



AUSTRALIAN BUILDERS PLATE

Questions frequently asked by boat dealers

Customer benefits

1. How will my customers benefit from the ABP?

The ABP will help you accurately advise your customers about the performance of each boat including loading, capacity, maximum engine size, buoyancy and any other additional information the manufacturer wishes to provide.

This information will help your customer to pick the boat that is right for their needs, from the number of people they can carry to the horsepower that they need.

Because the information on the ABP is uniform your customer will also more readily be able to compare different types and models of boats, including imported boats.

2. Will boats be any safer?

The ABP will ensure that all boats less than 6 metres will have a minimum standard of buoyancy and will float when swamped.

This may encourage buyers to purchase a new boat with buoyancy over a second hand vessel without any flotation.

3. Will it cost me more to buy a boat with an ABP?

The ABP should not increase the price where the boat is already being built to a standard and is sufficiently buoyant already.

However models that aren't currently built to a standard, and lack flotation will need to be upgraded to meet the ABP standard. This may result in some manufacturing cost increases.

Selling boats with an ABP

4. Can I sell a boat without an ABP?

No

Dealers will not be allowed to sell boats built after the commencement date without an ABP, unless of course it is a boat that is exempt from the ABP requirements.

5. Can I still sell my old stock?

Yes

Boats without an ABP can still be sold provided they were built before the standard is introduced through legislation.

Boats requiring an ABP

6. Which boats are required to have an ABP plate?

All boats are required to have an ABP plate with the exception of second hand vessels; an amphibious vehicle; a canoe, kayak or surf ski or similar vessel designed to be powered by paddle; a rowing shell used for racing or rowing training; a sailboard or sail kite; a surf row boat; a hydrofoil or hovercraft; a race boat; a sailing vessel; a submersible; and an aquatic toy.

Other exceptions include vessels subject to a Certificate of Survey, and Personal Water Craft (PWC) and Inflatable boats provided they comply with other requirements.

7. What labelling will a Personal Water Craft require instead of an ABP?

The ABP will not be required on a PWC designed to carry two or less people.

An ABP will be required on other PWC's unless the craft already has information attached to it that states:-

- the maximum number of persons the vessel may carry, as recommended by the builder, and
- the total weight of persons and equipment (expressed in kilogram's) that the craft is designed to carry, as recommended by the builder

8. What labelling will an Inflatable boat require instead of an ABP?

An inflatable boat requires an ABP UNLESS it already has a plate affixed in accordance with the European Directive 94/25/EC, or a plate attached in accordance with the requirements of the US National Marine Manufacturers Association as set out in the NMMA Certification Handbook.

Fixing and approving ABP plates

9. Is the dealer responsible for fixing the ABP to the boat?

Not unless you choose to be.

The majority of dealers will choose to buy a boat from the builder or importer with a plate already fitted by the builder or importer. This is the easiest option and the option which is favoured by the majority of dealers.

However some dealers may choose to buy a boat without a plate, knowing that they will then need to have the information on the plate approved by an competent person, and fitted prior to the boat being offered for sale. The person approving the information on the plate will need to identify themselves on the plate and take responsibility for the information.

An example of where this option might be used is where a dealer regularly undertakes modifications to a particular model of boat. For example a dealer might regularly customise a particular boat with a tuna tower or bimini. In this instance the dealer would have the information on the plate approved by an competent person and then would fit the plate to the boat prior to sale.

There is one other situation where a dealer will be responsible for putting a new plate on a boat. This is where a boat that has been already fitted with a plate by the builder is modified by the dealer. If the modifications to the boat invalidates the information on the plate the dealer will need to make sure that a new plate is fitted to the boat prior to sale. Once again the information on the new plate can only be approved by a competent person.

10. Who is authorised to approve the information on an ABP?

The information on an ABP can only be approved by one of 3 persons who must be a legal entity in Australia.

- The builder;
- The importer; or
- A competent person.

In the majority of cases the information will be supplied by the builder.

11. What is a competent person?

A competent person is defined as being a person who has acquired through training, qualification, experience, or a combination of these, the knowledge and skills enabling that person to competently determine and approve the information on a builders plate.

Any person approving the information on the plate is assuming responsibility for the information on that plate,

