

April-June 2005
Volume 2 Issue 2

In this edition:

It's time for a 'ski-change': new Jet Ski Management Plan

Getting to know you: Iain Nye's netting of wisdom

Commercial marine industry's culture of safety

Sewage pump-out innovation

Education: Queensland's new Marine Studies syllabus

Queensland sets benchmark for marine pollution prevention

Learning from marine incidents

Latest marine safety news

Seascape

Maritime Safety Queensland



Maritime Safety Queensland
GPO Box 2595
Brisbane Queensland 4001

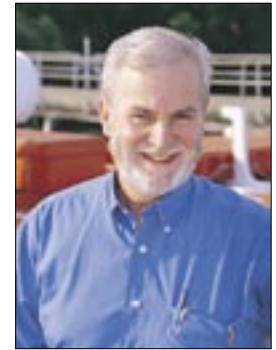
Internet: www.msq.qld.gov.au
Email: seascape@msq.qld.gov.au



Queensland Government
Maritime Safety Queensland



Hon Paul Lucas MP
Member for Lytton
Minister for Transport
and Main Roads



Captain John Watkinson
General Manager
Maritime Safety Queensland

Maritime safety is important to everyone who enjoys the state's waterways.

Maritime Safety Queensland conducts a range of programs and activities to ensure safety on the water becomes second nature to boat owners and operators.

Last year for example, following a regulatory review the agency implemented a new competency-based training program for licensing boaties, extended the requirement for the recreational marine driver licence, and made approved safety courses mandatory for deckhands on commercial and fishing vessels, as well as other regulatory measures.

The challenge to make maritime safety a priority never stops. The program continues this year with some legislative amendments that will help to further minimise the risk of marine pollution, deal more effectively with offenders, and enhance co-operation with other agencies in the interests of overall safety.

The aim of these amendments is to further encourage safety awareness on the one hand without jeopardising efficiency, and provide more watertight sanctions against offenders on the other.

The agency is always alert to the needs of industry, the broader community, its partner agencies and government - bearing in mind of course the state's international obligations and agreements or arrangements with other states and territories and the Commonwealth.

Maritime Safety Queensland recognises that consultation and partnerships are the best way to be both flexible and innovative.

Commercial maritime and fishing industries and recreational boating organisations throughout the state participated in the review of marine safety regulations last year. Federal and state government maritime authorities, education and enforcement agencies, the boating public and other interested community groups also contributed.

I hope there is a similar level of interest and participation in the review of marine safety and marine pollution legislation proposed for this year. I anticipate these amendments will come into effect at the start of next year.

The state government will continue to work with all stakeholders to make sure we get this legislation right. All those who enjoy and respect our wonderful waterways will be better off for having their say throughout this process.

Boat shows, such as the Brisbane Tinnie and Tackle Show and the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, present the potential buyer with an enormous variety of boat styles, each with their own handling characteristics and capabilities.

New boat manufacturers are always entering the market, and existing manufacturers are continually extending their range, adding optional extras to make our recreational time out on the water safer, easier and more enjoyable.

So how do you select a boat from the cavalcade of water craft available? It is important that you do a little research before making your choice, rather than making an impulse purchase that may not suit your needs.

You should consider the suitability of the craft relative to where you are likely to use it, what you intend to use it for, and the number of accompanying passengers. With this in mind, you then need to consider what safety equipment you will need.

If you intend to operate along the coast in partially smooth, open waters, or cross a coastal bar, you will need a well-powered boat with a deeper 'V' hull shape that can accommodate the breaking waves on the bar and provide a high level of stability in rough conditions.

Alternatively, a boat used exclusively in the relatively calm conditions found in smooth water limits or freshwater impoundments can be almost flat-bottomed, giving you the ability to move around on-board without sacrificing stability. This provides an ideal fishing platform.

Centre console models are becoming the choice for keen fisherman by providing a continuous walkway around the vessel. Half-cabin runabouts equipped with amenities and holding tanks are ideal if you intend to go on extended or overnight trips.

Where you use your boat, either smooth, partially smooth, or open waters, determines the level of safety equipment you should carry on board to meet your safety obligation.

For new boats, check to ensure there is an Australian Builders Plate affixed which highlights the maximum outboard kW/kg, persons, load, and buoyancy/flotation capability.

If you are going to home garage your boat, you should first determine if your vehicle is able to meet the towing requirements for the boat and trailer, including the launching and retrieval process.

You should discuss all of these issues with a reputable boat dealer who can give you professional advice before making your selection. This way you can factor-in all requirements to the final purchase price.



It's time for a 'ski change'

The State Government's new jet ski enforcement team has been cracking down on errant jet ski users as the state government prepares to act on its Jet Ski Management Plan.

Transport Minister Paul Lucas said three members of the new full-time education and enforcement team had been patrolling known jet ski "hot spots" in south east Queensland since Boxing Day 2004.

In its first three months of operations, the education and enforcement team patrolled the Gold Coast focussing on the Broadwater, Currumbin Creek and Nerang River. The team also covered the Brisbane region, particularly the Brisbane River, Moreton Bay and Pine River.

On the Sunshine Coast, Noosa, Golden Beach and Pumicestone Passage were the focus of attention. In April, they are scheduled to expand operations further north to Hervey Bay, the Whitsundays and beyond.

"They've intercepted and spoken to more than 350 jet ski riders, paying particular attention to explaining the existing requirements for jet ski use, and the release of the management plan," Mr Lucas said.

"While the focus has been on education, the team has issued 45 infringement notices for a range of offences including speeding, being unlicensed, allowing an unlicensed operation, and exceeding six knots within 30 metres of an anchored vessel.

"Their activities have enabled them to talk to the general boating community and local residents about the release of the Jet Ski Management Plan, and the State government is now certain a majority of people support the plan and the increased education and enforcement presence."

