



AUSTRALIAN BUILDERS PLATE

Questions frequently asked by boat dealers

Customer benefits

1. How will my customers benefit from the ABP?

The ABP will help you accurately advise your customers about the performance of each boat including loading, capacity, maximum engine size, buoyancy and any other additional information the manufacturer wishes to provide.

This information will help your customer to pick the boat that is right for their needs, from the number of people they can carry to the horsepower that they need.

Because the information on the ABP is uniform your customer will also more readily be able to compare different types and models of boats, including imported boats.

2. Will it cost me more to buy a boat with an ABP?

The ABP should not increase the price where the boat is already being built to a standard and is sufficiently buoyant already.

However models that aren't currently built to a standard, and lack flotation will need to be upgraded to meet the ABP standard. This may result in some manufacturing cost increases.

Selling boats with an ABP

3. Can I sell a new boat without an ABP?

No

In most States, dealers will not be allowed to sell boats built after the commencement date without an ABP, unless of course it is a boat that is exempt from the ABP requirements.

4. Can I sell second hand boats without an ABP?

In general, yes

Second-hand boats without an ABP, that have previously been registered in the State, can still be sold. A boat that has never been registered or is newly imported may be treated like a new boat.

Boats requiring an ABP

5. Which boats are required to have an ABP?

All boats are required to have an ABP plate with the exception of: an amphibious vehicle; a canoe, kayak or surf ski or similar vessel designed to be powered by paddle; a rowing shell used for racing or rowing training; a sailboard or sail kite; a surf row boat; a hydrofoil or hovercraft; a race boat; a sailing vessel; a submersible; and an aquatic toy.

A sailing boat with an auxiliary engine is exempt from the requirement to have an ABP fitted.

Vessels subject to a Certificate of Survey, Personal Water Craft (PWC) and Inflatable boats must comply with different requirements.

6. What labelling does a Personal Watercraft require?

The ABP is not required on a PWC designed to carry up to two people.

An ABP is required on other PWC's unless the craft already has information clearly and permanently marked that states:-

- the maximum number of persons the vessel may carry, as recommended by the builder, and
- the total mass of persons and equipment (expressed in kilogram's) that the craft is designed to carry, as recommended by the builder.

7. What labelling will an Inflatable boat require instead of an ABP?

An inflatable boat requires an ABP UNLESS it already has a plate affixed in accordance with the European Directive 94/25/EC, or a plate attached in accordance with the requirements of the US National Marine Manufacturers Association as set out in the NMMA Certification Handbook.

Fixing and approving ABP plates

8. Is the dealer responsible for fixing the ABP to the boat?

No, unless the dealer is also the importer.

9. Who is responsible for affixing the ABP to the boat?

The ABP must be fitted by:

- The builder if the boat is built in Australia; or
- The importer if the boat is built outside Australia.

In either case, the person or company must be a legal entity in Australia and takes responsibility for the accuracy of the information on the plate. The name of the person or company fitting the ABP to the boat is shown on the ABP.

10. Who can determine the information on an ABP?

The information on an ABP must be determined by a competent person.

A competent person is defined as a person who has acquired through training, qualification, experience, or a combination of these, the knowledge and skills enabling that person to competently determine the information on a builders plate.

The competent person is either:

- The builder;
- The importer; or
- A third-party competent person.

In general, a commercial boat builder is deemed to be a competent person for the purpose of the ABP standard. In the case of an owner-builder or importer, they may not meet the definition of a competent person, in which case a third-party competent person may need to be engaged to determine the information. Where this occurs, the name of the third-party competent person should be shown on the ABP, along with that of the builder or importer.

In some States, the Marine Safety Agency maintains a list of approved third-parties who can act as a competent person for the purpose of complying with the ABP standard.

