



# SEACARE AUTHORITY QUARTERLY REPORT

## Report 04/2001

### Outcomes of Seacare Authority Meeting 38 of 20 November 2001

#### Seacare Authority - rehabilitation and return to work benchmarks for the shipping industry

The Authority has endorsed an initial set of rehabilitation and return to work benchmarks for the shipping industry. The aim of the benchmarks is to establish a baseline against which future performance can be monitored and measured. The benchmarks are:

- (i) **Number of claimants assessed as capable of undergoing a rehabilitation program relative to the number of eligible claimants i.e. claims involving incapacity of 28 days or more – 52%** (Source: AMICA data reported in Seacare Authority Annual Report 2000-01 - an average of performance over the previous 2 years);
- (ii) **Number of claimants commencing a rehabilitation program relative to those assessed as capable of undertaking a rehabilitation program – 60%** (Source: AMICA data reported in Seacare Authority Annual Report 2000-01 - an average of performance over the previous 2 years);
- (iii) **Return to work – 79%** (Source: Australasian Return to Work Monitor – Seacare Scheme Report Sept 2001)
- (iv) **Durable return to work (i.e. return to work continued) – 74%** (Source: Australasian Return to Work Monitor – Seacare Scheme Report Sept 2001)
- (v) **Partial (or graduated) return to work – 2%** (Source: Australasian Return to Work Monitor – Seacare Scheme Report Sept 2001)
- (vi) **Usefulness of return to work (rehabilitation) program – 47%** (Source: Australasian Return to Work Monitor – Seacare Scheme Report Sept 2001);

The Authority has agreed that performance against the benchmarks will be reported annually in future Seacare Authority Annual Reports.

#### Rehabilitation and return to work – best practice guidance package

The Authority noted the five (5) elements which comprise the rehabilitation and return to work best practice guidance package. The package will be finalised and printed by late 2001 or early 2002. The package will be officially launched at a small ceremony as part of the February 2002 meeting of the Authority in Canberra.

The 5 elements of the package are: (i) a best practice booklet; (ii) a short form ready reference version of the booklet; (iii) a key actions poster; (iv) a PowerPoint presentation; and (v) a brochure.

The PowerPoint presentation will be available to download from the Seacare Authority website at [www.seacare.gov.au](http://www.seacare.gov.au) in the next few weeks.

### **Seacare Authority website – implementation of on-line forms**

The Employee and Ship Details form and an updated Insurance Arrangements form will be available for web completion and submission from the December 2001 quarter i.e. from mid January 2002. Employers will be provided with guidelines by email on how to use the new system. The Authority agreed that the new arrangements will be mandatory and not optional – meaning the option for paper-based responses will no longer be available from January 2002.

### **Review of exemption (S20A) policy**

The Authority is currently reviewing its S20A exemption policy/guidelines used to assist the Authority in considering applications for exemption from the operation of the Seafarers Act under Section 20A. In view of recent applications for exemption, involving new situations not previously encountered, the Authority has decided that it is timely to review the existing policy. It is expected that a new policy or guidelines will be determined at the February 2002 meeting.

### **National OHS Improvement Framework**

The Authority decided to adopt the National Occupational Health and Safety Improvement Framework (the NIF) that was endorsed by the Commonwealth and all State/Territory Workplace Relations Ministers in late 1999. The Authority agreed that it would develop a Seacare Authority OHS strategy for the shipping industry following expected Ministerial endorsement of a National OHS Improvement Strategy (NIS) early in 2002.

### **Seacare Authority occupational health and safety awards and conference**

The Authority has agreed in principle to staging an annual OHS awards event, aimed at recognising strong OHS performance in the industry. The Authority agreed that the event should be conducted in conjunction with the AMSA-ASA conference, or if the scheduling of that conference is not finalised by early 2002, the Authority's awards will be run conjunction with a Seacare Authority conference, with a focus on OHS.

### **Review of Seacare scheme legislation**

All Seacare Authority key stakeholders (employer associations, employee associations, AMICA, AMSA, insurers) have been invited to comment on the need for revision of both the Seafarers and OH&S(MI) Acts, including identification of any particular aspects of the legislation which may require overhaul.

