



**Australian Government**  
**Bureau of Meteorology**

## INFORMATION SHEET

### Changes to the Bureau's Marine Wind Warnings

The following provides important information about the changes to the Bureau's marine wind warnings that will come into effect on 1 November 2006.

#### **What is changing?**

The coastal wind warning service that the Bureau provides to mariners operating around Australia will be enhanced to reflect the importance that the Bureau places on informing the maritime community about potentially life threatening weather conditions at sea. From 1 November 2006 the warnings of the most severe wind conditions will explicitly refer to conditions that are of hurricane intensity, through the introduction of the new *Hurricane Force* wind warning, when average winds are predicted to be 64 knots or greater. The term *hurricane force* is the internationally accepted term for winds of this strength, based on the Beaufort wind scale which has been used internationally since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Note that this description applies as well to events that occur outside tropical areas.

#### **Why use "hurricane"?**

The Bureau has been using the term "Hurricane" in the warnings it issues for shipping on the high seas in the tropics when the most severe conditions are predicted, in accordance with international practice which is based on the Beaufort wind scale which ascribes the term "hurricane" to winds in excess of 63 knots (or more colloquially Beaufort Force 12 and above).

This change will provide information about hurricane intensity weather to all mariners operating in Australian coastal areas and adjacent ocean areas. In particular it will better emphasise the severity of predicted conditions to the many smaller boat operators who make use of the Bureau's coastal waters weather service.

#### **What about the old *Storm Warnings*?**

There will also be a change to the way the Bureau describes the next most severe wind conditions in both coastal areas and the high seas. From 1 November 2006 the *Storm Force* wind warning will replace the Bureau's Storm Warning when average wind conditions are expected in the range 48 to 63 knots, to focus attention on the expected wind strength.

#### **The benefits**

The introduction of the terminologies *Hurricane Force* and *Storm Force* into the Bureau's warnings will further emphasise the danger of being at sea when intense weather systems are predicted.

#### **Further information**

For further information visit the Bureau's marine web site at [www.bom.gov.au/marine](http://www.bom.gov.au/marine). A brochure explaining the changes in more detail can be obtained from your nearest office of the Bureau.