

# Port of Cooktown

## First-Strike Oil Spill Response Plan

A supplement to the Queensland Coastal Contingency Action Plan

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## Document control options

<b>Prepared by</b>	Maritime Services Branch
<b>Title</b>	Port of Cooktown - First-Strike Oil Spill Response Plan
<b>Division</b>	Maritime Safety Queensland
<b>Location</b>	Floor 2, 61 Mary Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
<b>Version No</b>	7
<b>Revision Date</b>	September 2018
<b>Status</b>	Final
<b>File Number</b>	225/00457

### Document sign-off

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](mailto: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 sources within the Port limits of Cooktown, Queensland.

# 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.

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

- 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 Cooktown are defined as follows:

- **Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)** is:
  - both Statutory and Combat Agency for ship sourced oil spills that impact Queensland Coastal waters
  - the combat agency for response to land-sourced oil spills that impact Queensland 's coastal waters the pre-designated Incident Controller for all incidents within the scope of this plan.
  - Maritime Safety Queensland is the Combat Agency for land sourced oil spills through a memorandum of understanding with DES.
- **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 limits of Cooktown

- **The 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.
- **The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)** is:
  - responsible for providing environmental and scientific advice to the Incident Controller for spills that impact, or are likely to impact, waters of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.
- **Cook Shire Council (CSC)** is:
  - responsible for shoreline clean-up and has agreed to provide trained personnel for first-strike response to all incidents within the scope of this plan. CSC is also the delegated local response authority (see section 5).

Details of the roles and responsibilities may be found in Schedule 1 to the Inter-Governmental Agreement on Australia's National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea by Oil and other Noxious and Hazardous Substances.

## 5. Delegations

Ports North and Cook Shire Council may initiate and carry out first-strike response operations within the port limits, in accordance with Section 8 of this contingency plan, without further direction from Maritime Safety Queensland.

## 6. Threat Assessment

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 Cooktown is very low some level of risk does exist and a first-strike response capability is required.

The port of Cooktown is a small local port that experiences between 6 and 10 spills each year. Most spills are less than 50 litres of diesel fuel or bilge oil from small commercial and recreational vessels moored or operating within the port.

There are extensive areas of mangrove habitat within the port which lies adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Vapours from diesel fuel spills also have the capacity to adversely affect local tourism and small business operators in areas near the port.

Depending upon its origin and prevailing weather and tidal conditions, an oil spill will either move upstream into the Endeavour River and associated mangrove habitats or downstream and out into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Most spills are likely to quickly evaporate or disperse without causing significant environmental damage.

A number of activities that regularly occur within the port present a credible oil spill threat. These activities, in order of precedence, include:

- medium sized passenger ships entering and leaving the port via a narrow channel
- refuelling operations within the port
- bilge or fuel discharges from small commercial, fishing and recreational vessels moored within the port

- slipway operations within the port
- land sourced spills entering port waters via stormwater drains

## 7. Possible Spill Scenarios

The types of incidents most likely to occur within the port are small spills of petrol, diesel fuel or bilge oil from commercial fishing and recreational ships operating in the port. However spills of up to:

- 3600 litres of lubricating oil and/or 30,000 litres of diesel fuel from a medium sized passenger ship that regularly calls at Cooktown
- 10,000 litres of light oil products (petrol or diesel fuel) from road tanker accidents within the town of Cooktown or greater, are possible within the port of Cooktown.

## 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 the Endeavour River	Yes	If viable	If viable	If viable	No *
Refuelling wharf	Yes	If viable	If viable	If viable	No *
Endeavour River (mooring area to river mouth)	Yes	If viable	If viable	If viable	No *
Endeavour River upstream of the mooring area	Yes	If viable	If viable	No **	No *

### Note

Dispersants should not normally be used within the port but their use could be considered in certain circumstances. Before using dispersants, the Incident Controller should consult with DES's Environment and Scientific Coordinator. Any decision to use dispersants should be consensual and in accordance with Maritime Safety Queensland's Dispersant Use Policy.

The banks of the Endeavour upstream of the mooring are heavily forested with mangroves. The preferred response option in these areas is to allow natural flushing.

## 9. Response and Handover Arrangements

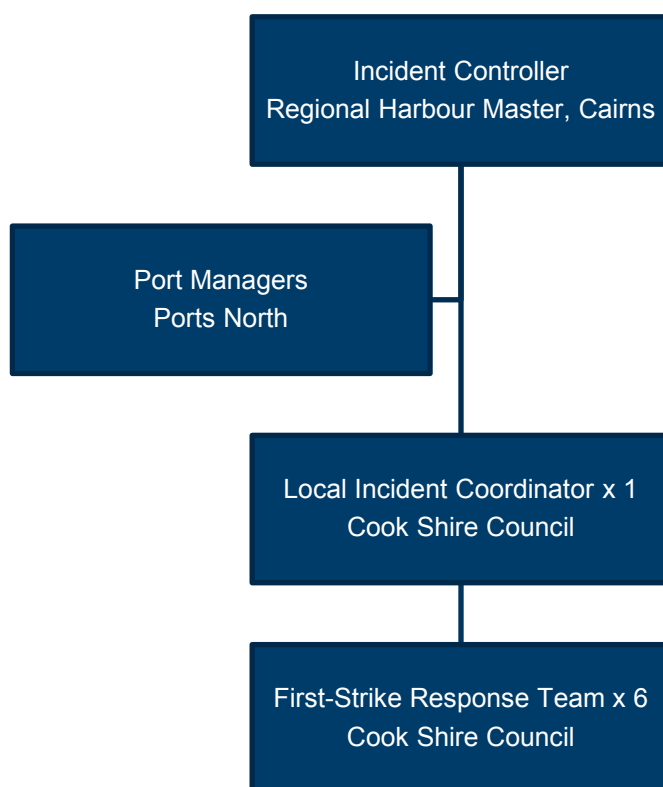
Early first-strike response action should include an assessment of the time and resources required to effectively manage each incident. Where a response is likely to be prolonged or exceed the port's first-strike response capacity, Ports North should request assistance from Maritime Safety Queensland. 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.

## 10. Incident Control Centre

The establishment and location of an Incident Control Centre (ICC) depends upon the scale of an incident.

- For level one incidents an ICC may be established at the Cook Shire Council Office, 10 Furneaux Street, Cooktown.
- For level two incidents and above, an ICC may be established at Maritime Safety Queensland's Marine Operations Base, 64 – 66 Tingira Street, Cairns in which case the ICC at Cooktown will become an Advanced Operations Centre.

## 11. Response Team Structure



## 12. First-Strike Equipment

First-strike oil spill response equipment is located at the Cook Shire Council Works Depot, Charlotte Street Cooktown. A regional stockpile of Tier 2 equipment is located at Maritime Safety Queensland's Marine Operations Base, 64 – 68 Tingira Street, Cairns.

Equipment Type	Quantity
General Purpose Boom	195m
Land Sea Boom (boom water pump and air blower)	60
Pacific Alpha Skimmer and Pump	1
Recovered Oil Container	1
Anchor Kit	1
Sorbent Boom	120 metres
Sorbent Pads	500 pads
Sorbent Mops	150 mops



## **13. Contact List**

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

# Appendix A – Map of Cooktown Port Limits

