



What is a simplified safety management system (SMS)?

All domestic commercial vessels must develop, use and maintain a safety management system (SMS).

An SMS consists of documented policies and procedures on how to keep your vessel, the environment, and all those on board safe.

AMSA recognises that some vessel operations are less complex, so their SMS don't need to be as complex.

If you are eligible for a simplified SMS, your SMS has a smaller set of requirements to meet. For Class 2 and Class 3 vessels these are:

- Vessel and contact details
- Risk assessment
- Crewing
- Policies and procedures
- Emergency plan
- Inspections & maintenance

This can be a digital or physical document. Using and maintaining your SMS means following your simplified SMS and updating it routinely.

Can I use a simplified SMS?

You can use a simplified SMS if you say **YES** to all of the following.

Vessel requirements	Yes	No
My vessel is Class 2 or Class 3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My vessel is less than 7.5 metres long.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My vessel carries no more than 4 day passengers (for Class 2 vessels).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My vessel does not carry dangerous goods as cargo.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My vessel is not operated primarily for towage.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My vessel does not have any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• berthed accommodation• an inboard engine operating on petrol, or any fuel that has a flashpoint of less than 60 degrees• a net reel, crane, lifting device or deck load, that may affect the vessel's stability or watertight integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered **NO** to any of these questions, you cannot use a simplified SMS.

How to build a simplified SMS

This toolkit will walk you through building your simplified SMS section by section. Each section includes an example of what it could look like. These examples are just a guide, you should make sure yours is specific to your operation.



Section 1: Vessel and contact details

In Section 1, you record:

- general information about the vessel
- key roles and responsibilities.

You MUST include	Done
Vessel details: UVI, type of vessel and operation, area of operation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owner's contact details: name, address, phone number and email address (if any)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Details of a person who may be contacted at any time about the operation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Owner's responsibility and authority statement, which covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • details of anybody who can act on behalf of the owner • the relationship / lines of communication between master / crew and onshore staff. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the designated person is not the owner:

You MUST also include	Done
Designated person's details: name, phone number and email address	<input type="checkbox"/>
Designated person's responsibility statement, which covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the roles and responsibilities of the designated person that relate to the safe operation of the vessel. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

If the master is not the owner:

You MUST also include	Done
Master's responsibility and authority statement (not required if the master is the owner), which covers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • responsibility for complying with the operation requirements • authority to make decisions for the safety of the vessel, the environment, and persons on or near the vessel • authority to request the owner's assistance to ensure safety of the vessel, the environment, and persons on or near the vessel. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

A **designated person** is responsible for:

- helping develop, implement and maintain the vessel's SMS
- monitoring and supporting safe vessel operations
- preventing pollution
- linking the crew with the owner.

VESSEL AND CONTACT DETAILS

EXAMPLE ONLY

Where owner is master and designated person

Vessel details

Tinnie123

UVI: 499999

6.2 m open aluminium net fishing boat for operations in sheltered waters

Owner details and authority statement

Tony Lee

Address: 123 Jones Street, Streaky Bay, South Australia 5680

Phone: 0123 xxx xxx

Email: tonylee@xxxxxx.com.au

As the owner is also the master and designated person, crew can communicate directly with the owner or Kim Lee in their role as emergency contact and operational support. Kim Lee may act on the owner's behalf.

Emergency contact and operational support

Kim Lee

Phone: 0123 xxx xxx

Email: kimlee@xxxxxx.com.au

Where designated person is not the owner

Designated person authority statement

As the designated person, Kim is responsible for the following:

- Monitoring the safe operation of the vessel, and safety of all people on or near vessel
- Ensure the SMS is implemented and working as intended
- Ensuring pollution prevention aspects of vessel operations are implemented and working as intended
- Providing support and resources to vessel, including giving advice and guidance on policies and procedures to masters and crew
- Alerting the owner to safety issues raised by masters and crew that cannot be satisfactorily resolved
- In consultation with master and crew, review relevant sections of the SMS following any incidents or concerns raised by masters or crew
- In consultation with master and crew, ensure inductions, training, and emergency procedures practice are carried out
- Providing briefings to the owner as required

Designated person

Kim Lee

Phone: 0123 xxx xxx

Email: kimlee@xxxxxx.com.au

Where master is not the owner

Master's responsibility and authority statement

The master is responsible for the following tasks:

- Pre-operating checks are carried out to ensure vessel is safe to operate and checks are recorded in the vessel logbook
- Coordinating and managing crew tasks to ensure all work is carried out in a safe and timely manner
- Ensuring safe navigation at all times
- Reporting hazards, risks, and non-conformances to the designated person at the first possible opportunity
- Delivering induction and refresher training for crew
- Being involved with review of SMS

The master has full authority from the owner to:

- Make decisions for the safety of the vessel, the environment, and persons on or near the vessel
- Request the owner's assistance to ensure the safety of the vessel, the environment, and persons on or near the vessel.