Employers and employees, ship safety committees as well as members of the legal profession, medical practitioners, rehabilitation providers and others associated with rehabilitation, compensation and OHS in the shipping industry are invited to provide their views of possible legislative change by writing to, or emailing, the Authority (address details at end of Bulletin).

### **Coverage of foreign flagged ships**

The Authority has considered legislative options to provide a choice for operators of foreign flagged ships to become covered by the Seafarers Act. One option involves an opt-in provision. The options will be considered as part of the legislative review referred to earlier in this Bulletin.

### Next Seacare Authority meeting

The next meeting of the Authority will take place in Canberra on Tuesday 19 February 2002. If you wish that a matter be placed on the agenda for discussion, please forward your item to the Seacare Authority Secretariat by e-mail at [seacare@dewrsb.gov.au](mailto:seacare@dewrsb.gov.au) or telephone on (02) 6121 7120 by 18 January 2002. Other meeting dates for 2002 are 21 May (WA), 20 August, Sydney and 19 November, Melbourne.

### Seacare Authority statistics and performance reports

In 2000 the Authority adopted a new set of standing reports for consideration at each meeting, aimed at keeping a closer watch on scheme performance, and to help identify policy directions. The following charts and tables have been reproduced from those presented to meeting 38 of 20 November 2001.

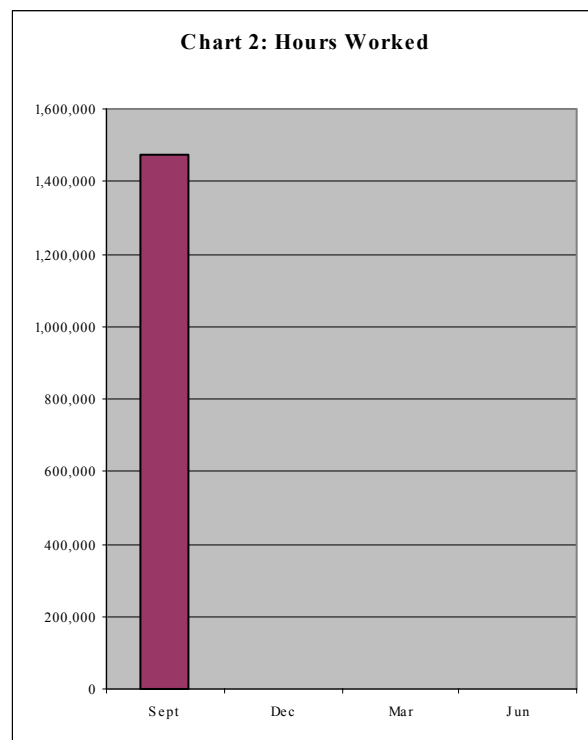
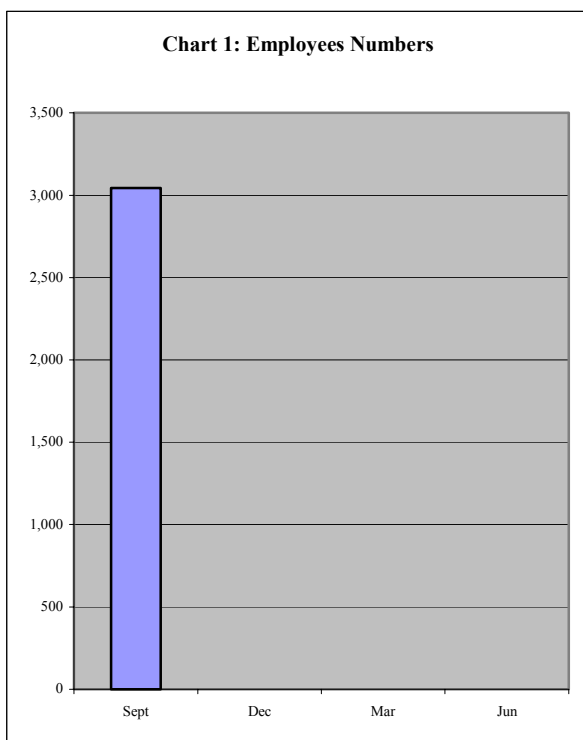


Chart 1 shows that in the first quarter, the number of seafarers covered by the Seafarers Act is 3008. If this employee number is sustained over the 4 quarters, the number of employees covered will be higher than the 2,895 reported for 2000-01, which was up on the 1999-00 figure of 2,850.

