



Seascape

April-June 2011 Volume 8 Issue 2

From the helm

It is fair to say that over the last few months Maritime Safety Queensland has been through some interesting challenges along with the rest of Queensland.

With an unprecedented number of flooding events and cyclones (see page 14) occurring in short succession earlier in the year, many of our business continuity processes have been put to the test.

You can read about one of our most important business continuity accomplishments with the successful temporary handover of REEFVTS from Townsville to Hay Point on page 4.

The past few months have also seen many boating infrastructure projects come to fruition (see pages 5 to 7), and there are still many more exciting projects yet to be finalised.

The Gold Coast Sand Bypass System, an engineering success story which has pumped more than 10 million cubic metres of sand to date, reaches a milestone in May, turning 25 (see page 8).

These success stories would not be possible if it weren't for Maritime Safety Queensland's dedicated staff. A fine example of commitment to marine safety was recognised earlier this year when Russell Witt, Regional Director (Gold Coast) received an Australia Day Achievement Award (see page 4).

While on the subject of staff, I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our new Minister, Craig Wallace who took on the position of Minister for Main Roads, Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure in February.

Minister Wallace will be taking on Ministerial and Parliamentary responsibilities for all of Maritime Safety Queensland's varied functions and responsibilities.

We congratulate Minister Wallace on his appointment and look forward to working with him in his new role.

Remember, You're the Skipper, You're Responsible.

Safe boating

Patrick Quirk
General Manager

Front cover:
A ship departs Townsville via the sea leads.

Culture campaign targets unsafe boaties

A project run by Maritime Safety Queensland on the Gold Coast to measure vessel activity and to identify and target unsafe behaviours is already having an impact on the region's boating safety culture.

The Gold Coast Boating Safety Initiative has completed the initial stage of research and data collection with vessel activity counts at 10 different sites around the Gold Coast waterways over a four month period. Statistics from the counts identified levels and types of boating activity and the impact on boating behaviour.

The second stage of the project involves interaction with the public through face-to-face awareness programs, safety messages promoted through local media, and targeted enforcement activities.

By working with the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, an increased, highly visible presence on the water has been made possible.

To date, 17 joint patrols have been completed, with over 700 vessels intercepted.

Maritime Safety Queensland plans to deliver an ongoing education program at 12 boat ramps around the Gold Coast waterways as the third part of the project.

Local Australian Volunteer Coast Guard and Volunteer Marine Rescue groups have accepted an invitation to participate in this program, providing boating safety key messages and to help promote their own organisation.



Above: Look out for displays such as these at Gold Coast boat ramps.

Tinnie and Tackle kicks off boat show season

The 37th annual Tinnie and Tackle, 4WD and Outdoor Show kicked off the boat show season this month, being held at the RNA Showgrounds from Friday 8th April to Sunday 10 April.

The event has maintained a strong focus on the smaller boat market and continues to grow in size of patron attendance and number of exhibitors.

The event's popularity hit an all time high in 2010 with attendance figures of 35,357 eclipsing the previous year's record attendance of 31,640. This year's attendance numbers remained steady at 34,654.

Maritime Safety Queensland participated in the event, holding a display for the duration of the show where staff answered questions and provided advice to patrons.

This year in a first for the event, Maritime Safety Queensland shared the stand with officers from the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol, which was of great benefit to patrons as the stand acted as a one-stop-shop for all boating and fishing enquiries.



Above: Maritime Safety Queensland's stand at this year's show.

Night shipping returns to Townsville

The Port of Townsville has resumed risk-managed deep-draft night shipping movements for the first time since Cyclone Yasi destroyed the port's off-shore navigation aids.

Maritime Safety Queensland General Manager Patrick Quirk said this was an important milestone in the state's cyclone recovery process.

"We fully appreciate that world trade doesn't sleep so the first night arrival of a deep draft bulk carrier is a significant step towards returning the port to full operations," Mr Quirk said.

"Maritime Safety Queensland and the port authority worked hard to restore navigation aids and normal daylight shipping operations recommenced within days of the cyclone passing."

"However the loss of two vital navigation lights set up outside the port to guide ships into the main channel meant it was unsafe for deep draft ships to enter at night."

"We are committed to completing those difficult repairs as soon as possible but in the interim Maritime Safety Queensland has been conducting trials using temporary lights."

"As a result we are now ready to accept night arrivals of a bulk carrier."

Mr Quirk said the interim arrangement would be carefully risk managed.

"Every ship will be assessed strictly on a case-by-case basis taking into account factors such as vessel type and tide and weather conditions."

"Meanwhile Maritime Safety Queensland will continue to actively pursue the permanent restoration of the sea channel lead lights in conjunction with the contractor, with a planned delivery date of mid-May," Mr Quirk said.

A multi-million dollar contract to restore the vital navigation aids to the Port of Townsville was recently awarded to local coastal and civil engineering company Pacific Marine Group.

"Preparations are already underway for the construction of high-precision off-shore navigation lights to lead ships to the port's main sea channel," Mr Quirk said.