Following a review prompted by a growing number of complaints about jet skis, state cabinet approved the plan in December, and invited public comment while it prepared the way for the new arrangements to govern their use.

Under the plan, scheduled for implementation from 1/7/05, the state government will consider submissions to restrict jet ski use in certain areas. The plan also requires jet skiers hold a special licence and standardises the minimum distance that must be maintained between jet skis and people in the water, moored vessels, infrastructure and the shore.



The stepped-up education and enforcement presence was one of the five key initiatives contained in the plan that could be put in place immediately.

Mr Lucas said the plan balanced the needs of waterside residents, recreational boaties, the general community and the environment with those of jet skiers. It also promoted increased safety for jet skiers by improving their skills and knowledge.

"Although jet skis make up only 4% of registered recreational boats, since 2001 jet skis have accounted for up to 7.6% of all reported recreational marine incidents and 10% of accidents causing serious injury," he said.

Above: Mark Alen, James Ulyate (also pictured riding above) and Peter Beloff from Queensland's jet ski enforcement team.



Show time!

Maritime Safety Queensland continues to sponsor the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show, now in its 16th year.

For Maritime Safety Queensland the Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show is an ideal time to highlight the importance of the continuing development of a culture of safety among the recreational boating fraternity, and to continue fostering strong partnerships with boating industry and associations.

The show is a key event each year on the national boating industry calendar and last year broke all attendance records. The biggest, and probably the most significant boat show in the southern hemisphere, it gives visitors an opportunity to learn more about the latest advances in all aspects of boating.

The show provides a forum for Australian marine manufacturers to sell and export their products and services overseas. Through the delivery of the industry's latest products, it has gained a reputation as the showcase of the Australian marine industry to the world.

And the world continues to knock on the door. This year official delegations from the Chinese and Malaysian governments are visiting the show, as well as several industry associations from other nations, and representatives from other boat shows from around the world.

Countries represented at last year's show included, Japan, China, Taiwan, United States, New Zealand, Korea, India, United Kingdom, Malaysia and Singapore.

The 2005 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show will be held from May 19 to 22.

For more details visit:
www.sanctuarycoveboatshow.com.au

Netting of wisdom

A quarter of a century ago, Iain Nye started in the commercial fishing industry. Today, with a world of experience under his belt, he operates two prawn trawlers based at Mooloolaba.

In many ways, Iain Nye is a typical commercial fisherman - a knockabout Aussie, not keen to be interviewed, but with some valuable insights he's learned through the University of Hard Knocks.

After many years on the water, the 53-year-old spends most of his time these days attending to the business side of things on solid land. He calls his two skippers, who have been with him for over 10 years, and crew 'mates' rather than just 'employees'.

He has a few firm ideas about how a trawling operation should be run safely.

He admits to sometimes pacing the floor when the *Lauren G*, a steel trawler, and the *Galaxy*, a timber trawler (both pictured right at the mouth of the Mooloolaba River), are out to sea and the wind starts howling and seas rise. He's confident though he's done everything possible to ensure his mates' safety.

Iain takes a proactive approach to safety. Experience has taught him some measures beyond the requirements of the law can prevent accidents and provide some peace of mind.

"Safety is a matter of common sense," he said.

"It's about sobriety, good equipment and safe work practices. There are no corners you can cut - that's a slippery slide to nowhere. My crew have got families and they've got to come home."

In 25 years of commercial fishing, despite his best efforts, two serious incidents have occurred on Iain's ships, fortunately each involving minimal damage. He has heeded the lessons learnt from these incidents and from the mistakes of others.

In 1999 when *Galaxy* was entering the Whitsundays it was side-swiped by a 3000-tonne ship, resulting in a lost boom, but managed to stay afloat. An investigation by the Australian Transport Safety Bureau concluded that contrary to claims by the foreign ship's captain, it had not made any course adjustments to avoid the collision.

"We had a 750-watt mercury light, two 1500-watt quartz halogens plus a stern light, and we were still hit," Iain said.

"The crew were sleeping and the poor old cook, who was skippering, walked out the back and had a look around. The ship was so close she had to look up to see its navigation lights. The crew all came out of it okay though.

"That incident taught us a couple of things. Lighting should be directed down onto the deck. If lights are scattered everywhere in the night it makes it impossible for approaching vessels to see the actual navigation lights. Also, crew must be observant."



A piece of equipment worth \$4.50 caused the second incident which led to \$37,000 worth of damage to a marina.

"We had a failure in a cleavace which holds the outer cable of the gear change cable. It caused the boat to stay in forward gear as it approached the marina. It took a self-steer mechanism off the back of a yacht's transom, knocked a pile over and dislodged two fingers of the marina.

"We were lucky further damage wasn't done.

But we had no reason to check the item because it was only 12 months old, but was poorly manufactured.

"From a safety point of view it is always best to buy good equipment, for example, good ropes rather than cheap ones.

"Today, we are just constantly vigilant, always checking things. We do have a procedures check list, but if we're working with any type of equipment, we always check it to see how it's wearing.

"I write everything down so that I can refer years back to what I did. Problems and how we solve them are all written down in a chronological order - all maintenance including fuel, oil changes and everything that goes on and off the boat.

"I also supply helmets on the boats, even though the guys won't wear them - and I'm disappointed about that. I think anyone working on a boat with lifting equipment should wear a helmet."

Astute crew selection is the other key ingredient in the Nye operation, a responsibility he shares with his skippers.

"After all, they have to live with them," he said, "and it's only a small area they work in, sometimes for weeks at a time."

"We really look for people with prior experience. And you need to talk with other people in the industry who know a potential crewman before you hire them. Drug users and heavy drinkers are the ones we avoid.

