Safety Management System (SMS) Guidelines

What is an SMS?

An SMS is a tool used to help keep people, vessels and the environment safe . It encourages the development of a safety culture where safety becomes second nature.

A safety culture involves everyone from deckhand to a vessel's owner. Everyone is responsible.

An SMS includes a set of documents about how a vessel is operated safely and how risks are controlled. It provides information about:

- how a company and vessel(s) operate on a day to day basis;
- what happens if there is an emergency on a vessel, for example, a fire or a person overboard;
- a vessel , what she does and where she operates;
- the Designated Person (DP) including their contact details;
- how things are done on a vessel, who does what, how they do it and when;
- how hazards are identified and assessed and how risks are managed;
- how records on what happens on a vessel are kept;
- how crew are trained and drills conducted.

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Do I need an SMS?

All commercial vessels in NSW must have an SMS.

The National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV) Part E requires all operators of commercial vessels of Classes 1, 2 and 3 to have and implement an SMS. NSCV Part F2 requires Class 4 vessels to have and implement a Safety Management Plan.

Why do I need an SMS?

You need an SMS because:

·   **it can help to keep your operation safe;**
·   **it can reduce the risk of accidents in your operation;**
·   **it could save you money;**
·   **it's a survey requirement; and**
·   **it's the law and covered by, but not limited to:**

   o   **The Passenger Transport Act 1990 (Clause 53D);**
   o   **The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000;**
   o   **The National Standard for Commercial Vessels;**
   o   **The Occupational Health and Safety Act;**
   o   **The Protection of the Environment Operations Act; and**
   o   **The Water Traffic Regulations.**
   o   **Marine Safety (Commercial Vessels) Regulation 2010**

Who is responsible for writing an SMS?

·   **The owner of the vessel;**
·   **and/or the Designated Person;**
·   **and/or a person appointed by the owner.**

The best people to help with writing an SMS are the Master and the crew. They work on the vessel regularly and know her best.

How do I start?

·   **Don't panic – developing an SMS is easier than you think.**
·   **Remember the SMS is for your company and your vessel.**
·   **Speak with everyone who works on the vessel and get their input. Your SMS should be about your vessel.**
·   **Show everyone that you're serious about safety not just obeying the law.**
·   **Be your own consultant – you know your company and your vessel best.**

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- Perhaps attend an SMS information session (contact RMS for details)
- Look at the SMS page on the RMS website.

How will I know that my SMS is OK?

- Everyone in the company has helped to develop it.
- Everyone is encouraged to maintain a safety culture.
- The SMS is "tailored" to the vessel and is not just a copy;
- The SMS contains the required 12 sections;
- Management and the crew of the vessel understand and follow the procedures in the SMS;
- The SMS procedures explain "what" happens on the vessel on a day to day basis, "who" is responsible and "how" it is done.
- The Emergency Procedures explain "what" to do in different situations, for example, Person Overboard, Fire and Collision;
- Records are kept about what happens on the vessel, for example, training, maintenance and drills;
- The SMS and record keeping are accurate and up to date; and
- Management and crew follow SMS procedures during drills with RMS.

The 12 sections of an SMS are:

1. **General.**

2. **Safety and Environment Policy.**

3. **Company Responsibilities and Authorities.**

4. **Designated Person DP.**

5. **Master's Responsibility and Authority.**

6. **Resources and Personnel.**

7. **Operational Procedures.**

8. **Emergency Procedures.**

9. **Reporting Accidents / Incidents.**

10. **Maintenance and Recording.**

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1. General

This section gives the details of your company. These could include:

- the name of your company;
- the address and contact details of your company;
- names and contact details of senior management;
- name and contact details of the designated person (DP);
- what your company does, for example, charters, fishing trips, dive trips;
- where it operates, for example, Sydney Harbour, Port Stephens; and
- the number and type of vessels operated, for example, two ex-navy minesweepers; catamaran charter vessel; or high speed adventure vessel.

2. Safety and Environment Policy

This section gives details of what you do to make sure your operation is safe and that you know what legislation is relevant to you.

3. Company Responsibilities and Authorities

This section shows how your company is organised. It explains who does what in your company. (A simple diagram showing 'who is responsible to who' can be very useful.)

4. Designated Person (DP)

The Designated Person (DP) looks after the safe operation of your vessel(s) and is responsible for the SMS. The DP is a link between your company and the people working on your vessel(s).

In some cases, particularly in larger companies, the DP is shore based and is in direct contact with management. In other cases, for example, one person operations, the DP might be the owner operator.

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It is very important that the DP understands what their responsibilities are.

5. Master's Responsibility and Authority

This section says that the Master of your vessel is responsible for understanding the SMS and making sure it is used on the vessel.

It says the Master is responsible for communicating effectively with crew and passengers.

It says s/he has complete authority to do what s/he thinks is necessary to keep the vessel, passengers and crew safe.

6. Resources and Personnel

This section is about the people who work for the company. It provides information on:

- **what qualifications they need;**
- **how they are trained and who trains them;**
- **where training records are kept; and**
- **how long the records should be kept (minimum 5 years).**

7. Operational Procedures

This section is about the normal operations of your company and vessel(s). It details what a new crew would need to know about your vessel before they could take her out. It provides information on:

- **the systems on the vessel;**
- **start-up / shut down procedures;**
- **not only "what" to do also "how" to do it, for example, embark/disembark passengers;**
- **who is responsible for doing particular jobs;**
- **how to maintain a safety culture; and**
- **how and where records are kept (for a minimum of 5 years).**

You must have procedures for the following as a minimum:

- **Crew briefings and initial safety training.**

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- **Passenger briefings.**
- **Other safety training.**
- **Refuelling.**
- **Disposal of sewage, garbage, waste oil and grey water.**
- **Recording crew lists.**
- **Recording passenger numbers / manifests.**

There is no maximum number of procedures. Each vessel is different and may have different equipment and different ways of doing things that need a procedure.

