



Seascape

January–March 2010 Volume 7 Issue 1

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Toward 
Tomorrow's Queensland

 Queensland
Government

From the helm

This edition of Seascope sees the start of another year. It also marks the end of an era with Captain John Watkinson moving on from his role as General Manager of Maritime Safety Queensland to take on other projects as part of his transition to retirement planning. One of these projects includes providing expert advice on aspects of the search for the Centaur so his skills and experience remain in high demand within Government.

John is a Master Mariner who commenced his career at sea after taking up a cadetship with Australian National Line (ANL) in 1968. He rose to the position of Master in 1977 and, after completing his service at sea commenced duty with the Queensland Public Service as Marine Pilot, Weipa in 1983.

He has had extensive experience in executive management roles within the Queensland Government and has successfully managed many new programs and innovative service delivery projects. These initiatives have substantially assisted and nurtured both the State's commercial and recreational boating sectors. He has also been an active contributor to reforms and initiatives in the national maritime sector including assisting with the development and implementation of the National Maritime Safety Committee.

His advice in emergency situations has helped guide government decision making on strategic maritime issues at all levels and he has successfully led the response to numerous serious ship groundings and oil spills which have threatened Queensland's marine and coastal environment — including the response to the 'Pacific Adventurer' oil spill which affected beaches in southeast Queensland in March 2009.

John was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2008 for services to the maritime industry and maritime safety.

With John's departure, the role of Acting General Manager of Maritime Safety Queensland is being undertaken by Patrick Quirk, who also has considerable experience in the maritime industry.

Patrick commenced duty with the Queensland Public Service as a marine pilot in 1986 and served in both operational and management roles in the former Department of Harbours

and Marine. In 1992 Patrick joined the Australian Maritime Safety Authority in Canberra as General Manager - Ship Safety. He returned to the Queensland public sector in 2000 and since then has had extensive experience in the port and logistics sectors as well as a period with Treasury.

He is a Master Mariner and has a degree in Business Studies. He also has a five metre 'tinny' which — like many of us — he enjoys using but often finds difficulty in finding the time!

Holiday boating



Christmas will be over by the time this edition appears on your computer but the holiday season and summer still have some time to go, which means Queensland's waterways will remain busy.

Many of the incidents that occur on our waterways can be avoided and are often caused through skippers being unprepared. Boating is not an everyday activity; in fact, most boat owners only use their boat a few times a year. Given the infrequency with which they use their boats, it is easy for them to forget basic safety and check procedures, regulations, skipper's obligations and the maintenance needs of their vessels.

It is essential that skippers refresh their memories every time they venture onto the waterways. They should not just assume that all of the required safety gear is on board and in working condition, that their flares have not expired and that their batteries have a full charge. The most common calls for assistance to volunteer rescue groups

are because of flat batteries. Taking a boat out with a battery that, while it may start the motor, is not fully charged will invariably lead to problems which could have adverse consequences for safety.

Over the holiday period and at all times, please think of other boat owners and show some courtesy towards them. Please think about the wash your vessel creates and how it can affect other boats, and think about what and where you discharge waste, be mindful about litter blowing overboard or leaving your fishing line behind.

If you apply some simple rules and think before you act you can have a safe boating year in 2010.

Safe boating

Patrick Quirk

Acting General Manager

Q150 raffle winners drawn

In the October – December 2009 issue of Seascope we showcased Maritime Safety Queensland's involvement in the state-wide celebrations for Queensland's 150 years of separation from New South Wales and the establishment of Queensland as a state and government in its own right.

As a part of this celebration, Maritime Safety Queensland donated a restored AGA LBTB 140 Buoy Lantern and AGA VSAA 10 Sunvalve valued at \$5,000 to the Queensland Maritime Museum to raffle and raise valuable funds to preserve our maritime history.

The lantern is a gas powered 'omni-directional' marine signal lantern and was one of many that were used to mark shipping channels in Queensland ports from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. It is manufactured from a combination of copper, bronze, gun metal and brass. Today, we use modern technology such as solar to power navigation aids.

The winners of the raffle were drawn at the Queensland Maritime Museum on 25 September 2009. The raffle was drawn by Hugh Harkins and Arthur Diack, both of whom are retired senior managers with Department of Harbours and Marine and Maritime Safety Queensland respectively.

Congratulations go to Gabriel Smith from Boonah who took out the major prize. Our congratulations also go out to the runner-up prize winners; Glen Berry, Matthew Osborne, Matthew Hanrahan and Damien Malouf who all walked away with a copy of 'Lighthouses of Australia, Images from the End of an Era' valued at \$95.

