



Media Update

October 30 2007

ABP Compliance a Must

National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) CEO Ms Maurene Horder emphasised that new recreational boats need to be fitted with a compliant Australian Builders Plate.

“We have received feedback from industry and government representatives saying that some plates on new boats are either incorrectly positioned on the boat or are not permanent fixtures of the boat.”

Most new recreational and owner built boats will need to comply with the ABP, which has been introduced in most states either through legislation or administration.

Ms Horder made the point that a compliant ABP meant including correct information about maximum horsepower, load, person capacity and buoyancy performance and ensuring that the plate was located where the driver of the boat could easily see it.

“Builders Plates hidden away on the transom aren’t going to help skippers decide on important safety issues to do with their boat.”

Ms Horder said that ABPs also needed to be permanently affixed and capable of withstanding the combined effects of water, oil, salt spray, direct sunlight, heat, cold and wear expected in the normal operation of the boat, without loss of legibility.

“The ABP is an important part of the safety information on board and needs to be readable over the life of the boat.”

In relation to permanency issues, Ms Horder added that a sticker that can be partially or wholly removed by rubbing with a fingernail is not permanently affixed.

“Plates must stand up to normal wear and tear including regular washing and printing that is affected by rubbing with a soft cloth and household detergent is not adequate.”

The ABP requirements are aimed at preventing accidents due to overloading and excessive engine power, as well as ensuring that smaller boats won’t sink if they do capsize or become swamped. Historically, these types of factors have been the ones most commonly associated with boating fatalities.

This is reflected in the latest statistics from the NMSC’s National Incident Database, which show that 48 people died in boating incidents last year. The most common incidents were person overboard, capsize, collision of vessels and swamping.

The NMSC aims to achieve nationally uniform marine safety practices and is made up of the CEOs of Australia’s marine safety agencies. Please check with your local marine agency for ABP regulations in your state or territory. Or for a copy of Edition 3 of the ABP Standard, visit www.nmsc.gov.au

Ends

For further information, please contact NMSC Communications representative Ursula Bishop on 0412 813 056.