

Port of Skardon River

First-Strike Oil Spill Response Plan

A supplement to the Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan

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Version 1 of this document was approved by the Chair of the Queensland National Plan State Committee in July 2006. Subsequent amendments have been of an administrative nature only and have not changed the intent of the document.

Contact for enquiries and proposed changes

If you have any questions or suggested improvements please phone the Manager, Pollution Response on 07 3066 3911 or email pollution@msq.qld.gov.au

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1. Introduction

This plan has been prepared by the Department of Transport and Main Roads in accordance with the agreed arrangements of Australia's *National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies (National Plan)* and the requirements of the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*. It is a supplement to the Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan.

2. Scope

This plan deals with first-strike response to oil spills from ships and other marine sources within the Port Limits of Skardon River, Queensland. See Appendix A for details of port area.

3. Objective

The aim of this plan is to describe the operational arrangements for first-strike response to oil spills within the area by identifying available resources, and providing contact information for key oil spill response personnel.

This plan is not a stand-alone document and should be read in conjunction with:

- The Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan. (QCCAP)
- Maritime Safety Queensland's Standard Operating Procedures for oil spill response.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities for first strike response to oil spills within the port limits of Skardon River are defined as follows:

- **Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)** is:
 - both Statutory and Combat Agency for ship sourced oil spills that impact Queensland Coastal waters and is the pre-designated Incident Controller for all incidents within the scope of this plan.
- **Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited (Ports North)** is:
 - responsible for ensuring that an adequate first-strike oil spill response capability is maintained within the Port of Skardon River.
- **Department of Environment and Science (DES)** is
 - the Statutory Agency for all land sourced oil spills. DES is also responsible for providing environmental and scientific advice to the Incident Controller for spills within the port.
- Maritime Safety Queensland is the Combat Agency for land-sourced oil spills through a memorandum of understanding with EPA, now known as DES.

Details of the roles and responsibilities may be found in Schedule 1 to the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Australia's *National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies*.

5. Delegations

Maritime Safety Queensland authorises and directs Ports North to initiate and carry out first-strike response operations within the port in accordance with Section 8 of this plan.

6. Threat Assessment

The Port of Skardon River has a tropical climate and is situated in the Gulf of Carpentaria about 100 kilometres north of the township of Weipa. No major residential communities are situated around or near the port.

In 2010, Maritime Safety Queensland commissioned a semi-qualitative risk analysis of oil spills from ships over 10 metres in length for all ports in Queensland. While the study indicates that the likelihood of a significant oil spill within the Port of Skardon River is low, some level of risk does exist and a first-strike response capability is required.

The seaward approach is via an unmarked tidal sandbar crossing whilst depths within the river vary between 6 and 10 metres. A number of small rocky outcrops extend into the river but appear not to be of a significant hazard.

The Skardon River encompasses a diverse range of ecologically important marine habitats. Many of these areas such as mangroves, salt pans, rock bars and marine swamps are likely to be of high importance to local fisheries. The habitats within the area support oyster beds, schools of baitfish and large predatory fish. The Skardon River has high wilderness values and is an important breeding area for estuarine crocodiles and green turtles. Marine stingers have also been identified in the river. The low lying habitats in the port limits are likely to be an important fisheries resource, providing nursery and forage areas for prawn and fish species such as barramundi.

No seagrass was identified in recent surveys growing within the intertidal region of the river mouth bounded by port limits. Only one small isolated seagrass meadow was identified in the Skardon River -the meadow was located approximately 2.4 km north of the port facilities on a sand/mud bank in a side creek of the Skardon River. Additional environmental information may be found in FNQPC's Port of Skardon River Environmental Management Plan.

7. Possible Spill Scenarios

The port is serviced at intervals of 6 to 8 weeks by barge from Cairns. Up to 500 tonnes of diesel fuel is transferred from the barge via a pipeline to a bunded 2000 tonne storage tank. Commercial or recreational vessel activity is very limited. However spills of up to:

- 2000 litres of diesel fuel
- 200 litres of bilge oil

could occur within the port. Land sourced oil spills could also impact port waters.

