

# Appendix 13 – Mackay

## 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
September 2024	2	Reviewed for currency. Amendments to remove individual messaging for each vessel type. Dates and webpage updated.

# Mackay Port

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.msg.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

Masters and Owners are to **Prepare Now** for potential destructive winds, swell, rain or riverine flooding forecast within 24-48 hours.

Masters and Owners should **Monitor Conditions** and **Stay Informed**, monitoring the Bureau of Meteorology, Local Government and VHF channel 10/16 where possible.

#### General Information

An extreme weather event **advice** warning will be issued when an extreme weather event or developing event is likely to affect the area within 48 hours, but not expected to impact the area within 24 hours. This phase is a critical time for masters and owners to plan and prepare for the impact of the event.

The Regional Harbour Master may commence working towards closing the port to elements of commercial and recreational traffic movements, by giving explicit or by making a particular direction to restrict the:

- entering or leaving of specific vessels in or out of a marina, port or pilotage area; and/or
- movement of specific vessels within a pilotage area.

Such direction will be appropriate with the threat to the safety of shipping or the environment and may occur at any time during Yellow, Orange or Red Alert.

The restriction on commercial and recreational vessel movements will, as far as practical, be implemented in consultation with key authorities and in a timely manner in order to minimise risks.

The extreme weather event advice will be communicated through an appropriate combination of VHF radio warning messages, notices to mariners, email and media releases. Stay informed by monitoring weather updates from BoM and monitor conditions.

During this period, masters and owners (or their representatives) should review their safety plans and address any matters outstanding (for example fuel, food, water and contact details).

Certain high risk commercial vessels and facilities may receive specific advice and instructions through direct messaging from the Regional Harbour Master. Additionally, any regionally essential cargoes may be risk assessed such that their departure is conducted as late as is safe to do so.

BE AWARE of flood waters. River conditions can change rapidly and with little notification.

### Vessels to remain in situ

Commence securing your vessel for the forecasted weather event including reducing wind loadings, securing your tender, double-up mooring lines and ensure commercial vessels are secured as per your Extreme Weather Event plan to cyclone rated moorings.

### Vessels to relocate in the local area

Reduce wind loadings and anchor or moor in protected and sheltered location, clear of other vessels and infrastructure.

### Vessels proceeding to sea

VTS will inform large ships' masters and agents of situation and potential reduction of notice to sail and/or expected closure of the inner and outer anchorages.

Vessels alongside loading, to update their completion loading times whenever a change has occurred.

## Orange – Watch and Act

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

**Leave/Evacuate Now** – If your extreme weather event plans require you to relocate within the local area or depart for sea.

**Monitor Conditions as they are changing** – Regularly checking the Bureau of Meteorology, Local Government websites as well as maintaining a listening watch on VHF channel 10/16 where appropriate.

**Do not enter flood waters** – This includes by vessel such as passive craft, tender or small craft.

### General Information

An extreme weather event **watch and act** warning will be issued when an extreme weather event or developing event is likely to affect the area within 12-24 hours. This phase is critical for masters and owners to complete all preparations in an orderly manner prior to the event occurring.

The extreme weather event watch & act will be communicated through an appropriate combination of VHF radio warning messages, notices to mariners, email and media releases.

Masters, owners and marine facility operators are expected to implement their safety plans in a timely and orderly manner.

If requested by port stakeholders, any regionally essential cargoes WILL be risk assessed, such that their departure is conducted as late as is safe to do so, depending on agreement from Master and Terminal Management.

Certain high risk commercial vessels and facilities will receive specific advice and instructions through direct messaging from the Regional Harbour Master. Some activities will be suspended, and restrictions may be placed on the movements of other vessels. This may include directed evacuations, instructions to remain and shelter in place or instructions not to enter flood waters. Once the movement of ships in relation to a pilotage and anchorage area has been restricted, and the port has been effectively closed by the Regional Harbour Master, the entering and leaving of ships in and out of the port is not permitted.

