

Vero Marine Insurance News

Landing Craft

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With over 25,000kms of coastline, Australia has a unique maritime landscape which can present problems for the loading and unloading of goods in remote locations and where wharf or berth facilities do not exist.

The Landing Barge/Craft class of vessel can offer some operators the means to overcome loading and discharge problems.

The Landing Craft as a commercial vessel design/type has been bred from military variants to act as a flexible and efficient means of loading and discharging goods between sea and land in the absence of wharf or berth infrastructure.

A Landing Craft can be defined as – “A vessel designed to convey cargo and equipment directly to or from a beach or shore”.

Landing craft can be made up of many sizes and configurations although most vessels used in Australian waters will be characterised by:

- ▼ Flat bottom and strengthened barge hull with raised accommodation and bridge

structure aft (at rear)
– to allow ease of beaching

- ▼ Bow (front) loading ramp
– to assist load and unload directly to or from the shore
- ▼ Operations limited to coastal and semi protected waters
– due to the restricted sea going parameters of the design.

Modern versions of the Landing Craft can have broad trade application with large or small payload capacity and various cargo configurations catered for.

Many locations and enterprises can benefit from the versatility of landing craft including:

- ▼ remote coastal or island communities
- ▼ resort islands
- ▼ mining, construction and resources sites where wharf infrastructure has not been developed

Landing Craft present as a relatively unique exposure for hull insurance purposes. Apart from the usual risks associated with coastal trading vessels, additional risk factors will often include:

- ▼ trade into remote locations can expose the vessel to unknown navigation hazards and possible damage whilst beaching. In addition, salvage and repair services may not be readily available

- ▼ regular voluntary beaching activity can cause weakness or a build-up of damage to the hull structure even though the vessel is specifically designed for this activity
- ▼ the open deck and loading ramp characteristics which add so much to the versatility of the design may also contribute to operational limitations where rough weather or heavy seas might be encountered

The voluntary beaching aspect of the risk will need focus by the broker and insurer to ensure that the policy notes this activity.

Due to the increased likelihood of hull and ramp damage during voluntary beaching, a higher deductible can often apply during this activity. In addition, insurers will pay more particular attention to the operational experience and record of the insured with this class of vessel and bring heightened focus to the skill and seamanship of master and crew.

How do I find out more?

Contact the Vero Marine Team or your Vero Business Development Manager.