

**2008**  
spring **edition**



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## Minister Announces New Chairman

On 10 November, Minister Anthony Albanese announced the appointment of Mr Leo Zussino as the new Chairperson of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) Board.

Mr Albanese said "The Government is very pleased to have someone of Mr Zussino's calibre and experience as Chairperson of the AMSA Board."

"Mr Zussino's appointment will add a new perspective to AMSA's regulatory role and its involvement in the development of maritime safety and environment protection standards."

Mr Zussino has extensive experience in the maritime sector, particularly commercial port operations and development and is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Gladstone Ports Corporation and Chairman of the Gladstone Economic and Industry Development Board.

AMSA Board members, Management and staff join the Minister in congratulating Mr Zussino on his appointment and wish him every success during his time with AMSA.



## Recognition for former Chairman

AMSA officially farewelled outgoing Chairman Mr Edward G. (Ted) Anson AM, on 31 October with the renaming of AMSA's Disaster Recovery Facility in his honour.

The Ted Anson Centre was unveiled at a ceremony attended by Mr Anson, his wife Karin, AMSA Board members and AMSA staff.

Ted served as Chairman of AMSA for four terms, spanning 9 years.

8 April 1999 - 7 April 2001

8 April 2001 - 30 June 2001

27 October 2003 - 26 October 2006

27 October 2006 - 26 October 2008

The AMSA Board, management and staff wish to express their thanks to Mr Anson for his valuable contribution to AMSA and the maritime industry throughout his career.



AMSA CEO Graham Peachey (left) and Mr Edward (Ted) Anson AM unveil The Ted Anson Centre plaque.

With little more than two months left to go until the satellite cessation of 121.5 MHz monitoring, AMSA is encouraging all beacon owners to switch to a 406 MHz digital distress beacon and ensure it is registered with AMSA.

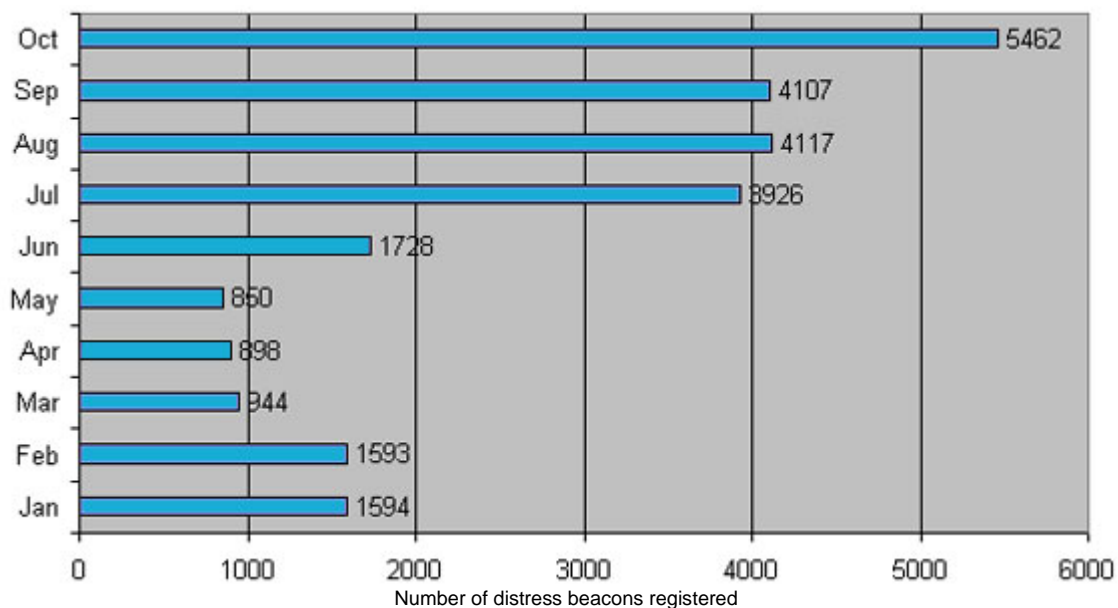
To further spread the word about the "Switch to 406", AMSA has had a presence at six boat shows this year - Sanctuary Cove, Melbourne, Adelaide, Sydney, Darwin, and Mandurah plus the Cowra Air Show.



