



**SEAFARERS SAFETY, REHABILITATION  
AND COMPENSATION AUTHORITY  
(SEACARE AUTHORITY)**

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY  
(OHS) STRATEGY**

**2002-03 TO 2003-04**

**6 NOVEMBER 2002**

## **The Seacare Authority Mission**

The Seacare Authority Mission is to take a leading role in minimising the human and financial costs of workplace injury in the Australian maritime industry.

## **The OHS legislative framework for the maritime industry**

The *Occupational Health and Safety (Maritime Industry) Act 1993* (OH&S(MI) Act) and regulations provide the legislative framework within which the Seacare Authority and stakeholders work towards achievement of this mission. The objects of the OH&S(MI) Act are to:

- secure the health, safety and welfare at work of maritime industry employees;
- protect persons at or near workplaces from risks to health and safety arising out of the activities of maritime industry employees at work;
- ensure that expert advice is available on OHS matters affecting maritime industry operators, maritime industry employees and maritime industry contractors;
- promote an occupational environment for maritime industry employees that is adapted to their health and safety needs; and
- foster a cooperative consultative relationship between maritime industry operators and maritime industry employees on the health, safety and welfare of maritime industry employees at work.

## **The OHS Inspectorate and other stakeholders**

The OHS Inspectorate function for the maritime industry is performed by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). AMSA is a key participant with the Seacare Authority in implementation of the Authority's OHS Strategy, along with employers, industry associations, seafarers and employee organisations, contractors, manufacturers and suppliers.

## **The national OHS framework**

The Workplace Relations Ministers' Council (WRMC), at its May 2002 meeting, endorsed the National OHS Strategy developed by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC). The NOHSC parties signed a Statement of Commitment which commits each party (all Ministers, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Australian Council of Trade Unions) to accept responsibility for development and implementation of the National OHS Strategy (an outline of the National OHS Strategy and the Statement of Commitment are at **Appendix 1** and **Appendix 2** respectively).

A central element of the National OHS Strategy is the adoption of OHS improvement targets. The national OHS improvement targets for the ten years to 2012 are:

- to sustain a significant, continual reduction in the incidence of work-related fatalities with a reduction of at least 20% by 30 June 2012 (and with a reduction of 10% being achieved by 30 June 2007, i.e. over the first 5 years of the 10 year strategy); and
- to reduce the incidence of workplace injury by at least 40% by 30 June 2012 (with a reduction of 20% being achieved by 30 June 2007).

### **International obligations**

Australia has ratified a number of International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) treaties which apply to the maritime industry and to maritime industry employers and employees. Some IMO and ILO treaty obligations impact on occupational health and safety, and to this extent are an important consideration in implementation of the Authority's OHS Strategy.

### **The Seacare Authority OHS Strategy**

Having regard to its statutory responsibilities, Australia's international treaty obligations (to the extent that they impact on OHS in the Australian maritime industry) and the National OHS Strategy, the Seacare Authority has adopted the following OHS Strategy for the period 2002-03 to 2003-04.

### **Maritime industry OHS improvement targets**

Central to the Authority's OHS Strategy is the adoption of OHS improvement targets for the maritime industry. The OHS improvement targets set by the Authority are:

- for fatalities, zero for the 5 years to 2007 and zero for the 10 years to 2012; and
- for injury incidence, a 20% reduction over 5 years to 2007 and a 40% reduction over 10 years to 2012.

**Note:** (i) there has not been a fatality of a seafarer covered by the OH&S(MI) Act for seven years to 30 June 2002. It was on this basis that the Authority decided that a zero fatality target is appropriate; and

(ii) injury incidence is defined as the number of injuries, as measured by compensation claims, per 1,000 seafarers employed. The Authority has identified two injury incidence benchmarks, with the benchmark year being 2000-01. Benchmark one is derived from the injury incidence rate for the maritime industry (Seacare scheme) reported in the national Comparative Performance Monitoring (CPM) report published annually by WRMC. The injury incidence rate for 2000-01 using this measure is 30.7 (the claims data used in the CPM report exclude disease claims and journey claims). Benchmark two is derived from the injury incidence rate reported in the Seacare Authority Annual Report. The injury

**incidence rate for 2000-01 using this measure is 60 (compensation claims data used in the Seacare Authority Annual Report includes disease claims, journey claims and off duty claims).**

At **Appendix 3** are graphical representations of the injury incidence reduction over the past five years, and an extrapolation of the injury incidence reduction required to meet the Seacare Authority OHS Strategy targets by 2007 and 2012. It shows that, based on the rate of improvement of the incidence of injury over the past 5 years, the injury incidence reduction target is achievable. It was for this reason that the Authority has agreed to review the injury incidence target in 2 years to ascertain if a more ambitious target might be set for the remainder of the target period.