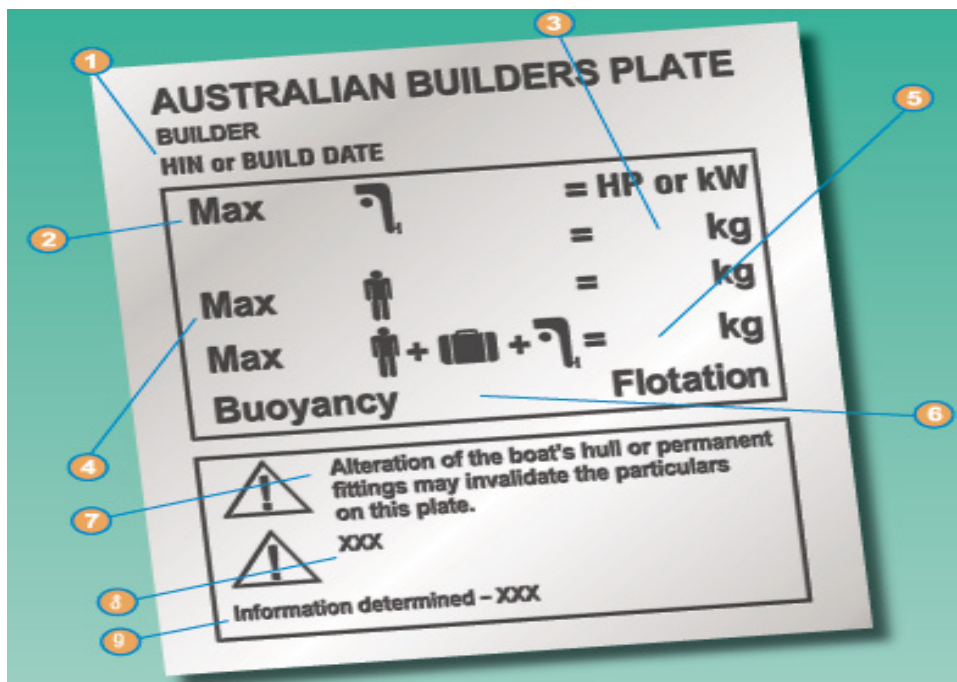
Any person whose name appears on the plate is assuming responsibility for the information on that plate.

11. How does the consumer know which of these people has supplied the information on the plate?

The person who is supplying the information on the plate needs to identify themselves by name and the capacity in which they are providing the information. They must be a legal entity in Australia.

Examples

- Built by Sunhope Boats, Australia
- Imported by RayStan Holdings, Australia
- Information approved by E.R. Smith, Naval Architect, Sydney, Aust.



This is a sample of an ABP for a boat less than 6 meters with an outboard motor, as of 5 September 2005. For further details, please refer to the National Standard for Australian Builders Plate for Recreational boats

- 1) Name of the person approving information on the plate, normally the builder or importer, and the capacity in which they approved the information and either the Hull Identification Number (HIN) or the year built
- 2) Maximum outboard engine power rating for which the boat has been designed and tested, expressed in kilowatts or horsepower
- 3) Maximum outboard engine weight for which the boat has been designed and tested expressed in kilograms, including the weight of any auxiliary outboard.
- 4) Maximum number of persons on the boat expressed as a whole number and in kilograms.
- 5) The maximum load that the boat has been designed and tested to carry when underway, This includes persons, maximum outboard engine weight allowed including any auxiliary engines, and carry-on equipment such as personal equipment, personal safety equipment, spare parts tools, dry provisions, fishing tackle, portable tanks and there contents, It does not include the mass of the contents of fixed fuel or water tanks.
- 6) For boats less than 6 metres in length there will be a buoyancy statement. Up until July 2006, the terms used may be either inadequate flotation, basic flotation, or level flotation. After July 2006 the term "inadequate flotation" will no longer be permitted for use.
- 7) A mandatory warning statement that alterations may invalidate the particulars on the Australian Builders Plate.
- 8) The person approving information on the plate may also add an optional person/load capacity warning statement or other safety information.

Examples may include.

