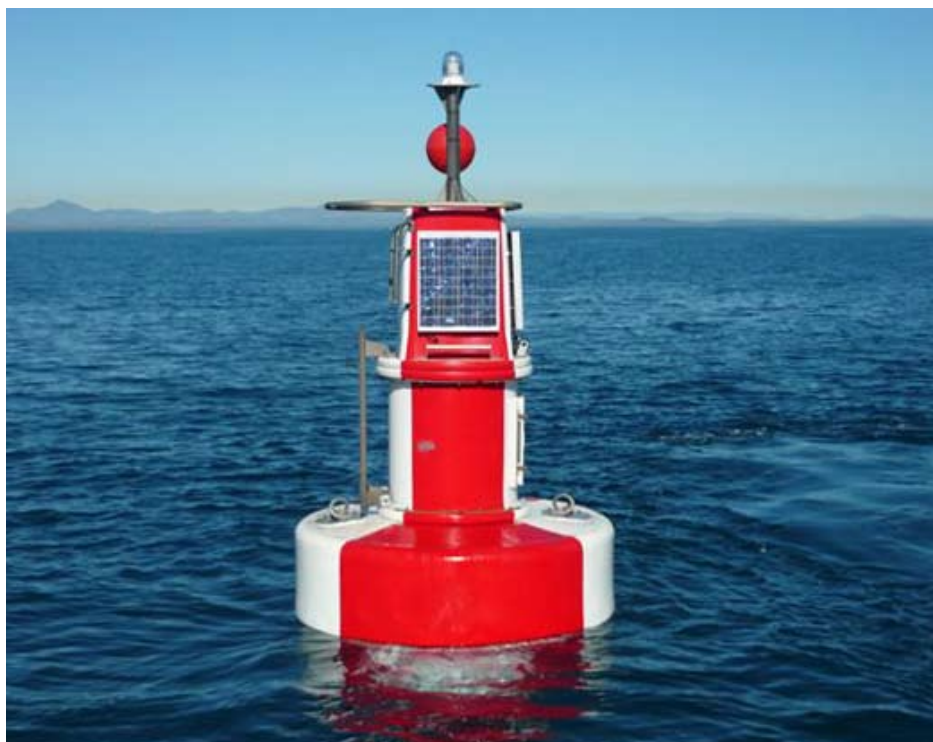


Regional boating



New marine buoy on trial in Gladstone

On 1 July the old 'K' class steel buoy on station at the Fairway location in Gladstone was removed and replaced with a new type of buoy made of synthetic material as part of a trial of new technology.

The new Fairway buoy is a Tideland SB2200 'Sentinel' made entirely of virgin UV stabilised polyethylene. It displays a flashing white light at night and contains a radar reflector.

The perceived advantages of this type of material are that it does not rot, rust or need painting. Even antifouling paint is not required, which is better for the environment and saves time and money. The buoy is filled with polystyrene foam beads which will keep it floating even if it fills with water as the result of a collision. The trials will determine the visibility, stability, user acceptance and maintenance requirements over a period of years. If successful then use of polyethylene buoys may extend to other regions.

With a diameter of 2.2metres, the buoy is one of several made by a growing number of manufacturers worldwide. If mariners have any comments on the new Gladstone Fairway buoy Maritime Safety Queensland would love to hear from you.



Airlie Beach hosts marine teachers conference

The Marine Teachers Association of Queensland is a professional group of marine studies teachers throughout primary and secondary levels. The group is a non-profit organisation which coordinates activities to support over 400 marine studies teachers within the Queensland education system.

Each year during the September school holidays, the Marine Teachers Association of Queensland holds a conference with the aim of gaining valuable professional development to pass on to its students. The conference is a program of workshops, presentations and fieldwork sessions which promote and reinforce the value of marine studies education as one of the essential areas of learning.

This year, the Mackay branch hosted the conference with an overarching theme of 'Linking Estuaries, The Great Barrier Reef and the Ocean' (LEGO). The four day conference was held at Club Crocodile in Airlie Beach from 20 September to 24 September.

Over 40 members participated in the conference and attended presentations on various topics such as boating safety for schools, available marine careers and courses and marine monitoring programs. Guest speakers included representatives from Maritime Safety Queensland, Australian Underwater Federation Queensland, Great Barrier Reef TAFE, Australian Maritime College and GBRMPA.

Members also had the opportunity to participate in workshops covering several diverse matters including writing criteria for assessments, links between catchments and the reef and making fishing equipment. Site visits, a day trip to Knuckle Reef and a Daydream Island living reef display were also included as a part of the conference.

Simone Baker, a marine studies teacher from Mackay said that the conference was a great opportunity to gain valuable teaching resources. "The conference is highly educational and provides hands on experience" Ms Baker said.

For more information on the Marine Teachers Association of Queensland go to www.marineteachers.org.au.



SeaSwift's MV *Trinity Bay*.

Competency-based training

Maritime Safety Queensland, in supporting and promoting competency-based training (CBT) for masters and engineers, has over the past four years developed a suite of Model Assessment Tools and Resources which are being used by 12 registered training organisations across Queensland. These tools include a workplace based task book, workplace focused assignments and written and practical assessments.

The focus of the assessment material and the registered training organisations training and assessment strategies is to promote skilling in the workplace through mentoring and workplace supervision with theoretical support provided by the registered training organisations through lectures and tutorials. The success of competency-based training requires a commitment from the candidate, registered training organisation, employer, industry and Maritime Safety Queensland.

David Ellem recently completed his Master Class 4. He undertook the training in partnership with his employer, SeaSwift Pty Ltd, and the registered training organisation e-Campus Australia, both Cairns based companies. David continued to work while undertaking his study. SeaSwift supported David's training and he completed his workplace based taskbook and assignments while working on *Trinity Bay* under the ship's master Tony Gofton, and *Newcastle Bay* under the ship's master Clinton Miles. Both vessels are 80 metre general cargo vessels.

David has also contributed feedback on the competency-based training system. He was very positive, and although

he gave himself a tight six month time frame to complete his course, he said he found it a very practical way to study. He could see the benefit in starting the task books early. 'As soon as someone is considering a higher level licence, they should start talking with a registered training organisation and commence work on the task book', David said. David had high praise for the support he received from SeaSwift and their qualified masters, and the flexibility and support he received from e-Campus Australia. David also gave feedback on the assessment material itself, offering a number of very good suggestions which will be taken to the Continuous Improvement Panel for the material to be revised.

SeaSwift now has a second candidate working through the his Master Class 4 qualification towards his commercial marine licence.



Maritime Safety Queensland endorses the assessment tools and resources used in the competency based training course.