### **Contributing to the five national priorities**

In addition to a focus on fatality and injury incidence targets, the Seacare Authority OHS Strategy addresses each of the **five national priorities** contained in the National OHS Strategy. These are:

#### ***Reduce high incidence/severity risks***

This priority aims to use improved OHS data, research and industry knowledge to target high risks and hazards, and to design interventions.

The Authority has **agreed** to use the lead up to, and participation in, the Authority's OHS Conference in April 2003 (which coincides with the Seacare Authority Sea Safe-Work Awards presentation) to engage with the industry and AMSA in identification of the 3 to 5 major OHS risks and hazards in each sector of the maritime industry covered by the OHS(MI) Act (namely the trading sector, offshore sector, aquaculture sector and passenger sector). Seacare Authority approaches will be developed in alignment with State/Territory OHS strategies, particularly in the aquaculture sector.

Identification of the major risks and hazards will provide additional data on which to design interventions aimed specifically at the various sectors of the Australian maritime industry.

#### ***Improve the capacity of business operators and employees to manage OHS effectively***

This priority aims to build the motivation and ability of employers to manage OHS risks effectively and of seafarers to work more safely and participate in OHS consultations.

The Authority has **agreed** to broker a national OHS compact or statement of commitment to be signed by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or General Manager (GM) of each employer covered by the OH&S(MI) Act committing those companies and their managements to work towards achievement of the Seacare Authority fatality and injury incidence targets.

### ***Prevent occupational disease more effectively***

This priority aims to develop the capacity of regulatory bodies, employers, seafarers and other stakeholders such as rehabilitation providers and medical providers to identify the risk factors and potential exposures that lead to occupational disease.

The Authority has **agreed** to coordinate an industry assessment of current and future disease risk factors and exposures leading to potential diseases among seafarers in the Australian maritime industry.

### ***Eliminate hazards at the design stage***

This priority aims to identify and eliminate hazards at source. This requires the involvement of designers, manufacturers, constructors, contractors and suppliers.

The Authority has **agreed** to work with AMSA and other industry/shipping organisations to identify and review design elements which lead to high risk hazards on prescribed ships and prescribed units, with the aim of seeking to reduce, and, where possible, eliminate hazards at source.

### ***Strengthen the capacity of government to influence OHS outcomes***

This priority aims to sharpen the effectiveness of governments in securing better OHS outcomes and providing examples of best practice.

The Authority has **agreed** to engage with the industry to identify the most effective means of providing OHS inspectorate services to the industry.

### ***Contributing to the nine areas requiring national action***

The Seacare Authority has also agreed to a range of actions and initiatives aimed at contributing to the **nine areas requiring national action**, to help ensure that the national priorities and OHS improvement targets are achieved.

Over the period 2002-03 to 2003-04 the Seacare Authority will:

#### ***Comprehensive OHS data collections***

- participate in NOHSC programs to ensure Seacare scheme data inputs to NOHSC are consistent with the National Data Set for Workers' Compensation Statistics (NDS);
- maintain Seacare scheme participation in the national Comparative Performance Monitoring report and improve OHS reporting in Seacare Annual Report;

- develop, in cooperation with AMSA, ISM code audit non-conformance reporting measures as an industry process measure of OHS performance, designed to complement existing outcome measures.

#### ***A coordinated OHS research effort***

- develop a formal partnership with Comcare to ensure improved OHS data for the Seacare scheme is available for policy making and to assist employers to benchmark enterprise performance.

#### ***A nationally consistent regulatory framework***

- agree upon and implement a Seacare Authority strategy for adoption of NOHSC standards and codes to the extent applicable to the maritime industry, in accordance with an agreed program developed under the auspices of the Seacare Authority's OHS Standards Task Force, commencing with a regulation prohibiting the use of asbestos in accordance with a nationally agreed standard.

#### ***Strategic enforcement***

- promote and assist stakeholders implement legislative reforms as passed by Parliament arising from the Authority's stage one legislative review outcomes;
- review the OH&S(MI) Act and regulations in context of the stage two legislation review to identify any additional enforcement measures and develop reform proposals for advice to Government.

#### ***Effective incentives***

- promote the Seacare Authority Sea Safe-Work Awards to recognise and reward strong OHS performers and leaders.

#### ***Compliance support***

- promote and assist stakeholders implement legislative reforms as passed by Parliament arising from the Authority's stage one legislative review outcomes;
- review the OH&S(MI) Act and regulations in context of the stage two legislation review to identify any additional compliance measures and develop reform proposals for advice to Government.

#### ***Practical guidance***

- produce two hazard publications – one addressing manual handling/body stressing and one addressing falls, trips and slips;

- produce OHS guidance material as necessary.

### ***OHS awareness***

- implement the joint Seacare Authority/AMSA education and awareness raising program;
- improve the use of the Seacare Authority website as a means to improve OHS awareness;
- complete the trial of positive performance indicators (PPIs) and evaluate for potential wider adoption in the maritime industry.