An effective way to develop Procedures is with the whole crew – the people who do the jobs - having input. You need to think about who is responsible for different tasks on your vessel and how things are done.

A meeting with the crew to discuss how things are done will provide valuable information you can use in developing your SMS.

A crew meeting also helps crew members develop a better understanding of the responsibilities of others.

Flip charts can be a useful way of summarising procedures as well as being an effective training tool. (Flip chart templates are available on the RMS web site)

8. Emergency Procedures

This section is about what you would do if there was an emergency on your vessel. It provides information on:

- **who is responsible for doing particular things in an emergency;**
- **how you practise for dealing with emergencies by doing drills;**
- **how you check emergency equipment**
- **how and where you record drills; and**
- **how often you do drills .**

You must have procedures for the following as a minimum:

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- **Fire / Fire in the Engine Room**
- **Prepare to Abandon Ship / Abandon Ship**
- **Person Overboard / Search and Rescue**
- **Collision / Flooding**
- **Environmental Protection / Spill**
- **Serious Injury**
- **Serious Security Incident / Terrorism (Vessel Security Plan)**
- **Bomb Threat / Suspicious Articles (Vessel Security Plan)**

An effective way to develop Emergency and Security Procedures is with the whole crew – the people who react in an emergency - having input. This encourages the maintenance of a safety culture.

You need to think about what you would do on your vessel in the event of an emergency and who would be responsible for different tasks.

A meeting with the crew to discuss how things could be done will provide valuable information you can use in developing your SMS.

Regular drills help to identify areas that may need improvement. (There is a useful document looking at drills on the SMS page on the web site.)

A crew meeting also helps crew members develop a better understanding of the responsibilities of others and to take ownership of the SMS.

Flip charts can be a useful way of summarising emergency procedures as well as being an effective training tool. (Flip chart templates are available on the Roads and Maritime web site)

9. Reporting Incidents and Accidents / Hazard Identification / Risk Management

This section is about how you try and prevent things going wrong and what you do if they do go wrong. It provides information on:

- **How you identify things that could be a problem (hazards), eg water**
- **How you identify things that could happen because of this (risks), eg falling in and drowning**
- **What you do to reduce the risks (controls), eg handrails**

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- How you report something on the vessel that needs repairing, eg on a work request form, in the log
- Who is responsible for fixing it
- How people are told that it's been fixed
- What you do if someone gets hurt on your vessel
- What you do if your vessel is involved in an accident or an incident

Remember, because no system is perfect, things will go wrong. Better to be prepared.

Confused about what Risk Management is?

Risk Management is:

- **Identifying hazards – noticing something that could be dangerous. For example, a loose handrail; an unmarked step; gear not stowed correctly.**
- **Identifying a way of doing something that could be dangerous. For example, working too close to a bollard; embarking passengers with no safety procedure; not giving a passenger briefing.**

- **Assessing the risk– thinking about what could happen and how serious a hazard is. For example, what could happen if a person leans on the loose handrail? Fall overboard and drown? Loss of professional reputation? Court case? Damages? What could happen if a deckhand works too close to a bollard? Trapped fingers / serious injury / loss of livelihood? Damages?**

- **Controlling – removing a hazard or putting something in place to reduce risk. For example, repairing the handrail; replacing the handrail with a stronger material;or making a 'no go' area for passengers. Train the deckhand not to work too close to the bollard? Improve communication between the master and deckhand? Move the bollard?**

- **Monitoring – checking to see if what you've done is working and if it isn't, having another look at the problem.**

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There is a simple sample risk register on the RMS website. For more detailed information on Risk Management, visit www.workcover.nsw.gov.au and download a copy of "HAZPAK – A Practical Guide to Basic Risk Management".

Still not sure? Contact the RMS SMS Team.

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10. Maintenance and Recording

This section is about how you look after your vessel and equipment. It provides information on:

- **when and how you check and test emergency equipment;**
- **how you make sure the equipment you use meets Occupational Health and Safety legislation requirements;**
- **what you do on a regular basis on your vessel, for example, daily engine checks;**
- **how you follow a maintenance schedule and manufacturer's instructions;**
- **how and where you record maintenance that has been carried out, for example, an engine room log; and**
- **how you might train crew in the use of some equipment, eg fire pump.**

11. Documentation

This section is about how you look after the documents that relate to your operation. It provides information on:

- **how you make sure documents are in the right place;**
- **how you make changes to documents and record them;**
- **how people are told changes have been made; and**

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· **how you get rid of out of date documents and record that you've done it.**

12. Review and Evaluation

This section is about how you give your SMS a "health check" or review. It provides information on:

- · **how often you will review your SMS;**
- · **how you will make any changes and keep a record (minimum 5 years); and**
- · **how you will tell people changes have been made.**

An effective way of doing a review is with all the people who use the SMS on a regular basis. They will be able to tell you if it's working or if it needs to be changed in some way.

Remember that this document is only part of an SMS. It is a tool to be used by everyone to help maintain a safety culture.

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Roads and Maritime Services

If you have any questions about SMS please contact:

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