



# NMSC Media Release

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## Technical Advisory Panel guides boat-build standard

The National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) has instituted a system of technical advisory panels (TAPs) to consider interpretations of National Standards for marine safety. The panels are composed of technical experts and their role is to help establish a uniform national approach to applying the National Standards in practical situations, consistent with the outcomes those standards are seeking to achieve.

NMSC's acting CEO, John Henry said that "importantly, the TAP's role is not to analyse the words in the standard, but rather to look at the underlying safety principles and ensure that they are not compromised".

A Technical Advisory Panel met recently to develop some interpretation guidelines for the national standard for the Australian Builders Plate (ABP). The request for the interpretation came about after an apparent inconsistency was identified when determining the buoyancy performance of boats under six metres in length that rely upon air compartments for their source of buoyancy.

Mr Henry explained that the Panel was asked to clarify the question of whether such a boat could meet the requirements of the ABP with a single integral air compartment – which seemed to be allowed if the buoyancy performance was determined using ISO 12217-3 – when other technical standards referenced in the ABP standard required at least three compartments.

"The Panel considered whether a single air compartment met the safety objectives of the ABP standard, given the possibility of air compartments leaking," he said.

"The Panel concluded that if air compartments are used as a source of buoyancy – regardless of which technical standards is employed to check the performance – the buoyancy shall be assessed with the two largest compartments vented at their high and low points, effectively meaning that a single air compartment is not adequate".

More detailed information on the Panel's latest findings and interpretation on the ABP can be found in the Guidance Circular titled *Technical Interpretation of Buoyancy Performance of Recreational Boats in Relation to the ABP Standard*, now published on the NMSC website: [www.nmsc.gov.au](http://www.nmsc.gov.au)

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

### **Ends**

*For further information, contact NMSC's acting CEO John Henry or Communications Officer Rosemary Pryor on (02) 9247 2124.*