

**2008**  
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## AMSA welcomes new board member

AMSA Chairman, Ted Anson AM and the Chief Executive Officer, Mr Graham Peachey welcomed AMSA's newest Board Member on Thursday 26 June 2008.

Mr Martin Byrne was appointed by the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP on 2 June 2008. Mr Byrne is Assistant Federal Secretary of the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers (AIMPE) and also has been a member of the Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Seacare) Authority since 1996.



Mr Byrne brings to the AMSA Board his keen interest and long-term experience in seafarer's qualifications, maritime employees' welfare, workplace occupational health and safety and workers' compensation.

While visiting AMSA, Mr Byrne met with all General Managers and their respective teams. He was also given a tour of the Emergency Response Centre and the Disaster Recovery Facility.

## Minister visits Torres Strait

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Jim Turnour MHR, Federal Member for Leichardt (Cairns to Torres Strait), and members of the Minister's staff paid a visit to Torres Strait on 7 & 8 August to inspect the Emergency Towing Vessel *Pacific Responder* and to familiarise themselves with other aspects of AMSA's operations in the region including safety regulation of shipping and coastal pilotage services, pollution response preparedness and search and rescue. They were accompanied by Emergency Response Division and Maritime Operations Division staff.



*ETV Pacific Responder* is celebrating its second anniversary in providing emergency response services to shipping incidents in the region. In addition, it provides AMSA with maintenance and construction services for its aids to navigation network in the Torres Strait and northern Great Barrier Reef. The Cairns-based vessel has responded to several shipping incidents in the region, including assisting Papua New Guinea authorities contain a cargo ship fire in the Torres Strait. It also assisted in the salvage operations for the *Pasha Bulker* incident at Newcastle last year. There are no port-based tugs capable of emergency towing services in the Torres Strait and northern Great Barrier Reef.

The Minister had a chance to experience the difficulties of steering a vessel between the Torres Strait islands and reefs first hand, and during a helicopter trip around the Prince of Wales Channel area he saw the close proximity to the reefs when large deep draught vessels pass in the area and some of the aids to navigation that are located to assist shipping.

To read a press release from the Ministers office about the visit, [click here](#).

## A national system for maritime safety

Australia's transport ministers recently agreed to establish a single national system for maritime safety regulation. They propose broadening the application of the Navigation Act 1912 to apply to all non-recreational vessels, including those currently regulated by State and Territory maritime safety agencies. Currently across Australia, maritime safety for non-recreational state-based vessels is regulated by more than 50 pieces of legislation administered by eight independent maritime safety agencies.



This proposal is part of broader national reforms designed to cut down red tape in the transport and logistics sector and deliver more consistency in transport regulation across Australia. In addition to maritime safety regulation, ministers are also reviewing arrangements for heavy vehicle regulation, registration and licensing and rail safety regulation.

The Australian Transport Council (ATC), which is considering the reforms, includes all State, Territory and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for transport issues across Australia.

The ATC agreed that their preferred option would be AMSA taking responsibility for regulating vessel design, survey, construction, and equipment, vessel operation, crew certification and manning. They also agreed that the national system should allow for the delivery of regulatory services by State and Northern Territory maritime agencies operating under arrangements agreed with AMSA.

The final decision on whether to proceed with a single national maritime safety system will be made following the completion of a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) which is being prepared for consideration by the ATC. It is anticipated that, if the RIS outcome is positive, the Prime Minister and Premiers at the Council of Australian Governments will consider an intergovernmental agreement that would underpin the single national system early in 2009.

Stakeholder consultations will be held throughout September and October 2008 in all states and the Northern Territory to provide important input to the RIS on the proposed options. Dates and venues are being finalised and will be published in industry and government newsletters, journals and websites. Those interested in participating in the consultations should contact their state or territory maritime safety agency for further details.

In addition, current AMSA stakeholders will also be invited to attend stakeholder consultations on the proposed single national maritime safety system. No significant impact on AMSA's current stakeholders or existing responsibilities is anticipated. A single national system is expected to provide benefits in streamlining career progression from state commercial vessels to the blue water fleet. Industry stakeholders will be advised of consultation dates and venues through regular updates.

## Online distress beacon registration launched

AMSA publicly launched online registration of distress beacons at the Melbourne Boat Show in July.

