



## Community consultation

Maritime Safety Queensland is committed to community engagement and consultation. Current projects under way include:

- **Recreational Boating Discussion Paper – closing date for response forms 2 November, 2007**
- **Marine Industry Survey – closing early 2008**



## New Marine Information Bulletins

Marine Information Bulletins cover important information for the maritime industry, and are also available on the Maritime Safety Queensland website under 'Publications' or by contacting your local Maritime Safety Queensland office. The latest bulletin is:

- **Lifejackets and personal flotation devices frequently asked questions**

# Slick fine handed out

The company that owns a ship responsible for an oil spill in the Norman River at Karumba was handed a stiff fine in the Cairns Magistrate Court.

The company was fined \$35,000 over the incident which occurred in December 2004.

The court heard the 31-metre fishing vessel *Fifeshire* spilled oil into the Norman River twice on the same day.

The spills happened when the ship's engineer accidentally filled the oil recirculation

tanks with diesel causing the first spill, and then overfilled the diesel tanks later in the day.

As a result, it was reported an oil slick 200 metres long and 10 metres wide was left in the river.

The ship's engineer was fined \$7000 for his part in the incident, and the vessel's owner was also fined \$1500 for failing to keep the proper documentation for the *Fifeshire*. No convictions were recorded.



*A slick of diesel oil was found in the Norman River.*

# Notice to 10 metre+ vessels in Gladstone

Those operating vessels of 10 metres or greater within the Gladstone pilotage area are advised that they must report their movements to the local Vessel Traffic Management (VTS).

This applies to boats leaving, moving or entering the pilotage area. With small boat and big ship movements increasing, this safety measure has been introduced to ensure a greater degree of separation between different size vessels in ship navigation areas.

A chartlet, showing the Gladstone pilotage area is available on the Maritime Safety Queensland website. Gladstone VTS can be contacted on VHF channel 13.



# Pasha Bulker tests oil response teams

## Maritime Safety Queensland lends expertise to successful salvage

Nobby's Breakwater was constructed in the first half of the 19th Century to help ships make a safe entrance into Newcastle Harbour. But it did nothing to save the *Pasha Bulker*. The ship battled massive seas before slamming into Nobby's Beach on 8 June 2007 where it lodged helplessly against the extreme weather conditions.

The ship is not the first to run aground there. In 1940 the *TSS Maianbar* broke its towline en route to Sydney and drifted ashore where, unable to be refloated, it was dismantled onsite. *Maianbar* was a 493 tonne steamship, a dwarf compared to the 40,000 tonne lightship displacement of the *Pasha Bulker*, which ran aground during a storm and heavy seas.

The response activated by Newcastle Ports Corporation lasted 25 days and took three salvage attempts amid fears that a potential 700 tonnes of fuel could leak into the

ocean. Eleven Maritime Safety Queensland personnel assisted in preparing equipment for deployment, planning and administration, applying valuable experience from the *Global Peace* oil spill in Gladstone and other incidents in Queensland waters.

While storms and flooding ravaged eastern New South Wales over the June long weekend, representatives from around Australia set about co-ordinating a plan to recover the *Pasha Bulker*. Mark Alen and Peter Finn from Maritime Safety Queensland's Assets and Environment section said one of their biggest challenges was trying to work in an area that had been declared a state of disaster.

"When we got there it was like a war zone... cars were dumped in the street, and poking out of stormwater drains," Mark recalled.

Even feeding the troops was a mission, with shop closures leaving only the local MacDonalds to serve long queues of hungry workers.

The incident's location at a major coastal centre resulted in constant public interest, with sightseers and tourists flocking to the site to witness first hand what they were hearing in news reports.

"In other groundings we've attended we've been in the middle of nowhere. Moving around Newcastle was a nightmare. It felt like everyone from Sydney drove up on the long weekend to get a look....the road turned into a 20 kilometre-long car park."

Peter described going about tasks with the use of a runabout boat to move from one land area to another, simply because it was quicker for salvage crews to go by river instead of road.

Aside from the conditions, the sheer size of the task was uncharted territory. The *Global Peace* spill off Gladstone was a 25 tonne spill, and cost around \$1 million to clean up. The bill for an incident involving 28 times that volume



Above: Maritime Safety Queensland's oil spill response team lend a hand at Newcastle.



Above: The Pasha Bulker aground in Newcastle.

# Never glide past a crocodile

of oil—potentially what crews faced with the *Pasha Bulker's* grounding—would be massive.

The salvors abandoned their first attempt at refloating the ship after movement caused by ocean swell snapped one of the cables connecting it to the tug boat.