"If someone turns out to be a danger or a problem, we have to be quite merciless sometimes and lay them off. In the end it's not only the boat, but the lives of the other people on the boat you are protecting."

Above: Iain Nye (left) with business partner Errol Clarke on board the Lauren G during a day of maintenance and repairs.

Advancing safety awareness

Increased co-operation between the state government and the marine industry has resulted in the preparation of specially-developed programs this year to pioneer advances in safety awareness throughout the state's commercial boating industry.

Maritime Safety Queensland has put two pilot programs in place for Airlie Beach and Brisbane following a survey of attitudes towards maritime safety in the industry.

Commercial boat owners and operators responded well to this survey, providing a much clearer picture of three main approaches to maritime safety in the industry, as well as what has to be done to improve safety awareness.

A third of the 680 who completed the survey - a 13.6% response rate - have what is known as a generative culture, which supports a learning environment with regular reviews of safety procedures and encouragement for improved safety of vessel, crew and passengers.

These are the industry leaders who adopt risk management as the best way to upgrade performance-based requirements.

Their's is obviously the optimal approach, and the pilot programs are designed to highlight its advantages over the most common attitude, the so-called 'bureaucratic' or unquestioning culture that observes rules and regulations only so far as is necessary to avoid any sanctions or penalties.

About 60% of respondents fit this bill and Maritime Safety Queensland know they can be convinced of the advantages of becoming self-starters with safety programs.

There is a minority third group, far fewer than one in 10, who persist in defying safety regimes and will not change no matter what. They will continue to be punished and hopefully driven out of the industry altogether.

The survey has also helped Maritime Safety Queensland to identify how it can contribute to improve already good co-operation between the state government and the industry to

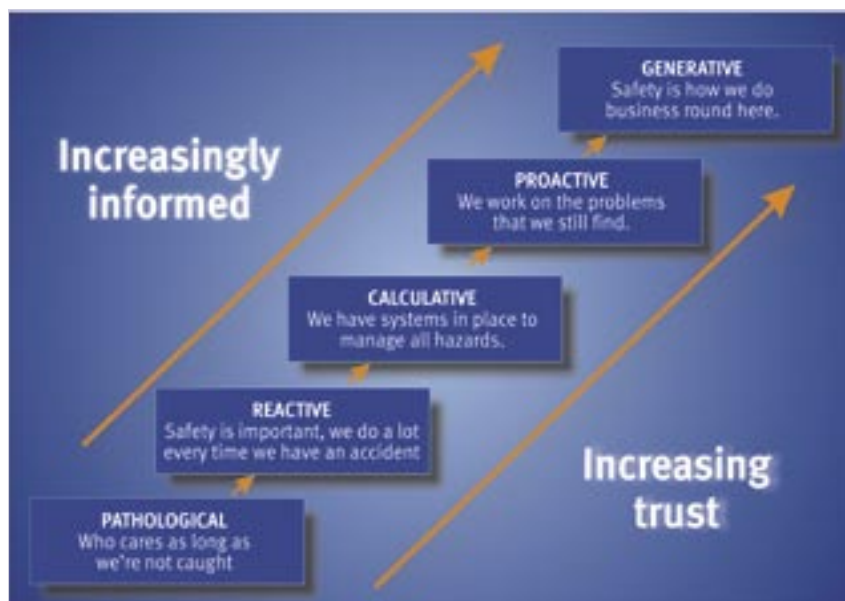
enable this safety awareness to flourish.

The pilot program at Airlie Beach started in December last year and it is expected that the Brisbane/Moreton Bay area program will commence before the end of 2005.

Maritime Safety Queensland distributed 5000 copies of the survey statewide, the first of its kind in the commercial marine industry. It was addressed to all sectors of the industry, including business or trading vessels, hire-and-drive craft, and commercial fishing boats.

The trading sector provided more than half of the responses. More than 50% of respondents from this sector had more than 10 years' experience in the industry, with an average of 17 years in the industry. Owner-operators with an average of 20 years in the industry characterised respondents in the commercial fishing sector.

Deb Lewis, Secretary of the Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association has given a commitment to the regional pilot project, in which an agency officer will assist the industry to implement processes based on the findings of the survey. "The meetings last year clearly demonstrated enthusiasm by all industry and government representatives," she said. And it is heartening to the WCBIA executive to see Maritime Safety Queensland's support for this project by providing a project officer two days per week to assist processes and outcomes that will be attached to this project."



What is safety culture?

Every organisation or group has a 'culture', and Queensland's maritime industry is no different. The culture itself is often invisible to those on the inside, but obvious to those on the outside. Therefore a survey is required to gauge this intangible quality.

Broadly speaking, an organisation's or group's culture can be defined as: 'Who we are, what we find important, and this is how we do things around here.' Rather than being fixed, a culture is always changing.

The survey mentioned above, conducted throughout Queensland's commercial shipping industry, was based on a model that classifies the safety-related practices of a group of individuals along a continuum (illustrated on the left). The closer a culture comes to 'generative', accidents become less likely.

Where are you, or your organisation, placed?

News in brief

Navy launches handbook

The Hydrographer of Australia, Captain Bruce Kafer of the Royal Australia Navy, launched the Australian Seafarers Handbook late last year.

The handbook, produced by the Australian Hydrographic Service (AHS), provides mariners with a description of the Australian physical and jurisdictional marine environments and combines information from various government agencies under the cover of one official nautical publication. It complements the Australian Navigational Chart series, containing much of the textual information that cannot be shown on charts.

A representative of the AHS said the handbook will enhance navigation safety and also reduce the risk to mariners of accidentally transgressing the many federal and state regulations that apply in Australian waters. The Seafarers Handbook is available for sale through AHS product distributors (listed at www.hydro.gov.au).

