

8 Emergency pollution marine incidents

8.1 General

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

8.2 Emergency contact numbers

Organisation	Telephone
Police/Fire/Ambulance	000
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority	+61 7 4750 0700 (Office hours) +61 7 3830 4919 (After hours)
Environmental Protection Agency (Qld Parks & Wildlife Service)	+61 7 4967 7355
Hay Point VTS	1300 645 022 (VHF 16)
Whitsunday Regional Council	+61 7 4761 3600
Hospital (Bowen)	+61 7 4786 8222
Regional Harbour Master (Mackay)	+61 7 4944 3700
Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (Canberra)	1800 020 504
Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (Mackay)	+61 7 4955 9600
Australian Customs Watch (24 hours)	1800 061 800
Maritime Safety Queensland (Mackay)	+61 7 4944 3700
Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR)	+61 7 4946 7207

Table 21 – Emergency contact numbers

8.3 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 (MSQ) is responsible for oil spill pollution response in Queensland coastal waters. 'First Strike Oil Spill Response Plan' has been prepared by Maritime Safety Queensland as a supplement to the 'Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan' and 'REEFPLAN' and describes the various roles, actions and responsibilities to be followed in the event of a spill.

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.

8.3.1 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 harbour master.

The Regional Harbour Master (Mackay) can be contacted on:

Phone: +61 7 4944 3700 or via Hay Point VTS 1300 645 022.

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 any additional information that relates to the spill.

Pollution is an offence — whether your boat is large or small, it is an offence to deliberately discharge oil or chemicals into Queensland's coastal waters under the [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#); severe penalties apply.

Everyone can help protect the marine environment by reporting pollution incidents to their local Regional Harbour Master's office or Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Reports can also be made to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority oil spill response number:

Phone: 3830 4919 (24/7) or 4750 0700 during office hours.

8.3.2 Waste disposal

Pollution is an offence — whether your boat is large or small, it is an offence to deliberately discharge garbage into Queensland's coastal waters under the [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#); severe penalties apply.

8.3.3 Sewage

Restrictions apply to the [discharge of sewage](#) within the Whitsunday region.

All vessels are defined as either one of the following two categories:

Declared ship — a declared ship is a class 1 commercially-registered passenger-carrying vessel fitted with a toilet. In recognition of their potentially greater sewage-generating capacity, declared ships must adhere to more stringent sewage discharge requirements. These include:

- the ship must be fitted with a sewage holding device

- the ship must carry a sewage disposal record book
- the ship must have a shipboard sewage management plan
- if the ship is fitted with a treatment system, records must be kept for all assessment and maintenance of the treatment system.

Other ship (non-declared ship) — other ships or non-declared ships include all recreational vessels and all class 2 and class 3 commercial vessels

VESSEL SOURCED SEWAGE - WHITSUNDAY PASSAGE AREA

	1st January 2004	1st July 2004	1st January 2010
All vessels with a fixed toilet	The sewage must pass through a macerator before being discharged into a waterway. Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.	The sewage must pass through a macerator before being discharged into a waterway. Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.	The sewage must pass through a macerator before being discharged into a waterway. Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.
Untreated sewage	Smooth Waters (Includes rivers, creeks and designated smooth waters) * Nil Discharge Open Waters * Nil discharge within 1 nautical mile (1852 metres) of aquaculture fisheries resources * 16 or more persons - nil discharge within 1 nautical mile of a reef, the low water mark of an island and the mainland. Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.	Smooth Waters (Includes rivers, creeks and designated smooth waters) * Nil Discharge Open Waters * Nil discharge within 1 nautical mile (1852 metres) of aquaculture fisheries resources * 16 or more persons - nil discharge within 1 nautical mile of a reef, the low water mark of an island and the mainland. Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.	Smooth Waters (Includes rivers, creeks and designated smooth waters) * Nil Discharge Open Waters * Nil discharge within 1 nautical mile (1852 metres) of aquaculture fisheries resources * 7 to 15 persons - nil discharge within 1 nautical mile of a reef, the low water mark of an island and the mainland. * 16 or more persons - nil discharge in open waters Prohibited Discharge Waters * Nil Discharge in waters that are - a boat harbour - a canal - a marina a marine national park 'B' zone, a preservation zone or a scientific research zone under the Marine Parks (Townsville/Whitsunday) Zoning Plan 1987 Declared Ships (Class 1 Commercial vessels) must have a sewage holding device.
Treated Sewage	Smooth & Open Waters Treated sewage can be discharged subject to the following restrictions: * Grade C Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 1/2 nautical mile (926 metres) of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade B Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 700 metres of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade A Treated Sewage - No restrictions other than Prohibited Discharge Waters Declared Ships are required to have on board a shipboard sewage management plan with particulars described at section 38G of the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Amendment Regulation 2003 and to keep sewage disposal records when discharged to a sewage disposal facility.	Smooth & Open Waters Treated sewage can be discharged subject to the following restrictions: * Grade C Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 1/2 nautical mile (926 metres) of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade B Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 700 metres of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade A Treated Sewage - No restrictions other than Prohibited Discharge Waters Declared Ships are required to have on board a shipboard sewage management plan with particulars described at section 38G of the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Amendment Regulation 2003 and to keep sewage disposal records when discharged to a sewage disposal facility.	Smooth & Open Waters Treated sewage can be discharged subject to the following restrictions: * Grade C Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 1/2 nautical mile (926 metres) of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade B Treated Sewage - Nil discharge within 700 metres of - a person in the water - aquaculture resources - a reef * Grade A Treated Sewage - No restrictions other than Prohibited Discharge Waters Declared Ships are required to have on board a shipboard sewage management plan with particulars described at section 38G of the Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Amendment Regulation 2003 and to keep sewage disposal records when discharged to a sewage disposal facility.
On Board Documents	All declared vessels with a treatment system are required to have on board system documentation and manuals for operating and maintaining the system	All declared vessels with a treatment system are required to have on board system documentation and manuals for operating and maintaining the system	All declared vessels with a treatment system are required to have on board system documentation and manuals for operating and maintaining the system

8.4 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
- danger of serious damage to a structure caused by a ship's operations.

8.4.1 Marine incident reporting

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 report must be made on the approved [Marine Incident Report Form 3071](#). These forms are also available 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.

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

- 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.

8.4.2 Marine incident reporting — AMSA

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; and
- a birth.

must be reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) using [AMSA Form 18 - Incident Alert](#) within four hours of the incident occurring. A detailed incident report must be submitted to AMSA Canberra on [AMSA Form 19 - Incident Report](#) within 72 hours of the incident occurring.

Reports are to be submitted by fax: +61 2 6230 6868 or 1800 622 153 or reports@amsa.gov.au.

Complete details of these requirements are available on the Australian Maritime Safety Authority website.

8.5 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority incident report form

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](#)

Urgent matters should be reported by phone to the appropriate number listed on the form.