



NMSC Media Release

28 September 2009

NMSC welcomes review of marine radio licensing

In response to concerns raised by the National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) and other representatives of the maritime community about correct radio use, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has released a discussion paper on regulatory arrangements for VHF marine radios used by recreational boaters.

NMSC's CEO Ms Margie O'Tarpey praised ACMA for acting on the recreational boating sector's concerns and producing a comprehensive discussion paper which covers the important issues.

"NMSC appreciates the Authority's action on this matter," Ms O'Tarpey said.

"The paper acknowledges an apparent low take-up of VHF operator's Certificates of Proficiency by recreational boaters and addresses our safety concern that VHF users may not be logging voyages because they aren't licensed.

"The current situation suggests the need for more user-friendly training and a certification package that is relevant, better and cheaper.

"In a fitting response, options for an improved training package are explored in the discussion paper".

Ms O'Tarpey strongly encourages stakeholders – including all relevant government and non-government bodies at the state and territory level and recreational boat operators – to comment on the discussion paper.

"I'm particularly pleased that NMSC and ACMA have worked so well together on this important communications and safety issue," she added.

Have Your Say

An electronic version of the discussion paper, *VHF Marine Radio Operator Qualification Arrangements – Non-Commercial (Recreational) Vessels* is available on the ACMA website at http://www.acma.gov.au/WEB/STANDARD/pc=PC_311904 or by contacting mrowp@acma.gov.au.

Submissions are required by 18 December 2009. Please note that all submissions will be publicly available, however, submissions can be made confidential on request.

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

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