

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

**Report into Boating Incidents
Lake Eucumbene
7 January 2004**

**Lake Eucumbene
18 November 2004**

Coroner	The Coroner, B. Donnelly
Date of findings	30 May 2006
Inquest location	Cooma
Recommendation(s)	Both incidents were examined and reported on by the Coroner. Three recommendations were made to NSW Maritime in relation to boating safety on alpine lakes.
Status of recommendations	Closed.

Background

Incident Details #1

During the morning of 7 January 2004, two men were fishing on Lake Eucumbene in a small open runabout in strong winds and heavy chop. The vessel was hit by a wave which lifted the front of the vessel up and caused water to enter the vessel at the stern. The vessel capsized and two men onboard were thrown into the water. Despite staying with the vessel one man experienced difficulties and did not survive the incident.

Background

Incident Details #2

In the morning of 18 November 2004, two men were trawling for fish on Lake Eucumbene in windy conditions which, by mid-morning had caused waves of between one and two metres. The men were last seen at 10.00am and the alarm was raised when they did not return later that evening. It appears the men drowned when the vessel either capsized or sunk. The bodies of both men were discovered the next morning, but the vessel was not located.

LAKE EUCUMBENE, 7 JANUARY 2004

LAKE EUCUMBENE, 18 NOVEMBER
2004

No.	Coroner's recommendation	NSW Maritime's response ¹
1.	(T)he wearing of Type 1 personal flotation devices at all times when boating in alpine waterways in boats of less than five metres, be incorporated into the proposed Maritime Safety (General) Regulation.	<p>The wearing of Type 1 personal flotation devices at all times when boating in alpine waterways in boats of less than five metres has not be included in the regulation.</p> <p>The importance of wearing lifejackets is the focus of regular advisory and media campaigns including the NSW Maritime website, brochures such as "Boat Smart – Know when to wear your Lifejacket", and "You're the Skipper, you're responsible", and in the Boating Handbook.</p> <p>NSW Maritime's Boating Handbook provides information on the hazards associated with boating on alpine lakes and recommends that if conditions deteriorate, a lifejacket should be worn and boaters should return to shore.</p> <p>This recommendation is considered closed.</p>
2.	Maritime New South Wales erect signs (at boat launching points) warning of the particular dangers of particular areas, signs also displaying freecall telephone numbers giving up to date weather information for particular areas.	<p>NSW Maritime has installed safety warning signs at launching location within alpine lakes areas.</p> <p>The safety sign states:</p> <p>"WARNING</p> <p>Be alert to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sudden weather changes ▪ Unmarked and submerged hazards ▪ Low water temperatures ▪ Rough conditions <p>Wear your lifejacket</p> <p>Weather Info 131256"</p>

¹ 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.

LAKE EUCUMBENE, 7 JANUARY 2004

LAKE EUCUMBENE, 18 NOVEMBER
2004

No. Coroner's recommendation

NSW Maritime's response ¹

The Boating Handbook contains information on boating safety on alpine lakes.

An on-line boating safety alert system is available to assist boat owners prepare and plan a day out on or near the water. The Maritime alert is based on official weather data and is delivered free of charge through the internet and by email.

This recommendation is considered closed.

3. Maritime New South Wales create a "best practice" standard advising of such matters as the dangers of wearing waders in boats, as well as recommending other safety equipment and training that boaters users should be encouraged to adopt.

Information on the dangers of wearing waders in vessels is included in the Boating Handbook. Media releases and education campaigns highlight the dangers associated with wearing waders.

Minimum safety equipment requirements for operating on NSW waters are also clearly provided in the Handbook.

A compulsory practical component involving log book assessment by an experience skipper is a requirement for any person wishing to obtain a recreational vessel driver's licence.

This recommendation is considered closed.