Warning – the recommended maximum persons to be carried on the flybridge should not exceed 2 persons or 150 kilograms

Warning – the recommended maximum load should be reduced in bad weather or when the boat is operated offshore. Refer to the owner's manual before operation.

- 9) The standard used to determine the information provided on the plate.
An Example might be:
Information determined – AS 1799

Modifications to boats

12. If a boat that has been fitted with an ABP plate by the builder is modified by the dealer and the modifications to the boat invalidates the information on the plate, the dealer will need to make sure that a new plate is fitted to the boat prior to sale. The information on the new plate can only be approved by a competent person.

13. What level of modification requires a new ABP?

Any modification that renders the information on the existing plate to be inaccurate requires a new plate to be fitted to the boat.

Examples:

Removal of a flotation chamber/seat to install a live bait tank would alter the buoyancy of the craft and require a new plate.

The fitting of accessories such as additional seats, fish boxes, extra or larger fuel tanks, extra batteries etc would add weight to the boat and may require the stated load capacity of the boat to be reduced.

Most manufacturers supply an options list with their craft.

14. Is there any way I can avoid having to change the plate if I customise a boat?

If the boat builder determines the information on the plate to allow for a generic set of “standard customisation options” that reflects normal purchaser demand plus a small margin of safety, then the dealer can option up to that level without having to alter the ABP.

If modifications or customisation occurred outside of the predetermined set of “standard customisation options” then a new ABP would need to be determined.

Imported boats

15. I import new boats into Australia and these already come with a NMMA or CE plate. Will these still require an ABP plate?

Yes

The ABP standard requires that the person identifying themselves as having approved the information on the plate (eg: the builder, importer or competent person) has to be a legal entity in Australia.

Overseas plates do not normally contain the buoyancy statement and mandatory warning statement required by the ABP standard. Also the information may not be in metric and will not meet the requirements of the ABP standard for that reason.

Motors

16. What happens if I sell a boat without a motor?

The ABP provides important safety information to the consumer including the maximum weight and horse power for the outboard. This allows the owner of the vessel to fit an appropriate sized motor at a later date.

17. Does the power rating have to be in Kilowatts?

No

The ABP standard states that the maximum power capacity can be expressed in either Horse Power (HP) or Kilowatts (kW). The mass of the outboard motor must, however, be specified in kilograms.

18. What happens if I fit an auxiliary outboard to the boat?

The fitting of an auxiliary mounting plate and auxiliary outboard would not affect the allowable power of the outboard on the ABP plate. The information about the maximum outboard motor power rating applies only to the boat's primary motor. The power of any reserve outboard is excluded.

However the auxiliary motor would need to be counted when the owner assesses whether or not the proposed loading is within the maximum load capacity of the boat.

Other information on the plate**19. What information does the plate give me about number of people that can be carried?**

The plate provides both the maximum number of people that can be carried in the boat and the total weight of those people, based on the calculations contained in the standard that has been used to determine the information provided on the plate.

On some plates additional information regarding the loading may be provided in a warning statement. This statement could cover matters such as reduced loading for flybridges and adverse conditions.

Standards**20. What standard has the boat been built to?**

The plate will only identify which standard has been used to determine the information provided on the plate. This does not necessarily mean that the boat complies with other aspects of that standard, such as fire protection and hull construction.

Flotation**21. What is meant by basic and level flotation?**Basic Flotation

The ABP Standard defines basic flotation as "a flotation system that will keep a boat carrying its maximum load from sinking when swamped, assuming the occupants of the boat have left it and are in the water clinging to it. With basic flotation the swamped boat may float at any attitude." This is a general definition to explain the concept.

However, when determining buoyancy for a boat the specific definition and performance requirement (or its equivalent) for basic flotation in the standard you are using (ie: ISO, AS) must be used.

Level Flotation

Level flotation is defined in the ABP standard as being “a flotation system that will keep a boat carrying its maximum load from sinking when swamped, assuming the occupants remain within the boat and supported by the flotation system. The flotation system must be such that it will keep the swamped boat floating level and prevent it from capsizing in calm water. Level flotation does not provide a self righting capacity.”