8. Response Options

The following guidelines apply to first-strike response within the port.

Area	Monitor	Contain Recover	Protect Resources	Shoreline Cleanup	Apply Dispersant
Approaches to Skardon River	Yes	If viable	N/a	If viable	No *
Coastline to the north and south of the entrance channel	Yes	If viable	Yes	Yes	No *
Port facility	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No *
Skardon River	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No *

Note

Dispersants should not normally be used within the port but their use could be considered in certain circumstances. However dispersants may be used in certain circumstances, for example, to reduce the risk of fire and/or explosion from a petroleum products spill. Before using dispersants, the Incident Controller should consult with DES's Environment and Scientific Coordinator. Any decision to do so should be consensual and in accordance with the Dispersant Use Guidelines outlined in the Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan. Under the guidelines:

- Prescribed Officers from AMSA and Maritime Safety Queensland, in consultation with DES, may authorise the use of dispersants within the port.

9. Incident Control Centre

Depending upon the severity of an incident the Incident Controller may establish an Incident Control Centre and/or Advanced Operations Centre at:

- Maritime Safety Queensland Marine Operations Base, Weipa
- Maritime Safety Queensland Marine Operations Base, Cairns.

10. Response and Handover Arrangements

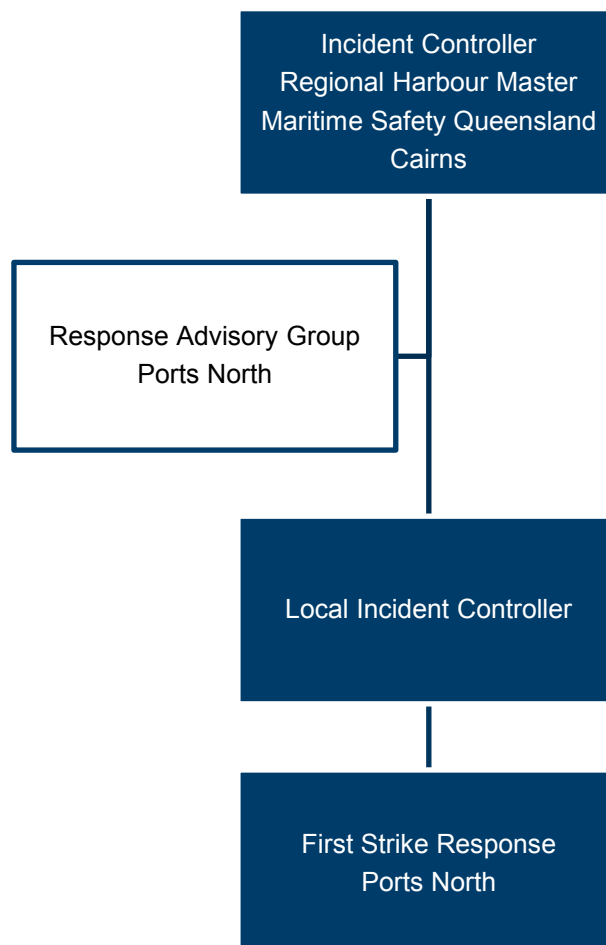
Early first-strike response action should include an assessment of the time and resources required to effectively manage each incident. Where a response is likely to be prolonged or exceed the port's first-strike response capacity, Ports North should request assistance from Maritime Safety Queensland. When determining the need for assistance and hand-over of the response, Ports North should consider the number and availability of local trained response personnel, their ability work safely without the need for excessive work hours, and the capacity of the ports' first-strike response equipment. Requests for assistance should be made as soon as possible and preferably in the first or subsequent SITREPs.

11. First-Strike Equipment

First-strike oil spill response equipment is located in two shipping containers at the dry plant storage shed adjacent the port facility.

