



# WORKING BOATS

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**WHAT'S NEW – THE A-B-C OF THE NATIONAL SYSTEM**

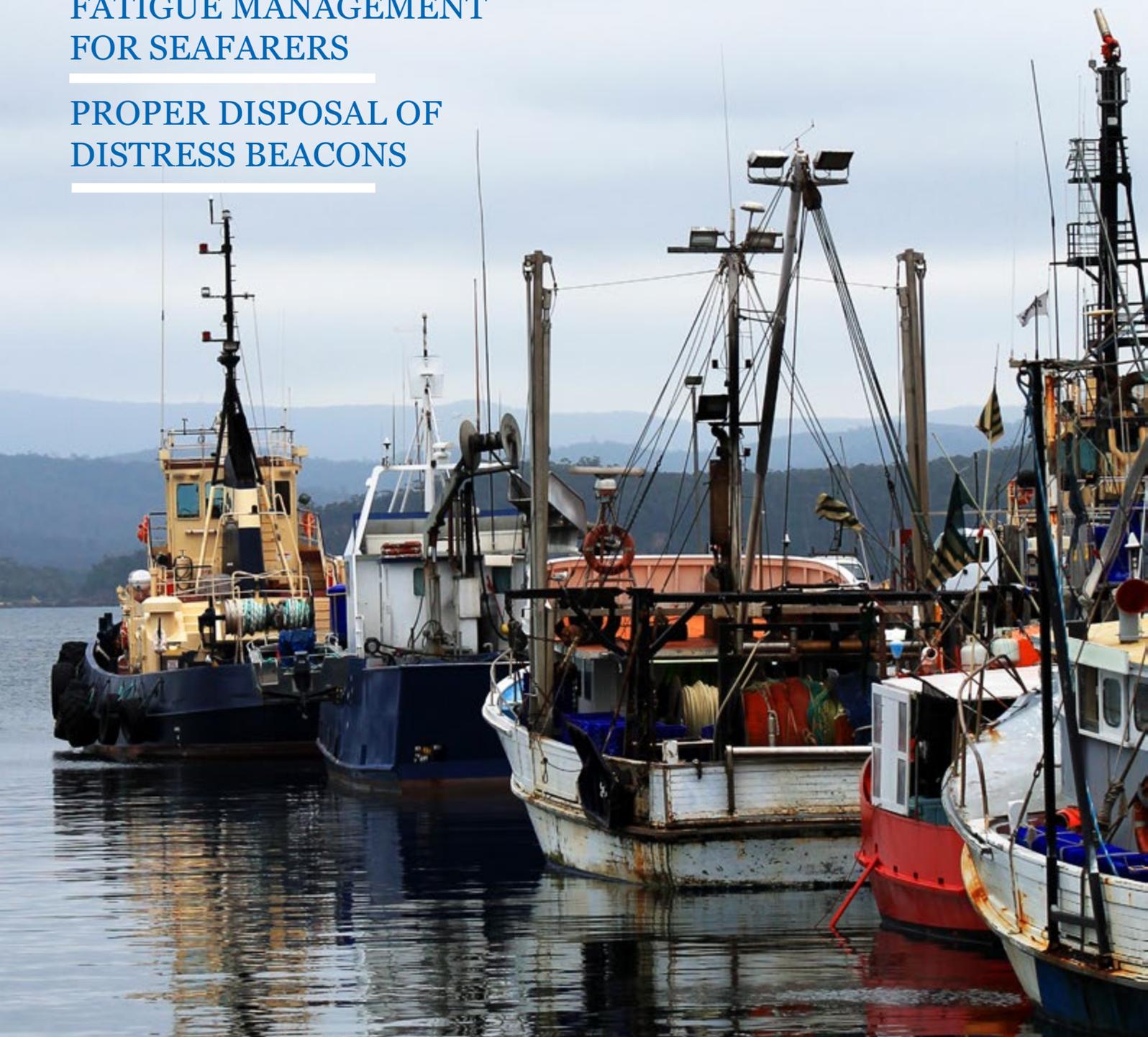
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**FATIGUE MANAGEMENT FOR SEAFARERS**

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**PROPER DISPOSAL OF DISTRESS BEACONS**

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## What's New – The A-B-C of the National System

This edition of Working Boats comes at an important time. The National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety (National System) has now been running for seven months—that's enough time to have a good idea of what's working, and what needs more attention. There have been resounding successes and some areas we have identified as needing more work.