"Townsville is one of the state's key trading ports and will play a key role in Queensland's recovery."

"Maritime Safety Queensland officers, along with port corporation and the Royal Australian Navy, worked tirelessly under extreme conditions to restore temporary navigation aids to the Port of Townsville and help reopen the port to shipping just days after the cyclone had passed.

"Ensuring the lights are restored correctly will be no easy task. But we're confident we've got the right team to get the work done."

"It's expected the project may take around eight weeks or so, weather permitting."

Townsville is the principal port in north Queensland and services a large area that includes the mining community at Mount Isa and the Greenvale nickel refinery.

The main imports are refined fuel products, nickel ore, motor vehicles, cement and general cargo.

Exports include raw sugar, copper and zinc concentrates refined lead, copper, zinc and nickel, high analysis fertiliser in bulk, molasses, frozen beef, and live cattle.

Townsville is also a regular port of call for cruise ships and naval vessels.



Above: Townsville sea channel leads suffered considerable damage during STC Yasi
Inset: The leads have been temporarily restored to allow night shipping through the channel.

Waterways safety work earns Oz Day Award

The Transport and Main Roads (TMR) Australia Day Achievement Awards is an annual event that recognises employees who make a difference both in and out of the workplace. The awards provide an opportunity for the department to acknowledge and reward individuals who provide exemplary service to TMR and who commit their time and expertise outside the workplace for the good of the community.

This year 24 staff from across the department were recognised for their outstanding individual achievements, including Maritime Safety Queensland's Russell Witt.

Russell was nominated for the award by his Maritime Safety Queensland colleagues for a number of reasons including the following:

- Russell has committed the last 20 years of his career to keeping Gold Coast waterways safe as the Gold Coast Regional Manager/Director for Maritime Safety Queensland.
- Russell's long presence on the Gold Coast, both on a personal and professional basis, has meant that the department's clients and stakeholders are confident that Russell is aware of local issues and the impact of government initiatives.
- Recent population and boating growth in the region, including exciting tourism operations like jet boat rides and other thrill adventures, has presented Russell with a unique set of challenges.
- Russell is committed to maritime safety and is a strong advocate for sustainable solutions.
- As a regulator, the decisions Russell makes when granting approvals have an impact on water safety across the whole state.
- Russell maintains strong relationships with external stakeholders and is often called upon to provide input on projects and proposals that will shape the future of the Gold Coast and its waterways.
- Russell has built a team of motivated and enthusiastic staff and has led them through multiple changes in the workplace, always ensuring that the MSQ Gold Coast regional office is able to adapt and address emerging maritime safety and community issues.

On receiving the award, Russell said that he "was led to his current role through a love of boating and the Gold Coast waterways, and his desire to make a positive contribution towards ensuring the enjoyment and safety of all who use them". He also said that he "was humbled, but honoured, to have his efforts in doing so recognised through the presentation of the award" Congratulations Russell.



Above: Russell Witt was presented with his award by Dave Stewart, Director-General of Transport and Main Roads.

Yasi test for REEFVTS

With Cyclone Yasi bearing down on the north Queensland coast earlier this month, and predictions that it would cross the coast anywhere between Cairns and Townsville, the recently-constructed Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) centre in Townsville put its backup procedures to the test and handed over the operation of REEFVTS from Townsville to Hay Point for the duration of the cyclone.

Handing over the operation of REEFVTS involves the switching of sensor information (AIS, radar, Inmarsat C messaging and VHF communications) from the Townsville REEFVTS Centre to Hay Point. VTS staff at Hay Point (with reinforcements from Townsville ahead of the cyclone) maintained the continuity of the REEFVTS ship traffic information and navigation assistance from Hay Point.

After the cyclone had passed, REEFVTS operations were handed back to Townsville following procedures which had been established in a joint effort between Maritime Safety Queensland and Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

"The handover of REEFVTS to Hay Point VTS and back to Townsville VTS went extremely well. This was the first severe Category 5 cyclone to threaten the Townsville REEFVTS centre and we are working on improvements for future severe weather events" said Mark Anderson, Acting Manager (Vessel Traffic Management).

During and immediately after the cyclone, information from several AIS sensors and VHF communications were lost, mainly due to power outages and some network issues. Ships were advised by AUSCOAST WARNINGS of a reduced service and alternative communications used until power was restored.



Boat ramps a 'shore' hit

The Department of Transport and Main Roads through Maritime Safety Queensland continues to work in partnership with local managing authorities (local government and port authorities) to build quality recreational boating facilities throughout the state.

The Queensland Government's Boating Infrastructure Capital and Maintenance Program provides for new and upgraded facilities such as boat ramps, pontoons, and floating walkways.

The government also provides funds for dredging projects to maintain adequate depths in channels used for recreational boating in State Boat Harbours and other high use waterways throughout the state.

