

12. Emergency, pollution, marine incidents

The aim of this section is to provide guidance to the port community for initial response procedures in the event of dangerous incidents, emergencies, terrorist acts and disasters.

12.1 Emergency contact numbers

Thursday Island Police

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 40691520

After hours or emergency: 000

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 40691275

After hours or emergency: 000

Queensland Ambulance Service and Hospital

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 4069 1109

After hours or emergency: 000

Maritime Safety Queensland

Location: Cairns (RHM)

Phone: +61 7 4052 7400

Fax: +61 7 4069 1351

After hours or emergency: 1300 551 899

Ports North (port authority)

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 4052 7400

After hours or emergency: +61 7 4051 2558

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)

Location: Cairns

Phone: +61 7 4051 7132

Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol (QBFP)

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 74069 1772

Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing

Location: Cairns

Phone: 1300 130 372

After hours or emergency: 1300 130 372

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 4083 1800

After hours or emergency: 1800 061 800

Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (Biosecurity)

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 4212 0185

After hours or emergency: 1800 020 504

Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)

Location: Canberra

Phone: 1800 641 792

Torres Shire Council

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 7 4069 1336

After hours or emergency: +61 4 2969 1330

Volunteer Marine Rescue

Location: Thursday Island

Phone: +61 40775 1532

After hours or emergency: 000

12.2 Authorities

MSQ's emergency procedures are prepared under the provisions of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) and the [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#). The port authority has published an emergency response plan for the port which details the required response to an emergency. All emergencies should be reported to Thursday Island port control on VHF channel 12, who will activate the emergency response plan and by calling the appropriate emergency response service either:

Fire/Police/Ambulance: 000.

12.3 Fire

Call the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES, phone 000) and notify Cairns VTS on VHF channel 12. QFRS is the lead agency when the ship is at the berth and Maritime Safety Queensland when the ship is off the berth. The Regional Harbour Master (Cairns), in consultation with the facility operator and the port authority, will make the decision if the vessel is to be removed from the berth for the safety of the port.

12.3.1 Emergency plans

It is the responsibility of port users/customers and organisations carrying out an operation or activity within the port to develop and manage their own emergency plan and procedure in accordance with relevant legislation, standards and codes. Depending on the nature and size of the operation or activity the authority may

request that a copy of this plan/procedure be provided for the authority's perusal. There may also be a requirement to link this plan/procedure with those used by the authority. It is an offence to fail or to refuse to supply a copy of the emergency plan/procedure to the authority upon request.

12.4 Marine pollution

The [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#) is designed to protect Queensland's marine and coastal environment by minimising deliberate and negligent discharges of ship-sourced pollution. Discharges of oil, noxious liquid substances, packaged harmful substances, sewage and garbage (MARPOL annexes I, II, III, IV and V) from ships are prohibited in Queensland coastal waters and pilotage areas.

Maritime Safety Queensland has the authority to detain any vessel suspected of causing marine pollution and to intervene where there is imminent danger to the coastline.

Ships should dispose of all waste ashore using the waste reception facilities available (see section 15 Port services)

12.4.1 Ship sourced sewage

Under the provisions of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#) it is an offence to discharge untreated or treated sewage in certain areas throughout the Thursday Island pilotage area. Contact the office of Maritime Safety Queensland, Cairns or visit the [Maritime Safety Queensland website](#) for more information.

12.4.2 Reporting

Section 67 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#) requires the master of a ship to report a discharge or probable discharge without delay to the Regional Harbour Master. The report should be made via Thursday Island port control (24 hours)

The following details should be provided in a report of marine pollution:

- date/time of incident;
- location (latitude, longitude and physical site);
- report source and contact number;
- nature, extent and estimated quantity of spill;
- type of oil or description;
- spill source and point of discharge from source;
- identity and position of nearby ships or name of alleged polluter;
- nature and extent of spill and movement and speed of spill;
- local weather/tide/sea conditions;

- whether a sample of the substance spilled has been collected; and
- and any additional information that relates to the spill.

The Maritime Safety Queensland regional office will complete [Marine Pollution Report \(F3968\)](#) based on the above information and fax to the relevant authorities.