Safety in mind – 2005 marine safety conference

Hundreds of representatives from government marine authorities and industry representatives from around Australia converged on Hobart recently for the National Marine Safety Committee's annual conference.

The conference, with the theme of "safety is a state of mind", featured over 50 speakers over a two-day program. Delegates could attend plenary sessions with two concurrent themes, one focusing on recreational boating and training and the other on commercial vessels and operators including port and security matters. John Kavanagh, Manager of Investigations for Maritime Safety Queensland, was a guest speaker at the conference, addressing the topic of "Applying the Standards – Legal Problems in Practice" for recreational boating.

Sinking the Brisbane successfully

Normally Maritime Safety Queensland is working to keep ships safely on top of the water. In early February, the agency provided its expertise to ensure a ship stays safely under the water.

The decommissioned guided missile destroyer ex-HMAS *Brisbane* (pictured right) is to be sunk three nautical miles off the Sunshine Coast later this year where it will become one of the world's premier scuba dive sites.

The agency has stepped in to help the Queensland Government's Environmental Protection Agency which is overseeing the sinking and subsequent management of the site.

In February, a hydrographic surveyor from Maritime Safety Queensland, using the state government vessel *Norfolk* equipped with a Swathe Echo Sounder, investigated a three-square kilometre area east of Mudjimba Island. Data from the survey, showing the contours of the sandy bottom in about 28 metres, will be used by the Environmental Protection Agency together with its core samples, to ensure that when scuttled, the hull of the *Brisbane* avoids any ridges or outcrops and sits squarely on the sandy ocean floor.



The chosen site is just inside state waters, well clear of fishing and trawling grounds and complies with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency. After the sinking a marine park will be proclaimed around the wreck and appropriate management plans established to ensure sustainable use of the area.

Above: Maritime Safety Queensland's Senior Hydrographic Surveyor, Ted Anderberg (left) and Maritime Operations Officer Kevin Geake aboard the *Norfolk* preparing to survey the proposed sinking site for ex-HMAS *Brisbane*.

Commercial fishing vessel safety awareness campaign

In a move to reduce the number of collisions between trading ships and commercial fishing vessels on the Australian coast, the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) has launched an Australia-wide safety awareness campaign.

The campaign is designed to raise the awareness of commercial fishermen to the contributory factors which the ATSB has identified during its investigation of 21 collisions between trading ships and fishing vessels since 1990. The ATSB is working closely with fishing industry peak bodies and officials in each state and territory to implement the campaign.

As part of the campaign, members of the ATSB's Marine Investigation Unit will hold a series of informal face-to-face discussions with commercial fishermen in various fishing ports around the country throughout 2005. An accompanying DVD/video is also set to be released as a joint initiative of Maritime Safety Queensland, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, NSW Maritime and the ATSB.

For further information on the safety awareness campaign phone the Australian Maritime Safety Authority on (02) 6279 5000 or the Marketing and Education Unit of Maritime Safety Queensland on (07) 3120 7488.

Storm tide gauges detect tsunami

A day after the earthquake that caused the devastating Asian tsunami, increased sea levels were detected along the Queensland coast by Maritime Safety Queensland's network of storm tide gauges.

After wreaking destruction throughout Asia, parts of the wave travelled around Australia's western and southern coasts and then northwards to Queensland, with fluctuations measuring up to about 0.1 metre.

About one day after the earthquake, as the wave moved north it was observed by the agency's gauges at the Gold Coast Seaway, the Brisbane River and others in south-east Queensland. Storm gauges managed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, including those in rivers of the south-east, also detected anomalies.

Tsunamis are not generally considered a threat to Queensland; however, coastal flooding from such events as tropical cyclones can cause major damage and loss of life.

The worst recorded example in Queensland was a 14.6-metre surge in 1899 at Bathurst Bay on Cape York Peninsula when 307 lives were known to be lost.

Maritime Safety Queensland's Tidal Unit holds the state's only complete database of tide predictions and observations. The predictions are documented in the *Official Tide Tables and Boating Safety Guide* that the agency publishes in September every year.



Hey, that sounds like....crunch!

Late one afternoon an 18-metre timber passenger charter vessel set out from Gladstone on a return trip to Swain's Reef. After rounding Gatcombe Head, the master set a course for Swain's Reef and engaged the autopilot.

The vessel, carrying two crew members and 10 passengers, was equipped with a variety of navigation aids including electronic charts, GPS plotter and depth sounder. The master had not traced the intended passage plan, nor was in the habit of doing so, but placed complete reliance on the navigational equipment. The depth sounder was usually set to alert the skipper at 15 metres, but was not set this evening.

The master retired to his cabin and left an unqualified crew member to stand watch. The crew member had no navigation training and did not hold even a Recreational Marine Drivers' Licence.

At around 10 pm the crew member became concerned with the position of the ship when she heard the sound of waves breaking on the reef. Unable to check the ship's position, she proceeded below to rouse the master without making any alteration to course or speed.

The master made it to the wheelhouse and reduced revolutions but was unable to prevent the grounding of his vessel.

Lessons

- The crew of two operated this ship at a frantic rate. They kept 3-4 hour watches during the night. While the master holds a Master Class 5, the crew member had only limited experience and was clearly not appropriately trained or briefed to stand watch.
- A master must not allow an unlicensed person to operate a commercial ship unless:
 - they believe that the person is competent to operate the ship;
 - they have given clear instructions on the way they are to operate the ship;
 - they are able to quickly resume operation of the ship; and
 - the unlicensed person holds at least a recreational marine driver's licence.
- The master placed complete reliance in navigational aids at the expense of good seamanship and prudent navigational practice. A proper passage plan would have prevented this grounding. An old fashioned pencil line on an old fashioned chart with regular position fixes still works wonders.
- The master did not use all of the means at his disposal to ensure safe navigation of the ship. Had the sounder been set, it is probable that the inexperienced crew member, with appropriate instruction, might have alerted the master earlier.

