



10<sup>th</sup> October 2016

## Safety campaign targets dory operations

In 2013 a Queensland commercial fisherman drowned after his dory boat, also known as a 'tender vessel', capsized.

Dory operations involve a fleet of small boats, usually with only one or two people on-board, fishing in a designated zone and reporting back to a mothership overseeing the operation.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has noted a deficiency in operational safety in this area of industry that must be addressed, including a lack of appropriate communication capability between dories and motherships, and a lack of appropriate safety equipment on-board.

The deficiencies in safety identified by the Coroner and AMSA not only put lives at risk, but lead to large-scale search and rescue operations that could be avoided with the introduction of simple and inexpensive VHF radios, the wearing of lifejackets, and knowledge of when to activate an Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB).

In a push to improve the safety of dories and prevent deaths at sea, AMSA has partnered with Maritime Safety Queensland, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to meet with fishermen across the state over the next month.

The regional meetings will be complemented by targeted on-water compliance activities with AMSA's partner agencies.

AMSA's national operations manager, Brian Hemming, said Queensland dory fishing operations were over represented in the number of serious incidents and unnecessary search and rescue operations.

"With a few simple changes to their safety culture, such as appropriate communication with motherships, wearing life jackets and ensuring the appropriate safety equipment is on-board the dories, we can aim to prevent future fatal incidents at sea," Mr Hemming said.

"AMSA and our partners will be talking directly with fishermen to encourage them to look at their safety management systems to ensure that risks are identified and mitigated."

AMSA has launched a fact sheet highlighting the unique safety challenges of dory fishing operations which can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.amsa.gov.au/forms-and-publications/Fact-Sheets/AMSA684.pdf>