

In the Zone

Focus on safety on Gladstone Harbour

Message from the Gladstone Regional Harbour Master

Welcome to edition twelve of *In the Zone*, focusing on safety on Gladstone Harbour.

While it may not have been classified as a cyclone, ex-tropical cyclone "Oswald" displayed many of the characteristics of one when it visited the Gladstone region recently. Gale force winds and extremely large quantities of rain lashed the port for several days. The system arrived with such an unexpected intensity and remained for so long, testing all users of the harbour and led to my closing the port to all traffic for a lengthy period of time. I ask you all to spare a moment to think of those who have lost vessels as a result of the past few weeks' weather.

The sudden and intense arrival of this extreme weather meant there was not time to implement the extreme weather (cyclone) contingency plan for the port. For the construction fleet, there was no time to proceed to shelter positions and if vessels did not have berths in the marina, they had to be secured as best as they could where they were. Fortunately, this succeeded with no vessels breaking their moorings and all remaining secured for the duration of the blow. There were uncomfortable moments for some personnel, who had to remain overnight on barges or vessels that were not designed for this, due to the port being closed. To these hardy souls, and all the other mariners operating in the port, please accept my thanks for the exemplary manner in which you reacted to this event, ensuring there were no incidents or injuries.

Some lessons have been learnt and are being put into effect as I write, such as back-up contingencies for short or no notice events without time or warning to implement shelter position contingency plans. In this case, the plan will be to secure vessels adequately where they are located and ensure all personnel can be evacuated from their work vessels as necessary. I encourage you all to

become involved in this process. If you have any suggestions, provide these ideas to your employers.

While operations have returned to normal here in the port, the same cannot be said for the rest of the Gladstone region that stretches from Double Island Point to St Lawrence. Navigation aids throughout the region have been destroyed, damaged or are missing, which will entail a massive effort by my staff to restore in the coming months. During the absence of these people and the clean up in the port here, the construction fleet will need to be extra vigilant in their safety efforts, as you did during the bad weather, to avoid any incidents occurring and keep the good construction fleet safety record in the port.

Australian HSE Alliance meeting

The Australian HSE Alliance held their second meeting on 15 January 2013 to study trends from the groups' shared data (lagging and leading indicators, 2010 through 2012). The group selected six categories out of the top ten upward trends to expand upon, and selected a sub-set of categories for a data range. They intend to study these results at their next meeting (26 February 2013) and select three targets regarding improvement opportunities that the group can focus on. This is an amazing effort from industry leaders who are working together to make a difference. Good things will come from this group.

On the water

Construction zone contractors, owners and operators are reminded that Section 4.1.4, 'Mates', of the *Standard for Marine Construction Activities within Gladstone Harbour* (the Standard) requires that:

"Companies are to ensure from 01 July 2012 all Mates joining vessels are to be provided with local knowledge training as part of their induction training and a record of completion of the local knowledge training is to be held either by the individual or their company."

This is to ensure that Mates have the required level of knowledge to safely navigate the harbour if the Master becomes incapacitated and they need to take command.

Filling out 'Marine Incident Report' forms

A marine incident must be reported to Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) within 48 hours of the incident, unless there is a reasonable excuse. Reports of marine incidents are vital to MSQ and, in turn, industry. The information gathered assists in the development of infrastructure, education programs and on-water compliance programs that benefit all waterway users. Everyone can learn something from marine incidents. Knowing more about your marine incident may help prevent someone else from being involved in a similar incident.

The report must be made on the approved form, 'Marine Incident Report', which can be found on the MSQ website. The form needs to be completed accurately with the incident described in detail. Writing must be legible and the 'Owner/Master's Report' section should give a description that allows an MSQ officer to understand all the events that occurred relating to the incident. MSQ officers can assist if help is required.

The completed form can be emailed to MSQ Gladstone at mir.gladstone@msq.qld.gov.au, mailed to PO Box 123, Gladstone QLD 4680, or taken into the MSQ Gladstone office at Level 2, 136 Goondoon Street, Gladstone.

Upcoming operation – 'Operation Bass'

MSQ officers, with water police and QBFP, will be conducting 'Operation Bass' on Gladstone Harbour from Monday 25 February to Friday 01 March 2013. It will involve on water interceptions of workboats and tenders, to ensure compliance with manning requirements in the Standard and appropriate commercial licensing and registration. Checks on night navigation will also occur. Minimal interruptions to operators are expected.

Cross Harbour Safety Group

The Cross Harbour Safety Group, comprised of marine operators contracted to Bechtel for Curtis Island efforts, just held their fourth forum to discuss improvement opportunities within the Gladstone Harbour. Collectively, this group (chaired by Norm Black, Bechtel P-JET) is developing a behaviour based program to enhance the safety culture within the marine group of companies working for Bechtel. Bechtel representative, Stan Crawford, stated "It's exciting to see companies share their best safety practices for the overall good of the harbour. This group has their bearing with a good heading toward success. Their commitment is making this work".

So far, this group has developed a marine induction process on harbour awareness of risks. They are currently enhancing this program with industry input, and intend to share this material with interested parties working in Gladstone. Look for more to come from this group!

On-the-spot fines to keep waterways clean

MSQ and enforcement partners are committed to protecting the environment. Previously, alleged offenders who committed any ship-sourced pollution offence would be issued with a summons to go to court at a later date, with lengthy delays and excessive costs to the tax payer. Authorised MSQ officers can now board a vessel to issue on-the-spot fines of more than \$1000 for minor breaches of the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*.

The ability to now issue infringement notices for pollution breaches is particularly relevant in the port of Gladstone, where the large volume and frequency of shipping activity require a high level of cooperation between operators and regulators to ensure our waterways remain clean.

MSQ, in conjunction with water police and the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol (QBFP), have conducted a series of compliance operations in Gladstone Harbour, focusing on safety and pollution obligations, which will continue in 2013. For information on marine pollution regulations in Queensland, visit the MSQ website.

Upcoming aquatic events

Location	Activity	Date and time
Gladstone Harbour to Barney Point Beach, Barney Point	Port Curtis Sailing Club – club sailing.	2, 3, 9 and 16 February 8am–6pm
		17 and 24 February 8am–3pm
		23 February 11am–6pm
Gladstone Harbour to Barney Point Beach, Barney Point	Port Curtis Sailing Club – club sailing.	2, 9, 16, 17, 23 and 24 March 8am–6pm
		3 and 10 March 8am–3pm

For any suggestions and feedback for *In the Zone* please email GladstoneSafety@msq.qld.gov.au.

Please remember to regularly check the MSQ website (www.msq.qld.gov.au) for any updated maritime information.