Exciting night 'out' for Kiwis

Late on a warm September evening, a man and three friends in a 3.7m runabout drifted along the landward side of South Stradbroke Island, attempting to land a fish or two. The vessel's 15hp outboard remained silent.

The master of the vessel had met the three passengers, tourists from New Zealand, a few days earlier in a nightclub, promising them an interesting evening's fishing – and he certainly delivered!

When the boat had drifted halfway along the South Stradbroke Island wall, the master attempted to start the engine, but it refused to respond. The boat drifted out of the sheltered waters of the Gold Coast Seaway, into larger swells until at about 10pm it capsized.

After jettisoning the motor and fuel tank, the master and the passengers righted the boat and began to bail it out. Unfortunately, all safety equipment was lost and mobile telephones destroyed when the boat capsized.

They then realised their sticky situation was becoming stickier. None had informed anyone of the trip and now they had no means of communication. They were drifting helplessly further out to sea and nobody was aware that they were missing. They prepared for a long uncomfortable night.

During the night, the current fortunately brought the boat closer inshore. A lifeguard from Nobby Beach spotted the boat and its occupants at 9 am and brought them safely ashore.

Lessons

- Before any boat trip, whether you are master or passenger, you should let someone know where you are going and what time you'll be back. *I've Gone Boating* cards are available from Maritime Safety Queensland for this purpose.
- The most common cause of disabled boats is engine or battery failure. Regular preventative maintenance and servicing by a qualified mechanic will significantly reduce the risk of propulsion failure. This incident highlights the serious nature of loss of propulsion at sea. Unlike cars, boats do not remain stationary when broken down.
- Additionally, swift action could have prevented this incident. Even when intending to operate in smooth waters, a recreational boat less than six metres should have oars and an anchor. The timely use of either of these devices could have prevented this incident.
- Three of the people involved in this incident had mobile telephones, but they failed to send a message of distress while they had the opportunity.
- In this case the master failed to meet his general safety obligation by failing to carry an anchor and to tell someone where he was going. If he had complied with both these safety measures, the vessel could have been prevented being swept out to sea and a search could have been initiated.

Check out more safety reports at msq.qld.gov.au

Have your say on new standards

Draft remakes of five marine safety standards for Queensland are now available for public comment.

They are:

- Commercial and Fishing Ships' Miscellaneous Equipment;
- Designing and Building Commercial and Fishing Ships;
- Qualifications for Accreditation for Ship Designers, Ship Builders and Marine Surveyors;
- Recreational Marine Driver Licence approvals (formerly the Recreational Ship Master's Licence approvals); and
- Recreational Ships' Miscellaneous Equipment.

Standards are intended to help people understand the General Safety Obligations specified in the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 under which the standards are drawn up. The standards are reviewed every seven years.

Maritime Safety Queensland will shortly be inviting submissions on the draft standards from public authorities, industry, interested groups, individuals and the general public.

The aim of consultation is to ensure the standards best meet the act's objectives of regulating marine safety while encouraging the continuing development of the effectiveness and efficiency of the state's maritime industry.

More information on the drafts and methods of making written submissions is available on the Maritime Safety Queensland website.

Vessel-sourced sewage legislation commenced at the start of 2004, and a new mobile business is pioneering the way by assisting boaties in meeting their obligations under those new laws.

A marina in south east Queensland has made space available to house "Royal Flush", a business which runs a private vessel used to pump out sewage from boats from Brisbane to the Gold Coast.

The Wynnum Manly Yacht Club Marina is the first marina in the state to make an arrangement with a private operator to assist boat owners to comply with legislation in Queensland requiring better management of sewage generated on vessels.

Maritime Safety Queensland General Manager Captain John Watkinson said the operator of the large rigid inflatable pump-out vessel to service boats has arrangements with owners at Manly Boat Harbour and two sites at the Gold Coast.

"Royal Flush has a contract with a commercial liquid waste removal firm at both South Brisbane and the Gold Coast to remove the sewage to that company's landfill site," Captain Watkinson said.

"There's space at the marina for the company to bring its truck alongside the vessel and pump out the sewage so he can continue to provide his service to other boat owners and operators.

"This is an easily-transportable service, enabling arrangements to be made with the Sanctuary Cove Marina and vessel users at Hope Island.

"The operator, Colin Skudder, plans to spend two days a week working out of Manly and three days pumping out from the Gold Coast sites, and we're sure it's not going to end there because vessels don't have to be moored in a marina for him to service them.

"A large marina at the Gold Coast is arranging for Royal Flush to also pump-out large luxury vessels," Captain Watkinson said.

"Royal Flush is something of a pioneer

New service pumps-out and takes away

service, and the agency applauds him for responding to an opportunity to assist boaties to continue to do the right thing for the marine environment they all enjoy.

"We hope this sort of business will become more commonplace among boating communities throughout the state."

The state government expanded the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Regulation 1995 from the beginning of 2004 to ban the discharge of sewage, treated or untreated, into certain designated waters.

Additional legislative requirements came into effect in July extending to other areas the restrictions on the discharge of untreated sewage, as well as specifying precautionary distances for treated sewage.

Captain Watkinson said boat owners and operators had options so they can comply in a way that is most appropriate for their purposes, including fixed and portable holding devices and treatment systems.

"Such decisions naturally have to take account of the availability of shore-based pump-out and other facilities, where available, for the disposal of vessel sewage. This new business in south east Queensland makes it even easier to comply," he said.

"Maritime Safety Queensland takes its anti-pollution and marine environment protection responsibilities seriously, and we prefer to encourage compliance in ways such as this."