Port authority duty officer (24 hours): +61 7 4051 2558

12.5 Marine incidents

Under the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#)., a marine incident is classified as an event causing or involving:

- the loss of a person from a ship;
- the death of, or grievous bodily harm to, a person caused by a ship's operations;
- the loss or presumed loss or abandonment of a ship;
- a collision with a ship;
- the stranding of a ship;
- material damage to a ship;
- material damage caused by a ship's operations;
- danger to a person caused by a ship's operations;
- danger of serious damage to a ship; and
- danger of serious damage to a structure caused by a ship's operations.

12.5.1 Procedures subsequent to serious marine incidents

In the case of a serious marine incident as defined in section 12.5 including a vessel grounding or if structural damage has occurred, the vessel is to be removed to a position of safety. The Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) through Thursday Island port control is to be immediately advised and advice sought.

The vessel will be surveyed by the appropriate authority (AMSA or classification society) to ensure seaworthiness before it leaves port limits.

12.5.2 Marine Incident Reporting – MSQ

A marine incident must be reported to a shipping inspector within 48 hours of the incident unless there is a reasonable excuse. Shipping inspectors are marine safety officers (located at Maritime Safety Queensland marine operations bases), and officers of Queensland Water Police and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol. If you are unable to access one of these offices, contact a shipping inspector by phone. They will advise you what to do next.

The reporting form used for recreational vessels is:

- Maritime Safety Queensland - [Marine Incident Report \(F3071\)](#) Recreational Vessels

The form is available online from Maritime Safety Queensland or from Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centres, Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol and Water Police offices. This form is used to report all incidents, no matter the type of ship involved. The form may be completed with the assistance of a shipping inspector to ensure the information is accurate, unbiased and as reliable as possible. It is important that the form is filled in completely, with the incident described in as much detail as possible. The shipping inspector who receives the form will check to ensure it has been correctly completed.

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If the initial report is not made in the approved form, the owner or master must make a further report to a shipping inspector in the approved form as soon as possible. The master would normally report a marine incident, but the owner would report if the master, for some justifiable reason, was not able to make the report. Each marine incident reported will be investigated by a shipping inspector and the results of the investigation reported in the approved form.

Section 124 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) requires ships masters to assist if a marine incident involves two or more ships. The master of each ship involved in the marine incident must, to the extent that he can do so without danger to his ship or persons on board his ship:

- Give the other ship involved in the incident, its master and persons onboard the ship the help necessary to save them from danger caused by the marine incident;
- Stay by the other ship until no further assistance is required; and
- Give the master of the other ship reasonable particulars adequate to identify the ship and its owner.

Section 129 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) requires the master of a ship to promptly report dangers to navigation including an abandoned ship, a damaged aid to navigation, severe weather conditions and so on.

12.5.3 Marine Incident Reporting – Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Under section 19 of the [Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003](#) any incident involving a ship in Australian waters including:

- breakage of gear or injury to any person during cargo work;
- damage or defect to ship, machinery or equipment;
- peril or a close quarters situation;

- stranding or disappearance;
- death, serious injury or a dangerous occurrence;
- a birth;

Must be reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)

- AMSA Incident form Domestic Commercial Vessels (DCV);
- AMSA form 18 (incident alert within 4 hours of the incident occurring);
- AMSA form 19 (detailed incident report must be submitted within 72 hours of the incident occurring).

Reports are to be submitted by:

Fax: +61 2 6230 6868 or 1800 622 153

Or

Email: Reports@amsa.gov.au.

Complete details of these requirements are available on the AMSA web site.

12.5.4 Marine Incident reporting - Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

To report an incident where a breach of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority regulations is observed witnesses are asked to complete the [incident report form – GBRMPA](#). Urgent matters should be reported by phone to the appropriate number listed on the form.

12.5.5 Environmental Incident Reporting

Incidents with potential to cause or which have caused ‘environmental harm’ as defined in the Environmental Protection Act 1994 within the port including land and facilities under the control of the Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited must be reported to the authority as soon as reasonably practicable. Failure to report an incident that impacts adversely on the environment is an offence.

Port users, owners, masters and organisations are reminded it is their responsibility to notify the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency and/or Cassowary Coast Council where the incident is of the nature that requires notification under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and environmental protection policies.

12.6 Port community responsibilities

As a responsible member of the maritime community, any person witnessing an incident which was/or is capable of becoming an emergency is obliged to report the matter to the Maritime Safety Queensland regional office (VTS) and/or the emergency response agencies of Police, Fire or ambulance.

AMSA requests pilots, stevedores, port authority officers and others to notify them of suspected deficiencies on ships.