Equipment Type	Quantity
General Purpose Boom (GP 800 Boom)	300m
Land Sea Boom Kit (boom, pump and blower)	60m
Weir Skimmer Kit (Pacific Alpha weir skimmer & pump)	1
Flexi-Dam recovered oil container	2
Anchor Kit	1
Sorbent Boom	240 m
Sorbent Pads	1000
Sorbent Mops	300

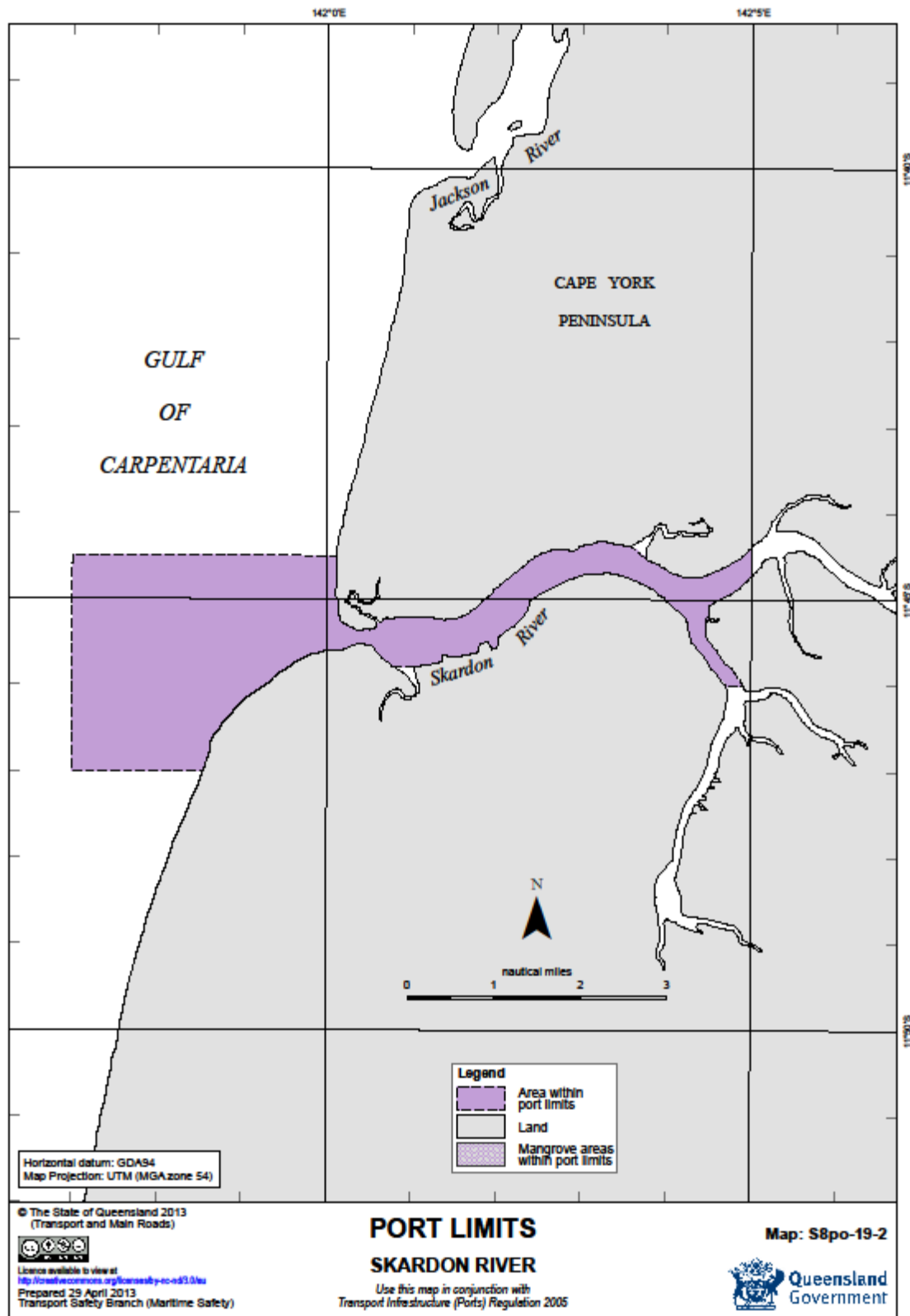
12. Response Team Structure