2008 saw the introduction of online registrations for 406 MHz distress beacons, and to promote this, internet terminals were established on the AMSA stands at each of the shows enabling members of the public who purchased beacons at the shows to register them then and there. Many show visitors also took advantage of the online terminals to update their existing registration details online.

Since the introduction of online registrations the majority of people seeking to register their beacons have opted for online registration over other methods. Online registration not only allows owners to instantly register their beacons but also allows them to update their details, lodge trip itineraries and notify of change of ownership which greatly assists search and rescue authorities should a beacon be activated.

Whilst more traditional registration methods (post, fax, email) are still on offer, the large numbers of registrations received by these means are causing processing delays. With a last minute rush expected, to avoid delay, AMSA actively encourages all owners to register online - [www.amsa.gov.au/beacons](http://www.amsa.gov.au/beacons).



Already we are heading full speed into the festive season and we are still trying to catch our breath. Rather than slowing down, we have picked up pace and the years end is rapidly approaching with all of us wondering how we are possibly going to get everything done before Christmas.

AMSA has undergone some significant refinements to our organisational structure in the last few months. You may be aware of these already from visiting our website, however, we have outlined these in more detail in this edition of *AMSAboard*. I believe the changes will offer significant benefits in the way we do business and will provide greater capacity for us to interact with our key stakeholders.



Very sadly we lost one of our Board Members, Mr Allan Thomson AM in October. Allan died suddenly and his passing has left a big void in the organisation. Myself, fellow Board Members and AMSA General Managers attended Allan's funeral and our sympathies go out to his wife, Lisbeth and son Stuart.

Additionally, in October, our long serving Chairman, Mr Ted Anson AM, retired from AMSA after some nine years. It has been a pleasure serving under Ted's leadership and he will be sorely missed by the organisation.

On 10 November our Minister, The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, announced the appointment of AMSA's new Chairman, Mr Leo Zussino. We look forward to welcoming him to AMSA and the experience he brings to the Board.

Our interaction with our colleagues within our region and further afield has continued over the past few months including personnel from our Rescue Coordination Centre jointly running Search and Rescue Coordinator training in Indonesia as part of the Indonesian Transport Safety Assistance Package.

AMSA attended a Tokyo MOU seminar in New Zealand. This seminar is conducted on an annual basis as part of the technical cooperation program of the MOU and addresses current issues regarding Port State Control including the current concentrated inspection campaign on safety navigation coordinated by Australia.

We continue our involvement with the International Maritime Organization and myself and the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Maritime Standards Division), Gary Prosser will attend the IMO Council meeting in London as Australia's representatives.

Recently, the Australian Defence Force signed an MOU with AMSA which recognises Royal Australian Navy (RAN) Seaman Officers training and service which gives RAN Seaman Officers a pathway to a civilian qualification. This AMSA initiative with the RAN is a milestone between the two organisations as never before has the RAN training and service been recognised allowing RAN Seaman Officers to gain a civilian qualification while still serving within the RAN. This initiative creates a seamless path for those RAN Seaman Officers who wish to pursue a mercantile marine career after leaving the RAN.

The continuing development of the establishment of a single national system of maritime safety regulation is continuing to move ahead. I know that many of you participated in the consultations around the draft Regulatory Impact Statement and I encourage you, through your respective agencies, to continue to participate in this process. It is anticipated that the next consultation phase will occur early in 2009.

