

Response to the Office of the State  
Coroner of New South Wales

**Report into Boating Incident  
Forster  
21 February 2002**

<b>Coroner</b>	<b>Coroner, M. P. Degney,</b>
<b>Date of findings</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Inquest location</b>	<b>Forster</b>
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	The Coroner dispensed with a formal Inquest on 13 June 2002. On 10 June 2003 the Executive Officer of the State Coroner wrote to the (then) Waterways Authority <sup>1</sup> making <b>two suggestions</b> .
<b>Status of recommendations</b>	<b>Completed.</b>

**Background** On the evening of 21 February 2002, a nine-year old was being towed behind a ski boat, by hanging onto the back of the duckboard, when he disappeared into the water. His body was found the following day and it is believed he drowned after losing consciousness due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Waterways Authority was renamed as NSW Maritime on 1 September 2004

**FORSTER, 21 FEBRUARY 2002**

No.	Coroner's suggestion (the inquest was dispensed with)	NSW Maritime's response <sup>2</sup>
1.	<p>“..the Coroner had become aware of research from the US into duckboarding or teak-surfing and carbon monoxide poisoning and has asked that you consider the issues with a view to activating publicity/warnings as you deem appropriate.</p>	<p>Hanging onto a marlin board (“teak surfing”), sitting on, riding on, or hanging onto a swim ladder, swim platform or transom attached to a vessel is prohibited under the Marine Safety (General) Regulations 2009.</p> <p>NSW Maritime has introduced a number of initiatives to highlight the dangers associated with carbon monoxide poisoning. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• amended the Marine Safety (General) Regulations 2009 to require a minimum ski rope length of 7 metres</li> <li>• extensive media campaigns</li> <li>• the ‘You’re the Skipper, you’re responsible’ campaign brochure includes information on carbon monoxide poisoning</li> <li>• dedicated pamphlet on carbon monoxide poisoning on vessels</li> <li>• dedicated page on the NSW Maritime website with comprehensive information on carbon monoxide poisoning which is available in English, Arabic, Chinese and Vietnamese</li> <li>• an emphasis on carbon monoxide poisoning included in the boating safety seminar package</li> <li>• carbon monoxide poisoning emergency response details included in the boating handbook.</li> </ul> <p>The wearing of lifejackets features highly in educational material.</p> <p><b>This recommendation is closed.</b></p>

<sup>2</sup> The response should be considered in conjunction with the published regulations, policies and safety initiatives outlined on the NSW Maritime website and in published materials.

**FORSTER, 21 FEBRUARY 2002**

No.	Coroner's suggestion	NSW Maritime's response <sup>2</sup>
	(the inquest was dispensed with)	
2.	"That there is no legal requirement for persons participating in this, or other similar recreational water activities, to wear lifejackets or other personal flotation devices is also an issue the State Coroner asks that you consider."	NSW Maritime conducts extensive education campaigns around wearing of lifejackets by persons involved in towing related activities. <b>This recommendation is considered closed.</b>