Many thanks to everyone who supported the Queensland Maritime Museum by either buying or selling tickets in the raffle. Nearly \$8,500 was raised which will go directly towards projects including:

- restoration of the Carpentaria Lightship
- display of a very rare Bernard and Barbier light pedestal circa 1890
- fabricating two twin power operated 20mm Oerlikon anti-aircraft gun mounts aboard Diamantina
- preparing interpretive displays of Forcefull
- installing electrical equipment to enable visitors to rotate one of Diamantina's main engines
- new storage facility for the Museum's large wooden boat collection
- reinstating the depth charge magazine aboard Diamantina and opening it to visitor access.

For those who missed out on the opportunity to enter the raffle, commemorative charts of Moreton Bay are still available for \$55 through the Queensland Maritime Museum. You can pick up a copy as part of a visit to the museum. More information is available on their website at www.maritimemuseum.com.au.



Above: (left to right) previous Maritime Safety Queensland General Manager John Watkinson and Queensland Maritime Museum CEO Ian Jempson with the lantern.

Workshop becomes annual event

On Tuesday 6th October 2009, the BoatSafe Training Association of Queensland held a workshop at the Volunteer Marine Rescue Association's facility on the Southport spit.

The workshop attracted 35 participants representative of BoatSafe Training Organisations, BoatSafe Training Providers, marine teachers and Marine Queensland.

Maritime Safety Queensland gave a number of presentations and supplied a panel comprising of staff from its central and Gold Coast regional office to address a diverse range of safety related questions posed by participants.

Important outcomes from the workshop will be referred to the BoatSafe Advisory Panel for consideration and used to inform Maritime Safety Queensland's review of the BoatSafe licence training and assessment scheme.

The 2009 workshop follows the success of a similar conference in 2008, and Gary McConnell, President of the BoatSafe Training Association Queensland has confirmed the workshop will become an annual event.

'It is extremely important for industry and government to continue to work together to maintain Queensland's competency based licence training and assessment scheme as one of the best within Australia', Mr McConnell said.

Mr McConnell wishes to thank the sponsors I. C. Frith and Club Marine and acknowledge Maritime Safety Queensland's contribution to a very successful workshop.



Above: Boatsafe Training Association of Queensland President Gary McConnell speaks at the workshop.

National agencies present united front in Western Australia

On 21 August 2009, the Montara Wellhead Platform, situated more than 200 kilometres off Western Australia's Kimberly coastline, suffered a well-head accident on the sea floor below the rig.

Oil escaped to the surface and continued to do so until an intercept well successfully plugged the leak in early November.

Under the arrangements of the 'National Plan to Combat Pollution of the Sea from Oil and Other Noxious and Hazardous Substances' (the National Plan), Maritime Safety Queensland provided various personnel to support the response operation from its commencement.

These personnel, who comprise Queensland's National Response Team (NRT) members, are based in various regions throughout the state and may be called on to assist with oil spill response operations in various roles, depending on the individual's expertise and experience.

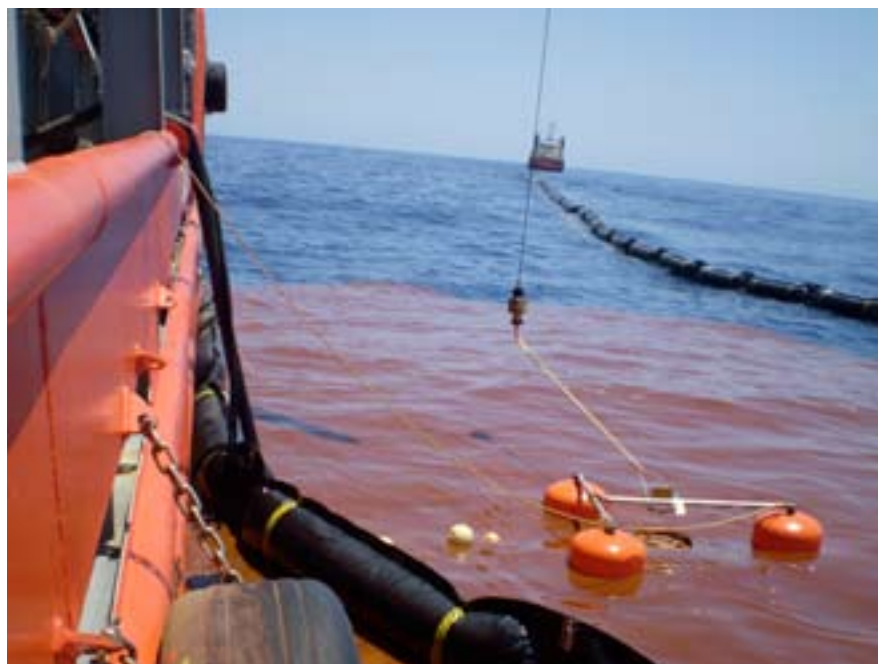
As at the end of November, 15 personnel from Maritime Safety Queensland had been deployed to support the response operation. Some deployed personnel worked multiple rotations as the response effort continued.

