



**Thursday, 7 May 2015**

## **Kit to assist commercial vessel owners meet safety deadline**

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) and the University of Tasmania's Australian Maritime College (AMC) have launched a resource kit to help industry and commercial vessel operators comply with revised operational safety requirements.

From July 1, 2015 operators of all passenger and hire and drive vessels will be required to have a safety management system (SMS) and comply with the revised standard under the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessels.

The requirement will also apply from July 1, 2016 for all operators of non-passenger and fishing vessels.

AMSA and AMC have worked together to develop a hands-on training workshop to help commercial vessel operators understand how to develop and implement a simple but effective SMS.

The Commercial Vessels Risk and Safety Management workshop resource kit has been designed to assist trainers to train domestic commercial vessel operators how to develop an SMS tailored to their operation.

AMSA has been working with industry and state-based maritime safety authorities to build awareness of their obligations and to assist commercial operators meet their requirements.

AMC is delivering the workshop through relevant courses at its Launceston campus.

AMSA Deputy CEO Gary Prosser said from July 1 next year safety requirements would be the same across the commercial vessel industry in every state, following the 2013 introduction of the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessels.

"Developing an SMS is about identifying and controlling risks, and providing assurance the risk controls are effective," Mr Prosser said.

"No-one knows the risks their operations present better than the vessel's operator and crew.

"The workshops provide vessel operators and their crews the information they need to create an SMS that works for their vessel and their business.

While some states already have a requirement for vessels to have an SMS in place, including Tasmania, Queensland, Victoria and NSW, other states have not.

"From July 1, 2016 the rules will be the same across Australia," Mr Prosser said.

AMC Safety and Survival Instructor Phillip Lenthall said the collaboration in developing the training resource kit would be particularly beneficial for smaller operators.

“For some vessels, with company support and infrastructure behind them there are resources to create a safety plan but for smaller operators it can be a more difficult task,” Mr Lenthall said.

“The feedback from vessel owners has guided the development of this resource kit to give them and their crews a practical, hands-on workshop to give them all the information they need to develop an SMS, to comply with national requirements.

“Including SMS requirements in our course materials helps to build a safety culture in the domestic commercial vessel industry, giving our students the skills to assess risks and develop systems to reduce risks.”

Industry bodies can nominate people interested in delivering the workshop, who then observe the workshop delivered by an AMSA or AMC staff member and participate in a train-the-trainer development session before they conduct the workshop under the supervision of AMSA or AMC.

The trainers are then able to organise and conduct workshops.

Mr Prosser said AMSA had been working with industry associations, including Southern Rocklobster Limited and Wildcatch Fisheries SA, to ensure their members are compliant with SMS requirements.

AMSA has recognised Southern Rocklobster Limited’s Clean Green program as an equivalent solution to meet requirements under the National System for Domestic Commercial Vessels.

Wildcatch will roll out workshops, using the resource kit, to its members who operate vessels in the abalone, prawn, charter boat, scale and Lakes and Coorong fishing industries in South Australia.

**Information released by:**

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