

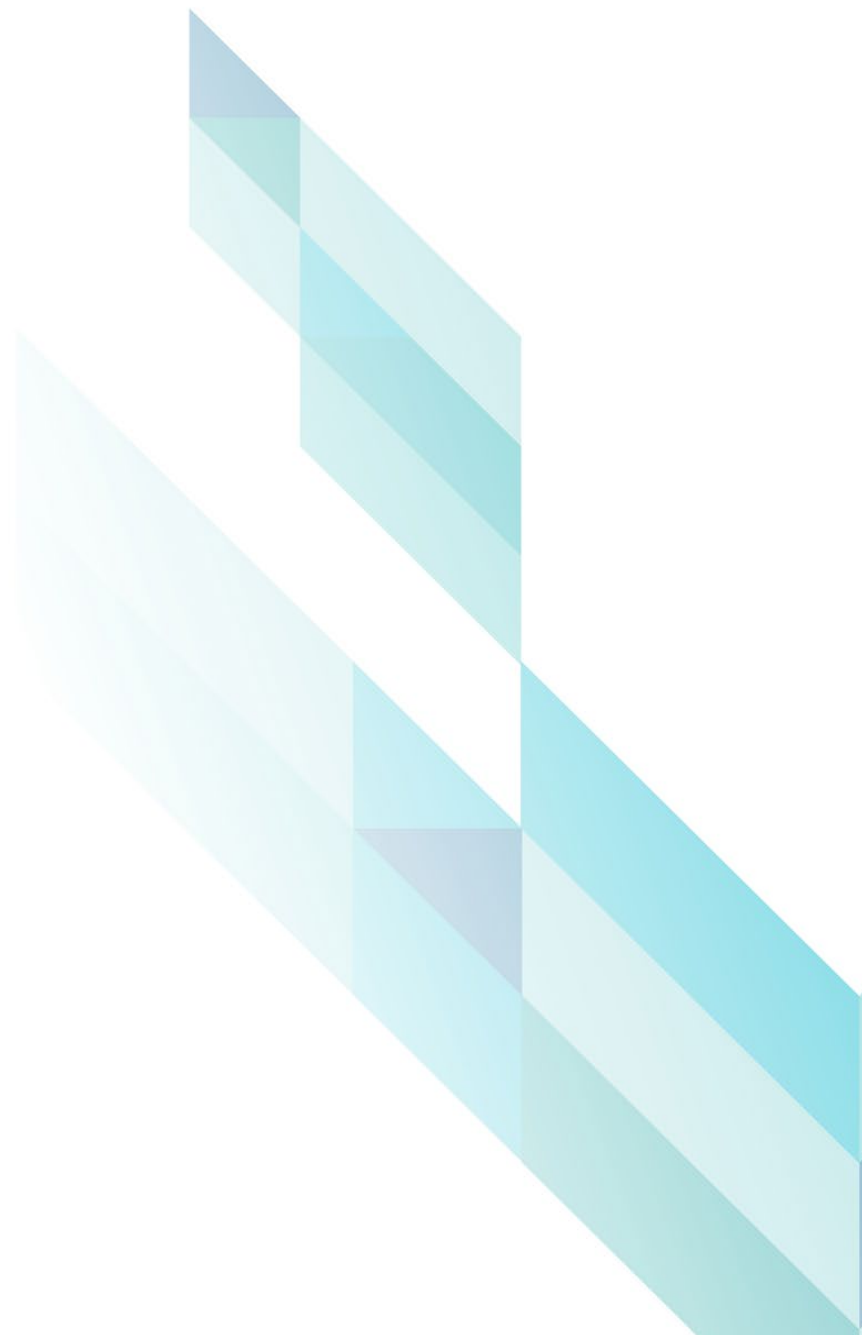


Australian Government

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Assembly station

Guidance: Marine Order 504 changes



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Assembly station

From 1 June 2025, Class 1, 2 and 3 vessels, except those eligible for a simplified SMS, must meet these requirements for assembly stations:

- Alternative assembly stations no longer dependent on the number of persons carried on board.
- Alternative assembly stations required if it's practical based on the vessel's layout, characteristics and risk assessment.