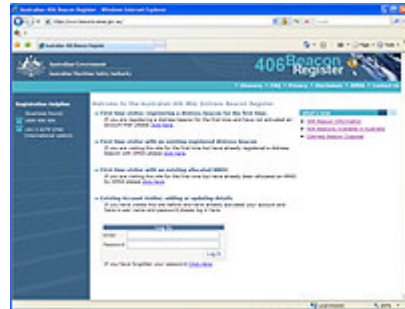
By registering a beacon with AMSA and providing details of the vessel, aircraft or person which the beacon belongs to and a list of emergency contacts, rescue authorities can very quickly determine if the activation of a particular beacon is a real distress situation or an inadvertent activation. Additionally, the Rescue Coordination Centre - Australia (RCC) can task the most suitable assets for a rescue response.

If you already have a 406 MHz distress beacon, or you are planning on purchasing one, ensure you visit the Australian 406 Beacon Register so the RCC is best equipped to respond to your distress situation. Registration stickers will be issued by AMSA to all registered distress beacon owners and should be adhered to your beacon to provide proof of registration.

Visitors to the Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney boat shows have been able to register their beacon on-site with internet access available at each of the stands. AMSA will again be offering this service at the Mandurah Boat Show in October.

To register your distress beacon online visit: [www.beacons.amsa.gov.au](http://www.beacons.amsa.gov.au)

Since the launch of online registrations, the daily number of distress beacons registered has doubled with a significant number of users also reaccessing their online accounts to update information.



Each time I sit down to write my report for *AMSAboard*, I am amazed at the pace of activity within the organisation. As I look back at the previous edition of our newsletter, I can see how things have developed and moved on and it provides me with an appreciation of the other issues that have emerged and events that have occurred in the intervening period.

Of major significance to AMSA since our last edition of *AMSAboard* is the appointment of our newest Board Member, Mr Martin Byrne who joined us in June. Martin is the Assistant Federal Secretary of the Australian Institute of Marine and Power Engineers and brings a wealth of seafaring qualification and welfare experience to the Board.



In the last edition of *AMSAboard* we advised that the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service had been nominated by the Australian Government for an IMO Bravery Award. In late June the Minister announced that the nomination had been successful and the crew have been awarded an IMO commendation for bravery. AMSA is very proud to have been associated with the nomination and subsequent win of the Westpac crew for their role in the rescue of 22 crew from the *Pasha Bulker* off Newcastle in June last year.

On a regulatory note, the establishment of a single national system of maritime safety regulation was recently supported by the State, Territory and Commonwealth Transport Ministers. AMSA is currently exploring what this will mean in practical terms for us, our partner agencies and key stakeholders. The final decision on whether to proceed with a single national maritime safety jurisdiction will not be made until the ATC has considered a Regulatory Impact Statement. During September, stakeholder consultations will be held in all States and the Northern Territory to allow input to the RIS. I encourage you, through your respective maritime safety agencies, to participate in this process.

The relationship AMSA has with our counterpart organisations around the world is highlighted in this edition of *AMSAboard*. AMSA is currently undergoing a voluntary IMO audit after the Secretary General of IMO, Admiral Efthimios Mitropoulos and myself signed a Memorandum of Cooperation earlier this year in London. The scope of the audit will examine Australia's compliance with the key IMO codes.

In other international developments, we have held discussions with China's Maritime Safety Authority and a draft Memorandum of Understanding is currently under development to build on our relationship. Additionally, China's Classification Society has joined AMSA's list of recognised organisations to undertake statutory surveys on our behalf. You can read more about these agreements in this edition of *AMSAboard*.

Closer to home, AMSA was fortunate to have the Minister, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP pay a visit to the Torres Strait with the Member for Leichhardt, Jim Turnour in early August. The purpose of the visit was to familiarise the Minister with the Australian Government's emergency response vessel, the *ETV Pacific Responder* and other aspects of AMSA's operations in the region.

Our memorandum of understanding with the Australian Maritime College is now well underway and in a joint venture graduates from AMC now working within AMSA have been involved in career fairs and the AMC Open Day. The purpose of the joint venture is to demonstrate the career continuum through education opportunities offered by the AMC.

There have also been a number of technology advancements over the past few months including the installation of a new Automatic Identification System base station in the far north of the Great Barrier Reef and the introduction of our on-line system for the registration of emergency beacons.

On an educational note, AMSA staff have been busy over the past few months with the boat show season in full swing. As the 1 February 2009 switch off date for the 121.5 MHz emergency beacon satellite system looms closer, the push is on to ensure everyone is aware of the need to

carry a 406 MHz emergency beacon. It is encouraging to see the increased number of registrations for beacons, now that the on-line system is operational – you can read more about this in this edition of *AMSAboard*.

