



National Marine Safety Committee

The National Marine Guidance Manual

GUIDELINES FOR ONBOARD SAFETY TRAINING – AUSTRALIAN DOMESTIC VESSELS

Edition 1 – November 2000

Manual 5 of the NMGM

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PREFACE

These guidelines provide the basis for national uniformity for the safety training of persons on recreational and commercial domestic vessels.

They also provide recreational vessel owners and the commercial industry with guidance on meeting their obligations regarding the health and safety of persons onboard their vessels. The safety training outlined in these guidelines is the recommended minimum safety and introduction training for individuals onboard a vessel.

Compliance with these guidelines, especially in a commercial vessel, does not relieve the master of the ongoing duty of care to ensure that all crew adopt safe working practices and are appropriately trained and supervised for the tasks they are required to perform.

The development of local training programs is encouraged. Annex A provides guidance on topics that should be considered when developing or reviewing such programs. National industry training programs are also a worthwhile resource for development of local training programs and may provide the benefit of recognition of skills.

These guidelines do not have the force of law except to the extent that they are adopted in Commonwealth, State or Territory legislation.

BACKGROUND

The need for safety training

In an emergency people are often stressed and confused. Their ability to receive and understand and absorb safety information is greatly reduced. They are distracted and their ability to follow anything but the simplest instructions is limited. By presenting information before it is required and reinforcing information through practice, there is a marked improvement in the efficiency of an evacuation during an emergency. Modelling of evacuation times in passenger ships and in large buildings has reflected these factors.^{1 2}

The complexity of operating emergency and lifesaving equipment in difficult circumstances requires practice and discipline. The familiarity of the crew with the emergency equipment and procedures and the preparation of passengers for such an event, however unlikely, will have major influence on the survival and injury rate from an emergency.

By publishing guidelines NMSC is setting a national benchmark against which owners and operators can assess their safety training. It gives owners and operators a tool which they may choose to use to reduce risk by demonstrating they have assessed the issues and implemented a system that meets with the industry and community guidelines.

In preparing the guidelines, NMSC sought industry advice. The completed guidelines will be open to periodic review and at each review comment received will be considered. The periodic review will also consider the –

- level of community and industry acceptance of the guidelines;
- ongoing need for the guidelines; and
- most appropriate form for publishing the information.

The NMSC guidelines for safety training are seen as a starting point for the industry to fill the present void. Industry or groups within industry remain free to develop alternative standards or guidance for their use in their sectors should they desire.

¹ “Evacuation Analysis of Ships” A.T.Brumley and L.L.Koss 1996

² “The Implications of Human Factors on the Evacuation of Ferries and Cruise Ships” A.T.Brumley and L.L.Koss

1 Scope and application

- 1.1 This document provides guidelines for the safety training of people onboard vessels in coastal and inland waters of Australia. It may be applied to recreational and commercial vessels.

2 Objective

- 2.1 The objective of these guidelines is to improve safety onboard recreational and commercial vessels through the application of safety training. Where codes or training programs already exist, these guidelines will assist with the review of such codes and training guidelines.
- 2.2 The availability of, and access to, formal safety training varies greatly around Australia. These guidelines reflect the safety training needs of individuals and the ability of industry and masters of vessels to provide the training.

3 Definitions

- 3.1 For the purposes of these guidelines, the following definitions apply

Crew –

In relation to a commercial vessel, those persons employed on board and in the business of a vessel other than a pilot or a person temporarily employed on board the vessel while the vessel is in port. In relation to a recreational vessel, all people onboard the vessel.

Master –

The person in command or charge of a vessel.

Onboard safety training –

Minimum training for all persons involving the safety aspects of being aboard a specified vessel and required for the carrying out of emergency duties or tasks onboard that vessel.

Passenger –

Any person other than –

- (a) the master and the members of the crew or other special personnel employed or engaged in any capacity on board a vessel; and
- (b) a child under one year of age.

Recreational Vessel –

A vessel that is used solely for pleasure or recreation.

Safety Training –

Training provided to meet the needs of individuals onboard a vessel to eliminate or minimise risk to their safety.

