



Australian Government

Seafarers Safety, Rehabilitation
and Compensation Authority

SEACARE NEWS

Issue 15 – December 2007

What's In This Issue

Seacare Annual
Report 2006-07

Seafarers Rehabilitation
and Return to Work –
A Best Practice Guide

Employers' OHS Incident
Reporting Obligations

Seacare Maritime
OHS Forum – WA

OHS Inspectorate Activities

Seacare Notices

Seacare Authority
Appointments



Chairperson's Comments

As 2007 draws to a close I reflect on what has been another busy year for the Seacare Authority and for the industry in general. There is no doubt that many companies operating within the Seacare scheme are experiencing boom times, which of course is very positive for the industry. However, it is also important to acknowledge that increased levels of activity may bring with it a range of concerns regarding OHS and the rehabilitation of injured seafarers. I encourage all employers, operators and seafarers to be especially vigilant and to place the highest priority on safety and injury prevention.

The Seacare Authority's Annual Report 2006-07 is available on the Authority's website and is being distributed to scheme stakeholders. The report provides valuable information on the scheme generally and on the performance of the scheme in terms of OHS, workers' compensation, rehabilitation and return to work outcomes. I am pleased that the scheme continues to demonstrate improving performance across several key indicators, which confirms the positive efforts of employers and seafarers alike.

The report also details the work undertaken by the Seacare Authority in fulfilling its statutory roles and administering the Seacare legislation, as well as in other areas such as the management of the *Seafarers Safety Net Fund*. I commend the report to you and welcome your comments.

A highlight in October 2007 was the *Seacare Maritime OHS Forum-WA* held at the Western Australian Maritime Museum in Fremantle. The event attracted many scheme stakeholders and facilitated open interaction and engagement as participants considered injury prevention as well as the issues confronting the industry and scheme more broadly. I wish to thank the Forum presenters, supporters and all participants for their contribution to a very successful Seacare event.

With best wishes for 2008,

Geoff Gronow ESM ED
Chairperson

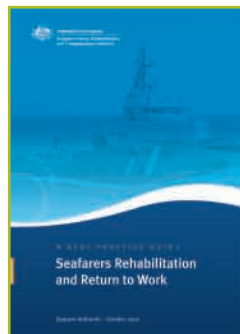
Seacare Annual Report 2006-07

The Seacare Authority Annual Report can be obtained by contacting the Seacare Management Section or may be accessed from the website www.seacare.gov.au.

Some of the key findings of this year's report include:

- There were 5,690 employees covered under the *Seafarers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992* (Seafarers Act) during the year working for 33 employers.
- The employees covered by the Seafarers Act were engaged on 199 ships – 64 (32%) in the bluewater sector, 118 (59%) in the offshore sector and the remaining 17 (8%) in the passenger, dredging, tug and aquaculture sectors.
- There were 65 OHS incidents including ten dangerous occurrences reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) by employers under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1993*.
- There were 173 workers' compensation claims made and reported to Seacare. There were 132 claims accepted, 98 involving lost time.

Seafarers Rehabilitation and Return to Work – A Best Practice Guide



In November 2007, the Seacare Authority released the second edition of its *Seafarers Rehabilitation and Return to Work – A Best Practice Guide*. The Guide is designed to assist seafarers, employers, rehabilitation providers, medical practitioners and other parties

involved in rehabilitation and return to work processes by outlining the minimum statutory requirements. However, it aims to provide information on how to do better and achieve best practice standards.

The revised Guide takes into account the views expressed and the knowledge shared by participants at the *Seacare Conference 2006 – Improving Rehabilitation and Return to Work Outcomes*.

The Seacare Authority encourages scheme stakeholders to use and promote the Guide widely. Copies of the Guide can be obtained by contacting the Seacare Management Section or may be accessed from the website www.seacare.gov.au.

Employers' OHS Incident Reporting Obligations

The *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1993* (OHS(MI) Act) imposes an obligation on employers to report all OHS incidents and dangerous occurrences to AMSA.

An OHS incident is defined as an accident that causes:

- the death of, or serious personal injury to, any person; or
- an employee to be incapacitated from work for a period of five successive days or more

A dangerous occurrence is an occurrence that *could* have caused:

- the death of, or serious personal injury to, any person; or
- the incapacity of an employee for five or more successive working days.

The Seacare Authority wrote to scheme employers in November 2007 seeking their support to ensure that every notifiable OHS incident and dangerous occurrence is reported appropriately. It is expected that employers will routinely forward *Incident Alert* and *Incident Report* forms to AMSA if a reportable incident or occurrence happens. Employers should provide the Masters of their vessels with clear instructions regarding these important reporting obligations.

