



Australian Naval Classification Authority

Frequently Asked Questions

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about the Australian Naval Classification Authority (ANCA), the Australian Naval Classification (ANC) Framework and how it will operate. It has been provided as general information and is intended to supplement more detailed information that is available in the [ANCA Manual \(Volume 1\)](#).

1. General Overview and ANC Framework

1.1 Why has ANCA been established?

Enhancing the capability and readiness of Australia's Defence vessels, in the evolving strategic environment, is a key Australian Government priority. With the ongoing investment in Continuous Naval Shipbuilding, ANCA will play a key role in assuring the seaworthiness of Australia's Defence vessels through the development and implementation of world-leading rules for their design and construction.

1.2 What is the ANC Framework?

The ANC Framework prescribes and issues clear rules, design standards and classification certificates for Australia's Defence vessels, including new capabilities (both bought off the shelf and those designed and built in Australia) and evolving technologies. The ANC Framework draws on best practice international naval ship rules, while enabling the inclusion of sovereign rules to comply with Australian legislation and requirements.

1.3 Where does ANCA and the ANC Framework fit within the existing Defence Seaworthiness regulatory system?

ANCA is authorised by the Defence Seaworthiness Authority (DSwA) to determine the classification basis for each Naval Vessel, through the application of relevant [ANC Rules \(Volume 2\)](#). These rules form part of the ANC Framework, which has been designed to ensure compliance with obligations under the Defence Seaworthiness Management System.

1.4 How does ANCA support the Defence Strategic Review?

The ANC Framework is a key enabler to achieve the outcomes of the Defence Strategic Review (DSR). The DSR re-confirmed the Australian Government's commitment to Continuous Naval Shipbuilding and enhancing maritime capability and readiness. The implementation of the ANC Framework, including a single set of sovereign design rules, supports the outcomes of the DSR by enabling innovation and speed to capability, a reduction in sustainment and acquisition costs, and greater cooperation across Defence, Government and commercial regulators.





1.5 Does the ANC Framework apply only to new Navy vessels?

No, the ANC Framework is applicable to all Australian Naval Vessels. This ensures that all Naval Vessels, regardless of age or design, complies with the latest safety and environmental legislative and regulatory obligations and requirements.

ANCA is currently focusing on implementing the ANC Framework on new capability. Transition of existing Naval Vessels will commence in due course, as directed by the Capability Manager.

1.6 Will the existing fleet be required to comply with the ANC Framework straight away?

Existing Naval Vessels will not need to comply immediately with the ANC Framework. Instead, they will undergo a transition program to develop an ANC Basis and achieve an ANC Certificate. Not all vessels will undergo transition, and the timeframe and priority for transition will be as directed by the Capability Manager.

It is important to note that the transition process has not yet commenced. ANCA will engage with relevant stakeholders well before any transition activity. It should also be noted that the focus for current fleet transition is not full compliance with ANC Rules, and transition will not change the current certification of the vessels. The aim of transition is to identify any gaps against applicable ANC Rules for ongoing risk management.

1.7 Does the ANC Framework supersede existing systems for naval classification and rules?

Yes, the ANC Framework, including the ANC Rules, supersedes the DEF(AUST)5000 system for naval classification and rules. DEF(AUST)5000 is no longer suitable to meet new and existing Defence Naval Vessels' evolving capability and operational needs. However, DEF(AUST)5000 will continue to be available for use by vessels that are currently certified under its standards.

2. Certification and Compliance

2.1 Does attaining an ANC Certificate demonstrate compliance with the Activity and Condition-based Compliance Obligations (ACCOs)?

An ANC Certificate can be used as evidence of compliance with the materiel aspects of Activity and Condition-based Compliance Obligations (ACCOs). However, additional evidence may be necessary to ensure full compliance with ACCO seaworthiness requirements.

2.2 Do non-compliances preclude the issuing of an ANC Certificate, and can ANCA stop a ship from sailing?

ANCA does not have authority to stop a ship from sailing. However, ANCA can suspend or withdraw an ANC Certificate, which indicates to the Naval Vessel Operator (NVO) and Capability Manager, that the vessel carries significant risk relating to personnel safety and/or the environment. These risks will need to be acknowledged by the Capability Manager, who also has a responsibility to ensure that suitable controls are in place to eliminate or minimise the risk So Far As Reasonably Practical (SFARP).

Additionally, if an NVO is faced with an urgent and compelling requirement to operate a Naval Vessel outside the approved ANC Basis, a Command Clearance may be used. A Command Clearance upholds the validity of the ANC Certificate where non-compliance cannot be managed through other non-compliance management processes.