4 Background

- 4.1 Australian occupational health and safety legislation imposes a general responsibility on employers to provide information, instruction, training and supervision so employees can perform their work competently and safely.
- 4.2 The owner and master of a vessel have a general duty of care for the health and safety of all persons onboard. This applies to both recreational and commercial vessels.
- 4.3 While all jurisdictions specify requirements for formal qualifications for masters and engineers in the commercial domestic marine industry, there is no national requirement for training of deckhands, general purpose hands or other non-certificated persons onboard a vessel.
- 4.4 Due to the diverse nature of the commercial coastal marine industry and the necessity for many sectors within the industry to be located away from training centres, it is recognised that the place of employment is the appropriate location for crew training. As a result, the minimum training for crew specified within these guidelines has been set at a level that can be delivered onboard or with local resources.
- 4.5 These guidelines do not prevent Marine Authorities either requiring or recommending a higher level of training for specific locations, types/classes of vessels or sectors of the commercial coastal marine industry.

GUIDELINES

5 Minimum onboard safety training for all persons

- 5.1 The owner and master of a vessel (either recreational or commercial) have a joint responsibility to ensure that training recommended in these guidelines is carried out.
- 5.2 The minimum training for all persons (this includes crew, special personnel and passengers) on board a vessel (either recreational or commercial) under way should provide them with information on –
- (a) specific safety features, practices or precautions onboard that vessel,
 - (b) location of personal safety equipment on the vessel,
 - (c) instructions on how to use the personal safety equipment,
 - (d) actions to be taken by the person in the event of an emergency, and
 - (e) abandonment procedures.

NOTE:

1. This may be best achieved via a safety briefing including a practical demonstration or by viewing a pre-recorded video specific to the vessel/class of vessel. It is envisaged that the briefing could be modelled on an airline passenger safety briefing. For short-haul commuter services, alternative methods for presenting minimum safety information may include literature, signage, or a taped message on the public address system.

2. The information should be either provided in a language understood by the majority of people onboard or presented in such a way to be understandable to people with other languages.

- 5.3 The minimum training may be supplemented on recreational vessels or for passengers on commercial vessels with additional appropriate information from Annex A.
- 5.4 The information should be provided before the vessel gets under way. If this is not practicable, then the information should be presented at the earliest opportunity after the vessel gets under way.
- 5.5 The safety information should be repeated on a weekly basis to all passengers who remain onboard for an extended period.

6 Safety training program for all crew of a commercial vessel

- 6.1 The owner should ensure a safety training program is developed for the crew of the vessel.
- 6.2 Where a generic model (either by company class or industry) is used for the safety training program for a vessel, the safety training program should be modified to suit the particular vessel.
- 6.3 The safety training program may form part of a vessel's Safety Management Plan or, in the case of a vessel operating under the HSC Code or ISM Code, the Training Plan.
- 6.4 The owner should ensure that the master is familiar with the vessel's safety training program and that the master implements the program onboard the vessel.
- 6.5 All crew of a commercial vessel should undertake safety training program for that vessel.
- 6.6 The safety training program is an important tool for demonstrating an owner or master's professional attitude and a conscientious attempt to discharge the person's responsibilities under duty of care requirements. Therefore the training program should be able to be demonstrated to outside parties on request.
- 6.7 The safety training program should specify;
- (a) the requirement for new crew to complete the training at 5.2 before the vessel leaves the berth or as soon as possible after joining a vessel under way.
 - (b) the topics from Annex A that are relevant to the vessel and to the duties allocated to the crew person.

NOTE:

For example, safety training requirements for crew whose duties are not primarily concerned with marine safety (ie. hospitality & catering staff or sub-contract workers) should be modified as appropriate to their duties in their day-to-day work and their duties in an emergency situation.

- (c) additional requirements specific to the vessel and its operation.

6.8 The safety training program should be completed within 1 calendar month of new crew joining a vessel for their first voyage. The requirement for training is irrespective of their employment status (ie. permanent, casual, contractor etc). The master of the vessel should ensure that any tasks allocated to the new person are appropriate for the skills that the new person possesses and that until the person is competent in those tasks that supervision is provided.

NOTE:

The completion of the training program does not absolve the master from his/her duty of care to all persons onboard the vessel.

6.9 An ongoing safety training program should be established to maintain the competency level of all crew. Records of such training should to be maintained in the appropriate documents (see Clause 6.11).

6.10 Persons rejoining a vessel after an absence of more than 6 months, or experienced people joining a vessel for the first time, should complete a modified safety training program to satisfy the master as to their competence. This will include persons who have completed a formal pre-sea training program. Records of such training should be maintained in the appropriate documents (see Clause 6.11).

6.11 All safety training for crew should be recorded in the vessel record book or, where a vessel record book is not required, in another appropriate document. Both the master and the person undertaking the training should sign that the training program has been completed.

NOTE:

All crew should be encouraged to keep a record of completion of training in their personal record of sea service.