Plans are well underway for *Natship09* - Australia's Sixth National Shipping Industry Conference which will be conducted in June next year in Sydney and we encourage you to attend this major shipping event. Additionally, though it seems a long way away at this time, *Spillcon 2010* is also in the early stages of development and will be held in Melbourne in April 2010. More information for both conferences can be found on our website at [www.amsa.gov.au/conferences](http://www.amsa.gov.au/conferences).

While our search and rescue crews have been as busy as ever, it is timely to remind everyone of the cessation date of the 121.5 MHz satellite – 1 February 2009. AMSA in concert with our State and Northern Territory colleagues has been running an education campaign about the switch off date for some eight years. Again, time has caught up with us and we encourage all of you to ensure the message is disseminated as widely as possible – lives depend on it! Further information can be found at [www.amsa.gov.au/beacons](http://www.amsa.gov.au/beacons).

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful and safe festive season and I look forward to further adventures with you all in 2010.

Please enjoy this spring edition of *AMSA* *aboard*.

Graham Peachey

## ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group meets in Canberra

The fifteenth session of the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group (JWG) met in Canberra from 29 September to 3 October. The topic of the meeting was "Harmonization of Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue" and it included a visit to AMSA's Emergency Response Centre.

The JWG was established in 1993 with the objective of assisting the relevant bodies of International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO) in developing provisions regarding new search and rescue techniques and procedures where both aeronautical and maritime interests are involved.



From L to R - Mr John Young (AMSA), Mr Hans Van Der Graff (IMO), Mr Graham Peachey (CEO AMSA), Mr David Edwards (US Coast Guard), Mr Brian Day (ICAO)

Members serve in the JWG as individual search and rescue experts rather than as State representatives and comprises 16 members - IMO invites 8 delegates to represent their member countries and ICAO independently invites eight countries to provide eight aeronautical delegates. Australia attends the JWG as an aeronautical member and has participated in the JWG since its inception. Originally, the representative was provided by Airservices Australia but since 1997, when AMSA became responsible for both aviation and maritime search and rescue, AMSA has provided the aeronautical member.

Rescue Coordination Centre Chief Dave Cole, who presided as Vice-Chairman of this meeting has been Australia's JWG representative since 2003. Dave will step down from his representative role at the end of this year and his replacement will be nominated to ICAO during 2009. Dave has been an exemplary representative providing invaluable input and expertise during his tenure.

## AMSA Corporate Plan

AMSA's Corporate Plan 2008-2011 was released in September and it sets out the objectives, strategies and target outcomes for the organisation over the next three years. Considerable work has been undertaken to deliver a Corporate Plan that more clearly aligns our objectives and targets to those that have been reported in our Annual Report.

For an electronic copy of the Corporate Plan, [click here](#).



## Blythe Star Anniversary

13 October 2008 marked the 35th anniversary of the sinking of the *Blythe Star*, a significant milestone in the history of Rescue Coordination Centre (RCC) Australia.

*Blythe Star* was a small coastal freighter built at Le Havre, France in 1955.



On 12 October 1973 the *Blythe Star* sailed from Prince of Wales Bay, Hobart for King Island with a cargo of superphosphate fertiliser, a ton of beer in kegs, and a crew of ten.

When the *Blythe Star* failed to arrive at Currie, King Island an extensive air-sea search, said to be the largest conducted in Australia to that time, was undertaken with no trace of the vessel found. The search was suspended on 23 October 1973.

On the 24 October 1973 seven survivors were located at Deep Glen Bay on the Tasman Peninsula eleven days after their vessel had capsized and sunk six miles due west of South-West Cape in eighty fathoms of water.

When the *Blythe Star* foundered the crew successfully launched the ship's life raft; one crew member died on the raft, and two others soon after the life raft drifted into Deep Glen Bay.

An extensive inquiry was held at Melbourne between 3 December 1973 and 14 February 1974 which ultimately gave birth to the AusREP Ship Reporting System as we now know it. AusREP operators in the RCC are constantly reminded of the *Blythe Star's* place in history as her photo is prominently displayed on the RCC Overview screen.