Section 2: Risk assessment

A risk assessment is the foundation of your SMS. Once you know the risks, you can make sure you have the right people, policies and procedures to keep your operation and crew safe.

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to a risk assessment. It should be tailored to the operations of each vessel.

How to do a risk assessment

1. Identify your risks

Think about your vessel's operations, what could go wrong and potentially cause harm to:

- the vessel
- people on or near the vessel
- the environment around the vessel.

Write down each risk.

2. Control your risks

Write out what actions and controls you'll use to eliminate each risk.

If you can't eliminate it, decide how to minimise the risk.

Work with the master and crew of the vessel, if any, when developing or reviewing your risk assessment.

Risk checklist

Your risk assessment must include:

What you MUST include	Done
Risks that could harm the vessel, people on or near the vessel, and its environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>
When a lifejacket must be worn by any person on board.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The risk of fatigue to the master and any crew.	<input type="checkbox"/>

RISK ASSESSMENT

EXAMPLE ONLY – YOUR RISKS AND CONTROLS WILL DEPEND ON YOUR OPERATION

Risks	Controls
Inclement weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check weather forecasts and updates• Local knowledge• Emergency contact knows where vessel is going• Seaworthy vessel• Lifejackets worn at all times• Safety equipment and EPIRB• And...
Launching and retrieving	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training in launching, retrieving, and boarding• Ramp condition and shared zones• Tide for access• Vessel and trailer secure• And...
Capsize / flooding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't overload vessel• Avoid bad weather• Level flotation• Lifejacket worn at all times• And ...
Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fatigue plan• Minimum 10 hours rest in every 24-hour period• Daytime operations only• Regular rest breaks• And ...
Dehydration / heat stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take and drink plenty of water• Wear sun protection• And ...
Person overboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add items
Loss of steering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add items
Slips, trips, and falls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add items
Collision and grounding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add items

Be sure to include risks and controls for your vessel specific operations (e.g. net fishing, passenger management solo operator etc.) linking the crew with the owner.



Section 3: Crewing

In this section you will need to show the number of crew you need for your operation.

How to work out your crewing

To work out your crewing, think about:

- The risks identified in your risk assessment
- Your vessel's operations (e.g. fishing, charter, etc.)
- The tasks the master and crew are doing, and the training and qualifications they need
- The risk of fatigue to the master and crew
- The areas where you operate your vessel, the expected conditions (e.g. weather, climate, and water temperatures), and the duration of voyages
- Vessel design, including the equipment you have on board
- Crew needed for your vessel's emergency plan
- Maintenance of the vessel, its machinery and equipment
- The external support available to the vessel

Class 2 vessels carrying passengers also need to think about effective and timely passenger monitoring.

What to put in your SMS

Items to provide	Done
How you worked out your crewing, considering the dot points above.	<input type="checkbox"/>
The number of crew.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crew qualifications needed, including radio communications and current first aid to at least HLTAID011 Provide first aid.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A crew list, including each crew member's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name, address, phone number, and email address (if any) • role and their certificates • next of kin's name, address, and phone number 	<input type="checkbox"/>

If your crewing is 1 person, the owner must allow the master to have at least 10 hours rest in any 24-hour period.

For the safe operation of the vessel, the appropriate crewing required is 2 crew:

- Master – Coxswain Grade 1 or 2 NC, including Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency (SROPC)
- One other crew member – GPH
- All crew to have current first aid certificate.

This is based on:

- Owner's 20 years practical experience in industry and local knowledge of the waters where operations are carried out
- GPH has worked on vessel for 10 years and is well trained in fishing operations and emergency drills
- Vessel is a 6.2m open fishing boat used for net fishing
- Vessel operates within the shallow waters of a bay that is designated as sheltered waters and is no more than 1 nautical miles from shore at any time
- Vessel operates for maximum period of 6 hours on any given day
- Nets are set and hauled using a small, powered winch
- Catch is sorted on deck
- Crew needed to manage any emergencies
- Vessel maintenance schedule is followed
- Onshore emergency contact who knows where we're going and when we're due back

Crew list

Chris Lee

General purpose hand – holds GPH and Provide first aid certificates

Address: 456 Jones Street, Streaky Bay, South Australia 5680

Phone: 0123 xxx xxx

Email: chrislee@xxxxxx.com.au

Next of kin

Jess Lee

Address: 456 Jones Street, Streaky Bay, South Australia 5680

Phone: 0467 xxx xxx



Section 4. Policies and procedures

You MUST include	Done
Pre-operating checks	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures for getting on and off the vessel	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures for key vessel operations	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lifejacket policy, which must account for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the risks identified in your risk assessment making sure lifejackets are readily available 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug and alcohol policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crew training (induction, duties, emergency procedures, refresher training)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other policies and procedures that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> control the risks from your risk assessment (e.g. fatigue) are specific to your vessel and operation (e.g. net fishing) 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Class 2 vessels carrying passengers also need to write down the following:

