

Appendix 17 – Port Alma

Extreme Weather Event Contingency Plan 2024 - 2025

Department of Transport and Main Roads — Maritime Safety Queensland, September 2024

Document history

Date	Version	Comments
September 2023	1	Original
November 2023	1.1	Minor amendment to update VTS contact details.
September 2024	2	Reviewed for currency. Marine rescue unit contacts and dates updated.

Port Alma

This port-specific plan must be read in conjunction with the full Extreme Weather Event Contingency Plan document, available on the MSQ webpage <https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/Safety/Preparing-for-severe-weather/Extreme-weather-contingency-plans> .

Extreme Weather Event

The hazards covered under this plan are CYCLONE, FLOOD and STORM. One or more hazards may occur simultaneously.

Yellow – Advice

Destructive Winds, Swell, Rain or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 24-48 Hours- Prepare To Remove/Secure Your Vessel

- This may include Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) forecasting a cyclone or a significant rain event across the catchment of the Fitzroy River.
- Master/Owner review safety plan and prepare vessel for the particular event e.g. Cyclone, flood.
- Gladstone VTS will broadcast advice, warnings, information and directions on VHF 13 and 16 as appropriate. VMR/Coast guards may also broadcast warnings.
- Vessels are to maintain a continuous listening watch on VHF Channel 13 for updates.
- Vessels are to comply with routine vessel traffic management procedures unless otherwise authorised by the Regional Harbour Master.

Additional requirements for large Commercial Vessels:

- All marine services are to be made available at short notice.
- Vessels at anchor must ballast down with engines on standby and be ready to proceed to sea at short notice.
- Vessels alongside may continue to load at the discretion of the Regional Harbour Master but must be ready in all aspects to depart at short notice.
- Vessels are not permitted to enter the pilotage area without the approval of the Regional Harbour Master – approval will only be given if fully satisfied that the ship can safely load and depart before cyclonic conditions affect the pilotage area.

Additional requirements for small Commercial and Recreational Vessels:

- Vessels owners on moorings should be aware of apparatus integrity.
- Mooring lines are to be doubled with secondary lines to alternative cleats.
- Check boat cleats for integrity, ensure lines are made fast to substantial boat parts, for example mast steps, winches and so on, bearing in mind cleats are known to have been torn out of decks.
- Have sufficient line to secure your vessel and position spare fenders and lines.
- Do not use chain to secure the vessel.

- Ensure ropes and other synthetic fibres are in good order and are capable of withstanding high loads, lines to be adjustable from on-board.
- Remove all sails, furling sails, awnings and any items of high windage and stow securely.
- Dinghies/tenders to be securely lashed inverted on deck to prevent filling with water – do not contemplate towing dinghies/tenders.
- Ensure that all scuppers and freeing ports are clear and will remain clear.
- Confirm that all bilge pumps are operational.
- Secure all hatches.
- Reduce wind loading to a minimum and stow all loose gear below.
- Shore power and water leads are to be disconnected.
- Vessels are allowed to bear against the fingers/pontoons.
- Store your vessel with fresh water, food, fuel and charged batteries since it may be the only comfortable accommodation available to you once the extreme weather event has passed.
- Keep storm anchors and spare warps ready at hand but well secured to prevent them creating a potential hazard such as fouling propellers in the event you must move the vessel.
- Monitor the weather forecasts.
- Make sure you comply with all directions issued by the Regional Harbour Master or his/her delegates.
- Listen to and monitor radio broadcasts/ other media outlets and Local Council websites for updates on conditions and advice warnings.

Orange – Watch and Act

Destructive Winds, Swell, Rain or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 12-24 Hours- Remove Your Vessel To Safe Location

Gladstone Region will issue Orange Watch and Act alert when an extreme weather event warning will be issued by BoM for an extreme weather event or developing event is likely to affect the area within 24 hours. This may include:

- Cyclone imminent for region within 24 hours.
- Fitzroy River levels increasing.

This phase is critical for masters and owners to complete all preparations in an orderly manner prior to the event occurring.

The following additional procedures are to be followed Orange Watch and Act alert is enacted:

- Smaller commercial vessels will go to storm moorings in accordance with local plans and should notify the VTS of their location when secure;
- The pilotage areas will be closed and a broadcast made on VHF Channel 13 and 16, as appropriate;
- At this time liaison with MSQ staff, DDMG, Police or Emergency Services will issue advice on the course of action to be taken in the local area;

- All marina-based vessels should by now be securely moored with additional lines and all other boats should be prepared to relocate; and
- Listen to radio broadcasts, monitor the Council websites and check weather forecasts to evaluate weather conditions and determine evacuation plans on the advice given.