## Compulsory beacon carriage and registration in Queensland

The changeover to the digital 406 MHz EPIRB in Queensland has been brought forward to 1 November 2008.

Under new Queensland regulations, all vessels operating beyond smooth and partially smooth waters must carry an EPIRB if more than two nautical miles from land. In addition, if it is a requirement to carry an EPIRB as part of your safety equipment, from 1 November 2008, it must be a 406 MHz digital EPIRB.

For more information about the new regulations visit [Maritime Safety Queensland](#).



## New look Shipping Registration Office

Over the last few months, AMSA's Shipping Registration Office has undergone a number of changes. Kevin Cross retired as the Commonwealth's Registrar of Ships on 24 September after a public service career of 35 years. Kevin joined the Treasury in Canberra in 1973 and, like many of his peers at that time, soon moved to Papua New Guinea where he served until independence. In 1975 Kevin returned to a position with the Office of the Insurance Commissioner in Canberra and joined the newly formed Ship Registration Office in 1981. He remained in that area for the remainder of his career, being appointed to the statutory position of Registrar in 2007.



The retirement of Kevin generated a shuffle of staff with Trish Malone being successful in gaining the position as the Commonwealth's Registrar of Ships. Trish previously held the position of Office Supervisor with the Ship Operations & Qualifications section and Peter Baker has been promoted from his position as Shipping Registration Officer to Deputy Registrar of Ships.

The Registration Office is currently aiming to transform and improve their profile within the maritime industry with a planned attendance at a number of boat shows in 2009, as well as increasing dialogue with the commercial and yachting industries about their requirements when registering a vessel on the Australian Shipping Register.

## Seacare Awards and Conference 2008

The 2008 Seacare Awards and Conference was held on 16 October at Doltone House, Sydney. The event provided a unique opportunity for all participants in the Seacare scheme, as well as the Australian maritime industry generally, to come together to learn from positive initiatives and celebrate achievements. The theme of the 2008 Conference was "Best Practice OHS in the Australian Maritime Industry".



The Seacare Awards & Conference attracts attendees from industry employers (shipowners, ship operators, crewing agents), employees (seafarers, officers, onshore OHS and human resource staff), representatives of employers and employee associations, government agencies, OHS and rehabilitation professionals, trainers and educators, insurance providers, legal professionals and others.

To view the winners of the awards from four categories, [click here](#).

## Southwest Pacific Data Distribution Region meeting

The Southwest Pacific Data Distribution Region (SWPDDR) meeting was held in Fremantle, Western Australia on 25-26 September. The meeting brought together managers from the Cospas-Sarsat Mission Control Centres (MCC) that are linked to the worldwide distress beacon satellite system through the Australian Nodal MCC located in Canberra.



Representatives from New Zealand, Indonesia, Singapore, South Africa, New Caledonia and Solomon Islands are participating in discussions regarding mutual support between MCCs, beacon registration management issues, communications and alerts incidents within the Cospas-Sarsat network and SPOT Satellite Messenger issues.

## Senior staff movements

A number of refinements have been made to AMSA's organisation structure and these came into effect on Wednesday 1 October 2008:



- The functions of the Maritime Casualty & Pollution Response (MC&PR) section, previously located within the Emergency Response Division (ERD), will be split and transferred to the Maritime Standards Division (MSD) and Maritime Operations Division (MOD). Its pollution response functions will move to MSD, and its National Marine Emergency Response Arrangements (NMERA) and emergency towage functions will move to a new maritime casualty area within MOD.
- The marine pollution investigations and prosecutions function will be transferred from MSD to MOD.
- Vessel Tracking, including ReefVTS, will be transferred from MSD to ERD.