You MUST include	Done
A passenger induction procedure, covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inducting passengers as soon as practical after they board the vessel Briefing passengers on the emergency plan and when to wear lifejackets 	<input type="checkbox"/>
A procedure for monitoring passengers at all times.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Each time you conduct training (including inductions and emergency drills) you **must** record:

- A description of the training or drill
- Name and signature of all training participants
- Date of training

You can record this in your logbook. You **must** keep this record for 5 years.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

EXAMPLE ONLY

Pre-operating checklist

- Battery and navigation lights
- Outboard engine - Test start, check fuel tank full
- Deck equipment - Anchor and chain, radio, chart plotter, bailer with line
- Safety equipment – Lifejackets, flares, lifebuoys, waterproof torch, fire extinguishers, first aid kit
- Check weather forecast
- Emergency contact informed of voyage plan
- Mobile phone (full battery, in-service)
- Equipment, water, and food onboard and securely stowed
- Personal protective clothing, cap, eyewear, sunscreen
- Master and crew fit for work
- Master and crew wearing lifejackets
- And...

Vessel access

- Visually inspect boat ramp for signs of wear and tear and obstructions
- Visually inspect water for tidal movement, water depth and wind direction
- Undertake pre-launch checks (bungs in place, strapping removed)
- When safe and boat ramp is clear, reverse trailer
- Someone to monitor reversing vehicle from safe distance
- Launch vessel
- Crew member to give master mooring line and then board vessel via boarding ladder
- Master to secure vessel to jetty
- Master parks vehicle and trailer and then boards vessel from jetty
- And...

Lifejacket wear

- Level 150 auto-inflating lifejackets to be worn at all times when onboard vessel
- Lifejackets to be inspected prior to and at end of each day's operations
- Lifejackets to be serviced in accordance with manufacturer's specifications
- Lifejackets to be replaced when damaged
- Lifejackets to be cleaned and dried and then stowed away following inspection at end of each day's operations
- Spare lifejackets stored under centre console
- And...

Fatigue plan

- Crew trained on causes and signs of fatigue
- Vessel operates for maximum of 6 hours per day and only in fair weather
- Total workday, including travel to/from work, pre-operating checks, processing of catch and vessel/equipment maintenance does not exceed 10 hours per day
- And...

Crew training

New crew to do an induction / familiarisation that covers:

- Company and vessel induction
- Safe working procedures
- The emergency plan
- Fatigue management
- Drug and alcohol policy
- And...

Every 3 months:

- Emergency drills
- And...

Drug and alcohol policy

- Zero-tolerance approach to use of alcohol and drugs on vessel
- All crew to report to work free from effects of alcohol and drugs
- Crew taking prescription medication to provide letter from doctor that they are fit for work
- Crew under the influence will not board vessel or work that day
- And...

Ensure you include policies and procedures that are specific to your operation (e.g. net fishing, pylon maintenance etc.)

Each task must be assigned to either the master or a crew member with the right skills, knowledge and competency.



Section 5: Emergency plan

Your emergency plan ensures you are prepared, helps prevent injuries, save lives, and reduce damage to your vessel and the environment.

Set up your emergency plan

Write down what to do in each of these emergencies if relevant, and the role of each crew member:

Items to provide	Done
Fire	<input type="checkbox"/>
A person overboard or unaccountably missing	<input type="checkbox"/>
An injury or other medical emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>
Master incapacitated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of steering	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of propulsion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel collision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel grounding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vessel flooding	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oil or fuel spill	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adverse weather or water conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any other circumstance identified by your risk assessment that may require an emergency response.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Class 2 vessels carrying passengers with only a master on board:

You MUST also include	Done
Make a laminated copy of the emergency safety procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Display that copy clearly and prominently on board, if practical	<input type="checkbox"/>

You must keep a copy of your emergency plan on board where it is readily accessible.
It must also have a way for the crew to record and confirm the presence of all on board in an emergency.