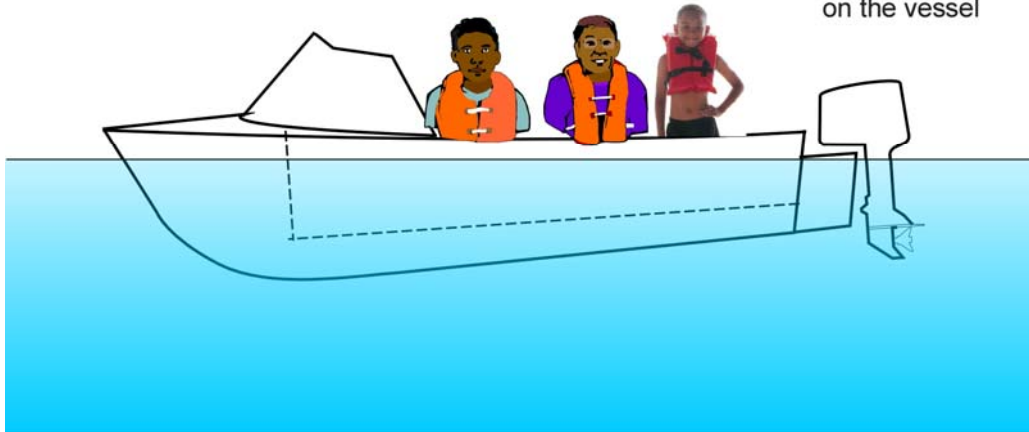
Once again, when determining buoyancy for a boat the specific definition and performance requirement (or its equivalent) for level flotation in the standard you are using (ie: ISO, AS) must be used.

Australian Builders Plate

Level or basic flotation requirement

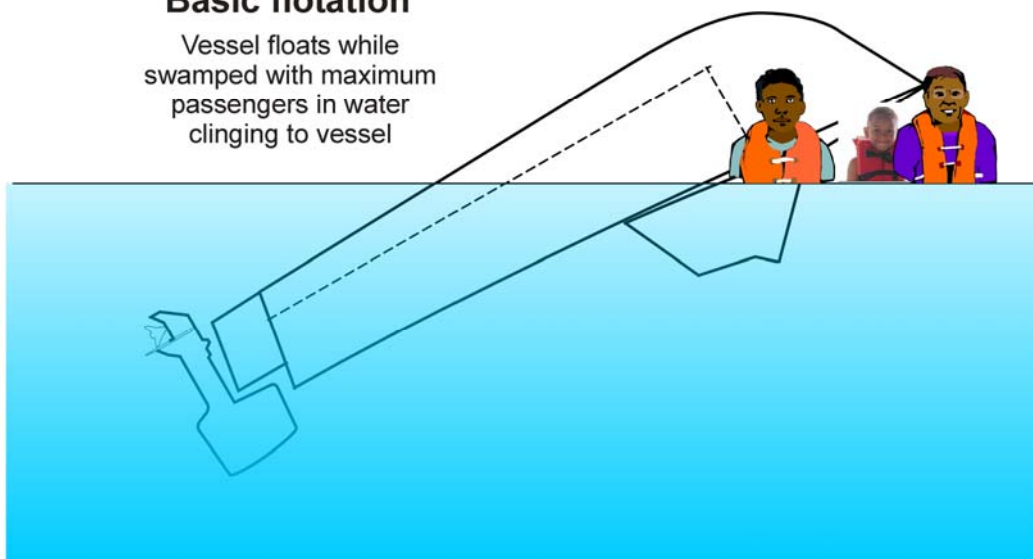
Level flotation

Vessel floats upright when swamped with maximum passengers remaining on the vessel



Basic flotation

Vessel floats while swamped with maximum passengers in water clinging to vessel



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact your local Maritime Safety Agency