These personnel were required to work in numerous roles ranging from administration, logistics and planning roles in the incident control centre in Darwin, to performing operational roles for the recovery of the oil onboard response vessels at sea, as well as conducting aerial surveillance operations.

Other agencies involved in the response effort included the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA), Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre (AMOSC), Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) Western Australia, Sydney Ports Corporation, New South Wales Maritime, Marine Safety Victoria, Newcastle Port Corporation and Darwin Port Corporation.

Working partnerships between Maritime Safety Queensland and these agencies have been strengthened as a result of Maritime Safety Queensland's involvement with the response operation, noting the opportunity to train or exercise together is often limited.

The remote location of the Montara Wellhead Platform provided a significant challenge for the response personnel to gain access to the site. Deployed personnel were required to fly



Above: Oil spill equipment in action in Western Australia.

from their respective 'home base' to Darwin, then transfer to Truscott operations base in north-west Western Australia, before conducting a helicopter transfer to a oil processing ship (such as the Jabiru Venture), before finally being craned onboard the recovery vessel via a personnel transfer net.

In the tropical conditions, deployed personnel worked in a difficult environment, providing response support in heat in excess of 50 degrees (C) whilst at sea.

As at mid November 2009, approximately 820,000 litres of oil and oily water had been recovered from the sea. The concentration of oil recovered was generally of a high percentage (which has been able to be recycled and returned to a neighbouring rig), which reflects the effectiveness of specialist training, the skills and professionalism of all of the response personnel involved.

In mid November, focus shifted to recovering weathered oil in the vicinity of offshore reefs and ensuring no oil impacted the shoreline. This was done utilising specialist oil recovery vessels known as 'Marcos', as well as other vessels continuing containment boom and recovery operations.

The response operation was terminated on 3 December 2009 with no oil impacting the shoreline or adjacent reefs, which is a testament to the efforts of all concerned.

An extensive monitoring program will be implemented to measure the potential long-term impact on various local fisheries, wildlife and the marine environment into the future.

The 'real-time' training and experience gained by participating in such a large scale event is considered invaluable. Maritime Safety Queensland's involvement provides an enhanced capability to respond to significant incidents that may occur on Queensland's coastline, as well as an increased ability to support response operations where the National Plan is invoked. The provision of support personnel also reinforces Maritime Safety Queensland's commitment to the prevention of pollution of the seas and provides an opportunity to apply 'lessons learnt' to future training and exercises coordinated by Maritime Safety Queensland each year.

South Passage returns to south-east Queensland

South Passage, a Queensland tall ship, was purpose built in 1993 for The Sail Training Association of Queensland Inc, a non-profit organisation who strive to make a difference in the lives of young people.

South Passage is a 100 foot long gaff rigged schooner based at Manly. South Passage returns to south east Queensland on 24 January 2010 after being in NSW waters since mid October 2009.

Returning to Brisbane is the culmination of her annual sailing calendar. South Passage voyages north to Cairns in winter and south as far as Wollongong in summer. Her main purpose is to take school groups sailing, with a typical voyage being three to five days long. The ship anchors at quiet beaches, inlets and islands along the way. Peter Grace, a board member of The Sail Training Association of Queensland Inc said that the target market for passengers aboard the South Passage is 14-17 year olds. 'A full ship consists of 22 students, two teachers and six South Passage crew, and the experience has been described as an outdoor education at sea', Mr Grace said.

South Passage is also available for day sails and voyages for the general public. There are five planned public voyages each year varying in duration from three to eight days.

South Passage will be in for a busy time when she returns to Queensland with two cruises on the Brisbane River scheduled for Australia Day. She will then go up on the hard for her annual maintenance and inspection. During her time up on the hard, most of her removable deck gear will be offloaded and inspected by a range of people including electricians, gas inspectors, Maritime Safety Queensland and the Australian Marine Safety Authority. The ship's single IVECO engine will also be serviced at this time.

The Sail Training Association of Queensland Inc has also recently received a grant of \$15,000 from the Community Gaming Fund as a major contribution to anti-fouling, repainting the hull and the deck.

South Passage will then resume voyages and day sails from the William Gunn jetty at Manly. She can often be seen sailing around Tangalooma, Peel Island, North Stradbroke Island and Moreton Bay. At Easter, South Passage will be sailing in the cruising class of the Brisbane to Gladstone yacht race. For the fourth year in a row she has been chartered by Womenrace4 Redkite — a women's charity raising money to support people suffering from cancer. The team has finished second in the past two years, and are determined to emulate their win in 2006.