6.12 The record of completion of all training in 6.11 is an important document for demonstrating discharge of responsibilities under duty of care. It is in the owners and master's interest that it should be available for inspection.

NOTE:

All crew whose duties are primarily concerned with marine safety, should be encouraged to undertake, at the earliest opportunity, safety training leading to industry training qualifications and certification in first aid, elements of shipboard safety and restricted radio operators certificate of proficiency. While such courses are not mandatory, they are important for the safety of the crew and ultimately the vessel and every opportunity should be taken to provide this training to the crew.

7 Industry-sponsored safety training for crew onboard a commercial vessel

7.1 Training developed by sectors of the marine industry, which provide marine safety training to the requirements for certification for marine qualifications, may be approved by as such by a marine authority. The completion by the crew of industry sponsored approved safety training programs will further assist the owner and master to discharge their duty of care.

ANNEX A – Contents of a safety training program for a commercial vessel

This Annex provides guidance to the contents of a safety training program for the crew of commercial vessels:

The safety training program has 4 parts which are described in more detail below.

Part A of the training program should be in all safety training programs.

Parts B, C, D & E are for guidance and should be selected for inclusion in the safety training program as appropriate to the vessel and to the people to whom it is being delivered.

Training for Parts A & B should be done onboard. Training for other Parts may be delivered either onboard or ashore. Training may be delivered by vessel crew, company staff or external training providers.

Part A – Onboard safety training

Onboard safety training requirements for all vessels and all people should be in accordance with Clause 5.2.

Part B – Drills and instruction on use of equipment

Select where relevant to the vessel and to the duties and responsibilities of the person.

- Activating emergency power, lighting and pumping systems
- Damage control drills (including use of emergency pumps & power)
- Fire drills (including use of firefighting equipment)
- Inspection of life-saving and fire-fighting equipment
- Liferaft drills (including use of lifesaving equipment)
- Practice assembly (muster) of crew
- Practice assembly (muster) of passengers and other persons on board
- Rescue boat drills and boat transfers
- Steering gear testing and drills
- Use of emergency equipment (flares, markers, radios, EPIRBs & line throwing devices)
- Man overboard procedures and drills
- Working watertight doors

Part C – Occupational health and safety

Select where relevant to the vessel and to the duties and responsibilities of the person.

- Accident and incident reporting
- Company safety policy
- Duties and responsibilities under the relevant Act or regulations
- Electrical safety
- Hazard identification
- Health
- Housekeeping
- Hygiene
- Material safety data sheets (MSDS)
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Reference to relevant OH&S legislation
- Safe working practices –
 - Assisting disabled people
 - Cargo handling
 - Chemicals hazardous substances & corrosives
 - Dangerous marine creatures
 - Hot work (welding, cutting, grinding)
 - Impact of tides and currents
 - LPG installations
 - Noise danger/hearing protection
 - Noise dangerous areas
 - Protection from sunburn
 - Refrigeration safety
 - Sorting of catch
 - Toxic gases
 - Ventilation
 - Working aloft or on booms
 - Working in confined spaces
 - Working over the side
 - Working with lines
- Seasickness

ANNEX A – Contents of a safety training program for a commercial vessel

Part D – Company/vessel procedures

Select where relevant to the vessel and to the duties and responsibilities of the person.

- Access to vessel
- Adverse, inclement and severe weather/cyclone arrangements
- Anchoring
- Berthing
- Collision/Grounding procedures
- Communications
- Internal
- External (Emergency use of radio)
- Company alcohol and smoking policy
- Company drug policy
- Company emergency plan
- Company firearms/weapons onboard policy
- Company training system
- Crew access around vessel
- Crew composition
- Crew stations and duties during passage and routine operations (eg. berthing)
- Cyclone/severe weather plan
- Damage control
- Duties and responsibilities of crew
- Employee code of conduct
- Evacuation/Abandonment procedures
- Firefighting procedures
- First aid
- Inspection of lifesaving and fire fighting equipment
- Keeping of records
- Lighting (navigation and working)
- Machinery breakdown routines
- Organisation and chain of command
- Pre-sailing safety checks
- Re-fuelling operations
- Safety of tenders and boats
- Safety on exposed decks

- Security
- Severe weather anchorages
- Shut-down safety checks
- Stowage of baggage and personal effects
- Watchkeeping requirements and procedures (These should include on-watch use of navigation aids/electronics as necessary, and collision regulations)
- Working hours

Part E – Company procedures for specific operations carried out onboard or from the vessel (where applicable)

Select where relevant to the vessel and to the duties and responsibilities of the person.

