Vesper Marine Introduces World’s First Touch-Screen Dedicated AIS Display

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Auckland, New Zealand – Vesper Marine, a leading manufacturer of innovative marine safety products, announced today the newest addition to its award-winning AIS collision avoidance systems family, the world’s first dedicated Class B AIS transponder with touch-screen control, WatchMate Vision™. Designed to overcome the challenges of operating electronics at sea and equip boaters with an unparalleled collision avoidance system, the innovative WatchMate Vision is also the first dedicated display-based AIS transponder to integrate WiFi functionality. WatchMate Vision can be accessed and controlled remotely anywhere on a boat via a variety of WiFi 802.11 g/b enabled devices including smartphones, tablets or laptops, or through integration with other marine electronics. Offering the same filtering and functionality of the proven Vesper Marine WatchMate family, the highly sophisticated, easy-to-use Vision enhances the speed, flexibility, interactivity and convenience of accessing relevant, critical AIS safety information on the water.

The WatchMate Vision has a full color, sunlight viewable, touch-screen display with adjustable backlighting and an intuitive interface based around the device’s new WatchMate Wheel™. Ensuring mariners have access to the most appropriate information quickly and easily, the adaptive wheel system recognizes the specific menu required for a given crossing situation and boating environment. Offering full control of the WatchMate Wheel from outside the visible screen area, important information is not hidden by the user’s finger. The user-friendly wheel and touch-screen display can be accurately controlled with ease, even when hands are wet or while wearing gloves.

The WatchMate Vision can operate as a WiFi access point to send data to
wireless devices or as a wireless client for integration into an existing network with other marine electronic systems. Providing seamless functionality with smart devices, WatchMate Vision is compatible with applications such as iNavX™ marine navigation allowing users to remotely access AIS information on other devices including iPad’s and laptops. The system also interacts with alarms and silent mode features remotely on an iPhone or iPad for seamless remote control operation. In addition, the device offers the first WatchMate NMEA 2000® support to integrate AIS data to other NMEA 2000®-compatible equipment. The system is also NMEA 0183 compatible and offers waterproof USB connectivity.

“The WatchMate Vision is simply the most revolutionary and feature-packed dedicated collision avoidance system on the market,” said Jeff Robbins, co-founder, Vesper Marine. “Boaters can enjoy their time on the water with the confidence that their vessel is visible to others and that their WatchMate Vision is watching for potential danger at all times. Its added innovative features allow for quick and convenient control and ease in operating the system directly or remotely for the ultimate safety, peace of mind and enjoyment on the water.”

The most intuitive and effective collision avoidance device ever built, the WatchMate Vision features a built-in GPS antenna, best-in-class 50-channel AIS receiver and powerful Class B AIS transponder. Incorporating new multi-processor architecture for fast performance including dedicated AIS and display processors that ensure reliable data acquisition, the system has a savvy user interface with fast coastal outline redraws. Vision transmits a boat’s name, size, position, speed and course over AIS channels while simultaneously displaying the timely and easy-to-process information boaters need to interpret potential hazards and react accordingly. All WatchMate devices employ a unique filtering algorithm that eliminates screen clutter and false alarms. To provide boaters with a clear picture of potential hazards, the system has a powerful proprietary target prioritization process that plots crossing situations and clearly illustrates target vessels that pose the greatest collision risk. The WatchMate also automatically displays crucial target information for dangerous vessels, including name and call sign, to aid in rapid inter-
vessel communication. Selectable boating profiles such as harbor, anchor, coastal and offshore allow users to easily switch between pre-defined filter and alarm settings. For additional situational and position awareness, the new Vision model displays of all coastlines worldwide. Users can track a group of vessels or friends and access ‘silent mode’ to suspend transmission of current position when looking for privacy or protecting fishing hotspots. All WatchMate devices display AIS Class A and Class B vessel position; voyage data; navigation aids; AIS safety messages; and meteorological and hydrographical information (where available) including real-time wind, current and tidal data.

The compact and self-contained WatchMate Vision measures 6.85-inches wide by 5.12-inches high and 2.44-inches deep. Equipped with a 5.7-inch VGA color TFT, resistive touch screen, the device is simple to install by bracket or flush mount and requires only power and connection to a VHF antenna. The low-power system uses less than 3-watts of power and features a 12–24 VDC power supply. The WatchMate Vision has an operating temperature range of –13 to 131 degrees Fahrenheit, is waterproof to the IPx7 standard and protected by a one-year limited warranty.

Availability: The WatchMate Vision is currently pending FCC approval, pricing and availability to follow. For more information on the WatchMate Vision, the award-winning WatchMate line of AIS displays.