

**NATIONAL BOATING SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**November 11, 2012  
Watsonville, CA**

**Resolution Number 2012-90-02**

**MODEL YEAR DESIGNATION IN HULL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER**

**WHEREAS**, boat manufacturers have raised concerns that the U.S. Coast Guard enforcement of model year regulations impedes commerce; AND

**WHEREAS**, the current U.S. Coast Guard definition of model year defines it as the period beginning August 1 of any year and ending on July 31 of the following year. Each model year is designated by the year in which it ends; AND

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Coast Guard specified its desire to receive input from the entire boating community on the topic at a meeting with National Marine Manufacturers Association (NMMA) members, and in response NMMA and the Marine Retailers Association of the Americas (MRAA) met to discuss and prepare a recommendation on the matter; AND

**WHEREAS**, at their June 7, 2012, meeting, NMMA and MRAA were able to reach a unanimous consensus on a path forward for model year definition and enforcement, and formally transmitted this *Model Year Enforcement Solution Recommendation* to the USCG on October 15, 2012; AND

**WHEREAS**, the Coast Guard announced a request for comments on September 28, 2012, asking whether it should make a change to the existing regulatory requirement to indicate a boat's model year as part of the 12-character Hull Identification Number (HIN). See "Hull Identification Numbers for Recreational Vessels" 77 Fed. Reg. 58,575; AND

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. HIN format is in use by the states and supported by the marine industry and it has been adopted by a number of important U.S. trading partners including the European Union, Canada, and Australia and a change to the HIN format would cause disruption for U.S. companies exporting boats to these markets;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Boating Safety Advisory Council, meeting in regular session in Watsonville, California, on November 11, 2012, recommends based on information before the Council that the U. S. Coast Guard implement the NMMA / MRAA *Model Year Enforcement Solution Recommendation* in the short term as an exemption to current definition and in the longer term as an amendment to the definition of model year.

In amending the definition of model year in accordance with the NMMA/MRAA agreement, NBSAC recommends that the U.S. Coast Guard change 33 C.F.R. 181.3 to replace the definition in the following manner:

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1. For boats less than 30 feet in length –
  - a. Delete the current definition start date of August 1 and replace it with June 1.
  - b. Allow for the manufacturer to designate a “new model for mid-year introduction” that provides the manufacturer the freedom to designate model year, but it can be no earlier than January 2 of the calendar year preceding the year in which the model year ends.
2. For boats 30 feet in length or more –
  - a. Allow the manufacturer the freedom to designate model year, but it can be no earlier than January 2 of the calendar year preceding the year in which the model year ends.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the NBSAC supports the U.S. Coast Guard enforcement posture as articulated in Rear Admiral Lee’s letter to NMMA on October 17, 2012.

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James P. Muldoon, Chairman  
National Boating Safety Advisory Council