



# Haul in a big catch with SAILOR Fleet Broadband

SAILOR 250 Fleet Broadband offers budget conscious fishing vessels and workboats the opportunity to enter the broadband arena. Ensuring you are always on target with weather and ocean conditions to ensure your next catch is a big one.



SAILOR Fleet Broadband harnesses the flexibility of Inmarsat's next I-4 satellite service. For fishing vessels and workboats, SAILOR FleetBroadband enables economical tracking, internet and e-mail access for operational and crew use. A low initial investment and the pay-as-you-go pricing of Fleet Broadband traffic means communication spend is reduced despite an increase in functionality and frequency of use.



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## Case study

In September 2002 the 12.2 metre steel fishing boat, *Tamara*, was at sea on a voyage from Southport, Queensland to Western Samoa with two crew onboard. Prior to departure, modifications had been made to the vessel that were not inspected by a surveyor. The most critical of these included a reduction in height of the engine room, ice room and steering compartment hatch coamings in the deck from 300 mm to only 75 mm high. Also, the bulwarks around the main work deck had been raised by 500 mm, but the freeing ports at the base of these bulwarks (that are designed to allow any water to rapidly run overboard), had been partially welded up. Below deck, watertight bulkheads had also been penetrated.

The master, while having considerable commercial fishing experience, was qualified as a Coxswain which restricts the holder to operating vessels less than 12 metres in length in inshore waters. The deckhand had no qualifications, minimal seagoing experience and was not familiar with the operation of the *Tamara's* safety equipment.

When about 140 nautical miles east of the Queensland coast in a following sea of 4-6 metres, the master opened the hatches to investigate the source of black smoke that he had noticed. While the hatches were open, the ship took a wave over the stern. Trapped by the high bulwarks and aided by the low hatch coamings and lack of drainage through the modified freeing ports, a large amount of water rushed down the hatches. Modifications to the watertight bulkheads below decks meant that flooding in one compartment would quickly spread to another, as they had lost their watertight integrity. The pumps could not cope with the large volume of water and the *Tamara* sank very quickly. The master did not have time to retrieve the EPIRB from inside the wheelhouse or prepare any other emergency equipment — even life jackets.

The liferaft, which had been stowed on the top of the wheelhouse, popped up nearby and inflated thanks to a hydrostatic release mechanism and the men clambered inside. They remained in the liferaft for the next 14 days with four litres of water, some dry biscuits and other emergency equipment that was inside the raft — but no EPIRB and no radio.

They were eventually found 30 miles from the coast by a fishing boat. No one knew of their plight for many days after the sinking as the crew had not organised regular radio contact with any individual or organisation. Only after they were reported overdue at their destination, nearly 450 miles from the position of the sinking, was the alarm raised. The vast area involved and the lack of any indication that the *Tamara* was in distress, meant that a search was impractical.

Only pure luck and the correct stowage of the liferaft with a hydrostatic release saved their lives.

### Crew members must:

- Know where life jackets are stowed and how to put them on quickly.
- Know the assigned duties on the emergency station list.
- Know the emergency, fire and abandon ship signals.
- Know the escape routes and emergency exits of the vessel.
- Know the location of all emergency equipment onboard and be proficient in their operation.

# LET US KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

**Are your details up to date?**

Up to date 406 MHz beacon registration details ensure the fastest possible response in case of an emergency.

You can register and update your details on line at any time:

[www.amsa.gov.au/beacons](http://www.amsa.gov.au/beacons)

**1800 406 406**



Australian Government  
Australian Maritime Safety Authority

121.5 MHz EPIRBs and PLBs are no longer licensed for use. Please dispose of old beacons responsibly.

## Working safely

### Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Crew members should participate in and encourage a safety culture onboard, making it a habit to wear PPE. PPE is clothing and equipment that protects the wearer from injury when participating in work-related activities. Crew members are required to wear PPE as part of their occupational health and safety requirements.

Examples of PPE include:

- ear plugs
- hard hat
- safety boots
- gloves
- visibility clothing.

### Confined spaces

Many incidents at sea have occurred as a result of working within confined spaces. The possible confined spaces onboard a vessel include those spaces entered through small hatchways or access points, cargo tanks and ballast or oil tanks. Confined spaces are not normally work spaces but may need to be entered on occasion for maintenance to be carried out.

Many fatalities have occurred in confined spaces due to preparations and procedures not being followed. The main hazard associated with confined spaces is an oxygen-depleted atmosphere. Even a rusty tank can have an atmosphere that will not support life. Other hazards can be the toxic effects of sewage systems, paint fumes, refrigeration, fuel tanks and stagnant bilge water.

Before entering a confined space:

- Assess the work that is required and plan to reduce time in the space.
- Inform the master of the work that is going to be undertaken.
- Develop a safe system that suits each job and clearly define safe methods of work.
- Ventilate the compartment — depending on circumstances, this may take 24 hours or more. If fans or blowers are used in a potentially explosive atmosphere they must not be capable of giving off sparks.
- Wear appropriate PPE such as masks or breathing apparatus, boots and a hard hat.
- Have a coworker remain stationed outside the compartment with a safety line tethered to the person inside the space.
- Have a rescue plan and a work plan established before entering the space.

Additional checklists may be required for monitoring during entry and after exit.

Detailed information on safe work practices in confined spaces can be found from the Department of Mines and Energy ([www.dme.qld.gov.au](http://www.dme.qld.gov.au)).

## Risk assessment and hazard management

Procedures and documentation should be kept on the vessel to identify hazards and the risk they present, implement control measures for identified risks and also monitor the effectiveness of the control measures.

Some hazards might typically include:

- hygiene issues
- gangways, ladders and stairs
- moving or rotating machinery without guards
- explosive gases in a battery compartment
- slippery decks
- hot piping, such as exhausts that are not insulated.

If a risk is identified the master should be informed and crew members should assist in developing these measures. Requirements for risk assessment and safe working practices are outlined in the NSCV.