Left: Colin Skudder, the owner of the new marine sewage pump-out business, Royal Flush.



Misuse of ship leads to safety prosecution

In December last year Tully Magistrates Court found the owner of the *Atlanta*, a recreational ship that was being used for commercial purposes, guilty of operating an unsafe ship.

The court case followed investigations into photographs taken by Coastwatch (Australian Customs) showing the 19-metre long fibreglass monohulled cruiser at Barnett Patches (*see below*), part of the Great Barrier Reef. Numerous people were seen fishing from the vessel at what is a protected portion of the reef.

Consequent investigations by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority discovered that most of the people on board that day had paid amounts ranging between \$140 and \$200 to board what they thought was a chartered fishing trip.

Suspecting a breach of Maritime Safety Legislation, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority officers passed their information on to Maritime Safety Queensland's Investigations Unit. Further inquiries by the unit revealed the owner had conducted 20 similar trips over the past three years, on all occasions being the master of the vessel.

This and other evidence supported the conclusion that the ship had been used to conduct fishing trips to the Greater Barrier Reef, and was being operated as a commercial charter ship while registered as a recreational ship. Additionally, the owner held only a Recreational Marine Driver Licence, rather than the required Master Class 5 Licence.

The *Atlanta* was found to be beneath the Australian Standard

for recreational ships, and certainly short of the stricter safety standards required for commercial vessels that conduct fishing trips of a similar nature.

The ship was impounded pending further surveying by an accredited surveyor, and the defendant was ordered to appear in court to answer charges under the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 including operating an unsafe ship (s41), inadequate safety equipment (s44) and being inappropriately licensed (s61).



The defendant elected to plead guilty to the charge of operating an unsafe ship, particularly relating to operating with no flaps on the engine room vents, having no means of locking the rudder in position and a corroded steering arm.

The defendant gave an undertaking in court *Atlanta* would be used exclusively for private recreational purposes in the future, and was placed on a \$5000 bond for 18 months. He was ordered to pay over \$2000 in professional and court costs.

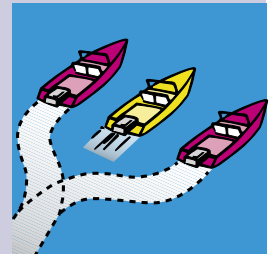
In summing up the magistrate commented that the onus is on owners and masters to ensure their ships are seaworthy, and are appropriately equipped and crewed.

I am unsure about the rules concerning overtaking another boat. Is it true that once I pass another boat on his starboard side, that they must give way to my boat if I choose to steer to port?

J.F., Gold Coast

Seascope: It should be commonsense that you do not come across the path of another boat travelling in the same direction, however the Collregs (Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea) are clear in the situation of one boat coming up behind another boat and then overtaking.

Although some operators are tempted to apply Rule 15 (crossing situation – give way to the vessel on your starboard side) after overtaking another vessel, Rule 13 (overtaking) is quite clear, specifically section (d). This rule states overtaking another vessel does not 'relieve her of the duty of keeping clear of the overtaken vessel until she is finally past and clear'.



The phrase 'finally past and clear' is important in the interpretation of the rule. It is incumbent on the skipper of the overtaking vessel to avoid collision after taking into account considerations such things as wind and sea conditions. Action to be taken if the other vessel suddenly changes course or suffers a sudden loss of power should also be considered.

In other words, give plenty of sea space when overtaking. You may also consider using the appropriate sound signals (if fitted) so the other vessel knows your intentions.

My question is on the disposal of flares once they have passed their used-by-date. What do you do with them and where do you take them?

J. B. Mackay

Seascope: Pyrotechnic distress signals expire three years after manufacture. Past this date, they become very unreliable. As they are still capable of producing extreme heat, it is critical that they are disposed of safely, particularly out of the reach of children. There are 30 safe disposal locations throughout Queensland. These locations are listed in the 'Guide to Recreational Boating and Fishing in Queensland' and also on the Maritime Safety Queensland website – click on 'safety' and then 'flares'.

Contacting Seascope: If you would like to write to the editor, please either email us at: seascope@msq.qld.gov.au with 'Dear Editor' in the subject line, or post your letter to: The Editor, Seascope, GPO Box 2595, Brisbane Q 4001.

Earlier start for marine students

New marine studies syllabus introduced

Students interested in pursuing marine studies can now begin in Year Eight, rather than waiting until Year 12 under a new Coast and Marine Studies syllabus currently undergoing accreditation for use within Queensland schools.

An earlier start is just one of several changes introduced to marine studies by the new Coast and Marine Education Syllabus, written entirely by Queensland teachers.

Following its accreditation by the Queensland Schools Association, at least 10 schools throughout Queensland are expected to adopt the new curriculum this year and another 50 in 2006.

During a special awards presentation at Parliament House late last year Education Minister Anna Bligh officially thanked the syllabus authors and committee members for their historic achievement in getting the Coast and Marine Syllabus considered for accreditation.

Awards were accepted by Captain John Watkinson and David Oelrichs on behalf of Marine Safety Queensland.

The new curriculum introduced a raft of changes designed to keep pace with Queensland's booming marine training needs, of which, early intervention at the school level is a major component. Students learn basic navigation and marine safety skills and can sample a wide range of marine recreational activities.

By evaluating their skills in these areas they can decide on career pathways to Senior Marine studies where they have the opportunity to obtain their boat licence, marine radio, sailing or snorkelling certificates.

Other changes introduced by the new curriculum include:

- a water safety program in which students will have the opportunity to obtain community marine first aid and life saving awards;
- a Reef Guardian's Marine Conservation Program in which students



Above left: Queensland's Minister for Education, Hon. Anna Bligh presents Maritime Safety Queensland General Manager, Captain John Watkinson, with a certificate of participation for Maritime Safety Queensland's contribution to the new Marine Studies syllabus.