Core business activities for AMSA including ship inspections and search and rescue operations continue apace for the organisation. In fact the 2007 Port State Control report has just been released. The report indicates that detention rates are up slightly on last year reflecting the significant effort that has been put into improving the focus on those ships posing the highest risk. It is essential that AMSA continues its rigorous PSC regime to ensure the safety of personnel and the protection of Australia's unique and pristine marine environment. You can read more about the PSC findings in this edition of the newsletter.

Please enjoy this winter edition of *AMSAboard*.

Graham Peachey

## AMSA signs memorandum of cooperation with IMO

During the recent International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council meeting in London, AMSA's CEO signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Secretary General of IMO on Australia's agreement to be audited under the scheme.

The audit will be commencing this month with three international auditors from the United States, Turkey and India. The scope of the audit will examine Australia's compliance with the key IMO codes and conventions.



## AMSA and China Maritime Safety Authority hold discussions

AMSA's CEO and the General Manager of Maritime Standards recently met with officials from the China Maritime Safety Authority to discuss cooperative arrangements that would encourage information exchange, networking and sharing of technical expertise.

A draft Memorandum of Understanding is currently under development and will build on the positive relationships between Australia and China in international fora such as the IMO. The discussions and signing of the record of meeting also included participation by the Chinese Vice Minister Communications, Mr Xu.



## China Classification Society (CSS) joins AMSA's RO list

On 23 June, AMSA's CEO jointly signed an agreement with CSS to delegate them as one of AMSA's recognised organisations to undertake statutory surveys on our behalf.

The number of classification societies that AMSA now has official agreements with is seven and the inclusion of CSS on the list was an historic moment for China. The signing ceremony was witnessed by Mr Xu Zuyuan, Vice Minister (China Ministry of Communications).



## AAC meeting outcomes

The AMSA Advisory Committee (AAC) had its second meeting for 2008 in Melbourne on 10 July. The AAC was established by the AMSA Board as an independent forum with the ability to influence the policy and major operational direction of the Authority.

The high profile membership is drawn from the commercial and recreational maritime sectors, peak industry bodies, port authorities, educational institutions, the union movements, the Royal Australian Navy, State Governments and major clients, and appointments are made on a two-year basis by the AMSA Chief Executive Officer.

Current office holders are:

- Mr Paul Bendy (Chair) formerly of Adsteam Marine
- Mr Phil Jones (Deputy Chair) – Chief Executive Officer, Yachting Australia Inc
- Mr David Anderson – Executive Director, Ports Australia
- Mr Graham Peachey – Chief Executive Officer, AMSA
- Dr John Glaister – Deputy Director-General, Queensland Transport
- Mr Dick Hall – General Manager – Operations, Farstad Shipping (Indian Pacific)
- Captain Phil Hickey – Senior Marine Advisor, Caltex Refineries (NSW)
- Mr Michael Phillips – Managing Director, Hetherington Kingsbury Shipping Agency
- Commodore Kim Pitt AM (RAN) (Ret'd) – General Manager – Operations, Australian Antarctic Division
- Professor Malek Pourzanjani – President and Principal, Australian Maritime College
- Captain Fred Ross – Maritime Policy Director, Australian Maritime Officers' Union
- Mr Llew Russell – Chief Executive Officer, Shipping Australia Limited
- Mr David Sterrett – Chairman, Australian Shipowners Association
- Mr Gary Webb – Chief Executive Officer, Newcastle Port Corporation

At their 41st Meeting, members consulted on a wide range of issues including: Coastal Pilotage Services in the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait; the IMO Voluntary Audit scheme and Australia's audit in August 2008; the mid year meeting of the IMO Council and AMSA's work with the Chinese Maritime Safety Authority and the China Classification Society. A particularly useful feature of the AAC meetings is the Member's update on key issues for their particular sector.

The next meeting will be held in late October in conjunction with the AMSA Board meeting. One of the main issues for members at the next meeting will be to look at their role and function and how best to utilise the extensive experience that comprises the AAC.

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## 2007 Port State Control report released

Port State Control (PSC) is of particular importance to Australia due to the role of shipping in Australia's trade and the sensitivity of the Australian coastline to environmental damage. AMSA is supported in its rigorous PSC program by the Australian government and other maritime industry stakeholders.

The delivery of PSC data over a number of years has provided AMSA with evidence of the benefits of the program. There has been a clear improvement in the overall standard of foreign flagged ships and a general decline in average deficiencies per PSC inspection.

Between 1 January and 31 December 2007 there were 2963 initial PSC inspections with 159 of those leading to the detention of a vessel.

To access the Report [click here](#).



## Merauke visit as part of ITSAP

AMSA's Murray Brissett and Paul Threfall, along with Andy Cole from AeroRescue Darwin recently travelled to Merauke, Indonesia for a three-day visit as a part of the Indonesian Transport Safety Assistance Package (ITSAP).

