

Appendix 3 – Skardon River

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, inclusion of chartlet
September 2024	2	Reviewed for currency. Minor updates only to dates and webpage.

Skardon River

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 include CYCLONE and FLOOD. One or more hazards may occur simultaneously.

Yellow – Advice

Destructive Winds, Swell, Rain or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 24-48 Hours

- Suspend all cargo or trading operations and obtain a situation report on state of operations including draft.
- Inform ships' masters of situation and place a short notice to sail.
- Obtain information on length of time to bring ships to a readiness to sail.
- Inform Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) of situation and ascertain suitable sailing times and draft requirements.
- If time permits, resume cargo, trading operations or ballast operations. Bring ship to satisfactory handling trim and safe transit draft.
- Small vessels prepare to move to designated cyclone mooring areas of the creeks and waterways of the Skardon River within the mangrove areas.

Note: When conditions are deteriorating, every endeavour will be made to accommodate the working of cargo in the available time, allowing for tidal constraints.

Orange – Watch and Act

Destructive Winds, Swell, Rain or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 12-24 Hours

- Sail all large merchant ships (note: It may already have been necessary to have sailed some ships due to tidal conditions).
- In the event that a ship cannot sail, arrange linesmen, instruct master to take standard cyclone precautions.
- On water authorities prepare to depart.
- All small vessels should move to their designated area and final preparations and tying off completed.

Red – Emergency Warning

Destructive Winds, Swell or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 6 Hours

Port Closed

Vessels are not to leave their cyclone moorings or designated areas until the official all clear is given by the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns). Only movements of an emergency nature will be permitted during a Red Emergency Warning.

Yellow – Advice

After The Event Has Passed, Recovery Underway

The Regional Harbour Master will assess residual risks and determine which actions need to be addressed. Do not assume that as the extreme weather event has passed it is safe to move your vessel.

Vessels are not to leave their cyclone moorings until the official all clear is given by the Regional Harbour Master.

Mariners should maintain a listening watch on VHF frequency 09 and follow advice/directions from Skardon River Port Control.

Movements will be at the RHM's discretion and can be in stages including limited to Internal Port movements until the Channel or areas within the Port are deemed safe.

Mariners are to consult the latest Notices to Mariners for updated information on Port depths and conditions.

White – All clear

Port open to all traffic, business as usual

A Pilotage area may be effectively re-opened by the Regional Harbour Master following direction to allow the entering or leaving of ships in and out of a pilotage area, or movement of vessels within a pilotage area. Such direction will be provided when satisfied that all danger has passed, and the Pilotage area is safe for vessels to re-enter or exit.

The berth will be re-opened and operations resumed when structural assessments have been completed and wind and sea conditions are within operational limits.

Communication

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

To ensure an orderly evacuation, the schedule is to be observed when announced by the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) over VHF channel **09**.

Skardon River Port Control, will implement the extreme weather event contingency plan on behalf of the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) by acting as a central communications point and will be designated as the Maritime Control Centre for the duration and aftermath of the extreme weather event.

The vessel Maritime Control Centre call sign will be 'Skardon River Port Control'.

VHF channels **09** will be continuously monitored before and during the extreme weather event, unless the centre is evacuated. Extreme weather watches, warnings and any directions will be issued on these channels frequently as directed by the Regional Harbour Master.

If a vessel is to be left unattended, its owners are to advise Skardon River Port Control (Cairns VTS centre) of their contact telephone numbers.