### ***OHS skills development***

- audit selected OHS representatives training courses for compliance with the standards required by the Seacare Authority OHS representatives training course accreditation guidelines;
- commence direct communication with on board OHS committees to identify OHS skills requirements, and develop a plan to deliver those skills.

### **Monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy**

The OHS Strategy will be reviewed by the Authority at its first scheduled meeting following 30 June 2003, to enable new or emerging priorities to be considered for inclusion in the Strategy and to monitor progress in implementation of the Strategy over its first year of operation.

The Seacare Authority will also contribute to NOHSC reporting on the maritime industry contribution to the implementation and achievement of the national OHS Strategy outcomes and to the national targets.

### **Reporting on the Strategy**

Progress in implementation of the Strategy will be reported in the 2002-03 and 2003-04 Seacare Authority Annual Reports.

**Prepared by:  
Seacare Authority Secretariat  
November 2002**

## **Appendix 1**

### **Outline of the National OHS Strategy**

Can also be viewed at [www.nohsc.gov.au/the National OHS Strategy/the National Strategy Chart Overview](http://www.nohsc.gov.au/the%20National%20OHS%20Strategy/the%20National%20Strategy%20Chart%20Overview)

## **Appendix 2**

### **The National OHS Strategy Statement of Commitment**

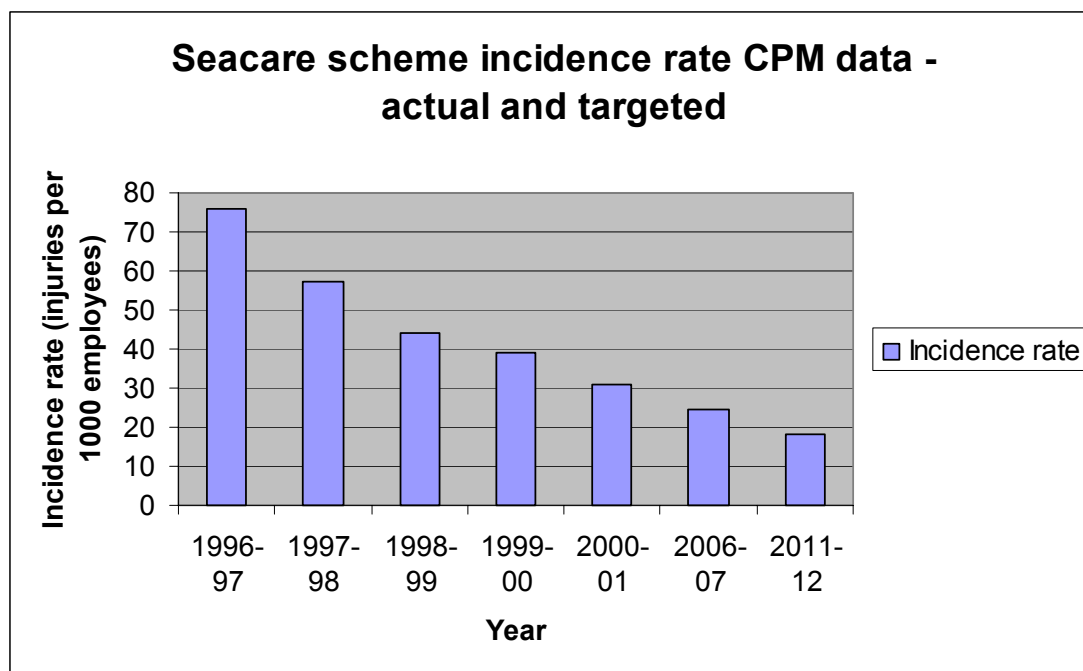
Can also be viewed at [www.nohsc.gov.au/the National OHS Strategy](http://www.nohsc.gov.au/the%20National%20OHS%20Strategy) (page v)

**Seacare scheme – injury incidence rates using Comparative Performance Monitoring (CPM) data (Table 1 and Chart 1) and using Seacare Authority Annual Report data (Table 2 and Chart 2) – actual 1996-97 to 2000-01 and targets, at 2007 and 2012**

**Table 1**

Year	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2006-07	2011-12
	<b>Actual</b>					<b>Targets</b>	
Incidence rate	76	57.4	43.9	38.9	30.7	24.6	18.4
% change over previous year		25.8	23.5	11.4	21	20	25.2

**Chart 1**



The incidence rates used in Table 1 and Chart 1 are derived from the 4<sup>th</sup> National Comparative Performance Monitoring Report of August 2002. The incidence rate is the number of compensable injuries resulting in one week (5days) or more off work per 1,000 employees (unstandardised)

**Table 2**

Year	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2006-07	2011-12
	<b>Actual</b>					<b>Targets</b>	
Incidence rate	115.3	87.7	59.2	54.6	60	48	36
% change over previous year		23.9	32.5	7.8	-9.9	20	25

**Chart 2:**