Additional requirements for large Commercial Vessels:

- All large commercial vessels, whether underway, alongside or at anchor, will likely be directed to proceed to sea (this is to take effect if BoM has predicted a cyclone track suggesting landfall between St Lawrence and Sandy Cape or a track parallel and close to the coast);
- All marine services are to be mobilised to assist clearing the pilotage area; the VTS will coordinate the safe and orderly clearing of the pilotage area;
- Ships alongside will depart as soon as marine services are available (if conditions deteriorate rapidly it may be necessary to depart without normal marine services in order to minimise the risk associated with remaining in port, as approved by the Regional Harbour Master);
- Ships are to report on Channel 13 when clearing the pilotage area; and
- Ship Masters must determine their own course of action to avoid the cyclone once clear of the pilotage area – no direction or recommendation will be made with regards to cyclone avoidance or the safe navigation or operation of the vessel.

Red -  Emergency Warning

Destructive Winds, Swell, Rain or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 6 hours- Preserve Life – Stay Safe – Take No Risk on the Water

- It is too late to consider the safety of the vessel.
- Response action should already have been directed to personal safety.
- Rivers / ports closed by Regional Harbour Master and Vessel Traffic Services may have shut down.
- Mariners should maintain a listening watch on VHF frequencies 13 and 16 for weather and condition updates.
- Flying debris may be a major danger to any persons on vessels and mariners are advised to stay indoors.

Yellow –  Advice

Recovery – Wait for All Clear – Take No Risk on the Water

- Do not assume that as the extreme weather event has passed it is now safe to move your vessel.
- Hazards including high river flows and debris may still be present.
- No unauthorised boat movement on the rivers (including entering the Port).
- Vessels not to leave secure moorings/locations unless directed by Police or the Regional Harbour Master.
- Wait until White (All Clear) is declared by Regional Harbour Master.

- The Regional Harbour Master will assess residual risks and determine the actions needed to be addressed.
- Broadcasts will be made over key VHF frequencies to alert vessel owners of the lifting of navigation restrictions and any hazards that may have been identified in local waters.
- Owners and masters of vessels should be aware that aids to navigation may be affected by the extreme weather event. Owners and masters should reference Notices to Mariners for the latest updates.
- Port infrastructure will need to be inspected to ensure that facilities are fit for purpose.
- Charted depths may have been altered as a result of storm surge and or flood water runoff.
- Caution needs to be exercised due to debris in the water, which is not only above water but can also be undetected just under the surface.

White – All clear

Event Has Passed- Business As Usual

- Extreme weather event has passed and all necessary river monitoring and clearing conducted to allow Regional Harbour Master to declare the All Clear for the river.
- Following inspections and surveys to critical maritime infrastructure (e.g. navigational aids, wharf, etc.) as well as clearance of navigational hazards, the Regional Harbour Master will reopen the anchorages, port and pilotage areas.
- Vessel Traffic Services will coordinate the safe movement of vessels following the opening of the pilotage area in accordance with normal practice. Berths will be re-opened and operations resumed when wind and sea conditions are within operational limits.
- Masters are reminded that vessels must proceed at a safe speed to the prevailing circumstances and conditions. Debris may still be in the water and can cause damage to vessels.
- Masters and owners should review and update their severe weather management plans as required.

Safe Havens

- The streams and creeks surrounding the port. All creeks leading off the Fitzroy River should to be avoided.
- All large commercial vessels must depart Port Alma for sea and the waters to the south e.g., Bundaberg, Hervey Bay or Brisbane

Communication

The successful implementation of this plan relies on high quality communication of information and directions.

The Gladstone Vessel Traffic Service, at the Regional Harbour Master Office Gladstone, will be the Maritime Control Centre.

The Vessel Traffic Services Centre will implement the extreme weather event contingency plan on behalf of the Regional Harbour Master by acting as the central communications point and will be designated as the Maritime Control Centre for the duration and aftermath of the extreme weather event.

The Maritime Control Centre call sign will be Gladstone VTS.

