



اوتوريٽي ڪيٽسائن ڪسلا مٽن
ڪصيتن. دان عالم سڪيتر
Safety, Health and Environment
National Authority

WORKPLACE SAFETY AND HEALTH NOTICE (WSHN)

TOPIC WORKPLACE ACCIDENT: DROWNED AFTER MAN OVERBOARD				Reference Number 2026/WSHN/05
Approved by: Director of Compliance and Registration Division	Endorsed by: Chief Executive Officer	Issue date: 14 September 2026	Expiry date: None	Revision No: 1.0

SUMMARY OF THE INCIDENT

In July 2026, a **fatal accident** occurred during a training exercise involving a boat near a jetty. During the exercise, the boat was operating at high speed, causing one person to fall overboard. Although the individual was wearing a life jacket at the material time, he subsequently drowned, leading to a fatality.

APPLICABILITY

All employers, self-employed persons and principals at every workplace.

REQUIRED ACTIONS

Employers, self-employed persons and principals must ensure workplace hazards are identified, and sufficient controls are implemented to eliminate risks. Where elimination is not reasonably practicable, control measures and safe work procedures shall be implemented to reduce risks to **As Low as Reasonably Practicable (ALARP)**. In relation to boat-based work and training activities, all Employers, Self-Employed Persons and Principals should, where applicable, implement the following measures:

a. Conduct risk assessment prior to boat-based activities

Conduct a suitable and sufficient risk assessment before commencing any work or training activities to identify hazards, assess risks, and determine appropriate control measures. Review risk assessments whenever work activities, personnel, equipment, or environmental conditions change, or after an accident.

For boat-based activities, the assessment should consider, where relevant:

- Weather forecasts and environmental conditions;
- Sea state, tides and currents;
- Visibility suitability, stability and safe operating limits;
- Communication arrangements;
- Personnel competency, fitness, and fatigue;
- Man-overboard scenarios and rescue capability; and
- Availability and adequacy of emergency response capabilities.

Control measures to be implemented based on the hierarchy of control, with priority given for risk elimination.

b. Establish effective man-overboard prevention and monitoring arrangements

Ensure systems are in place to prevent personnel from falling overboard during boat activities and training exercises. Where personnel are exposed to a foreseeable risk of falling into water, implement appropriate control measures, including safe operating limits and speed; safe seating and positioning arrangements; effective supervision and communication; a buddy system for medium- and high-risk activities; and continuous monitoring of personnel during operations. A designated person should be assigned to account for all personnel throughout the activity and initiate immediate response in case of an emergency.

c. Develop, implement, and regularly test emergency response protocol

Develop and implement emergency response procedures appropriate to the hazards and risks present. For boat-based activities, emergency response arrangements should include, among others: man-overboard recovery procedures; rescue and retrieval arrangements; emergency communication protocols; clear escalation and reporting procedures; designated emergency response personnel; and access to rescue equipment and medical assistance. Regular drills and exercises should be conducted to verify the effectiveness of the emergency response arrangements and to identify opportunities for improvement.

d. Ensure the provision, maintenance, and suitability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Emergency Rescue Equipment

Suitable PPE and emergency rescue equipment must be provided, maintained in good condition, and readily available for use. This includes, where applicable: approved life jackets or personal flotation devices; lifebuoys and rescue lines; rescue boats; emergency communication devices; and first aid equipment. PPE issued must be appropriate for the task, properly fitted, inspected at suitable intervals, and replaced when found defective or no longer suitable for use. Emergency equipment should be stored in readily accessible locations and personnel should be trained in its proper use.

e. Ensure adequate emergency response capability

Adequate number of competent personnel should be available to respond effectively to foreseeable emergency situations. Determine the adequacy of emergency response resources through the risk assessment process, taking into account the nature of the activity, the location of the operation, environmental conditions, response and rescue time requirements, and the worst credible emergency scenario. Emergency drills should be conducted periodically to verify the adequacy of manpower, equipment and response arrangements.

f. Strengthen workforce competency, supervision and situational awareness

Personnel engaged in boat operations, supervision, maintenance, inspections, and emergency response activities receive adequate information, instruction, training and supervision. Personnel must remain competent for the tasks assigned and are physically fit to perform their duties safely.

LEGAL REMINDER

All employers, self-employed persons and principals are reminded of their duties under the **Workplace Safety and Health Act, Cap 277 (WSHA)**, and subsidiary regulations to take, so far as reasonably practicable, the measures necessary to ensure the safety and health of persons who may be affected by work activities.

This includes ensuring that workplace hazards are identified, risks are assessed, appropriate control measures are implemented, personnel are adequately trained and supervised, and effective emergency preparedness and response arrangements are established and maintained.

Failure to comply with workplace safety and health requirements may constitute an offence under the relevant legislation.

For further clarification on this matter, please submit inquiries via “General Enquiries” on the SHENA website: www.shena.gov.bn or contact the SHENA office at + **673 238 2000** during office hours.

SHENA appreciates the cooperation of all stakeholders in ensuring that Brunei Darussalam is a safe place to work and live.

END