Chart 2 shows that in the first quarter, hours worked by seafarers was approximately 1,428,019 which extrapolates to approximately 5,712,076 hours worked annually, slightly down on the 2000-01 figure of 5,897,548.

**Table 1: Seafarers Act – Compensation claims data – 2001-02**

Claims data at end of each quarter	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Total	Annual	Previous
						estimate*	Year
Total claims reported to AMICA	48				48	192	203
Claims accepted	31				31	124	179
Total claims accepted less property claims	30				1	120	NA
Claims rejected	1				1	4	19
Claims pending	16				16	5	5
Claims accepted - on duty	28				28	112	166
Claims accepted - off duty	2				2	8	3
Claims accepted - other (travel, study)	1				NA	4	10
Active or continuing claims	NA				NA	62	62
Claims of 5 or more days duration						140	151

Source: AMICA, \*Seacare Authority

Table 1 indicates that, based on the first quarter figures, the annual estimate of the number of claims (192) will be down from actual claims reported in 2000-01 (203).

**Table 2: OH&S incident report 2001-02**

	Sep	Dec	Mar	Jun	Total	Annual	Previous
						estimate*	year*
Incidents reported to AMSA	17				68	69	
Dangerous occurrences notified	2				8	8	
Investigations of incidents	4				16	12	
Prohibition notices issued	0				0	0	
Improvement notices issued	3				12	0	
Prosecutions commenced	0				0	0	
Prosecutions concluded	0				0	0	

Source: AMSA, \*Seacare Authority

Table 2 indicates that AMSA has increased activity in the field with an increase in investigation activity and particularly in the number of improvement notices issued, compared to 2000-01.

