



## **Introducing USL Code 2010**

### **What is USL Code 2010?**

USL Code 2010 is the latest version of the Uniform Shipping Laws (USL) Code. It updates the previous version of the USL Code, with recently completed sections of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels (NSCV).

The parts of the NSCV that have been incorporated into USL Code 2010 include:

- NSCV Part C Section 6B (Buoyancy and Stability after Flooding) and
- NSCV Part F2 (Leisure Craft)

These parts of the NSCV were prepared by the National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) in consultation with industry and state and territory marine authorities.

### **When will USL Code 2010 apply?**

USL Code 2010 will apply from 1 October 2010.

### **Who will it apply to?**

USL Code 2010 will apply to:

- All new commercial vessels
- Existing commercial vessels applying to upgrade their Certificate of Survey
- Existing commercial vessels subject to initial survey (including vessels that were previously used recreationally or in a manner that did not require initial survey)
- Vessels returning to NSW survey where over two years has elapsed from the time of the vessel's last periodic survey

### **What transitional arrangements are in place?**

Applications for design approval lodged prior to 1 October 2010 can be made using USL Code 2009 provided that construction of the vessel commences (i.e. keel laid) before 1 October 2013.

Applications for design approval lodged on or after 1 October 2010, will need to meet the standards specified in USL Code 2010.

Prototype approvals current before 1 October 2010 will continue to be recognised until their scheduled expiry date (i.e. 5 years from the date of approval).

Vessels already in survey prior to 1 October 2010 will continue to be surveyed to the version of the code that applied at the time of initial survey.




## Where can I get a copy of USL Code 2010?


Copies of the consolidated USL Code 2010 are available on the NMSC website, at [www.nmsc.gov.au](http://www.nmsc.gov.au).

## What are the major changes?


Key changes include:

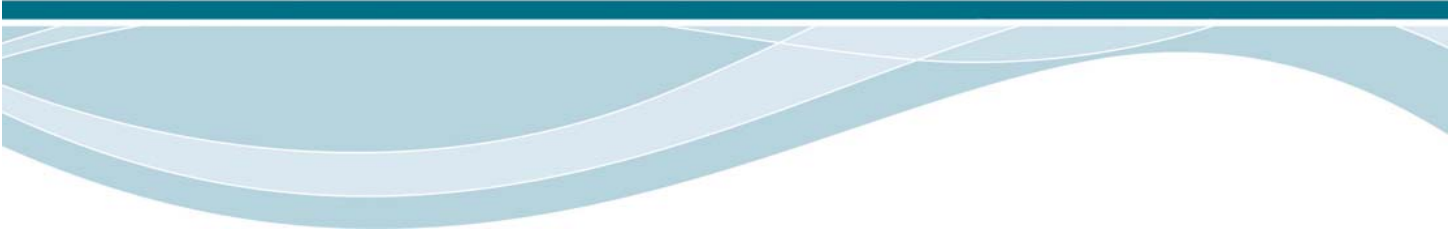
### Buoyancy and Stability after Flooding

- The new standard takes account of changes to current vessel design and construction practices as well as developments in relevant national and international standards.
  - The new standard incorporates a performance-based framework that considers the hazards of swamping, local flooding, grounding and collision.
  - The standard specifies higher standards for high flooding risk vessels that carry large numbers of passengers. These higher standards align with changes made to relevant international standards for passenger vessels
    - Vessels that carry 400 passengers or more require a two compartment standard of subdivision
    - For vessels that carry 36-400 passengers a one compartment standard continues to apply.
  - Protection from swamping is addressed for commercial vessels less than 6m in length
    - The standard differentiates between level and basic floatation and requirements for level floatation provide for the added weight of personnel.
  - The control of consequences of grounding proposes vessel draft as a better measure of risk from grounding and provides the option of using a double bottom or watertight compartments to provide the required levels of protection.
  - The approximate method for determining the location of bulkheads has been eliminated
    - The forward collision bulkhead is determined by an energy coefficient that models the likely extent of damage in a bow-on collision
    - The aft most location of the collision bulkhead has been changed to a choice between performance based requirements.
  - Other changes include:
    - The margin-line criterion has been eliminated allowing portions of the deck to be submerged where there would be no effect on safety.
    - The max equilibrium angle has been altered from 7 deg and 10 deg for vessels greater/less than 35 m to 12 deg and on certain vessels up to 15 deg.
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- Intermediate stage flooding analysis is required for flooding risk category IV.
  - The requirements for air chambers have been derived to address the concerns that led to their prohibition under the USL Code.
  - The addition of an option to use poured foam represents a significant relaxation over the current USL Code.

### Leisure Craft

- The new standard takes into account the wider variety of hire and drive operations now available, including unpowered off-the-beach craft, through to houseboats, PWCs, bareboat yachts and flexible arrangements for the assessment of novel craft. It provides dedicated user-friendly rules and requirements tailored to specific types of activities.
  - The new standard puts an emphasis on safety management, operators must have a safety management plan in place and must provide a briefing to hirers and users. The standard introduces the use of a guide to advise the skipper on the safe operation of the vessel without becoming responsible for its operation.
  - The standard allows CE Certification to be accepted for vessels up to 24 metres in length as the basis for satisfying construction standards. This provides additional flexibility for imported vessels. The standard also removes the prescriptive requirements for accommodation for more safety based outcomes.
  - Under the new standard,
    - Class 4E powered vessels may be up to 24m in length; and
    - Class 4C and 4D vessels may be up to 15m in length, or 24m if the vessel is restricted to a designated area.
    - **Note:** in NSW waterways, other than the Mildura-Wentworth area and the Hawkesbury River, the length of a houseboat must not exceed 15.5 metres and the overall length, including the main deck, swim deck and any protective guards around propulsive machinery, must not exceed 18.0 metres. In the Mildura-Wentworth area and the Hawkesbury River the length of a houseboat must not exceed 20.0 metres and the overall length, including the main deck, swim deck and any protective guards around propulsive machinery, must not exceed 21.8 metres.
  - Vessels must not carry more than 12 people when underway.
  - If the vessel is capable of a maximum speed of 10 knots or more the skipper must hold a general boat driving licence. The standard addresses the risks associated with the operation of larger vessels. Vessels greater than 12m, other than houseboats, and capable of speeds over 10 knots will require a skipper who holds a general boat driving licence and one other competent person to assist the skipper.
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**Further information**

Contact NSW Maritime's Commercial Operations Branch on 9563 8771.