A second effort saw the vessel rotated to face deep water, which would allow it to clear the reef and refloat, but was suspended after two oil slicks were detected. Assessment found the spills to be lubricating oil from the damaged propeller, which dissipated offshore with no coastal pollution.

The third and successful attempt at salvaging the *Pasha Bulker* occurred on 2 July, when she was successfully towed off the reef and held offshore for inspection.

Refloating the ship was achieved without pollution, the smooth running of the operation a clear benefit of teamwork established in oil spill response training.

“Knowing people involved in the salvage from previous training exercises helped to build up a working relationship between those from the various departments, governments and states providing assistance,” Mark said.

The effectiveness of the response operation to the grounding and eventual salvage of the *Pasha Bulker* is presently being reviewed under the National Plan.

Captain John Watkinson, General Manager, Maritime Safety Queensland, is chair of the Incident Analysis Team which will assess the adequacy of the response and identify lessons that could be learned.

After temporary repairs, the *Pasha Bulker* commenced her long voyage under tow to Vietnam where attempts to mend her buckles and dents will begin in the coming months. Will fate consign her to the scrap heap—destined to revisit Australian shores after reincarnation into shells for motor vehicles? If the eBay listing holds merit—she attracted bids to \$16 million within an hour of being listed before being removed as an illegitimate sale item—refurbishment could convert her into a hotel, floating restaurant, casino or even a retirement village. But for a ship that's only a year old, it seems fitting that she is given another chance of a life at sea.

It was only a short trip up a northern Queensland river to Brodie's favourite fishing spot.

As his 4.1 metre tinny skipped across the water, powered by a 30 hp outboard, he dreamt of a big day of catching, cleaning, gutting and eating. Rounding a sharp, narrow 'horseshoe' bend, a salt water crocodile about the size of Brodie's boat could be seen sunning itself on the bank.

The motor's roar startled the croc, and it sprung into the river right into the path of the speeding boat. With the impact between animal and boat right beneath the rear seat, Brodie was thrown into the water, as his boat continued on. Suddenly, Brodie felt like the fish and not the fisherman.

With the outboard swivelled to one side the tinny circled. Treading water Brodie attempted to board the boat as it travelled past. He dislocated his shoulder in the attempt and then received serious head injuries from the boat's propeller.

With the offending croc nowhere to be seen, Brodie managed to reach the shore, but tripped and fell on a stick which severely cut his throat and jaw.

Bleeding badly, Brodie knew that if he didn't retrieve his boat before it ran out of petrol, he could perish. After several minutes he managed to kick the boat as it went past, altering the course so it ran into mangroves.

He boarded the boat, returned to the boat ramp and was taken by ambulance to the nearest hospital. The total inventory of his injuries: A fractured and dislocated shoulder, several broken vertebrae, fractured skull, broken jaw, and cuts to his temple throat and jaw. But he was thankful that the knock to the croc's head had spoiled its appetite.

### Lessons

- Above about 25 hp, outboards should be steered by wheel rather than tiller—the powerful torque of bigger motors makes tiller control dangerous. A kill switch is an essential safety item — clipped to your jacket or belt, it cuts the motor if you are thrown away from the helm.
- Even if a skipper is familiar with a section of river, there is always the chance that debris or other obstacles are present. Expect the unexpected. Speed should be reduced when rounding bends where forward visibility is limited.
- Always tell someone where you are going boating, and your expected time of return, particularly if you are headed for an isolated area. It is also recommended that if you are travelling to an isolated area that you carry a marine radio. Coverage for mobile phones is often limited in such areas.
- Do not feed crocodiles – it is illegal and dangerous.



# Campaign pushes for no spills

The statewide *Cleaner Marina* education campaign is being used to great effect in Mooloolaba where the marina is striving to be unique among all harbours in Queensland.

The education campaign which started in August is targeting the cumulative affect of small oil spills during the refuelling of

commercial fishing vessels. The objective is for 'no spills' of oil during refuelling at Mooloolaba Harbour over 12 months.

The campaign is receiving strong support from Brisbane Marine Pilots and businesses who run on-water refuelling operations that service the fishing and commercial fleet based in the harbour. Over 630 fishing vessels and commercial vessels call Mooloolaba home.

Education material such as posters and flyers are being circulated around the wharves, and in some cases directly onto the back decks of trawlers, outlining various procedures that minimise the risks of spillage. A workshop with service providers was held in July.

Maritime Safety Queensland's Acting Area Manager for the Sunshine Coast, Peter Kleinig, said that while oil can also be spilt from bilge pumps, equipment failure and stormwater, the *Cleaner Marina* campaign for Mooloolaba is focussing on refuelling.

"Fuel installations and refuelling are a high risk area in the Sunshine Coast, so we decided to target that area first," he said. "As authorised officers, we have developed a checklist that if followed, dramatically reduces the risk of any spillage.