Above right: A marine studies teacher instructs a student on taking a compass bearing.

will participate in sustainable school activities to reduce waste and pollution entering our seas; and

- a junior marine biology program engaging students in activities that help them to learn about marine ecosystems.

Marine aquaculture will be introduced under a new industry strand where students can participate in the design and construction of prawn and fish farms. They learn about the technology involved in the aquaculture industry and the role it will play in the future as fish resources in the sea become more controlled.

The Marine Teachers Association of Queensland developed the curriculum over four years, in consultation with several industry organisations such as the Queensland Studies Authority, Education Queensland, Australian Maritime College, Yachting Queensland, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Wet Paper Publications and Maritime Safety Queensland.

One of the principal authors, outgoing syllabus chairman Bob Moffatt, paid tribute to all those who contributed to the syllabus development, many donating their time for "the love of the subject".

"The original motivation for the change came from a need to create more time in the school curriculum," Mr Moffatt said.

"There was just not enough time in Years 11 and 12 to explore fully the opportunities the subject had to offer. For example you cannot learn how to drive a power boat with just a few hours a week behind the wheel.

"With the opportunity for boating now introduced in Year Eight, students now have five years to learn instead of just two."

Junior marine studies have become increasingly popular among students since being introduced into Queensland schools in 1998.

Bob said Coast and Marine Studies presented new opportunities for all students, including those with a general interest in coast and marine education and those intent on careers directly involved in marine science or maritime studies, such as oceanography, coastal management, shipmaster, naval architect, surfboard manufacture, clothing retailing or navy diving.

Cooktown student earns cadetship



Edén Mills, a Year 12 student from Cooktown State High School, will be well on the way to earning an Open Coxswain Licence by the end of his schooling, thanks to a \$12,000 cadetship.

Edén (pictured left) was selected from several other applicants for the cadetship which he started in September last year, and if all goes well, will finish in the middle of 2006 as a fully

qualified marine professional.

Much of his training, which is fully paid for through the cadetship, is on the 63-metre ketch, *Paradise Blue*, where he is working through the ROPES (Record of Practice Experience and Sea Service) system. Edén has already earned a Padi Scuba Divers Licence for Open Waters, and should earn a Padi Dive Masters by the end of the year.

Other schools around Queensland are now looking to duplicate the Cooktown cadetship.

Queensland sets benchmark for marine pollution prevention

With more than 10,000 ships passing through coastal waters off Queensland each year, much of which is some of the world's most sensitive seas, Maritime Safety Queensland has to be vigilant at all times.

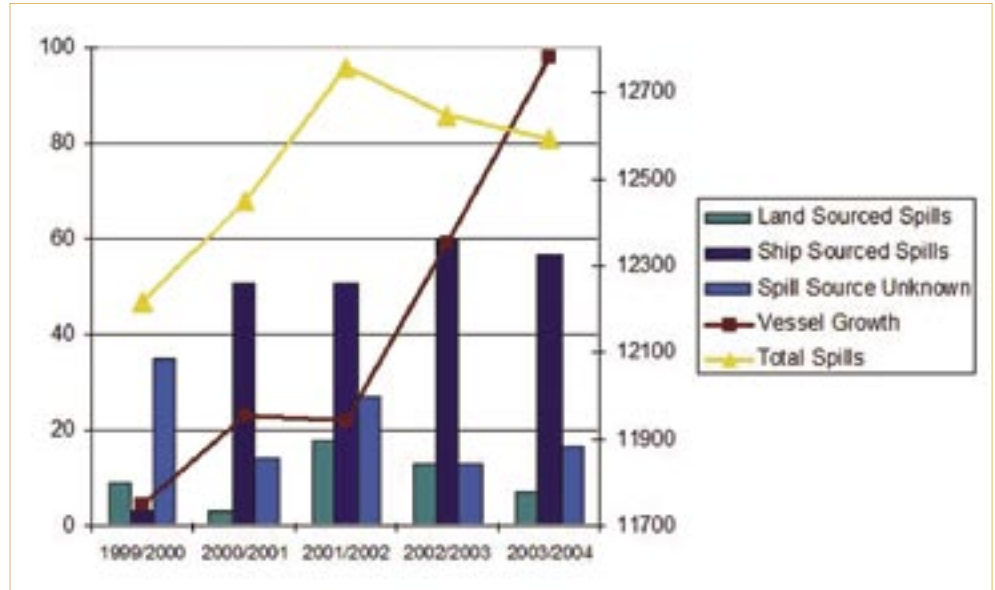
The agency takes its responsibilities on behalf of the state government very seriously, and since the introduction of the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*, the number of reported pollution incidents has been dropping even though the number of vessels transiting Queensland waters has increased

The Ship Reporting System is a major part of our armoury for marine pollution prevention and response in the Great Barrier Reef. Ships entering these waters are warned of their responsibilities to safeguard the sensitive waters, navigational safety details are given and their position is tracked along the way. The system creates an intelligent picture of shipping operations and can help to detect non-compliant ships attempting to enter the area.

The Ship Reporting System also involves informing ship crews, their owners and agents about their responsibilities towards the marine environment under state legislation.

The penalties for those who pollute Queensland waters are hefty. Under the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995* corporations can face fines of more than \$1.3 million and individuals \$262,500. Maritime Safety Queensland pursues polluters vigorously, with 25 prosecutions successfully undertaken since the legislation was implemented.

Prosecutions have included a \$20,000 fine against the owner of a fishing trawler for discharging between 160 and



200 litres of hydraulic fuel oil in Mooloolaba boat harbour in 1998, and a fine of \$22,000 against the owner and \$1000 against the master for discharging approximately 20 litres of diesel oil off Thursday Island in 2001.

