



NMSC Media Release

15 December 2009

Hayden Asks Boaters to Keep A Proper Look-Out

Former Australian Test cricketer Matthew Hayden shakes his head as he remembers the now infamous incident a few years ago when his boat capsized and sank while attempting a bar crossing off Brisbane's North Stradbroke Island.

It took Matthew, fellow cricketer Andrew Symonds and friend Trent Butler an hour to reach the shore, battling currents, shock and exhaustion.

Matthew is keen to talk about the lessons learnt from this incident as spokesperson for the National Marine Safety Committee's "Skipper Keep Your Eye on the Ball" campaign, which will run for the second year in a row during the 2009/10 summer boating season.

"Even though it was slightly embarrassing that we flipped over while crossing a bar, it is absolute gold in terms of lessons learnt for me," he said.

"This campaign is about understanding the importance of staying focused and concentrating at all times because out on the water, it only takes a split second for things to change and you can then find yourself in real trouble."

NMSC CEO Margie O'Tarpey explained that the "you're the skipper you're responsible" message still needs to be reinforced to recreational boaters.

"Recreational vessels were involved in the majority of all marine incidents over the last 5 years and recreational motorboats were the most common vessel type involved in fatalities and in serious injuries."

According to the latest NMSC statistics during the six months ending June 2009, there were 713 reported commercial and recreational marine incidents resulting in 30 fatalities and 254 injuries.

- Recreational vessels were involved in 67% of all incidents. Recreational motorboats were the most common vessel type involved in fatalities (53%) and in serious injuries (49%).
- As in previous years, collisions were prevalent and made up 33% of all incident types.
- Error of judgement, inexperience, failure to keep a proper look-out and navigational error were amongst the top ten factors that contributed towards marine incidents.

Ms O'Tarpey explained that skippers need to –

- Lookout for floating debris, hazards like submerged reefs or rocks, other boats, kayaks, dinghies and swimmers.
- Keep right when they're in a navigation channel, entering a narrow passage, or a sharp bend.

Ms O'Tarpey thanked Matthew for being a great role model for boaters and for donating his time to be the campaign spokesperson.



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The public awareness campaign will run from December 2009 – February 2010 and features magazine and web advertising, television community service announcements, and a public relations campaign. The campaign is also supported by the Australia New Zealand Safe Boating Education Group, which is made up of representatives of Australian and New Zealand marine agencies, Yachting Australia and Australian Boating Industry Associations.

For further details on the campaign, go to www.nmsc.gov.au. Please contact your local marine safety agency for information about boating regulations in your state.

Ends

Media contacts

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