"Swift reporting is being emphasised if a spill does occur."

Glen Heilmann, Operations and Administration Manager for De Brett Seafood, represents one of several service providers supporting the *Cleaner Marina* campaign. His company refuels up to 20 commercial fishing vessels a month, pumping up to 400,000 litres.

He said that De Brett's placed high priority on the supervision of refuelling and fully supports the 'no spill' target. He said the responsibility for control of oil based products extends well after refuelling is completed and that boat owners should be careful not to overflow their tanks.

"After refuelling if something shifts in the trim of the boat, and tanks are overfilled, then tanks can simply overflow," he said.

"For example, when a boat takes on ice or bait after refuelling, you can have fuel coming out. Or if the boat owner hasn't got their fuel tanks set up correctly, the fuel rushes into another tank and it's out the breather before you can blink."

Glen said that De Brett's policy is not to refuel a boat unless a suitably qualified and experienced person is on board to supervise.

Left: Jason Fisher, Wharf Manager at De Brett's Seafood at Mooloolaba



## Noosa River Plan celebrated

Members of the Noosa Commercial Boatmen's Association know the importance of keeping the Noosa River and its banks in good shape. Their livelihood depends on it.

The association's adoption of a new voluntary code of practice and a quality management system was celebrated earlier this year with a presentation attended by representatives from Queensland Transport, Maritime Safety Queensland and the Noosa Shire Council.

The code and management system, designed in consultation with Maritime Safety Queensland and the Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association, seeks to ensure that in the face of increasing on-water traffic, the Noosa River's values are well protected and conserved.

The "Noosa River Plan" logo – the official mark of accreditation under the Code of Practice – was officially presented to the Association for use on vessels, promotional and public materials and to further promote the Noosa River Plan and its objectives.

Below: Celebrating a milestone for sustainable tourism on the Noosa River from left: Paul Grossman of the Noosa River Boatmen's Association, Noosa Shire Council Mayor Bob Abbott, and Captain Peter Marchbank, Assistant Harbour Master.





## Boating infrastructure enters pipeline



Above: More boat ramps are on the way as part of the government's \$50 million boating infrastructure program.

Queensland Transport recently announced the endorsement of a \$50 million program that will deliver new boating infrastructure projects around the state.

Over the next two years Queensland Transport will work with local governments to deliver new and upgraded boat ramps, pontoons and the continuation of long-term dredging strategies around Queensland.

The projects scheduled include 14 new boat ramps, 16 upgraded boat ramps and six new pontoons.

Main Roads, port authorities and Maritime Safety Queensland's hydrographic services will partner with Queensland Transport's Services Division to plan and deliver the project over the next two years.

## Derelict vessels removed

Two heavily deteriorated vessels were removed from the Mooloolah River in August as part of Maritime Safety Queensland's continuing campaign to rid Queensland waterways of derelict and abandoned boats.

A giant crane was used to remove the *Sea Quest*, which had spent 19 months rotting in Lock Laws in the Kawana Waters canal precinct. A week earlier the heavily corroded steel yacht the *Mickolette* was removed from the Kawana Waters Marina.

A local man had spent nearly a year trying to locate the owner of the *Sea Quest* after he agreed to allow the boat to stay on his mooring while the original owner finalised its sale.

Following the sale, the new owner stripped the vessel of all its valuable fittings and then disappeared, leaving the owner of the mooring with unpaid mooring fees, a dilapidated hulk and an unexpected legal issue.

The mooring owner and his neighbour took it upon themselves to pump out and maintain the vessel to minimise the risk of its sinking. After becoming aware of the growing risk posed by the *Sea Quest*, Maritime Safety Queensland tried to locate the owner without success.

By exercising the rights of ownership over the vessel through regularly boarding it, pumping it out and even moving it, and in the absence of the current owner, the mooring owner and his neighbours became legal owners of the vessel. They therefore became responsible for the removal of the *Sea Quest* from the water and eventually agreed to fund its removal.

The General Manager of Maritime Safety Queensland, Captain John Watkinson, warns others of the important lessons to be learned from this case.

"Firstly, owners of unseaworthy ships will be held accountable for their actions. Secondly, the general public should be very careful when entering into commercial arrangements with owners of vessels that are a clear risk of becoming derelict.

"State legislation empowers Maritime Safety Queensland to deal with unseaworthy or abandoned vessels that are, or could become, a hazard to navigation or a marine pollution risk.

"In the case of the *Sea Quest* the people involved acted responsibly and cooperated with officers from Maritime Safety Queensland which meant the State didn't have to resort to using its legal powers to resolve the issue.