### Vessels to remain in situ

Continue to conduct your own extreme weather event plan, securing your vessel where it is safe to access.

### Vessels to relocate in the local area

If safe to access, relocate your vessel now to a more suitable location in the local area.

### Vessels proceeding to sea

Coordinate with Mackay VTS.

For vessels at anchor master's / agents to immediately report to VTS their intentions.

For vessels alongside, master's / agents / terminals to immediately report to VTS time of expected completion of loading (fully or partial), so as a departure schedule (evacuation plan) can be planned around port resources. Note departure sequence, if required, will occur in accordance with the established evacuation plan issued for the event by the Regional Harbour Master.

The evacuation plan will be developed based on vessel type, characteristics and terminal.

## Port Closure

The Regional Harbour Master will have commenced Mackay port and anchorages closure plan, wholly or in part, by giving general or by making a particular explicit direction to restrict the following:

- entering or leaving of vessels in or out of Mackay Port and pilotage areas: and/or
- movement of vessels within a pilotage area.

Such directions will be appropriate to the threat to the safety of shipping or the environment and may occur at any time prior to the event.

The closure of the port and anchorages or restriction on vessel movements will, as far as practical, be implemented in consultation with key authorities and in a timely manner in order to minimise risks.

## Red - Emergency Warning

### Destructive Winds, Swell or Riverine Flooding Forecast Within 6 Hours

**Leave/Evacuate Immediately** – If your extreme weather event plans require you to relocate within the local area or depart for sea and it is safe to do so.

**Seek/take shelter now** – If unable to depart for sea.

#### General Information

The extreme weather event **emergency warning** will be communicated through an appropriate combination of VHF radio warning messages, Notices to Mariners, email, SMS alert and media releases. Stay informed by monitoring weather updates from BoM and local government authority.

By this phase, all vessels are expected to have enacted their vessel safety plans noting that the port may be closed and/or vessel movements restricted depending on the threat to safety of vessel movements or the environment. Mariners should note that it is likely to be too late to consider the safety of your vessel and that extreme weather conditions may limit the ability of emergency services to assist you should you run into difficulties. Your vessel should be secured in place. Your actions should be directed towards your own personal safety.

It is also important to be alert during the 'eye' of the cyclone as a period of calm may be experienced before the damaging wind force resumes once the eye has passed.

#### Vessels to remain in situ

Access to vessels at anchor, secured to cyclone buoy mooring may not be safe, as gale force winds if not already experienced will commence soon.

It may now be too late to consider the safety of your vessel and weather conditions may limit the ability of emergency services to assist you should you run into difficulties.

Ensure your evacuation plan allows for sufficient time to make your way to a shelter ashore.

## Vessels to relocate in the local area

If **SAFE** to access, relocate your vessel now to a more suitable location relatively close-by as gale/cyclonic force winds if not already experienced will commence soon.

If **NOT SAFE** to access, leave your vessel in situ.

Ensure your evacuation plan allows for sufficient time to make your way to a shelter ashore.

It may now be too late to consider the safety of your vessel and weather conditions may limit the ability of emergency services to assist you should you run into difficulties.

## Vessels proceeding to sea

All vessels commenced passage at best speed to safer navigable waters.

Vessel masters reminded to maintain proper lookout, due possible restricted visibility associated with storm front and traffic congestion as vessels determine passages to keep away from the effect of extreme/cyclonic weather conditions.

## Port Closure

**The Regional Harbour Master will have closed the port and anchorages.**

## VTS Closure

The Regional Harbour Master may be required to close Mackay VTS operations at Hay Point in part or wholly depending on safety of personnel. VTS may be relocated to the Nelson Street Office, Mackay City, on a minimal manning routine during this alert status, or transfer all operations to another regional VTS centre such as Townsville or Gladstone.

# Yellow – Advice

## After The Event Has Passed, Recovery Underway

**Monitor Conditions as they are changing** – Regularly checking the Bureau of Meteorology, Local Government websites as well as maintaining a listening watch on VHF channel 10/16 where appropriate.