EMERGENCY PLAN

EXAMPLE ONLY

Fire <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quickly assess the situation to see if fire can be brought under control• Use portable fire extinguisher or bailer to extinguish the fire• Use radio or mobile phone to alert emergency contact, other vessels and if required, emergency services• If cannot be brought under control prepare to abandon vessel – lifejackets are worn at all times• Await emergency assistance• And...	Person overboard <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lifejackets are worn at all times• Deploy lifebuoy• If possible, swim to and reboard vessel• Manoeuvre the vessel to allow person easier access• Use grappling hook and boarding ladder to assist person back on board the vessel• Use radio or mobile phone to alert emergency contact and/or emergency services where they are injured, unable to be located or cannot be reboarded• And...
Oil/fuel spill <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and stop the source of spill• Wear PPE to protect yourself• Confine the spill• Evaluate and use oil absorbent clean-up materials provided• Assess water and environment for any spill and commence clean-up• Report to AMSA and local authorities• And...	Master incapacitated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure master is fit and well to undertake operations• Crew member to take command and control of vessel and deploy the anchor• Use radio or mobile phone to alert emergency contact and/or emergency services• And...
Loss of steering/propulsion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess the situation• Confirm the stability and integrity of the vessel• If vessel is drifting deploy the anchor• Have crew maintain lookout while master attends to any mechanical issues• Use radio or mobile phone to alert emergency contact or other vessels in the area• And...	Collision <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check vessel for damage• Take steps to control/limit any flooding• Administer first aid as necessary• If another vessel is involved – assist others• Alert emergency contact and/or emergency services• Lifejackets worn at all times• If the vessel cannot be operated safely, remain with vessel if it is safe to do so, until help arrives• And...
Grounding <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check vessel for damage• Take steps to control/limit any flooding• If possible, head for safe haven• Use radio or mobile phone to alert emergency contact and/or emergency services• Lifejackets worn at all times• If the vessel cannot be operated safely, remain with vessel provided it is safe to do so, until help arrives• And...	Vessel flooding or capsize <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lifejackets worn at all times• Remain with vessel if possible and safe to do so until help arrives• If required move to assembly station and prepare to abandon vessel• If possible – use radio or mobile phone to alert nearby vessels or emergency response agencies• Activate the EPIRB or PLB• And...

Your emergency plan must also include procedures for:

- adverse weather or water conditions
- personal injury or other medical emergency
- any other emergency identified by your risk assessment



Section 6. Maintenance

This section covers inspections and maintenance for your:

- vessel
- machinery
- equipment.

How to set up your inspection and servicing plans

1. Set up your inspection plan

You MUST include	Done
A schedule for when you will inspect specific equipment, machinery, and your vessel.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Who can conduct your inspections. This must be the owner or another person with sufficient experience and knowledge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A record of each inspection, any issues/hazards found, and corrections made.	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Set up your servicing plan

You MUST include	Done
When your machinery and equipment will need to be serviced, based on the manufacturer's instructions.	<input type="checkbox"/>

You can record each inspection and each service in your logbook.

MAINTENANCE

EXAMPLE ONLY

Inspection plan

Inspections must be conducted by Tony Lee or Kim Lee.
Any deficiencies and corrections will be recorded in the logbook.

When	Item
Every Monday	VHF radio – test call
	Visual check of vessel (hull, engine, fuel tank, fuel filter and hoses, safety gear)
First Monday of every month	EPIRB/PLB – registered, in date and tested
	First aid kit – in date and nothing missing
	Safety equipment (lifebuoys, flares, signalling light, waterproof torch, binoculars) – in date (where applicable) and good condition
First Monday in January	Portable fire extinguishers – in date, good condition

Servicing plan

When	Item
July	Lifejackets – service
	Outboard – service
	Portable fire extinguishers - service

Record of inspections (in logbook)

Inspection date	Deficiency	Correction
06/01/25	Fire extinguisher check	In date and good condition. Annual service due in July 2025 <i>Kim Lee</i>
06/01/25	Weekly check	VHF test call all good. Vessel, engine etc. and safety gear checked – all ok <i>Tony Lee</i>
03/03/25	EPIRB battery expires in April.	Replaced EPIRB and registered with AMSA. Disposed of old EPIRB at Tony's Batteries. Documentation filed. <i>Kim Lee</i>
07/07/25	Lifejackets need to be serviced	Serviced by Jan's Nautical Shop and documentation filed. <i>Tony Lee</i>
07/07/25	Fire extinguisher service	Annual service completed by Dave's Fire Servicing. Good condition, no need to replace <i>Kim Lee</i>



Section 7. Review

After you've made your SMS, you'll need to do regular reviews. This means checking that your risk assessment and procedures are working to keep your operation safe.

What to put in your SMS

Set up your review record.

You MUST include	Done
A place where you can record: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• date of the review• signature or initials of the person who did the review	<input type="checkbox"/>

Your review record can be at the end of each reviewed section, or at the end of the SMS.

When you need to review

You need to review your **risk assessment**:

- if you plan to start a different operation
- after a marine incident
- if the master believes the risks have changed

You need to review your **procedures, including your emergency plan**:

- every 12 months
- if you find a new or increased risk when you review your risk assessment.