

**GUIDANCE NOTE No: 25/96**

**REVISION No: 3**

## **Charter Fishing and Tourist Operations - Vessels Less than 12 metres and Carrying Not more than 12 Passengers**

This Guidance Note is intended to briefly describe survey and manning requirements for charter fishing and other tourist carrying vessels operating in sheltered and Inshore Waters (within 15 nautical miles of the coast including islands). All items **not** covered under this guidance note are to comply with USL code requirements. Hire and Drive vessels are **not** covered by these guidelines.

For operations outside sheltered waters, vessels must be a minimum of 7 metres in length (USL Code). The length is measured on the deck and **excludes** appendages like bowsprits, small pods, etc, (refer GN19/95). The vessel will need to meet USL Class 2C survey requirements for the total number of persons to be carried (includes passengers and crew). Vessels for overnight use will need to have adequate bunks, one per person, and at least one washbasin, a shower and a toilet. Vessels operating within 20 nautical miles of Darwin Radio **may be** allowed with a VHF radio in survey but vessels intending to operate outside this limit **will need** to be equipped with a HF SSB radio in survey (refer GN23/96).

For operations within sheltered water limits, vessels may be less than 7 metres in length and will need to comply with GN4/94 and GN7/94.

Vessels less than 5 metres in measured length (for open and well decked vessels length is measured at top of gunwale) operating in declared sheltered waters and carrying **not** more than 4 persons (crew plus passengers) are exempt from survey and manning requirements but **need** to carry basic safety equipment (refer GN8/94).

Prospective buyers of vessels greater than 7 metres in length need to ensure that the vessel has a valid survey certificate or can meet survey requirements for the intended area of operation and total number of persons to be carried. A vessel which is constructed of steel or aluminium and has **never** been in survey is usually easier to bring into survey than a FRP/GRP or timber vessel which has **never** been in survey due to difficulties in making a structural assessment. FRP/GRP **or** timber vessels which have never been in survey are **not** likely to be allowed beyond declared sheltered waters.

Prospective vessel owners may contact the Marine Safety Branch before **or** after buying the vessel. If requested, after receipt of a completed application for initial survey form and payment of fees, a surveyor will conduct an initial survey and provide a list of deficiencies which need rectification before a certificate of survey can be issued. **It is recommended that the above procedure be followed prior to finalising purchase.** If the owner decides to proceed with

survey after initial survey, fees for stability approval, inclining test, and stability assessment are applicable.

Vessels from other States with valid certificates of survey will be recognised for the same "class of operations" 2E, 2D, 2C or 2B **only** and **not** necessarily for similar **area** of operations. This is because some States have declared large areas of open sea as Sheltered Waters. For example, a vessel with a Queensland Class 2D certificate for operations within 20 nautical miles of Cairns will **not** be allowed to go outside of the Port of Darwin limits. Additionally, 2C and 2B vessels will need to be fitted with radios in survey and carry a 406 MHz EPIRB to AS/NZS 4280 requirements.

Masters of vessels less than 12 metres in length with propulsion machinery less than 250KW, operating within 15 nautical miles of the coast, are required to hold a Certificate of Competency as Coxswain. Restricted Coxswain certificates may be issued where vessels operate within specific Inland Waters. For details of prerequisites please contact this office on 89 995285.

Copies of Guidance Notes and schedules of safety equipment are also available from the Marine Safety Branch office.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Charting Fishing operators are also required to obtain Fishing Tour Operators Licence issued under the *Northern Territory Fisheries Act*. Please contact the Fisheries licensing section for more details - telephone 08 89992183.

Any enquiries should be directed to a Marine Surveyor.

Signed by: Sri Srinivas  
Date Issued: 28/11/08

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**For further information contact Marine Safety Branch:**

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