After Easter, a general public sail back from Gladstone to Brisbane will be held and shortly afterwards she will start voyages to take her back up the coast to Cairns.

The Sail Training Association of Queensland Inc are always on the lookout for people to join them on their South Passage adventures. A normal crew has three paid positions; a skipper (USL Master 4 minimum), a sailing master (USL Master 5 minimum) and a cook. The three watch leaders are volunteers who have completed a training course on sailing South Passage safely. For volunteers and crew, sailing experience is useful but an ability to work well with teenagers is essential.

If you would like further information on South Passage, you can visit www.southpassage.org.au or phone The Sail Training Association of Queensland Inc. Manly office on 07 3893 3777.



Contract renewed with Brisbane Marine Pilots

Maritime Safety Queensland recently negotiated a new contract with Brisbane Marine Pilots Pty Ltd (BMP) for the delivery of pilotage services in the Port of Brisbane.

The contract with BMP had been in place since 1 January 1989. The new contract between the state and BMP commenced on 1 January 2010.

The new contract includes revised lease arrangements relating to the Mooloolaba pilot station and jetty facility. Pilot transfers to/from ships are conducted by pilot boat from the pilot station.

The contract ensures certainty for providing pilotage services for ships trading with the fast growing Port of Brisbane. Jim Huggett, Acting Director Pilotage and Hydrographic Services Maritime Safety Queensland said 'Maritime Safety Queensland is committed to providing safe, efficient pilotage services across the state, now and into the future.'

Pilotage services assist in the prevention of marine incidents and safeguard the pristine marine environment of Moreton Bay as well as critical marine infrastructure within the port.

The delivery of pilotage services across the state is only one of Maritime Safety Queensland's responsibilities and is provided either directly, or by contract, as is the case in the Port of Brisbane.



Be prepared for a tsunami threat

Tsunami Facts

Tsunamis are usually the result of an undersea earthquake that results in a sudden rise or fall of a section of the earth's crust under or near the ocean. This earthquake creates an explosive vertical motion that can displace the overlying water column, creating a rise or fall in the level of the ocean above. This rise or fall in sea level is the initial impulse that generates tsunami waves.

Tsunamis are enormously powerful and can reach speeds of up to 950km/h. Unlike a normal wind wave you would see at the beach, a tsunami won't quickly recede and can inundate the shore for an extended period. This is how it got the name tsunami, which in Japanese means "tidal wave", because it looks more like a very quickly rising tide than a breaking beach wave.

In Australia, tsunamis are recorded about once every two years and can vary in size and severity. Most are small and present no threat of land inundation. However even a small tsunami can be very dangerous to swimmers and mariners.

Smaller tsunamis can generate strong and unusual tides and currents; rapid and unpredictable changes in water level; and abnormal waves that could endanger coastal users and damage moored boats.

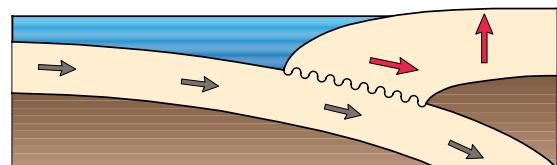
Larger tsunamis could result in coastal inundation and potentially pose a serious threat to lives and property.

With a coastline stretching 6973km from Coolangatta around Cape York and into the Gulf of Carpentaria, and scores of offshore islands, Queensland is exposed to numerous potential sources of tsunami within the Pacific Ocean.

Over the last 15 years, tsunamis recorded along the Queensland coast have created relatively small water variations. However, these events would have generated dangerous rips and currents.

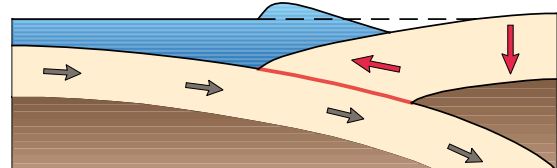
In Queensland, the largest tsunami since European settlement caused water level variations of about 0.6 of a metre, causing destructive currents along the coast.

Damage to boats and coastal infrastructure along Australia's eastern seaboard occurred as a result of the 1960 tsunami generated off the coast of Chile.



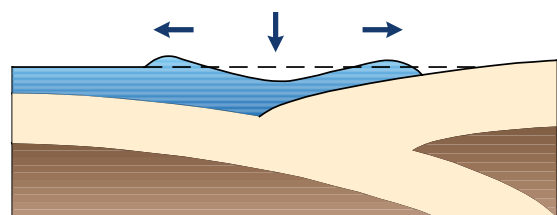
Prior to undersea earthquake

This is a picture of the lower tectonic plate dragging against the upper plate, causing stress.



At time of undersea earthquake

Stress on the tectonic plates causes the upper plate to rebound to its initial position, causing tsunami.



After undersea earthquake

The tsunami moves outwards across the ocean.

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