
 - (f) if a training record for the person is not maintained by the operator of the vessel — maintain a record.

Note for paragraph (b) These MAR units can be found at www.training.gov.au.

Note for paragraph (d) In addition to crew having appropriate training, a vessel must be equipped for towing.

- (2) A MAR Maritime Training Package, or other accredited unit of competency, must be delivered by an RTO.
- (3) A non-accredited unit of competency, or training considered equivalent by the operator, must be delivered by a validated trainer or supporting trainer under direction of a validated trainer.
- (4) A validated assessor must confirm that the person is competent to undertake the duties.

Note 1 An assessment under schedule 2 must include an assessment of competency by requiring the person to undertake a range of practical tasks relating to their duties.

Note 2 Only a validated assessor can make an assessment judgment.

4 Command or operate beyond 3 nm from shore or sheltered waters

Note For paragraph 5(2)(d), a person who meets the competency, training and assessment requirements set out in this clause is considered to have the equivalent competency, training and assessment requirements as those mentioned in clauses 1, 2 and 3.

- (1) The person must:
 - (a) hold a first aid certificate of at least HLTAID011 *Provide first aid* or another course that the National Regulator considers to be equivalent; and
 - (b) have completed the following from the MAR Maritime Training Package, or other units of competency or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent:
 - (i) Coxswain Grade 1 near coastal course at certificate II level (other than MARB027 and MARF030); and
 - (ii) MARB027 and MARF030 if applicable to vessel operations; and

(c) either:

- (i) hold a Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (SROCP) or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent to the training required for this certificate, and
- (ii) if fitted with a HF radiotelephone — a Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (LROCP) or have completed a unit of competency or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent to the training required for this certificate; and

(d) have completed training provided by the operator of the vessel on:

- (i) coordinating search and rescue operations; and
- (ii) setting up and securing a vessel towing operation; and

(e) have completed any additional units of competency or training required by the operator of the vessel; and

(f) if a training record for the person is not maintained by the operator of the vessel — maintain a record.

(2) However, from 1 July 2026, paragraph (1)(b) does not apply to duties or functions on a vessel 12 m to <24 m long — that person must have completed either of the following courses and corresponding additional units of competency, or completed other units of competency or other training considered by the operator of the vessel to be equivalent:

Course option	Additional units	Engineering competencies required unless another person on board has completed the units
Coxswain Grade 1 NC	MARF030, MARH017, MARH036, MARH037; MARK008	MARB028, MARC033, MARC035, and MARC039
Master up to 24m NC		MARB028, MARC033, MARC035, and MARC039

(3) A MAR Maritime Training Package, or other accredited unit of competency, must be delivered by an RTO.

(4) A non-accredited unit of competency, or training considered equivalent by the operator, must be delivered by a validated trainer or supporting trainer under direction of a validated trainer.

(5) A validated assessor must confirm that the person is competent to undertake the duties.

Note 1 An assessment under schedule 2 must include an assessment of competency by requiring the person to undertake a range of practical tasks relating to their duties.

Note 2 Only a validated assessor can make an assessment judgment.