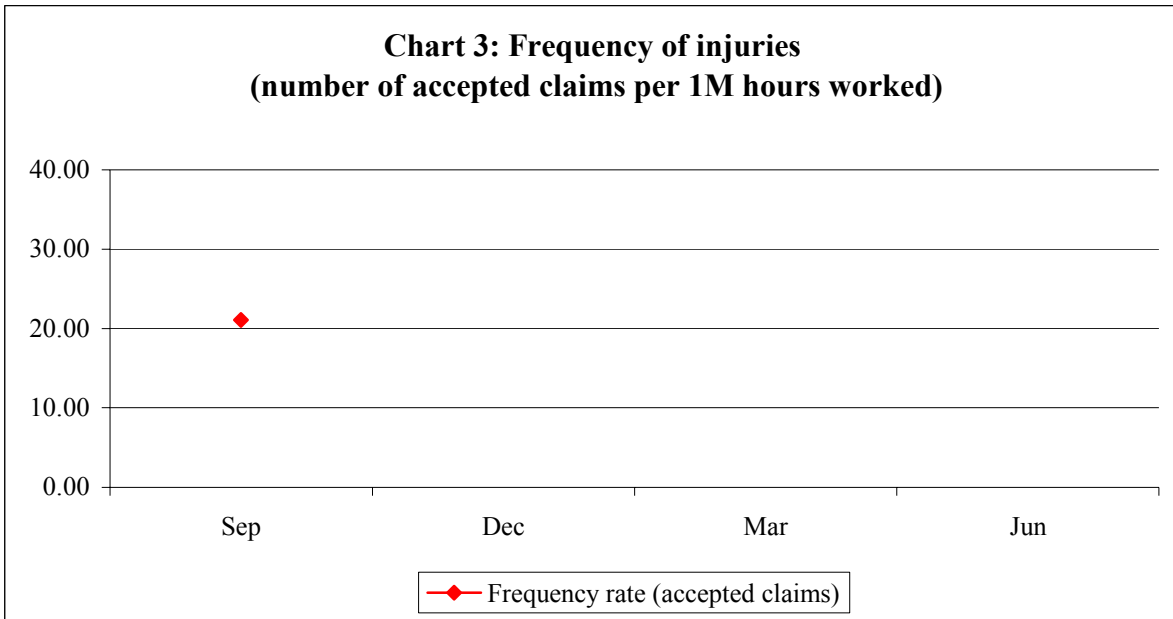


Chart 3 identifies the injury frequency rate at the end of the first quarter as 21.71. This compares favourably with the injury frequency rate of 29.90 in 2000-01. It is too early to know if the first quarter rate will be sustained over the year. Care should be taken in interpreting this chart because accepted claims at the last day of the quarter are subject to significant adjustment with the passage of time.

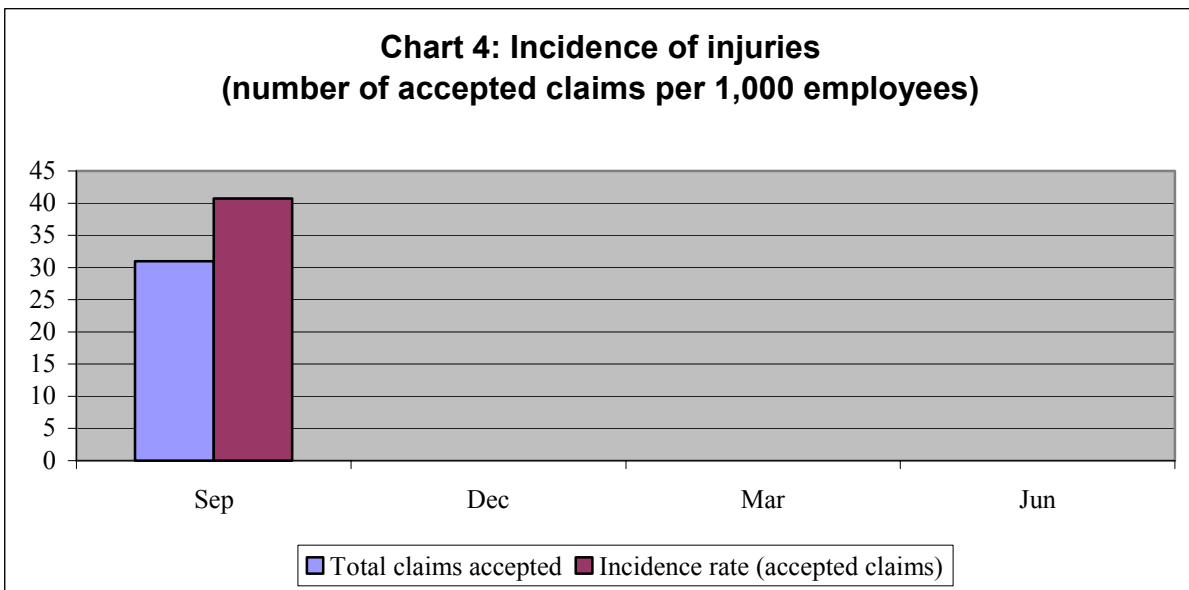


Chart 4 identifies the injury incidence rate at the end of the first quarter as 41.22. This compares favourably with the injury frequency rate of 61.80 in 2000-01. It is too early to know if the first quarter rate will be sustained over the year. Care should be taken in interpreting this chart because accepted claims at the last day of the quarter are subject to significant adjustment with the passage of time.

*We encourage you to replicate this Report in part or in full in your organisation's newsletter or journal. No permission is required to publish but it would be appropriate to acknowledge the source. Another way in which you can ensure your organisation improves communication is by creating a direct link between your website and the Authority's website. Some organisations have already done so.*

#### **HOW TO CONTACT THE SEACARE AUTHORITY**

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**Geoff Gronow**  
Chairperson

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