South East Queensland

Recently completed projects

- Manly Boat Harbour – new community sports pontoon, to assist disabled persons to go boating (completed November 2010)
- One Mile (Dunwich) – new dual-level, multi-use pontoon (completed November 2010)
- Reconstruction of the Uhlmann Road boat ramp at Burpengary (completed November 2010)
- Cavill Avenue – new pontoon (completed December 2010)
- West Crab Island Channel maintenance dredging (completed December 2010)
- North Channel, Gold Coast Broadwater maintenance dredging (completed February 2011)
- South Channel, Gold Coast Broadwater maintenance dredging (completed early March 2011)



Right: Manly Boat Harbour, community sports pontoon during construction.



Above: Left, Uhlmann Road boat ramp, Burpengary, before reconstruction and right, newly reconstructed.

Current projects

- Jock Kennedy Park, Russell Island boat ramp (estimated completion June 2011)
- Gold Coast Seaway entrance dredging, a joint initiative with Gold Coast City Council (estimated to commence in mid 2011)
- Wellington Point Queuing beach, to be located between the south boat ramp and the jetty (estimated completion June 2011)
- Murlong Crescent – new floating walkway (estimated completion July 2011)
- Paradise Point – new floating walkway (estimated completion July 2011)
- Jacobs Well Channel dredging (estimated completion August 2011)
- Port Drive Whyte Island – new pontoon (estimated completion August 2011)
- Maroochydhore Cod Hole – new floating walkway (estimated completion September 2011)
- Beachmere floating walkway (estimated completion November 2011)
- Bellara floating walkway (estimated completion November 2011)

Southern region

Recently completed projects

- River Heads (Bingham) Hervey Bay – rebuild of single lane boat ramp (completed December 2010)

Current projects

- Branyan Sandy Hook Park (Burnett River) – new two lane boat ramp (estimated completion June 2011)
- Riverview (Bundaberg) – rebuild of two lane boat ramp (estimated completion mid 2011)
- Bundaberg, Queen Street – new floating walkway (estimated completion September 2011)
- Buxton, Power Street – new pontoon (estimated completion December 2011)

Central region

Recently completed projects

- Widening of boat ramp at Town of 1770 to three lanes (completed September 2010)
- Rosslyn Bay (Anchor Drive) – rebuild of four lane boat ramp and new floating walkway (completed December 2010)

Current projects

- Freshwater Point (Sarina) – new single lane boat ramp (estimated completion June 2011)



Above: Left, Anchor Drive, Rosslyn Bay during construction in October 2010 and right, completed in December 2010.

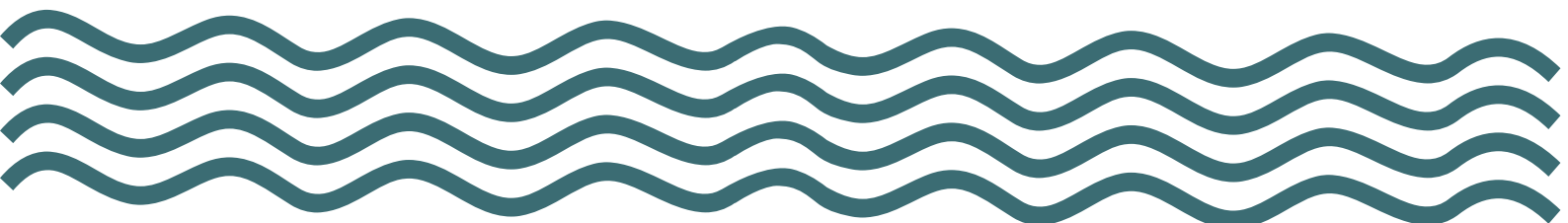
Northern region

Recently completed projects

- Annie River, Marina Plains – new single lane boat ramp (completed October 2010)
- Engineer's Jetty Thursday Island – new multi-use pontoon (completed January 2011)

Current projects

- Townsville Railway Estate, Barnicle Street – new two lane boat ramp and floating walkway style pontoon located upstream from the existing ramp (completion due May 2011)
- Mourilyan Boat Harbour – new three lane boat ramp, pontoon and breakwater (completion due September 2011)
- Starcke River – new single lane boat ramp (estimated completion October 2011)



New pontoon a boaties boon

The new \$2 million multi-use pontoon at Engineers Jetty on Thursday Island is a critical piece of infrastructure for the Thursday Island community. The facility opened for public use once the project reached practical completion on 27 January 2011.

The pontoon will benefit the island's ferry service as well as recreational boaties, a great outcome given that the main mode of transport in the Torres Strait is by boat.

Funding for this project was secured in January 2009 with the planning works commencing shortly after.

To ensure the best result was achieved for all potential users of the facility, extensive consultation was carried out with key stakeholders and user groups during the design and planning phase of the project.

The pontoon is DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant and provides all-tide dinghy access, increased berthing space and safer access for the aged and disabled users. The new pontoon also caters for use by commercial vessels including the local ferry operators.

The new facility is owned by the department and managed by Ports North on behalf of the department.

The project was funded by the department from Maritime Safety Queensland's Boating Infrastructure Capital and Maintenance Program, and from Passenger Transport Division's DDA Public Transport Infrastructure Upgrade Program.

Above and right: The newly constructed pontoon at Engineer's Jetty, Thursday Island.