Welcoming the visitors were Assistant II of the Regent of Merauke, Julius Noya, the head of the Indonesian Search and Rescue Authority (BASARNAS), Sumpeno Yuwono and a representative from the Indonesian Navy.

The main focus of the visit was to inspect the area and its facilities ahead of a joint exercise between AMSA and BASARNAS in November. The exercise will involve a search mission followed by a debrief and training. This particular location was selected for the exercise due to its proximity to Australia.

The exercise is a part of ongoing efforts under the ITSAP to establish a coordination of tasks and functions of search and rescue incidents and/or accidents that may take place in this area.



## Cooperative arrangements with AMC

Earlier this year the Australian Maritime College (AMC) and AMSA formalised their strong relationship by agreeing to work together on a range of activities, such as staff exchanges, training and cooperative research projects. Both the AMC and AMSA have been undergoing changes to their recruitment and retention strategies. As part of their recruitment process, AMC has been involved in career adviser seminars around the country. Some AMSA personnel who had begun their maritime careers as AMC graduates were able to attend some of these. While the demographics and job necessities of both agencies are quite different, the concept of a 'continuum' in terms of career paths having entered the Maritime stream was explored. Having AMC staff and AMSA personnel in attendance, provided career advisers and prospective students of the AMC with an understanding of the longer-term possibilities offered by a course of study within the area of maritime.



## Pasha Bulker rescue crew win IMO Bravery Commendation

On 20 June the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP announced that the Westpac Helicopter crew, nominated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority on behalf of the Australian Government for the rescue of 22 crew off the stranded bulk carrier *Pasha Bulker*, had been awarded an IMO commendation for bravery.

The six recipients are:

- Captain Ian McFadden and Captain Ian Osborne (pilots)
- Graham Nickisson (Crew Chief)
- Peter Praniess (Aircraftman)
- Glen Ramplin and Nathan Langham (Rescue Crewmen)

The formal presentation of the Award will be conducted by the IMO in London later this year.

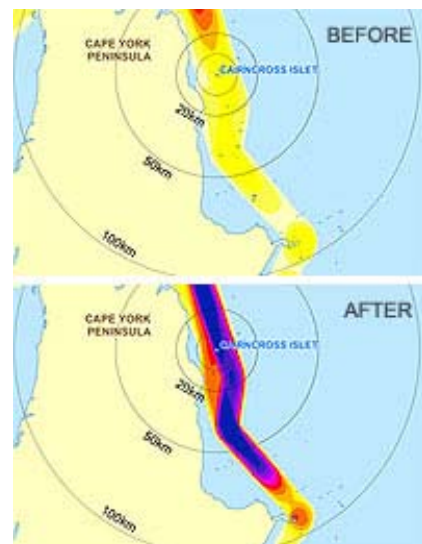


## AMSA installs new AIS base station

Recently, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's Navigation Safety team installed a new Automatic Identification System (AIS) base station on Cairncross Islet, located on the inner shipping route in the far north of the Great Barrier Reef.

The AMSA Geographic Information Systems team was then asked to carry out spatial analysis on historical AIS data to see how this new AIS station has contributed to improving AIS coverage in the area.

Firstly, a plot was created showing AIS vessel tracking coverage in the area before the installation of the Cairncross Islet base station. Then, another plot was created showing AIS vessel tracking coverage in the area after the installation of the Cairncross Islet base station.



For both plots, the darker the colour the higher the density of vessel traffic in the area, and the lighter the colour the lower the density of vessel traffic in the area.

These images illustrate that the addition of the new base station at Cairncross Islet has significantly improved the AIS coverage in the area, demonstrating how valuable historical AIS and other vessel tracking data can be.

## 'Pollution Kills' Campaign

As part of its ongoing campaign to raise awareness of marine environmental issues, AMSA's Environment Protection section has produced two new posters with the theme "Pollution Kills", using graphic images of wildlife impacted by pollution. While the wording on both versions of the poster is the same, the images highlight the two most common types of marine pollution incidents reported to AMSA - oil and garbage. The posters include a telephone number for reporting pollution and an email address to request further information.

Copies of the posters have been circulated to all AMSA offices nationally. Additional copies can be obtained from Katrina Hansen, [katrina.hansen@amsa.gov.au](mailto:katrina.hansen@amsa.gov.au).