Further information on employers' reporting obligations is available from the Seacare website www.seacare.gov.au and the AMSA website www.amsa.gov.au (see "Shipping Incident Reporting" button on AMSA homepage).

Seacare Maritime OHS Forum - WA

The Seacare Authority held a special forum in Fremantle on 16 October 2007 as part of the *Seacare Awards & Conference* program, and in recognition of *Sea Safe Work Day* (27 September 2007) as well as the national *Safe Work Australia Week* (21-27 October 2007).

The *Seacare Maritime OHS Forum-WA* was attended by around 70 participants, largely from Western Australia although there were several representatives from other states. At least eleven scheme employers were represented with other attendees from a range of organisations including maritime unions, insurers, legal firms, industry bodies and government agencies.

The Forum featured presentations on OHS trends, issues and gaps from each of the key OHS regulators in the WA maritime environment – Allan Schwartz, AMSA; Gavin Guyan, NOPSA; and David Harrod, Marine Safety section of the WA Department of Planning and Infrastructure. Presentations were also made from an employee/seafarer's perspective by Martin Byrne, Australian Institute of Marine & Power Engineers and from an employer's viewpoint from Neil Butt, Farstad Shipping (Indian Pacific).

The second half of the Forum was devoted to round-table discussions where participants identified strategies and tactics for improving OHS performance across the industry and within their own maritime workplaces.

More information on the Forum, including the presentations and detail on points raised is available on the Seacare website www.seacare.gov.au.



Presenters (from left to right) - David Harrod (WA Department of Planning and Infrastructure), Gavin Guyan (NOPSA), Allan Schwartz (AMSA), Martin Byrne (AIMPE) and Neil Butt (Farstad Shipping)



Participants



Forum Opening



Round Table Discussions

OHS Inspectorate Activities

AMSA is the Inspectorate for the Seacare scheme and works with the Seacare Authority to effectively regulate OHS and to promote injury prevention.

AMSA is currently reviewing a range of initiatives including target setting and methods of measuring OHS performance. The Inspectorate is also taking steps to raise OHS awareness within the jurisdiction through its publications and guidance materials and by engaging directly with industry bodies and groups.

The audit regime, conducted by the Inspectorate as a principal means of ensuring compliance with the OHS(MI) Act, is being enhanced to include a greater focus on risk assessment, hazard identification and review processes. A targeted inspections program aimed at providing education and greater awareness of the most prevalent risks and hazards is also being considered. The Inspectorate will contact ship operators and owners with details of the program in due course.

A Marine Notice on OHS incident reporting and the analysis of incident reports is being developed for release shortly.

Seacare Notices

Seacare Notices are issued to scheme employers and published on the Seacare website. Current notices include:

05/2007 - Maximum Level of Benefits

02/2007 - Indexation of Compensation Benefits

Seacare Authority Appointments

In August 2007, Mr Peter Bremner was reappointed as a Member of the Authority representing employers for a period of three years. In October 2007, Ms Teresa Hatch was appointed as Mr Bremner's Deputy.

In August 2007, Mr John Wydell was appointed as Deputy to Mr Byrne.

In October 2007, Mr Brad Groves, AMSA was appointed as a Deputy Member.

Members

Mr Geoff Gronow	Chairperson
Mr Martin Dolan	Deputy Chairperson
Mr Martin Byrne	Employee Member
Mr Peter Bremner	Employer Member
Mr Mal Hearnden	Employer Member
Mr Graham Peachey	Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Deputy Members

Mr John Wydell	Deputy to Mr Byrne
Ms Teresa Hatch	Deputy to Mr Bremner
Mr Tony Caccamo	Deputy to Mr Hearnden
Mr Brad Groves	Deputy to Mr Peachey

Seacare Management Section

Mr Phil Beaumont	Director
Mr David Bonny	Assistant Director

Contact details

Phone	(02) 6275 0070
Fax	(02) 6275 0067
Email	seacare@comcare.gov.au
Website	www.seacare.gov.au
Postal address	GPO Box 9905 Canberra ACT 2601

Publication Details

© Commonwealth of Australia 2007

Seacare News Issue #15

ISSN 1835-0208 Print

ISSN 1835-0216 Online

Seacare Management Section
GPO Box 9905, Canberra ACT 2601

Disclaimer

This publication is intended to provide only a summary and general overview of matters of interest. It is not intended to be comprehensive and is not a substitute for independent professional advice. Please contact an appropriate qualified professional person before relying on the contents of this publication.