Above: A crane removes the remains of the *Sea Quest* from the Mooloolah River.

"Maritime Safety Queensland thanks the two gentlemen concerned for their understanding of the situation they had got themselves into and their co-operation in ridding the waterways of this vessel."

General Manager John Watkinson said "the *Sea Quest* exercise was an example of people accepting their responsibilities, without the need for formal legal action, and hence minimal public exposure to costs."



## 406 EPIRB is now wiser purchase

With less than 18 months before the 121.5/243 satellite service for EPIRBs is turned off, it is now not only safer but more financially prudent to purchase superior 406 MHz EPIRBs.

There are significant advantages in converting early to the 406MHz range of EPIRBs, as they emit a stronger signal, have a longer continuous signal battery (48 hours) and considerably reduce the search area. A smaller search area means quicker rescue.



Unwanted EPIRBs, including redundant 121.5 models, can now be disposed in the collection bins at any Battery World store around Australia.

It is critical to dispose of EPIRBs responsibly to avoid accidental activations.

## Commercial log book improved

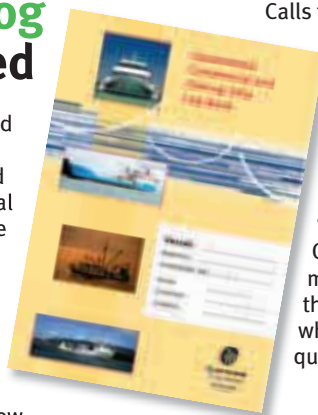
The new improved Queensland Commercial and Fishing Ship Log Book is now available and is an ideal tool for professional mariners who want to improve the safety of their vessels.

Owners and masters can use the Log Book to track and record all required periodic activities and events relating to the safe operation of their ship and crew training requirements.

And a well maintained log book will be a welcome sight for Maritime Safety Queensland's marine safety officers and enforcement partners who routinely monitor vessels.

The latest edition features significant changes and is best used alongside other ship documents such as manuals and plans.

Log books can be purchased at Maritime Safety Queensland's regional offices or online at [www.msq.qld.gov.au](http://www.msq.qld.gov.au).



## Weather with you – by phone

The Maritime Weather Service provides an instantaneous method for boaters throughout Queensland to check the most critical element of their voyage – the weather.



The voice-automated system gives callers regional-specific information for individual areas from Cooktown to Coolangatta, and is updated frequently every 20-30 minutes directly from the Bureau of Meteorology.

There is also a specific 'marine warnings' number, ideal for mobile phone-toting boaters to keep up with changing weather patterns.

Maritime Safety Queensland recently upgraded the computer system behind this service to keep pace with increasing demand, and to ensure the system remains at the cost of a local call from anywhere in Queensland.

Calls to the Maritime Weather Service have grown from 10,000 calls per month in late 2003 to an average over 30,000 calls per month peaking last month at an all time high of over 40,000 calls

Maritime Safety Queensland installed the phone system "in-house" at the Pinkenba Operations base in Brisbane, a move that significantly decreased the cost of providing the service while maintaining the system's quality and accuracy.

At a cost of a local call, be safe and be prepared by ringing the Maritime Weather Service.

**1300 360 426** for all of Queensland

**1300 360 427** for marine warnings

**1300 360 428** for south-east Queensland

## New Moreton Bay chart released

The Manly to Mooloolaba Boating Safety Chart (called MB1) is the most popular of the nine charts developed and sold by Maritime Safety Queensland.

Edition Three, released in July, includes additional features designed to educate and assist recreational boaters.

The chart covers from Manly Boat Harbour northward to Mooloolaba Boat Harbour and easterly to 153° 41'E at a scale of 1:115000. It now displays ship navigation areas associated with the Port of Brisbane, safe recommended courses for small craft, and information about the dangers of travelling in designated shipping channels.

With shipping movements into Brisbane expected to increase significantly in coming years, using the recommended small craft courses on the chart and the associated waypoints will make for safer boating in the bay.

Some of the courses run just outside the deep water shipping channel, but are still deep enough for safe navigation. The chart also refers to Notices to Mariners on the Maritime Safety Queensland website where boaters can find the latest updates to their chart.

The reverse side features enlargements (1:15,000) of boat harbours and marinas at Mooloolaba, Scarborough, Newport Waterways, Cabbage Tree Creek and Manly; and Kedron Brook Floodway, Caboolture River, and Pine River (1:30000).

This edition combines rules and regulations from several government agencies that apply to recreational boating on the waterways, including international visitor information, gazetted waters, speed limited areas, restricted areas or activities and marine environment.

All charts are available from selected Queensland Transport customer service centres (see Maritime Safety Queensland website for details) and map/chart retailers or some chandleries.