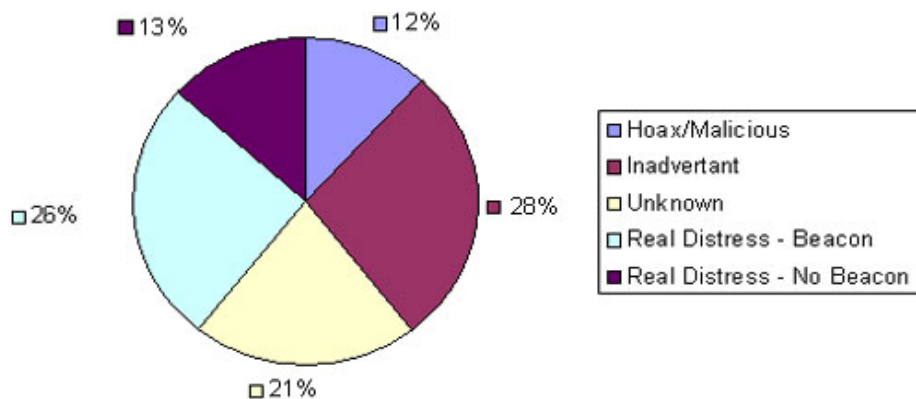


## Rescue response statistics

Data provided by the Rescue Coordination Centre – Australia helps to provide an overview of how busy staff are responding to distress beacon activations on top of other distress situations where a beacon may not have been involved.

The graph below shows the break up of rescue responses for the period April to June. Unfortunately hoax or inadvertent beacon activations remains high at 40%, representing a significant waste of resources.

One of the anticipated benefits of the switch to and registration of 406 MHz distress beacons is the ability to more efficiently identify the validity of a beacon activation. This will lead to a significant reduction in the waste of resources attending to malicious or inadvertent beacon activations.



## Upcoming AMSA events

Preparations for the inaugural Ship Safety and Maritime Industry Week, encompassing *Natship09* - Australia's Sixth National Shipping Industry Conference, have commenced. *Natship09* has been scheduled for 3-5 June 2009 and will be held at the Hilton Hotel Sydney, New South Wales.

With the theme of *The Future: Our Response to the Challenges*, *Natship09* will cover a broad range of topics affecting the maritime industry and will look ahead to future changes occurring across the sector.

Once again, *Natship09* will be proudly supported by the Australian Shipowners Association, Ports Australia and Shipping Australia Limited.

For more information, email [natship@amsa.gov.au](mailto:natship@amsa.gov.au).

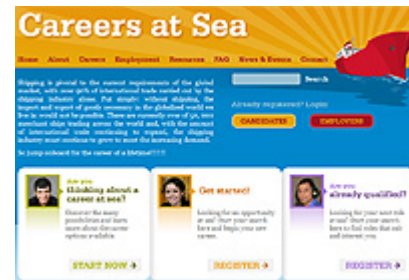


## New website for Careers at Sea

On 21 July, the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP, launched the Australian Shipowners Association's 'Careers at Sea' website.

The website has been designed as a one stop shop for information on careers in the shipping industry and also seeks to put qualified seafarers in touch with potential employers.

<http://www.careersatsea.com.au/>.



## 2 people found adrift in Torres Strait

On 7 July, Thursday Island Police coordinated a search for an overdue five metre Wahoo travelling between Saibai Island and Badu Island. AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre - Australia coordinated aviation assets for the search. Nine aircraft comprising two helicopters and seven fixed wing aircraft including a RAAF P3 Orion, a Coastwatch Dash 8 and AMSA's Dornier aircraft were used for the search.

On the afternoon of 8 July, the vessel with two people on board was located by the Coastwatch aircraft. A rescue helicopter winched the survivors from the broken down vessel and conveyed them to Thursday Island Hospital for a medical checkup. AMSA's Emergency Towage Vessel, *Pacific Responder* assisted Thursday Island Police to recover the vessel to prevent any navigation hazard in the area.



## Two men rescued at Moore Reef

Two men were rescued from their sinking yacht at Moore Reef about 200 nautical miles off Cairns on 3 August. The men, a 70 year old and a 33 year old, both British, were taking part in a around the world rally when their yacht *Asolare* hit the reef.

The AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre was alerted to the situation after New Zealand Radio Taupo picked up a Mayday message on HF radio. The men activated their 406 MHz EPIRB so rescuers could pinpoint the location and identity of the yacht.

AMSA's Dornier Search and Rescue aircraft based in Cairns was tasked to fly to the stricken vessel and assess the situation while a rescue operation was mounted. A merchant ship, *Vassos* was diverted to the scene as well as a Cairns based rescue helicopter which winched the men from the yacht and took them to Cairns.



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

*AMSAboard* is a maritime industry newsletter based on AMSA's operations.

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