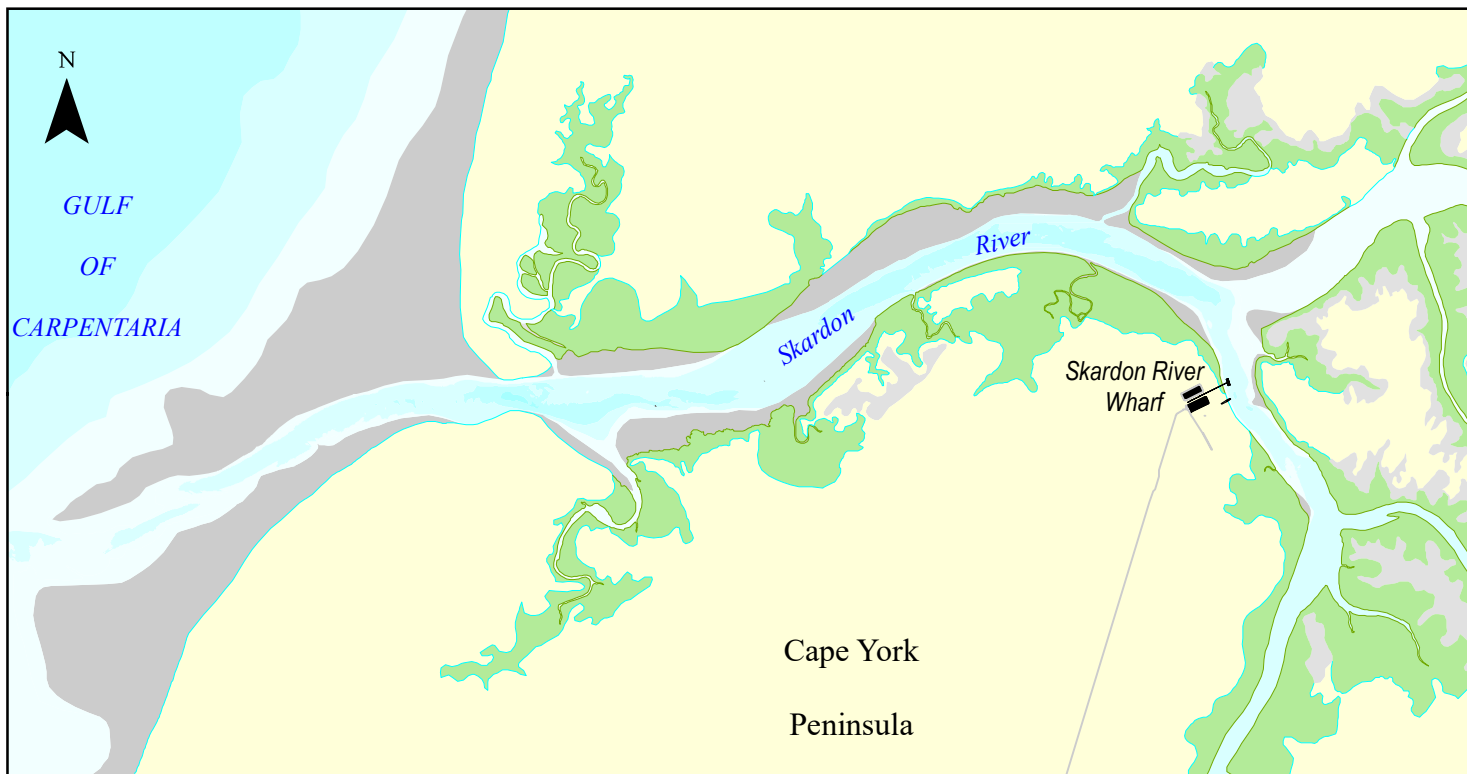
Key Contacts

Name	Contact Number
Regional Harbour Master	07 4052 7400
Skardon River Port Control (Cairns VTS)	1300 551 899
Police – Weipa	07 4090 6000
Boating and Fisheries Patrol	07 4069 8114
Water Police – Thursday Island	07 4069 1520
Metro Mining	07 3009 8000
Transshipment Services Australia	08 9226 4008

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 EXTREME WEATHER EVENT PLAN (CYCLONE) PORT OF SKARDON RIVER



OBJECTIVE:

To have the port area evacuated at least six hours before destructive winds commence, and to have all vessels safely moored in their designated areas of shelter by that time.

All vessels, other than those being used for emergency purposes, are to evacuate and clear the port area. Owners should be aware that should they leave their vessel in the port area, they may be liable to prosecution and, additionally, be held accountable for any damage that their vessel may cause or incur.

To ensure an orderly evacuation, Masters should be aware of the sudden onslaught of cyclones during the wet season and should take adequate precautions to have their vessels ready to depart on short notice. When the meteorological office advises that a strong tropical depression or cyclone is likely to form, Masters will put their vessels on standby to sail.

VESSEL COMMUNICATIONS & CONTROL CENTRE:

Skardon River Port Control will implement the extreme weather event contingency plan on behalf of the Regional Harbour Master by acting as a central communications point and will be designated as the Maritime Control Centre for the duration and aftermath of the extreme weather event.

Skardon River Port Control will monitor VHF ch 16/ch 09 and telephone 1300 551 899 and will relay messages from the Regional Harbour Master.

Once in position, all small vessels are to contact Skardon River Port Control and advise them of the area in which they are moored and how many people will be remaining onboard. If a vessel is to be left unattended, its owners are to advise the Skardon River Port Control of their contact telephone numbers.

The Harbour Master's requirements for clearing the port of large vessels will generally be:

- Wind speeds must not have reached 30 knots.
- Ships must be able to sail, e.g. machinery working and crew on board.
- The ship must be in a suitable trim to sail.
- The ship's deepest draught must give suitable clearance when sailing.

To ensure an orderly evacuation, the following schedule is to be observed when announced by the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) over VHF ch 16 and ch 09.

Yellow - Advice

Destructive winds forecast to affect the area within **24 - 48 hours**.

- Suspend loading, obtain situation reports on ships.
- Inform ships' masters of situation and place on short notice to sail.
- Obtain information on readiness to sail.
- Inform RHM of situation and ascertain suitable sailing times.
- If time and draft permit bring load to satisfactory handling trim.
- Small vessels to cyclone mooring areas.

Orange - Watch and Act

Destructive winds forecast to affect the area within **12 - 24 hours**.

- Sail all ships where possible.
- All small vessels should be moored at cyclone moorings and final preparations and tying off completed. On water authorities prepare to depart.

Red - Emergency Warning

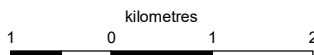
Destructive winds forecast to affect the area within **6 hours**.

Port closed.

Vessels are NOT to leave their cyclone mooring until the official ALL CLEAR is given by the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

Map S10c-12-2

Map Datum: GDA2020
Map projection: UTM MGA Zone 54
Prepared 14 November 2023
Maritime Safety Queensland - Spatial Services



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