These prosecutions are sending a clear message to the shipping and boating community that the Queensland government will not tolerate pollution of its waters, whether it is accidental or deliberate.

It has been 35 years since the last major threat to our coastline occurred, when the *Oceanic Grandeur* ran aground in the Torres Strait discharging around 2000 tonnes of crude oil. This incident resulted in the development of the National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances, which established an action plan on which all signatory agencies agree in situations where there is the danger of an oil spill.

At the same time there have been world-leading advances in the technologies used for ship monitoring and management, resulting in the National Plan being activated only three times for major ship groundings in Queensland coastal waters.

Maritime Safety Queensland is the agency responsible for protecting the state's coastal waters by keeping them safe for shipping, minimising the risk of an oil spill, and being ready at all times to respond quickly when an incident occurs. The state government contributes funds to purchase equipment for this purpose, raise public awareness about clean waters and conduct education campaigns with industry about complying with the law.

Above: Oil spills In Queensland vs Total number of vessels). Left: Bunga Teratai Satu aground off Cairns, November 2000).



Get online and save time

You can now renew your recreational boat registration online thanks to a new initiative from Queensland Transport.

Queensland Transport has launched a range of online services allowing you to visit a Queensland Transport customer service centre without leaving home.

Recreational boat registration and changing your address are the two services currently available to boat owners, but plans are underway to extend the services to ordering Maritime Safety Queensland publications.

Judy Oswin, Queensland Transport's Executive Director (Services Group), said the department had taken steps to ensure all Queenslanders had the option of transacting with government by getting on the internet

Come and support forums

Marine industry representatives from Cairns, Hervey Bay and Whitsunday/Airlie Beach areas are urged to attend special information forums scheduled for later in the year.

The sessions at the forums, hosted by Maritime Safety Queensland, will discuss latest developments in a range of marine industry issues and initiatives. Industry is also encouraged to raise issues of concern. Forums have already been held at the Gold Coast and Gladstone.

The forums will be an excellent opportunity for industry representatives to be briefed with up-to-date information that's relevant to their daily operations.

Information sessions at the forum, which will also involve the Marine Board, will include:

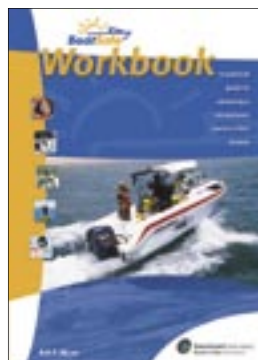
- an update on the new national standards for commercial vessels;
- the state of a marine safety culture in

Queensland, and the activities currently underway to support industry initiatives to promote successful business outcomes.

More information about the forum is available from Maritime Safety Queensland on (07) 3120 7464 or by email to marineboard@msq.qld.gov.au

BoatSafe Workbook under development

To coincide with BoatSafe, Queensland's new recreational boating licensing scheme, becoming fully implemented on 1 July 2005, Maritime Safety Queensland has produced the *BoatSafe Workbook* to be released in May 2005.



The workbook takes a comprehensive look at all aspects of boating ranging from preparation and pre-departure checks to safely moving around on the water and implementing emergency procedures. The content complements the BoatSafe scheme with a tutorial guide at the end of each section.

The workbook is essential reading for people wanting to earn their Recreational Marine Driver Licence, or an excellent refresher for those at all levels of experience on the water.

Maritime Safety Queensland continues to keep its existing publications up-to-date, recently releasing revised versions of the *Small Ships Manual* and the *Commercial and Fishing Ships Operating Documents*. Both of these widely-used publications now contain information consistent with new marine safety legislation introduced in August last year.

All of these publications are available from Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices. See the Maritime Safety Queensland website for details of other outlets.

Upcoming events - 2005

APRIL

- 7-8** Gladstone Industry Forum (Marine Board)
22-25 Brisbane Tinnie and Tackle Show, RNA Showgrounds

MAY

- 1-2** Bay-to-Bay Yacht Race Hervey Bay/Gladstone
20-23 Sanctuary Cove International Boat Show

JUNE

- 9-10** Cairns Industry Forum (Marine Board)
11-12 Ocean Whitsunday Boat and Leisure Show

JULY

- 8-10** Gold Coast Boat and Outdoor Adventure Show
13-14 Thursday Island and Crocfest

AUGUST

- 6-7** Caloundra, Coastguard Classic Boat Regatta
18-19 Hervey Bay Industry Forum (Marine Board)
31 - Sept 5 Brisbane Boat Show

OCTOBER

- 6-7** Whitsunday (Mackay/Airlie Beach) Industry Forum (Marine Board)

Contacting Maritime Safety Queensland

Office of the General Manager _____ 07 - 3120 7462

Regions:

Southport _____ 07 - 5539 7300
 Brisbane _____ 07 - 3860 3500
 Mooloolaba _____ 07 - 5477 8425
 Hervey Bay _____ 07 - 4128 9555
 Bundaberg _____ 07 - 4131 5608

Gladstone _____ 07 - 4973 1200
 Port Alma _____ 07 - 4934 6929
 Mackay _____ 07 - 4944 3700
 Whitsundays _____ 07 - 4946 2200
 Townsville _____ 07 - 4726 3400
 Cairns _____ 07 - 4052 7400
 Weipa _____ 07 - 4069 7165
 Karumba _____ 07 - 4745 9281
 Thursday Island _____ 07 - 4069 1351

To contact the editorial team of Seascapes either email us at: seascapes@msq.qld.gov.au with 'Dear Editor' in the subject line, or post your letter to: The Editor, Seascapes, GPO Box 2595, Brisbane Q 4001.

