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24 November 2022

Our Ref:  
Your Ref: COR 2020 004255

**Coroner's Registrar  
Coroners Court of Victoria  
65 Kavanagh Street  
SOUTHBANK VIC 3006)**

Attention: Ms Nicole D'Rozario

Dear Ms D'Rozario

**INVESTIGATION INTO THE DEATH OF "GFE"  
FINDING WITHOUT INQUEST – SAFE TRANSPORT VICTORIA RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS  
CASE NUMBER: COR 2020 004255**

On behalf of Safe Transport Victoria (ST Vic) I write in response to the Coroner's finding without inquest dated 26 August 2022 following the investigation into the death of GFE on or about 20 March 2020, and the recommendations below.

1. I recommend that Marine Safety Victoria and the Department of Transport develop legislation mandating that solo operators in enclosed and coastal Victorian waters must wear a PFD Type 1 with an attached registered EPIRB.
2. I further recommend that Marine Safety Victoria and the Department of Transport develop legislation mandating that any recreational vessel that has an LPG system on board in an enclosed area must have an operable gas detecting system.

Response

We note that the recommendations are also addressed to the Department of Transport (DoT) who will be providing a separate response. As DoT is the agency responsible for legislative policy development, we will only be commenting on the operational matters raised in the recommendations.

**Recommendation 1**

ST Vic notes recommendation 1.

It is requirement under regulation 101 of the *Marine Safety Regulations 2012* (MSR) for solo operators to wear a lifejacket on vessels up to 12 metres in length or yachts that do not have lifelines fitted.

In addition, it is a requirement under regulation 96 of the MSR that boaters must carry a registered emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) on coastal waters when they are two or more nautical miles offshore. ST Vic's current safety messaging highly recommends that all other boaters carry an EPIRB,

personal locator beacon (PLB) or other means of raising an alarm. PLBs are particularly recommended for solo operators.

In relation to your recommendation that it be mandated that solo operators in enclosed and coastal Victorian waters attach a registered EPIRB to their lifejacket, we note that there would be practical difficulties in attaching an EPIRB to a lifejacket. EPIRBs are quite large and bulky and are designed to be carried on the boat itself.

However, PLBs are more portable, and it is possible to attach PLBs to a lifejacket, noting that these have to be located above the water (i.e. on the shoulder strap of the lifejacket) to transmit. ST Vic supports the use of PLBs and strongly recommends that solo boaters carry a PLB attached to their lifejacket at all times.

ST Vic will continue to educate solo boaters about the risks of boating alone and encourage them to carry additional means of raising the alarm, including carrying an EPIRB or PLB, particularly on solo trips.

## **Recommendation 2**

ST Vic notes recommendation 2.

We note that the responsible regulator for the installation of LPG systems on vessels is Energy Safe Victoria. However, ST Vic will provide communications about the importance of ensuring good ventilation in enclosed spaces on vessels and ongoing inspections of gas installations.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you in more detail if this would be of assistance.

If you require any further information, please contact Jane Wright, Policy Advisor, at [jane.wright@transportsafety.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.wright@transportsafety.vic.gov.au).

Yours sincerely



**LAURA MCDONOUGH**

General Counsel and Director of Legal, Governance and Policy