How to meet the assembly station requirements

Step 1. Review your risk assessment

The vessel owner should review the risk assessment in consultation with the master and crew.

Consider:

- how an alternative assembly station can control risks
- whether an alternative assembly station is practical based on your vessel's layout, characteristics and risk assessment
- where to locate an alternative assembly station.

Update your risk assessment with any changes.

Step 2. Update your emergency plan

Identify:

- at least one assembly station (primary assembly station) for all persons on board
- an alternative to any primary assembly station that becomes unusable or inaccessible during an emergency (if determined as practical in your risk assessment in Step 1)
- arrangements for assigning each crew member to an emergency station
- a system, for use in an emergency, for the crew to record and confirm the presence of all persons on board
- how often emergency procedures, including assembly station drills, will be practised.

Note: Assembly station requirements in [NSCV C1 – Arrangement, Accommodation and Personal Safety](#) specify minimum requirements to facilitate the orderly and timely movement of people in an emergency.

Additional requirements for vessels that carry passengers

Ensure that the emergency plan includes:

- the location of each assembly station
- what passengers must do in an emergency
- how passengers are to find, put on and secure lifejackets
- placement of appropriate signage to guide passengers to the assembly station
- placement of 'what to do in an emergency' information in each assembly station, passenger cabin and other area frequented by passengers
- placement of appropriate signage and information on how to find, put on and secure lifejackets in each assembly station, passenger cabin and other area frequented by passengers.

Scenarios and examples

35m Class 1B charter vessel

The owner/operator of a 35m charter vessel authorised to carry up to 32 berthed passengers plus crew is reviewing their assembly station requirements.

In consultation with the master and crew, they identify through their risk assessment the need to have an alternative assembly station based on:

- vessel layout
- number of passengers able to be carried
- the possibility of a primary assembly station becoming inaccessible during an emergency.

Based on the risk assessment, they identify an alternative assembly station, located close to an embarkation station, with adequate deck area for passengers and crew.

The owner/operator updates the emergency plan to include the new alternative assembly station.

Signage is placed at the alternative assembly station. Emergency information is updated in each passenger and crew cabin, saloon and deck area to guide passengers.

The updated plan is then included in both crew induction and ongoing emergency training procedures and passenger induction briefing.

Extract from emergency plan

Emergency procedure: Abandon ship

Action	Responsible
Sound prepare to abandon ship alarm (7 short blasts followed by one long blast of the ship's horn)	Master
Provide information about the nature of the emergency over the public address system and action being taken. Tell passengers to follow instructions given by the crew	Master
Check primary assembly station is clear and safe for passengers to gather. Inform master. If not clear instruct crew to use alternative assembly station.	Crew members (names/positions)
Direct passengers to assigned assembly station	Crew members (names/positions)
Assist any passengers with mobility or medical issues to assembly station	Crew members (names/positions)
Undertake head count – inform master	Crew members (names/positions)
Instruct passengers to don lifejackets and ensure they are fitted properly	Crew members (names/positions)
Manually launch life raft(s) utilising launch instructions	Crew members (names/positions)

Master to determine and command when to abandon ship	Master
Help passengers to board life raft(s) and ensure they are seated with the entrance clear	Crew members (names/positions)
Crew members board life raft(s)	Master and crew
Once all accounted for, cut painter line(s) and move away from vessel – ensure EPIRB is activated	Crew members (names/positions)

Questions and answers

Q: Do vessels operating under simplified SMS need to include an assembly station?

A: Vessels that meet the eligibility criteria for a simplified SMS will not be required to include an assembly station in the vessel's emergency plan. However, owners are encouraged to include one where it is practical based on the vessel's layout, characteristics and risk assessment.

Contact

Got a question about this requirement? Please [contact us](#).