7. Port Navigation and Movement Restrictions

7.1 Speed

The *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016* sections 81, 83 and 84 and 85 apply and refer to ships not being operated at a speed of more than six knots when within 30 metres of any wharf, boat ramp or pontoon, a vessel at anchor or moored or made fast to a jetty.

7.2 Trim Requirements

The safe handling of ships within the region requires certain conditions of trim. Ships should be ballasted or loaded in order to have an even keel or trimmed by the stern with the forward draft not less than 2% of the LOA and the propeller fully submerged. Vessels trimmed by the head or listing may be subject to restrictions and the Regional Harbour Master is to be informed when bookings are made. Ships not meeting trim requirements may experience considerable delays until the problem is rectified.

Masters should pay special attention to their loading/ballasting plans to ensure that their ships are suitably trimmed and able to put to sea at short notice, especially during the cyclone season – November to April.

7.3 Draft Restrictions

Crossing Urangan Fairway bar requires a minimum under keel clearance of 10% of a vessel's draft or 0.7 metres whichever is the greater. Under keel clearance can be calculated as channel depth + tide height (predicted) - ship draft and must be ≥0.7m.

Weather, tidal conditions or special circumstances may require a departure from these guidelines, details of which will be provided by Gladstone VTS where required.

7.4 Transit from Fairway to Anchorage

Due to the transient nature of natural waterways, crossing the bar at Urangan to enter the Great Sandy Strait should not be taken lightly. Careful consideration should be given to weather, wind and tidal information prior to committing to entry. It is for this reason that MSQ requires utilising the services of a Competent Person to provide Navigation Advice and local knowledge. Once inside the bar, navigation through deep water to the anchorage area at Kingfisher Bay is approximately 19nm. Ships must exercise caution in this region due to large numbers of recreational vessels and small commercial vessels that frequent the Strait.

7.5 Advisory Note - Interaction with Marine Mammals

The presence of whales or marine mammals indicates that our ports are seen as environmentally attractive places.

The safety of life and the security of the environment from ship based incidents is paramount.

All vessel masters are required to fully comply with relevant marine mammal legislation, such as the provisions of the *Nature Conservation (Animals) Regulation 2020 Chapter 6 Part 1* which prescribes minimum approach distances and maximum speeds within proximity to whales as illustrated in the diagram below.
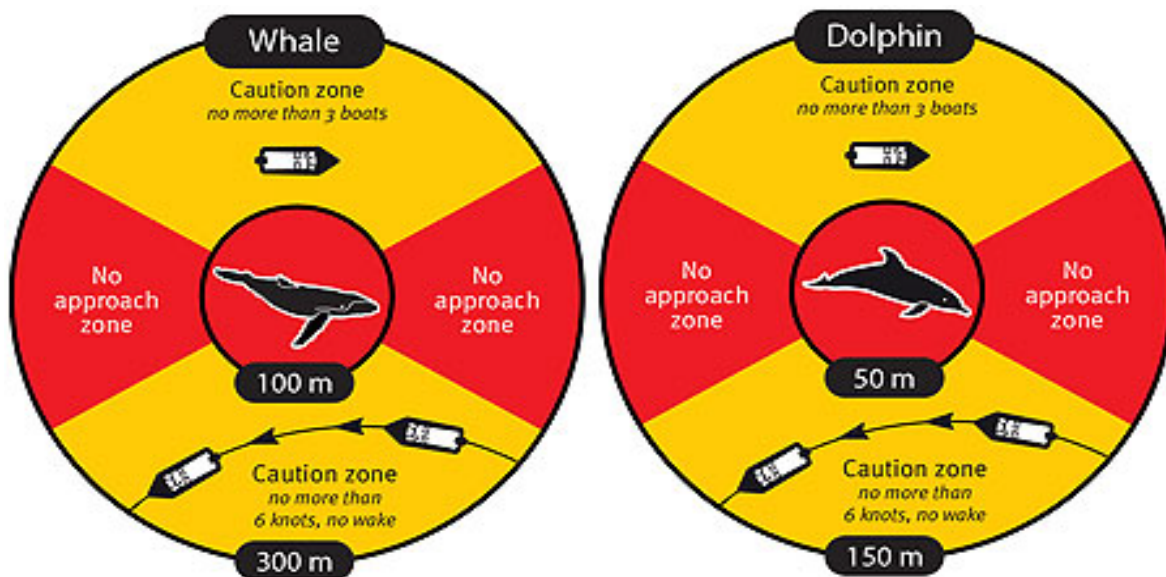

Figure 1 – Mammal protection areas

When whales or marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of port areas and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, then every possible endeavour will be undertaken to manage shipping movements around the marine mammals to keep them safe, provided the safety of life, the ship and other environmental protection objectives are not threatened. Such action may include not commencing transits until the mammals are deemed clear.

In situations where a vessel is underway and restricted in its ability to manoeuvre or constrained to a channel and marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of the transit and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, the master must take all reasonable action necessary to keep them safe, without endangering the vessel, crew and the environment. Such action may include the reduction of speed to the minimum safe speed to safely navigate the channels.

Masters are required to report collisions with marine mammals to VTS and Department of Environment and Science **1300 130 372**

Marine wildlife strandings | Environment, land and water | Queensland Government
References:

Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 part 5A, Sections 338A to 338L.

North East shipping Management Plan- Sections 5.5, 5.6 and 9.5