**Do not enter flood waters** – This includes by vessel such as passive craft, tender or small craft.

## General Information

The Regional Harbour Master will assess residual risks and determine the actions needed to be addressed. Do not assume that as the extreme weather event (or cyclone) has passed, it is now safe to move your vessel.

Vessels should stay in their place of shelter until they are advised that it is safe for vessel movements to resume. The lifting of restrictions and resumption of vessel movements will be communicated through an appropriate combination of VHF radio warning messages, notices to mariners, email and media releases. Stay informed by monitoring weather updates from BoM and monitor conditions.

Owners and masters of vessels should be aware that aids to navigation may be affected by the extreme weather event and that other dangers may be present in waterways. VTS may conduct messaging about unusual currents, floating debris, subsurface obstruction or unknown shoaling depths.

Mariners should maintain a listening watch on VHF frequencies 16 and 10 and follow advice/directions given by Mackay VTS.

Movements will be at the RHM's discretion and can be in stages including limited 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.

Maritime infrastructure will need to be inspected to ensure that facilities are operational and fit for purpose.

## Port Partial Re-Opening to Support Specific Port Clearance Operations

The Mackay and Hay Point Pilotage Area will be re-opened in part, based on a planned approach by the Regional Harbour Master following directions to allow the entering or leaving of specific ships in and out of a pilotage area, or movement of vessels within a pilotage area. Such direction will be provided:

- based on individual risk assessment, and the pilotage area determined as safe as reasonably possible for identified vessels to re-enter and conduct specific port operations, anchor or leave.
- based on risk assessment to re-open the anchorages (outer and inner) returning specific vessels on a planned basis via VTS coordination.

The Vessel Traffic Services centre will coordinate the safe movement of these specific vessels, as part of supporting specific port operations in accordance with the port opening plan.

# White – All clear

## Port open to all traffic, business as usual

### General Information

The Mackay Port and Hay Point Pilotage Area (including all Compulsory Pilotage Areas) is fully 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 leave; and
- Following inspections and surveys to critical maritime infrastructure (for example navigational aids and wharves) as well as clearance of navigational hazards.

The Vessel Traffic Services centre 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.

Port operations to be conducted in accordance with the Mackay Port Procedures and Information for Shipping Manual

Masters are reminded that vessels must proceed at a safe speed to the prevailing circumstances of information and directions.

Owners and masters should inspect their vessel for any repairs or maintenance required and review their emergency preparedness plans.

### Vessels who remained in situ

Safe to return to your vessel.

Recommend conducting a full vessel survey to ensure no damage and watertight integrity maintained.

### Vessels who relocated in the local area

Safe to return to your vessel.

Recommend conducting a full vessel survey to ensure no damage and watertight integrity maintained.

Remain vigilant that local waterways may still have unseen submerged obstructions, if relocating your vessel.

### Vessels returning from sea

Vessel masters to contact their agents for information (time and date) regarding planned return to anchorage or berth.

All vessels to listen for and follow Hay Point VTS instructions.

Vessels will be returned to anchorages based on a planned process.

Vessels will be returned to berths based on terminal requirements and availability of tugs and pilots.

## Communication

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

The **Mackay** Vessel Traffic Service, at the Regional Harbour Master Office **Mackay**, 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 **Mackay VTS**.

VHF channels **10, 16** and **67** 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, 21, 67 and 80**.

## Key Contacts

Name	Contact Number
Regional Harbour Master	(07) 4944 3700
Hay Point VTS	1300 645 022
Emergency Services	000

## Key Websites

Name	URL
Detailed weather updates: BOM	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a>
MSQ Website	<a href="http://www.msg.qld.gov.au">www.msg.qld.gov.au</a>
MSQ Dashboard – detailed information on Port closures, Notice to Mariners, Tide Charts and more.	<a href="https://www.qldmaritime.msg.qld.gov.au">https://www.qldmaritime.msg.qld.gov.au</a>