With the realignment of the above functions, changes to the Executive Management Group also came into effect:

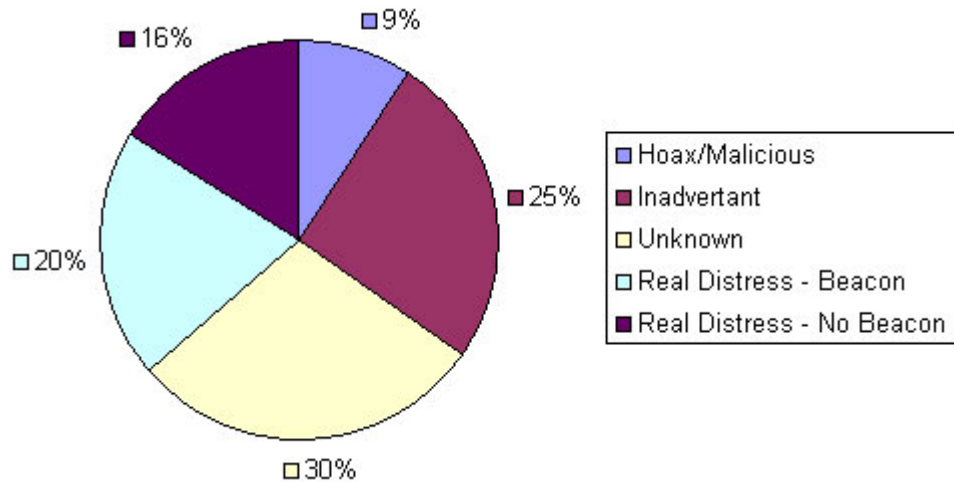
- The General Manager, Maritime Standards Division will be redesignated as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Maritime Standards Division.
- The General Manager, Maritime Operations Division will be redesignated as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Maritime Operations Division.

To view AMSA's Organisation Chart, [click here](#).

## Distress Beacon Activations

In 2007-2008, AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre - Australia managed 9,241 incidents, of which 2,936 involved the use of a distress beacon. The below pie chart shows the break up of rescue responses, involving distress beacons, for the period July to September 2008. Figures for the quarter show a slight reduction in the percentage of hoax and inadvertent activations, down from 40% to 34%.

It is hoped that as the number of registered 406 MHz distress beacons grows, the ability to easily identify the validity of a beacon activation will lead to a continued reduction in the amount of resources wasted attending to malicious or inadvertent beacon activations.



## IMO Celebrates 60 years

World Maritime Day 2008 was celebrated at the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) refurbished Headquarters on 25 September. The theme for World Maritime Day 2008 was "IMO: 60 years in the service of shipping".

The theme was chosen as an appropriate way in which to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the adoption of the IMO Convention (1948) and the 50th anniversary of its entry into force (1958). The celebrations also coincided with the 100th session of the Council.

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The sixth National Shipping Industry Conference, *Natship09*, will be held at the Hilton Hotel Sydney from 3-5 June 2009.

**Natship**<sup>09</sup>

*Natship09* is convened by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority in association with the Australian Shipowners Association, Ports Australia and Shipping Australia Limited.

For more information, visit [www.amsa.gov.au/natship09](http://www.amsa.gov.au/natship09) or to register your interest [click here](#).

## Safety gear saves lives

A satellite detection of an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) in the vicinity of Howie Reef, approximately 20 nautical miles east of Innisfail led to the successful rescue of a survivor in the water. The man, was the only person on board a 5.4 metre vessel which had departed Cowley Beach and had sunk while he was trying to clear the anchor line from the propeller.

The survivor who was wearing a bright yellow life jacket was spotted by the crew of the Cairns Dornier dedicated search and rescue aircraft who directed the Cairns Rescue Helicopter 510 to his location where they successfully winched him to safety. Without an EPIRB or a life jacket, it is unlikely that this man would have survived his ordeal, and anyone embarking on a seafaring expedition should ensure they have the appropriate safety gear on board.



Photo courtesy AeroRescue Cairns



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

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