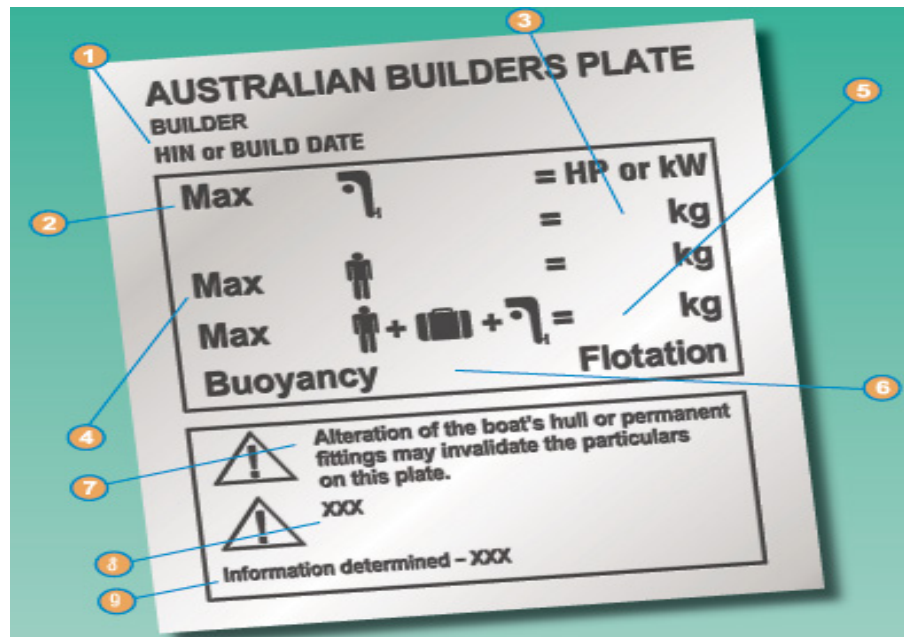
12. How does the consumer know which of these people has supplied the information on the plate?

The person who is supplying the information on the plate needs to identify themselves by name and the capacity in which they are providing the information. They must be a legal entity in Australia.

Where a supplementary plate is used, the person providing the information for the supplementary plate should be aware that they are approving the information contained on both the existing and the supplementary plate and would also need to be identified on the plate.

Examples

- Built by Sunhope Boats, Australia
- Imported by RayStan Holdings, Australia
- Information approved by E.R. Smith, Naval Architect, Sydney, Aust.



This is a sample of an ABP for a boat less than 6 meters with an outboard motor, as of 5 September 2005. For further details, please refer to the National Standard for Australian Builders Plate for Recreational boats

- 1) Name of the person approving information on the plate, normally the builder or importer, and the capacity in which they approved the information and either the Hull Identification Number (HIN) or the year built
- 2) Maximum outboard engine power rating for which the boat has been designed and tested, expressed in kilowatts or horsepower
- 3) Maximum outboard engine weight for which the boat has been designed and tested expressed in kilograms, including the weight of any auxiliary outboard.
- 4) Maximum number of persons on the boat expressed as a whole number and in kilograms.
- 5) The maximum load that the boat has been designed and tested to carry when underway, This includes persons, maximum outboard engine weight allowed including any auxiliary engines, and carry-on equipment such as personal equipment, personal safety equipment, spare parts tools, dry provisions, fishing tackle, portable tanks and their contents, It does not include the mass of the contents of fixed fuel or water tanks.
- 6) For boats less than 6 metres in length there will be a buoyancy statement. Up until July 2006, the terms used may be either inadequate flotation, basic flotation, or level flotation. After July 2006 the term "inadequate flotation" will no longer be permitted for use.
- 7) A mandatory warning statement that alterations may invalidate the particulars on the Australian Builders Plate.
- 8) The person approving information on the plate may also add an optional person/load capacity warning statement or other safety information.

Examples may include.

Warning – the recommended maximum persons to be carried on the flybridge should not exceed 2 persons or 150 kilograms

Warning – the recommended maximum load should be reduced in bad weather or when the boat is operated offshore. Refer to the owner's manual before operation.

- 9) The standard used to determine the information provided on the plate.
An Example might be:
Information determined – AS 1799

Modifications to boats

13. What happens if I modify a boat prior to sale?

If a dealer modifies the boat so that the information on the plate is no longer correct, then the dealer will need to have a new plate placed on the boat with the information on the plate approved by a competent person.

Note that this only applies to new boats prior to sale to the consumer.

14. What level of modification requires a new ABP?

Any modification that renders the information on the existing plate to be inaccurate requires a new plate to be fitted to the boat.

Examples:

Removal of a floatation chamber/seat to install a live bait tank would alter the buoyancy of the craft and require a new plate.

The fitting of accessories such as additional seats, fish boxes, extra or larger fuel tanks, extra batteries etc would add weight to the boat and may require the stated load capacity of the boat to be reduced.

Most manufacturers supply an options list with their craft.

15. Is there any way I can avoid having to change the plate if I customise a boat?

If the boat builder determines the information on the plate to allow for a generic set of “standard customisation options” that reflects normal purchaser demand plus a small margin of safety, then the dealer can option up to that level without having to alter the ABP.

If modifications or customisation occurred outside of the predetermined set of “standard customisation options” then a new ABP would need to be determined.

Imported and exported boats

16. I import new boats into Australia and these already come with a NMMA or CE plate. Will these still require an ABP plate?

Yes

Unless the plate complies with the ABP standard, and the person identifying themselves as having approved the information on the plate (eg: the builder, importer or competent person) has a legal entity in Australia.

However overseas plates do not normally contain the buoyancy statement and mandatory warning statement required by the ABP standard. Also the information may not be in metric and will not meet the requirements of the ABP standard for that reason.

