



NMSC Media Release

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Standards organisations team up to revise small craft standard

The National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) entered into an agreement with Standards Australia some 12 months ago to enable NMSC to project manage the revision of AS 1799.1 Small Craft – General Requirements for Power Boats.

As a result of the collaboration, the draft standard for AS1799.1 is now out for public comment.

The revised standard is a key reference standard for the Australian Builders Plate (ABP). It covers buoyancy, stability, fire protection and a range of other safety aspects for recreational boats up to 15 metres in length; however, the current edition had not been revised since 1992.

NMSC's Acting CEO John Henry said the project has been conducted according to the processes of Standards Australia, with NMSC becoming the first 'bureau' under Standards Australia's new business model.

"Devolving standards development to specialist bureaus working in specific fields is common practice amongst the equivalent bodies to Standards Australia in Europe and North America, but is relatively new to Australia," Mr Henry said.

'Under the inter-governmental agreement that established the NMSC, there is an obligation on marine safety agencies to implement the National Standards developed by NMSC as legal requirements," he said, "however, in the case of recreational boats, only certain key safety requirements, like buoyancy in new boats under six metres in length are intended to be regulated.

"Nonetheless, there is a need to have other aspects of good safety practice documented in a technical 'standard' that is not a National Standard.

"A standard designed around Australian conditions has proven its worth over many years, especially in the case of 'tinnies' and other boats made just for use in Australia and which account for the largest sector in the recreational fleet.

"AS 1799.1 fulfils that need by providing a mix of deemed-to-satisfy solutions for the ABP along with recommended approaches to achieving safe outcomes.

"The arrangement with Standards Australia provides NMSC with an additional option in the range of solutions we can provide".

Have your say

The draft standard for AS 1799.1 Small Craft – General Requirements for Power Boats can be obtained directly from Standards Australia's publisher SAI Global via the website: www.standards.org.au, click on Drafts for Public Comment and follow leads to document reference DR 08224. **Comments close on 14 January 2009.**

The NMSC aims to achieve nationally uniform marine safety practices and is made up of the CEOs of Australia's marine safety agencies.

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For further information, contact NMSC's Communications Officer Rosemary Pryor on (02) 9247 2124.