



# GUIDANCE NOTICE

## Certificates of Survey (Scheme S) and Vessels exempt from Survey (Scheme NS)

All domestic commercial vessels under the National Law are required to meet applicable design, construction, stability and equipment standards. The way in which vessels demonstrate compliance with the standards differs depending on whether vessels are Scheme S (surveyed) or Scheme NS (non-survey). Vessels in Scheme S undergo a survey by an accredited surveyor, whereas an owners declares compliance for Scheme NS vessels.

A Certificate of Survey is evidence that a vessel has been surveyed and meets specified standards for design, construction, stability and safety equipment that apply to the vessel.

Vessels required to undergo survey and obtain a Certificate of Survey are **Scheme S** vessels.

Generally, **Scheme S** comprises:

- Vessels greater than 7.5 metres in length.
- Vessels operating in A, B or C waters.
- Vessels that carry passengers.
- Vessels specified as **'high risk'** in the National Standard for the Administration for Marine Safety Section 4 (NSAMS 4).

### Issue of a Certificate of Survey for Scheme S vessels

A Certificate of Survey will normally be issued for a period of five years for each **Scheme S** vessel. Intermediate (periodic) surveys are required to demonstrate that the vessel continues to meet the applicable standards as defined in *Marine Order 503 (Certificates of Survey) 2013*.

### What do I need to do under the National System?

What you need to do depends on whether your vessel is:

- a new vessel;
- an existing vessel where you do not change the structure, use and area of operations;
- an existing vessel where you modify the structure,
- change the use or change the area of operations (eg move to another State/Territory);
- a vessel that is exempt from survey.

### Scheme S – New Vessels

For new **Scheme S** vessels, apply to your local marine safety agency for plan approval, initial and periodic surveys.

### Scheme S – Existing Vessels with the same structure, use and area of operations

If your existing **Scheme S** vessel is unmodified and continues operating in the same geographical area after the National System starts, your existing State/Territory Certificate of Survey is “grandfathered” and you do not need to do anything until your certificate is nearing expiry. You will continue to be limited to the same structure and use of your vessel and area of operations permitted under your existing Certificate of Survey. Prior to expiry you will need to apply for a National System Certificate of Survey from your local marine safety agency.

### Scheme S – Existing Vessels with modified structure, changed use or changed area of operations

If you have an existing Certificate of Survey or Registration issued by a State/Territory and you want to modify your vessel, change its use or change its area of operation before it is due to expire, you will need to apply for a National System Certificate of Survey. Check with your local marine safety agency for further information.

### Applying for a Certificate of Survey

To apply for a National System Certificate of Survey you need to:

1. Complete the relevant Certificate of Survey Application Form and associated documentation available from the AMSA website or your local marine safety agency;
2. Provide the evidence required to support the application; and
3. Pay the required fees.

Details of your local marine safety agency are available at [www.amsa.gov.au](http://www.amsa.gov.au)

## Vessels Exempt from survey – Scheme NS (non-survey) vessels

*EX2015/02 Marine Safety (Certificates of Survey) Exemption 2015* exempts certain vessels from the requirement to obtain a Certificate of Survey because they are **Scheme NS** (non-survey) vessels. It is important to note that NS vessels are still considered domestic commercial vessels.

Owners of **Scheme NS** vessels make a declaration on their Application for a Certificate of Operation that their vessels meet the applicable standards as opposed to undergoing a survey.

**EX2015/02** exempts the following vessels from survey:

- a vessel being moved for the purpose of obtaining a Certificate; or
- a tender vessel which:
  - is used to transport goods or people between the shore and its parent vessel or between its parent vessel and another vessel; or
  - does not move more than 1 nautical mile from its parent vessel (or another distance determined by the National Regulator).

*Note: if the parent vessel is a vessel in survey, the tender must be inspected with the parent vessel whenever the parent vessel is surveyed.*
- an auxiliary vessel which:
  - does not move further than 5 nautical miles from its parent vessel if it does not carry passengers;
  - does not move further than 2 nautical miles from its parent vessel if it does carry passengers;
  - is less than 7.5 metres in length (or another length determined by the National Regulator);
  - carries up to 12 passengers (or another number determined by the National Regulator);
  - is not powered by a petrol inboard engine.

*Note: the vessel must be inspected at intervals identified on the certificate of operation of its parent vessel.*
- a Class 2D or 2E, 3D or 3E vessel that is less than 7.5m long does not carry passengers and is not high risk;
- a Class 4D or 4E vessel that is less than 7.5m long, does not operate overnight and is not high risk;
- a vessel that is less than 24 metres long and is only used inshore by a sailing school or training organisation to train members of the public for recreational boating qualifications;

- a personal watercraft (PWC);
- a human powered vessel; and
- a sailing vessel that is less than 7.5m long, that doesn't have an auxiliary engine, or if it does have an auxiliary engine – the engine has less than or equal to 3.5kW propulsion power.

Please see *EX2015/02 Marine Safety (Certificate of Survey) 2015* for the list of high risk vessels and to ascertain the applicable standards that apply to each of the vessel types.

Contact your local marine safety agency for further information relating to **Scheme NS**.

## Applying for Scheme NS

To apply for **Scheme NS** you need to:

1. Complete the relevant **Scheme NS** Application Form available from the AMSA website or your local marine safety agency;
2. Provide the evidence required to support the application; and
3. Pay any required fees.

The following vessels are **not** required to make an application to be included in **Scheme NS**:

- personal watercraft (PWC);
- human powered vessels; and
- sailing vessels that are less than 7.5m long, that do not have an auxiliary engine, or if it does have an auxiliary engine – the engine has less than or equal to 3.5kW propulsion power.

### All NS vessels are required to have a Certificate of Operation.

Details of your local marine safety agency are available at [www.amsa.gov.au](http://www.amsa.gov.au)

## Other things you can apply to do:

**Vary your Certificate of Survey** to ensure information on your certificate remains accurate (e.g. change of name, the vessel has been altered, sold or damaged).

**Obtain a replacement Certificate of Survey** when your Certificate has been lost, stolen or damaged.

**Voluntarily suspend a Certificate of Survey** if you wish to voluntarily suspend your Certificate of Survey for up to six (6) months.

**Voluntarily revoke a Certificate of Survey** if you wish to voluntarily cancel your Certificate of Survey permanently.

## Related Forms

- Application for a Certificate of Survey
- Application to vary a Certificate
- Application for a replacement Certificate
- Application to voluntarily suspend a Certificate
- Application to voluntarily revoke a Certificate
- Application for Scheme NS
- Application for a Certificate of Operation

Forms are available from the [AMSA website](#).

## References

- *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012*
- *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Regulations 2012*
- *Marine Order 503 (Certificate of Survey – national law) 2013*
- *AMSA EX2015/02 Marine Safety (Certificates of survey) Exemption 2015*
- National Standard for Commercial Vessels – Part F2 – Leisure craft (NSCV F2)
- National Standard for the Administration for Marine Safety - Section 4 (NSAMS 4)