We are working on making our communication with you faster and more effective, and we're committed to continuing this communication with you. We also have closer cooperation between state, territory and federal departments, which should be making it easier for you to operate across borders.

From the beginning we knew that success would be in how clearly we explained the reform's changes to industry. You can't take 50 different laws and boil them down to one national law without explaining to people what it means for them. In preparation for this task we put full-time AMSA staff in regional offices across the country, with their single aim being to work with industry and government to communicate the reforms—you can see an article on them, and their contact details, later in this edition. Industry has told us it welcomes the support, but also made it clear that we need to keep things simple—explain the basics and avoid the waffle.

We hear you, and will focus on the basics while we work on the next stage of the reform. That next stage is about making the rules simpler and more flexible, while still keeping our focus on safety. We're also thinking about the improvements being made now and how they can still be useful in 20 years' time. We will be asking you soon to look at some of our ideas and to share your ideas with us.

One of the 'keep it simple' things we've done is take the questions we're hearing from you and translated them into a simple A-B-C answer sheet. Please see the [AMSA website](#) for more information. These sheets answer your questions on crewing, operating one or more vessels, survey and tickets. We will use this document whenever we meet with you and the state maritime agencies to ensure the messages you receive from AMSA and our state partners are consistent. If you have any thoughts or suggestions on these A-B-Cs let us know – you can email us on [national.system@amsa.gov.au](mailto:national.system@amsa.gov.au) or phone 1300 517 246.

In making the rules simpler and more flexible, our aim is to lessen the regulatory load on the maritime industry while keeping a high level of safety. We look forward to your help and input with this important task.



“ We are working on making our communication with you faster and more effective ”





## How many qualified crew do you need on your vessel?

The Revised National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) – Part E, introduces new requirements for the crewing of Domestic Commercial Vessels (DCVs). The requirements are being introduced in accordance with the following National System Transitional Requirements:

- all new Class 1, 2 & 3 DCV operations must comply with NSCV Part E upon commencing operations
- existing Class 1 vessel operations must comply with NSCV Part E by 1 July 2014
- existing Class 2 or 3 vessel operations must comply with NSCV Part E by 1 July 2016

Note: Pre-existing grandfathered crewing arrangements determined by a marine safety agency prior to commencement of the National System remain in effect. Grandfathered crewing arrangements do not relieve DCV owners of their obligation to determine appropriate crew for each type of operation of the vessel.

DCV owners with grandfathered crewing conditions may apply to the National Regulator to be considered as a new vessel operation and satisfy the relevant criteria.

### Determining appropriate crew

Schedule 2 of NSCV Part E specifies the core complement of personnel that must be carried on board based upon length and kW propulsion power. A vessel must carry crew with certificates meeting the requirements found in NSCV Part D Crew Competencies. Core complement is a base level of crew for basic navigation, engineering and handling of the vessel.

Note: A vessel can only operate with core compliment under certain conditions. For more information see NSCV Part E – Operations.

National System transitional rules say that to operate legally a DCV owner must carry out a risk assessment of their vessel's operations to determine appropriate crewing

### Risk assessment

NSCV Part E, Schedule 2 Operation Requirements says the owner of a DCV must determine appropriate crew by evaluating the risks to the vessel, the environment and everyone who will be on or near the vessel. It also sets out the factors that must be considered, including:

- the tasks and activities of the vessel including on-board operations and potential risks
- the number of people to be carried
- the design characteristics and competencies for technological aids fitted
- the area of operation and weather conditions
- the duration of the voyage including fatigue of the master and crew
- requirements for emergency preparedness and response.

For more information including please visit the [AMSA website](#).



## Certificate of Competency Task Books

AMSA is currently updating all Certificate of Competency Task Books to make sure they reflect the new MAR Maritime Training Package which will be delivered by approved training organisations from early 2014. The revised AMSA 2014 task books are expected to be released in April 2014 and will meet the National Standards for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) as outlined in Part D.

Current task books can still be issued and signed off as complete by marine safety agencies and AMSA-approved training organisations. A list of approved training organisations is available on the [AMSA website](#). All current versions of task books and Record of Practical Experience and Sea-Service (ROPES) must be completed by 31 December 2014 to be considered for a sea service assessment.

