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### **VESPER MARINE - NEW ZEALAND HI-TECH INNOVATION WINNER**

Vesper Marine, the maker of the *AISWatchMate*<sup>®</sup>, a unique collision warning alarm for marine traffic, has been named winner of the Enatel Innovative Hardware Product Award at this year's 15th annual New Zealand Hi-Tech Awards ceremony held at the Christchurch Convention Centre Friday 1 May.

Vesper Marine's founders and off-shore sailors Jeff Robbins and Deirdre Schleigh know first hand the importance of safety while on the water, whether off-shore, along the coast or around the harbour.

"Safety is too important to be complicated and buried deep in the menus of today's complex marine electronics", says Robbins. The *AISWatchMate* provides any mariner, whether on a yacht, launch or small commercial vessel, with a simple easy-to-interpret tool to help avoid collisions at sea. When operating in stressful or crowded circumstances, potentially fatigued crew are faced with critical decision making and need concise, pertinent information relating to the situation at hand.

Incorporating the Automatic Identification System (AIS) the *AISWatchMate* is made especially effective by compulsory regulations requiring all international vessels over 300 tonnes and all domestic vessels over 500 tonnes to have AIS transponders installed. In addition, more and more vessels are voluntarily opting to use the safety benefits of AIS.

Using AIS is a highly effective means to track vessel movements. The *AISWatchMate* offers unique interpretation of the data providing prioritised information and advanced warning to the watch captain. Course changes can be made well in advance to avoid danger.

This dedicated safety instrument has also won the Freeman K. Pittman Innovation Award earlier this year and has attracted commercial partners and customers from all corners of the globe.

Robbins added "We are very honoured to be chosen again as one of the most innovative companies and thank the respected national and international panel of judges for their recognition of our work."

The PricewaterhouseCoopers Hi-Tech Awards are presented annually to celebrate New Zealand's high tech companies and their achievements. These premier technology awards recognise excellence across New Zealand's software, electronics, biotechnology, telecommunications and creative technology industries.

For more details, please visit [www.vespermarine.com](http://www.vespermarine.com)

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