The safety aspects of the following operations should be emphasised:

- Cargo operations
- Communicating with people in emergencies
- Crane work
- Diving and snorkelling
- Entertainment arrangements
- Landing passengers across beaches
- Passenger operations & management including checking numbers, crowd control, welcoming onboard and safety briefings
- Passengers in tenders
- Serving of alcoholic drinks to passengers
- Whale watching

ANNEX B – Training requirements

This Annex contains an overview of training requirements current at the time of publication. For detailed requirements contact your state or territory marine authority.

Australian marine legislation

The USL Code and State and Territory legislation requires that Masters, Mates and Engineers of commercial vessels in the domestic marine industry be certificated. Australia's certification system and levels is high by world standards and results in these people being relatively well trained in marine safety issues at the time of certification. The system for maintaining their skills in safety areas is less thorough as there is no requirement for continuation training.

There is no requirement in the USL Code for the training of non-certificated crews of commercial vessels. NSW does require training for crews in passenger vessels. Some classes of commercial vessels are exempt from conducting regular safety drills and it is possible for an experienced crewmember of several years standing to have no experience or practical training in lifesaving equipment.

In recreational vessels two states and the Northern Territory do not have any requirement for boat driver licensing. In those states that require licensing, the level of knowledge required on safety is minimal.

International requirements

The Standards of Training and Certification of Watchkeepers Code (STCW-95), the draft Standards of Training and Certification of Watchkeepers Code for Fishing Vessel Personnel (Draft of STCW-F) and the International Safety Management Code (ISM) all specify familiarisation training for seafarers. The familiarisation should cover the safety procedures and equipment of the vessel.

Existing structured training

In the recreational sector the Australian Yachting Federation administers a qualifications system for power and sail vessels. The scheme is voluntary and while widely used, the percentage of recreational boaters using the scheme is relatively small. It is used by some yacht and boating organisations as a training and qualification requirement for participation in events or for use of club owned vessels. The scheme provides a resource point for recreational boaters to further their knowledge on safety skills.

The existing commercial certification system and industry training offered has a range of modules that provide valuable skills to people going to sea from both the marine and occupational safety perspective as well as industry skills. There are schemes in most states and territories that provide limited opportunities for people entering the industry to gain these skills which can later be credited towards the certification process and towards academic awards.

These schemes provide valuable training but can not provide the basis of a compulsory deckhand training scheme due to the:

- Limited numbers of students that can be accommodated;
- Limited availability of the schemes outside of major centres;
- Relative rigidity in the format of delivery and high resource costs of the training;
- Costs in terms of fees and time required to attend the training;
- Casual employment nature of the industry;
- Need for industry to have a flexible workforce in the most remote areas.

This training does not replace the need for safety training that specifically addresses the safety issues of the vessel as provided for in the guidelines.

Industry training packages

The seafood industry has developed an industry training package and the trading industry is in the process of developing its industry training package. NMSC supports these developments and seeks to ensure that the training packages provide common training in the marine safety area.

The training packages will provide for marine safety training that is outcomes based and make provision for varied and flexible delivery that meets the requirements of the industry. Training under the new plans, and the training tools and the assessment guidance developed by the plans will provide an excellent support resource for safety training. It will not, however, replace the need for training that specifically addresses the safety issues of the vessel as provided for in the guidelines.

Industry codes

Sectors of the industry have more recently developed codes of practice to address safety obligations onboard industry vessels. These schemes are seen as complementary to the Guidelines for Onboard Safety Training – Australian Domestic Vessels and may be recognised as providing an equivalent or acceptable alternative.

Duty of care

Commercial vessel operators have a contract obligation for the safety of all people onboard their vessel. This obligation is further supplemented by a general duty of care for the safety of people on or in their property. This duty of care also applies to owners of recreational vessels with respect to other people onboard their vessel. The duty of care is independent of marine legislation requirements.

Occupational health and safety

Owners and operators of vessels have a responsibility for the safety of employees under OH&S arrangements. They are specifically responsible for providing training and supervision for employees and a safe workplace. The OH&S requirements are also independent of marine safety requirements. In each state there are variations on how the OH&S requirements are applied to the marine industry.

Risk management

Under the principles of risk management, the level of risk or exposure of an owner or employer may be reduced by taking measures to identify the hazard and reduce the risk by making changes as necessary. The contract, duty of care and OH&S requirements under existing laws expose an owner or operator of any vessel to considerable risk of damages should an accident occur.

By providing appropriate safety briefings and training, a vessel owner or operator can greatly improve safety and reduce his/her exposure to the risk of damages.



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