
From: Hugo Johnston
Subject: Summary of current Licence Conditions - Yellow Water Cruise

Dear John,

Please find attached information pertaining to the potential issue of the licence required to operate our boats on Yellow Water.

Kind Regards

Hugo
Hugo Johnston
Owners Representative
Kakadu Tourism

Subject: Summary of current Licence Conditions - Yellow Water Cruise

Hi Hugo,

Please find attached a summary as requested with regards to our licence conditions to operate on Yellow Water.

**Current Licence: Marine Safety (Wildlife or Other Sightseeing)
Exemption 2013 – AMSA EX2013/13A**

This current licence with exemption made under subsection 143(1) of the National Law enables our guides to master the 6 vessels operating under Kakadu Tourism. These vessels operate within the inland waters of Yellow Water and the South Alligator River region and are up to 12m in length, have twin 40hp motors and can carry up to 63 passengers.

The current process to obtaining this permit to operate these vessels involve completing the following documents,

- Personal Particulars
- AMSA791 – Exemption 13
- AMSA542 – Eyesight test
- Payment method form *(\$125 for exemption EX2013/13A and \$70 for an examiner to attend)

All new guides are trained by our senior guides who have been working on the boats for some time. Once we are satisfied they are competent to operate the vessels we then need to have all the paper work submitted to Marine Safety, and once they process the paper work and payment are processed they will organize an assessor from Marine Safety to attend site and deliver the competency test. Sometimes this can take up to a month before they are able to come out to test due to other commitments and operators.

While this process is in place, all of our guides need to complete their 'Kakadu Knowledge' which is delivered either on site or on line through CDU. This can take 3 days on site with a final exam paper delivered before receiving this accreditation, or up to a week on line with the same final exam paper submitted. This accreditation is through CDU.

ISSUES:

We struggle to find suitable applicants for the seasonal role let alone finding someone with a Coxswains that enables them to master a vessel with passengers

There is a high cost in wages with training and then the wait for the assessor to attend

We had a guide come across from Guluyambi Cultural Cruises here in Kakadu who master similar vessels but had to go through the assessment again even though he had been there for 11 years. The current exemption is not recognized on any other waters even though the vessels and the nature of the tours are similar.

AMSA's review of the current licence and exceptions to bring this into a national scheme:

With the proposed introductions of the Coxswain 2 licencing would be detrimental to the business and would make recruiting even harder to find seasonal workers to work in this remote location. We have around 15 guides in the peak season. If we were required to put our current guides through a course is also very costly and is difficult to find a suitable course that is recognized by AMSA. CDU offer a 3 week course in Darwin but very rarely have available positions. If we were to send our current team to change their licence we would be required to pull the guides from the business and capping our boats. Darwin is up to 300 km away so would need to pay for the course, weeks wages, offsite accommodation and 3 meals a day costing Kakadu Tourism up to \$10,000 per guide not to mention lost potential earnings.

In September 2016, AMSA asked for a review with operators nationally to the proposed changes being the implementation of the Coxswain 2 licence to all operators and removing the Exception 13, which we currently operate under.

This feedback from market has initialized a total review of the possibility of the introduction to Kakadu Tourism and other operators of the Coxswain 2 licence condition. From feedback, we are expecting a decision early in 2018 with direction as to what the outcome of the review will be.

Kind Regards,
Brett Skinner