VHF channels 13 and 16 will be continuously monitored before and during the extreme weather event, unless the centre is evacuated.

Maritime Safety Queensland may contact stakeholders via SMS and/or email regarding information to potential extreme weather events or extreme weather events.

Updates on whether broadcasts and conditions in your local vicinity may be broadcast by the local coastguard or marine rescue stations, initiated on VHF channel 16.

Key Contacts

Name	Contact Number
Maritime Safety Queensland - Gladstone	07 4971 5200
Gladstone VTS – 24 hours	07 4839 0208
Marine Rescue Qld (MRQ) Gladstone	07 4972 3333 or 131 677 (131MRQ)
Gladstone Police	07 4971 3222
Gladstone Regional Council	07 4970 0700
Rockhampton Regional Council	1300 22 55 77 07 4932 9000

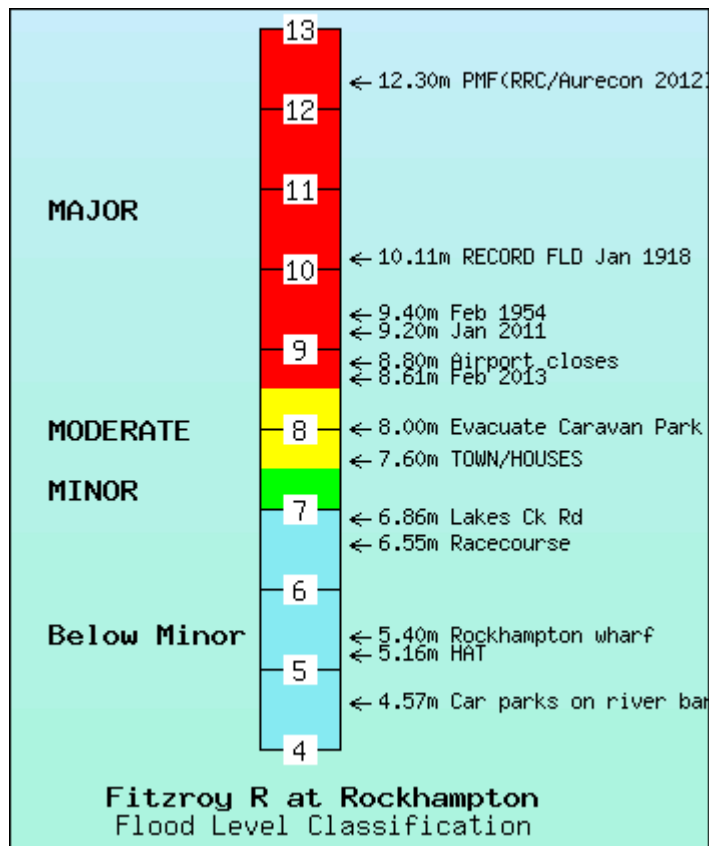
Key Websites

Name	URL
Detailed weather updates: BOM	www.bom.gov.au
MSQ Website	www.msq.qld.gov.au
MSQ Dashboard – detailed information on Port closures, Notice to Mariners, Tide Charts and more.	https://www.qldmaritime.msq.qld.gov.au
Maritime Safety Queensland - Gladstone	www.msq.qld.gov.au
Gladstone VTS – 24 hours	www.msq.qld.gov.au
MRQ Gladstone	www.mrq.qld.gov.au/rescue-units/mrq-gladstone
Gladstone Police	mypolice.qld.gov.au/gladstone
Gladstone Regional Council	www.gladstone.qld.gov.au
Rockhampton Regional Council	www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au/Home

Cyclone Categories

Category	Strongest Gusts (km/h)	Winds
1	< 125	Damaging Winds. Minimal house damage. Damage to some crops, trees and caravans. Vessels may drag moorings/anchor
2	125 - 164	Destructive Winds. Minor house damage. Significant damage to signs, trees and caravans. Heavy damage to some crops. Risk of power failure. Small vessels may break moorings.
3	165 - 224	Very Destructive Winds. Some roof and structural damage Some caravans destroyed. Power failure likely.
4	225 - 279	Very Destructive Winds. Significant roofing and structural damage. Many caravans destroyed and blown away. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.
5	> 279	Very Destructive Winds. Extremely dangerous and widespread destruction

Fitzroy River Rockhampton Flood Level Classification (BoM)



<http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/brochures/fitzroy/fitzroy.shtml>