13. Contact List

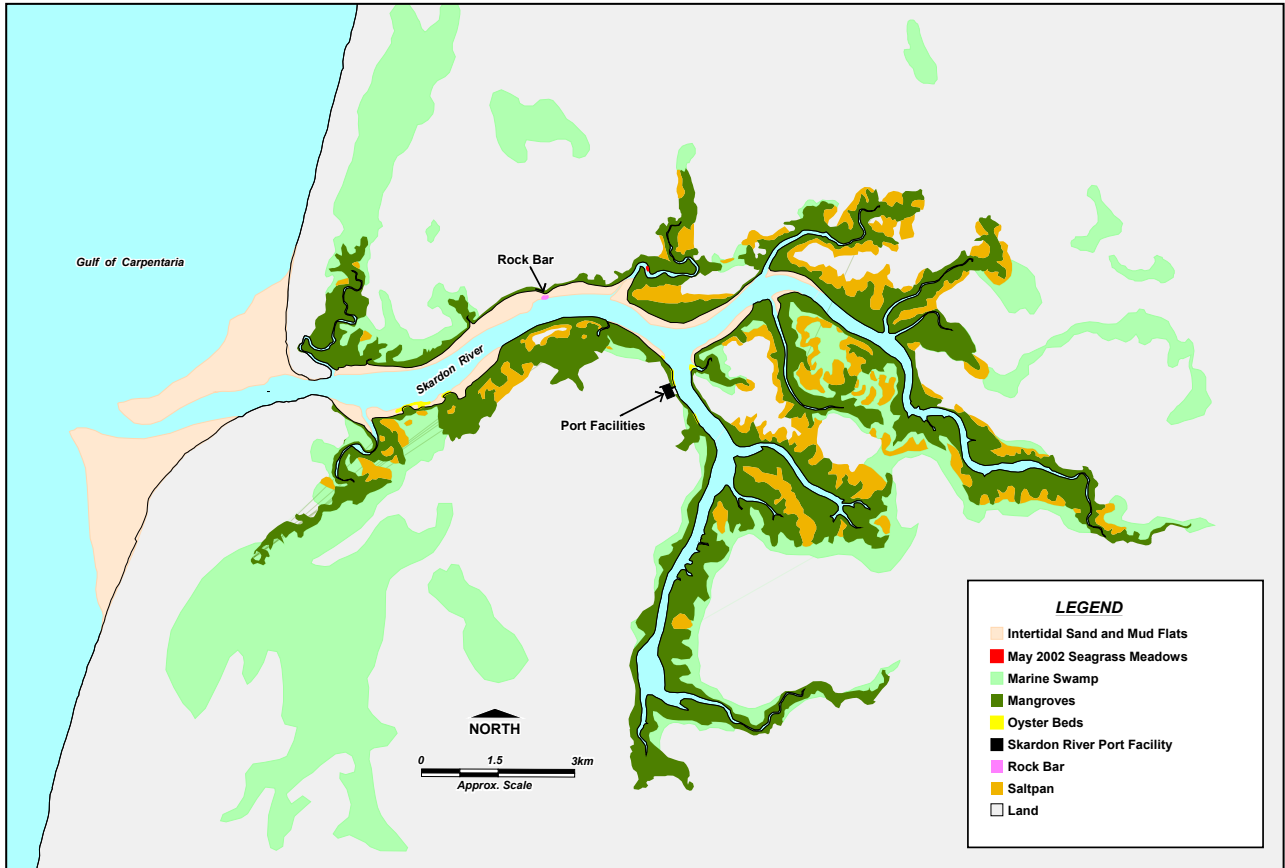
For contact details refer to Appendix 1 of the Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan.

Appendix A - Map of Skardon River Port Limits



Appendix B - Port of Skardon River Resource Map

Source: Ports Corporation of Qld Port EMP



Skardon River - Marine Resources Map