AUSTRALIAN CUSTOMS NOTICE NO. 2007/65

Maritime Crew Visa becomes mandatory 1 January 2008

From 1 January 2008 it will be mandatory for all foreign sea crew (including supernumerary crew) visiting Australia to hold a visa. The transitional arrangements, which have been in place since the Maritime Crew Visa (MCV) was introduced on 1 July 2007, will end on 31 December 2007. Foreign crew of non-military ships will no longer be eligible for the grant of a Special Purpose visa (SPV).

Customs officers, together with Regional Seaports Officers from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) will be responsible for the administration and operation of these new arrangements at seaports around Australia. It is important that crew, masters, agents and operators of vessels arriving in Australia are aware of these requirements and take appropriate action, in particular they should be aware of the following:

# Penalties

From 1 January 2008 crew who arrive in Australia without an MCV or other appropriate visa for crew will be restricted on board their vessel. A penalties regime, administered by DIAC will apply in relation to crew arriving without visas. A penalty of $5000 for each case applies for Masters, agents and operators who bring crew to Australia without an MCV.

From 1 January 2008 crew arriving by sea must hold:

* a valid national passport
* an MCV granted for the same passport, and
* another document that establishes the crew member’s employment on the vessel. For example, crew list, articles, seaman’s book, or contract.

Vessels carrying crew without an MCV will be permitted to enter Australia. However crew without a valid visa will be restricted on board the ship. All vessels must wait until they are immigration cleared by Australian Customs before any crew leave the ship. Crew who hold a visa but leave the ship without being cleared may have their visa ceased and be restricted on board the vessel.

# Crew in Australia around 31 December 2007

Crew who arrive in Australia before 31 December 2007 without an MCV, and who have not departed before 1 January 2008, are able to remain in Australia lawfully as the SPV remains valid until they depart. Once they have left Australia, they can then apply for the MCV.

# Apply now

To apply for a Maritime Crew Visa visit: [www.immi.gov.au/sea](http://www.immi.gov.au/sea)

# Further information

For more information visit: [www.immi.gov.au/sea](http://www.immi.gov.au/sea) , email: [seaports@immi.gov.au](mailto:seaports@immi.gov.au) , if in Australia phone: 131 881 or outside Australia contact the nearest Australian embassy, consulate or high commission.

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10th December 2007