Candidates who wish to use the AMSA 2014 version of the task book once released need to know the following information:

Candidates who enrol in a course with an approved training organisation who have agreed to

use the AMSA 2014 task books as part of their training and assessment plan:

- must complete the approved task book provided by the approved training organisation in which they are enrolled. The approved training organisation will sign off the task book as completed before the candidate can be issued with an Australian Qualification Framework certificate
- only task books signed off as completed by the approved training organisation are able to be submitted for a reduction in qualifying sea service.

Candidates issued a task book prior to 1 July 2013 under a state or territory arrangement will be considered as having the equivalent task book. These task books must be completed under the issuing arrangements before 31 December 2014.

The requirements for completing an AMSA 2014 task book do not apply to current task books and ROPES.



## Fatigue management for seafarers

Marine and Safety Tasmania (MaST) has recently published a valuable article on fatigue management while working on the water. The following is a section of the article, which was published in MaST's Safety Bulletin – January 2014:

*Work in the Maritime Industry is stressful and combined with a lack of sleep; a mariner can easily become fatigued. This, combined with other factors such as the vessel's motion, vibration, heat and cold, noise and perhaps an unsatisfactory diet, can cause the situation to get out of hand.*

*Recently an incident occurred where a vessel ran aground and became a total loss as a result of fatigue. The scenario was typical; the Skipper of the single-handed vessel had been fishing for several days, was under pressure to get his catch to the market and had a long steam to the processor. The skipper thought he was managing his tiredness through catnaps to be woken periodically by his watch alarm; however he had got to the stage where he thought he should anchor for a while.*

*At this point he still had a further hour to steam to an anchorage, but went to sleep prior to arriving. The vessel steamed straight ashore and the first thing the Skipper knew was when it went aground.*

*In this case the vessel was a total loss but luckily the Skipper was not badly injured and was rescued shortly after the grounding.*

*How could this incident have been prevented?*

- *Operating with a crew and not single handily when a long steam is required.*
- *Planning the voyage better, to allow for rest breaks - if operating with a crew is not an option.*
- *Using a watch alarm as a means of sleeping while still steaming is not an option. COLREGS Rule 5 states "Every vessel shall at all times maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and of the risk of collision".*
- *Perhaps making arrangements with a processor to land the catch closer to the fishing grounds.*

## How to dispose of unwanted distress beacons

A friendly reminder that 121.5 MHz distress beacons were phased out in 2009 and replaced with 406 MHz distress beacons. All 121.5 MHz distress beacons should be disposed of appropriately at Battery World stores or the battery disconnected.

AMSA regularly responds to distress beacons that have been disposed inappropriately in rubbish tips, tying up emergency response resources and personnel which may be diverted from a genuine emergency.

121.5 MHz beacons can only be detected by overhead aircraft and not by satellite, and it can take several hours for emergency services to home in on the location.

All distress beacon owners should make sure they have a current 406 MHz beacon and it is registered with AMSA. This is a free service and only takes a couple of minutes to complete online or over the phone. Having a registered distress beacon means AMSA can contact the beacon owner or an emergency contact if the beacon is activated and get help on its way as soon as possible. AMSA also recommends the purchase of GPS enabled distress beacons. GPS enabled beacons allow AMSA to home in on the location in minutes via satellite.

Distress beacons can be registered via the [AMSA website](http://www.amsa.gov.au) or by phoning 1800 406 406.



# National System Regional Liaison Officers

While every government maritime employee around Australia has an interest in the National System, there are six of them whose main job it is to help industry.

They are the regional liaison officers employed by AMSA to help industry and other government agencies understand the reform, and to give them a local contact point when they need help.

AMSA's General Manager, Domestic Vessel Division, John Fladun, said the regional liaison roles were one of the early ideas of the National System.

"It was clear, even before day one, that you could not introduce the biggest ever maritime reform for Australia's domestic commercial vessel sector without there being some teething problems," John said.

"We knew we would need to build on the links with industry and state and territory maritime agencies if we were to get the best possible benefits from the new reforms. The regional liaison roles really grew out of that."

Mr Fladun said the six staff had been based around the country, rather than in Canberra, to get them closer to industry and their state counterparts. There are AMSA regional liaison officers based in Brisbane, Melbourne, Adelaide, Darwin and Perth.

Liaison officers carry out a range of tasks on any given day. Much of their time is spent answering the more detailed questions from industry that come in to AMSA's National System Support Centre,

“Their brief is simple... talk with industry to understand their issues... then work to develop a solution”

where phone and email enquiries from around the country are processed, or that are passed on to the liaison officers from other government agencies. They also meet industry and agency staff to get their perspective on how the National System is working.