17. If the boat already has an NMMA or CE plate affixed, can I add a second plate with the additional information?

Yes

Provided that they are a legal entity in Australia, the builder, importer or competent person could affix a plate that contained supplementary information to that already displayed. For example the supplementary plate could contain the weight in kilograms, the buoyancy statement, and the mandatory warning statement.

Where a supplementary plate is used, the person providing the information for the supplementary plate should be aware that they are approving the information contained on both the existing and the supplementary plate and would also need to be identified on the plate.

Engines

18. What happens if I sell a boat without an engine?

The ABP provides important safety information to the consumer including the maximum engine weight and horse power. This allows the owner of the vessel to fit an appropriate engine at a later date.

19. Does the engine rating have to be in Kilowatts?

No

The ABP standard states that the maximum engine capacity can be expressed in either Horse Power (Hp) or Kilowatts (kW).

20. What happens if I fit an auxiliary outboard to the boat?

The fitting of an auxiliary mounting plate and auxiliary outboard would not affect the allowable power of the outboard on the ABP plate. The information about the maximum outboard engine power rating applies only to the boat's primary engine. The power of any reserve outboard is excluded.

However the auxiliary engine would need to be counted towards the total allowable weight of outboards specified on the plate. The reason is that the auxiliary outboard is located on or near the transom where it is likely to have a significant affect on trim.

21. What information does the plate give me about the boats engines?

The plate provides information about the maximum horsepower or kilowatts of the primary outboard engine only, and the maximum weight of all outboard engines that can be carried on or near the transom including the weight of auxiliary motor.

Other information on the plate

22. What information does the plate give me about number of people that can be carried?

The plate provides both the maximum number of people that can be carried in the boat and the total weight of those people, based on the calculations contained in the standard that has been used to determine the information provided on the plate.

On some plates additional information regarding the loading may be provided in a warning statement. This statement could cover matters such as reduced loading for flybridges and adverse conditions.

Standards

23. What standard has the boat been built to?

The plate will only identify which standard has been used to determine the information provided on the plate. This does not necessarily mean that the boat has been built to that standard.

Flotation

24. What is meant by basic and level flotation?

Basic Flotation

The ABP Standard defines basic flotation as “a flotation system that will keep a boat carrying its maximum load from sinking when swamped, assuming the occupants of the boat have left it and are in the water clinging to it. With basic flotation the swamped boat may float at any attitude.” This is a general definition to explain the concept.

However, when determining buoyancy for a boat the specific definition and performance requirement (or its equivalent) for basic flotation in the standard you are using (ie: ISO, AS) must be used.

Level Flotation

Level flotation is defined in the ABP standard as being “a flotation system that will keep a boat carrying its maximum load from sinking when swamped, assuming the occupants remain within the boat and supported by the flotation system. The flotation system must be such that it will keep the swamped boat floating level and prevent it from capsizing in calm water. Level flotation does not provide a self righting capacity.”

Once again, when determining buoyancy for a boat the specific definition and performance requirement (or its equivalent) for level flotation in the standard you are using (ie: ISO, AS) must be used.

Australian Builders Plate Level or basic flotation requirement

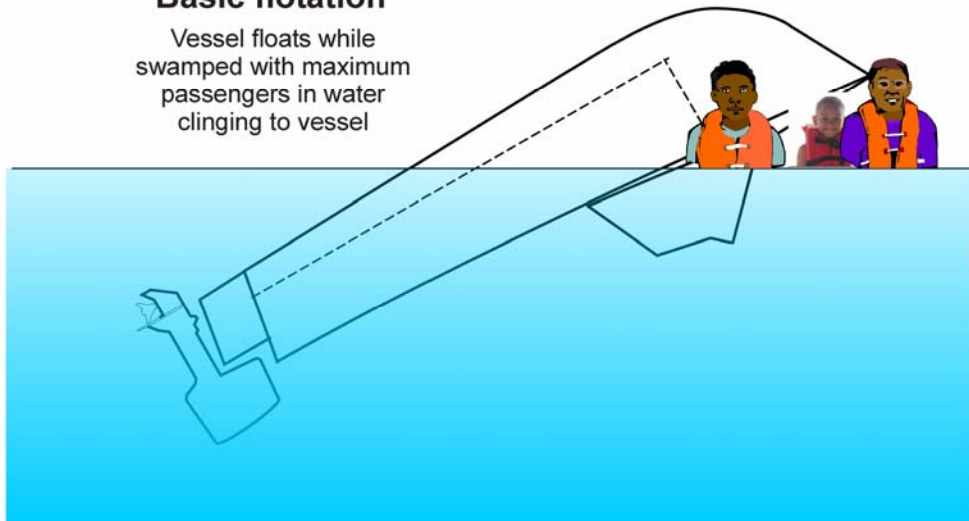
Level flotation

Vessel floats upright when swamped with maximum passengers remaining on the vessel



Basic flotation

Vessel floats while swamped with maximum passengers in water clinging to vessel



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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