2.3 What is the difference between naval classification and civil classification?

In accordance with the Defence regulated Seaworthiness outcome, Naval Vessels must balance military operational capability with personnel safety, and the protection of the environment SFARP. As a result, the design, construction and operation of Naval Vessels is far more complex than a civilian designed vessel, as these also must consider combat operations and extreme threat conditions. The integrated capabilities of a Naval Vessel require a high level of sophistication, integration, reliability and redundancy. Materially, this is controlled through the application of a system known as Naval Classification.

3. ANC Rules

3.1 How often will the ANC Rules be updated?

ANC Rules are periodically reviewed as part of ANCA processes. Rule changes occur for a variety of reasons including (but not limited to):

- A rule change request,
- A change to legislation or International Conventions, or
- Recommendations resulting from accidents and investigations.

3.2 When is a Naval Vessel classed as a small craft?

A Naval Vessel is classed as a small craft if it is less than 24m length overall (LoA).

3.3 Who will determine which ANC Rules are applicable for a Naval Vessel?

The applicability of ANC Rules for a specific Naval Vessel is determined by ANCA as part of the development of the ANC Basis for the vessel. The ANC Basis utilises the Naval Vessel's Operating Support Intent (OSI), in consultation with the NVO, to assess which ANC Rules are applicable.

3.4 Can you apply for a waiver against an ANC Rule requirement?

Yes. During the development of the ANC Basis, variances provide the NVO with a mechanism for seeking approval for permanent non-compliances against ANC Rules. These variances will form part of the approved ANC Basis for the vessel.

During the life of the Naval Vessel, there may also be a requirement for temporary non-compliances to the ANC basis (for example, as a result of a defect) These need to be notified to ANCA, who may require a Condition, Memorandum or Note to be added to the ANC Certificate.

3.5 If a risk is identified, who does the risk assessment?

Any risks identified, including those arising from non-compliances or the proposal of alternate solutions, must be risk assessed by the NVO.

4. Assessment and Authorisation

4.1 How does ANCA assess if a proposed solution to an ANC Rule is adequate?

If the proposed solution is an ANC Rule Part 2 solution, then it has already been assessed as 'Deemed-to-Comply' with the requirements of the Rule. However, if the proposed solution is an 'Alternative Solution' then ANCA Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel (SQEP), in consultation with Subject Matter Experts, will assess the information provided by the NVO. They will determine if the solution sufficiently meets the Part 1 Goals, Functional Objectives and Performance Requirements for the rule. ANC Rule Part 3 Guidance will also assist the NVO with understanding the requirement and intent of the rule in more detail.



4.2 What is a Competent Organisation and how is authorisation obtained?

A Competent Organisation, under the ANC Framework, is one that is recognised or authorised by ANCA. Competent Organisations play a key role within the ANC Framework in support of providing permissible evidence, and compliance findings.

The process for recognition and authorisation of a Competent Organisation is still being developed by ANCA and will be published on the ANCA website in due course. In the meantime, the provision of permissible evidence will continue to be provided by existing organisations.

4.3 Will the ANC Framework apply to foreign designed vessels?

Yes, the ANC Framework will apply to all vessels that meet the definition of a [Naval Vessel](#).

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 What is the role of the Naval Vessel Operator?

The Naval Vessel Operator (NVO) plays a crucial role in maintaining the safety and operational readiness of Naval Vessels, thereby ensuring they can perform their intended missions effectively.

The NVO's responsibilities include:

- Complying with the ANC Framework, including appointing a senior executive officer, who is accountable for ongoing compliance with the ANC Framework,
- Developing and implementing the ANC Basis in consultation with the ANCA,
- Populating and maintaining the ANC Record with permissible evidence,
- Maintaining the vessel to ensure it remains compliant with the ANC Basis,
- Managing and rectifying non-compliances, and
- Continuous improvement and compliance.

6. Integration and Interaction

6.1 How will ANCA interact with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)?

ANCA will interact with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) through collaboration and coordination on safety and regulatory standards. This involves:

- Mapping ANC Rules against relevant AMSA requirements.
- Sharing information and best practices to enhance safety and compliance.
- Coordinating on joint initiatives and projects to improve maritime safety and operational effectiveness.

These interactions ensure that Naval Vessels meet both military and civilian safety standards, and enhance overall maritime safety and effectiveness.

6.2 How will ANCA interact with Civilian Classification Societies?

ANCA will recognise civilian classification societies as Competent Organisations that can provide permissible evidence to support Naval Classification. Future interaction will include participation in Technical Advisory Working Groups (TAWGS) and Technical Boards.

Find out more

To learn more about ANCA and its Framework, please visit defence.gov.au/anca.

For official correspondence, please email ANCA.Correspondence@defence.gov.au and for all other matters, please email ANCA.Communications@defence.gov.au.