"Along with state frontline staff, our liaison team is the one that's most likely to get early notice from industry that an issue might need to be addressed," John said.

"Their job when that happens is fairly simple – talk with industry members to understand the issue, and then work directly with their state agency or their Canberra-based colleagues to develop a solution."

He said liaison visits to regional areas to meet with specialist industry groups, such as boat hire and fisheries groups, had led to better understanding of their specific local needs.

Regional liaison staff and their contact details are:

- Brisbane: Keith Brightman (liaison manager) – 0419 812 940 and Mark Strong (liaison, New South Wales and Queensland) – 0400 126 606
- Melbourne: Wes Oswin (liaison, Victoria and Tasmania) – 0457 751 246
- Adelaide: Adam Brancher (Manager, Standards, and liaison, South Australia) – 0419 744 124
- Perth: Mark Beal (liaison, Western Australia) – (08) 9430 2108
- Darwin: Steve Whitesmith (liaison, Northern Territory) – 0408 976 282.

## National System FAQ's

**Q: The AMSA website has changed. Where do I find what I am looking for?**

A: All information regarding the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessel Safety can be found under the 'Domestic' heading on the [AMSA website](#). You can navigate to different sections of the website by using the menu on the left side of the screen, to find forms, guidance material or any other information that you may be looking for. Some of the menu items include 'Application forms', which contains all forms you will need to apply for a certificate or exemption; 'Industry guidance notices', which provide up-to-date information to help you understand operational aspects of the National System; and 'Vessels, operations and surveys', which contains further detailed information on many aspects of the National System, including certificates and incident reporting.

**Q. I have questions about changing my qualifications over to the National System, but I don't know where to start?**

A. To help you find information about each ticket or understand other aspects of the National System, we have prepared Guidance notices to explain what you will need to submit with your application, what your ticket lets you do and where to go to apply. Guidance notices on qualifications, sea service and medical fitness can be found on the [Forms page](#) or the [Fact sheets page](#) of the AMSA website—for details on vessel operations and other requirements of the National System. If you still need assistance, please see your local marine safety authority, or email [national.system@amsa.gov.au](mailto:national.system@amsa.gov.au).

**Q: Who do I call if I need to speak to someone about my vessel, qualification or certification?**

A: Your local maritime authority should be your first point of contact as they will make the decisions associated with your tickets and applications. As delegates of the National Regulator, they will be able to help you with your enquiry about the National System. You can find the contact details of your local maritime authority on the [AMSA website](#) and click on the department logo for your state or territory agency.

**Q. I need to change the details or apply to have a restriction lifted from a certificate, what do I need to do?**

A. If you would like to apply to change your operating conditions, such as restrictions to inshore waters, engine ratings or other limitations, you can use the [Application to Vary a Certificate form](#).

To update your personal details, or a change of representative for a company, the [Change of Personal details form](#) can be found on the [Forms page](#) on our website.

Otherwise, if you can't find a form that suits your needs, consider using the [National System Miscellaneous form](#) to notify the National Regulator of any change of circumstances.



# Australia's inaugural national shipping and domestic commercial vessel conference

# MARITIME 14

SHIP TO SHORE

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA  
10-12 NOVEMBER 2014



## Maritime 2014: Ship to Shore

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority is proud to announce the first national shipping and domestic commercial vessel conference. Combining the knowledge and resources of Natship and the Marine Safety Conference, this event will bring national and regional representatives across the maritime industry together in Melbourne from 10-12 November 2014.

Maritime 2014: Ship to Shore will provide a unique opportunity for people involved in both the shipping and domestic commercial vessel industries throughout Australia to discuss the latest maritime developments in regulations, safety, environment, seafarer qualifications, navigation and search & rescue. With a concurrent exhibition, this event will provide a meeting place for industry representatives to exchange ideas and knowledge, as well as to establish personal and business connections.

This is the first time since the commencement of the *Navigation Act 2012* and the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessels) National Law Act 2012* that representatives of government, business and industry will come together to discuss the issues, challenges and opportunities of Australia's maritime industry.

Registrations will open later in 2014. For more information, please visit the [Maritime 2014 website](#).



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

# Register or update your contact details

If you would like to receive this newsletter directly,  
please register your contact details below:

[www.amsa.gov.au/community/consultation/newsletter-survey](http://www.amsa.gov.au/community/consultation/newsletter-survey)

To learn more about the National System, catch up with AMSA on social media  
or on our [website](#).



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