



The increased involvement of recreational speedboats in 2007 can be largely attributed to a refined classification process which has resulted in more vessels being recorded as recreational speedboats instead of recreational motorboats (refer Section 2.2 for more details).

There were no factors in the top 15 that were substantially below their four-year average.

Will your boat make the distance?

Many boat owners take a “jump in and go” approach towards boating. Little time is spent checking equipment, inspecting thru holes, checking the hull for deterioration or testing safety equipment. At sea, poor planning and equipment failure can have catastrophic results.

The new owner of an 11.8 metre sailing trimaran had a frightening and expensive introduction to boating. He had only settled the purchase of his boat the day before he set off to travel from the Gold Coast to Hervey Bay. Having left the Gold Coast early he was about 10 kilometres east of Jumpinpin Bar at 7.15am when he suddenly lost steering, his sail then ripped and the engine broke down. He used his mobile phone to call for help. After making the call he discovered that the boat was taking on water but his mobile phone battery was now flat and he could not notify authorities that his situation had become more serious. He activated his EPIRB and flares.

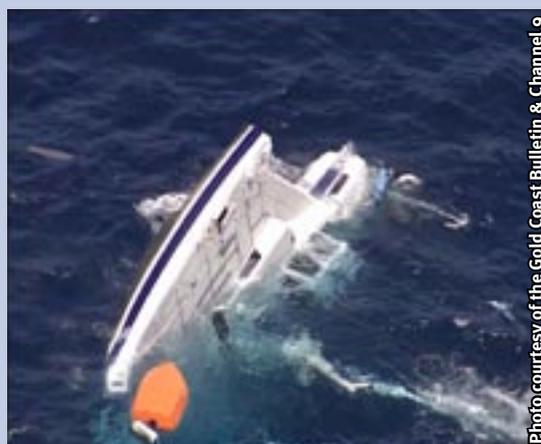


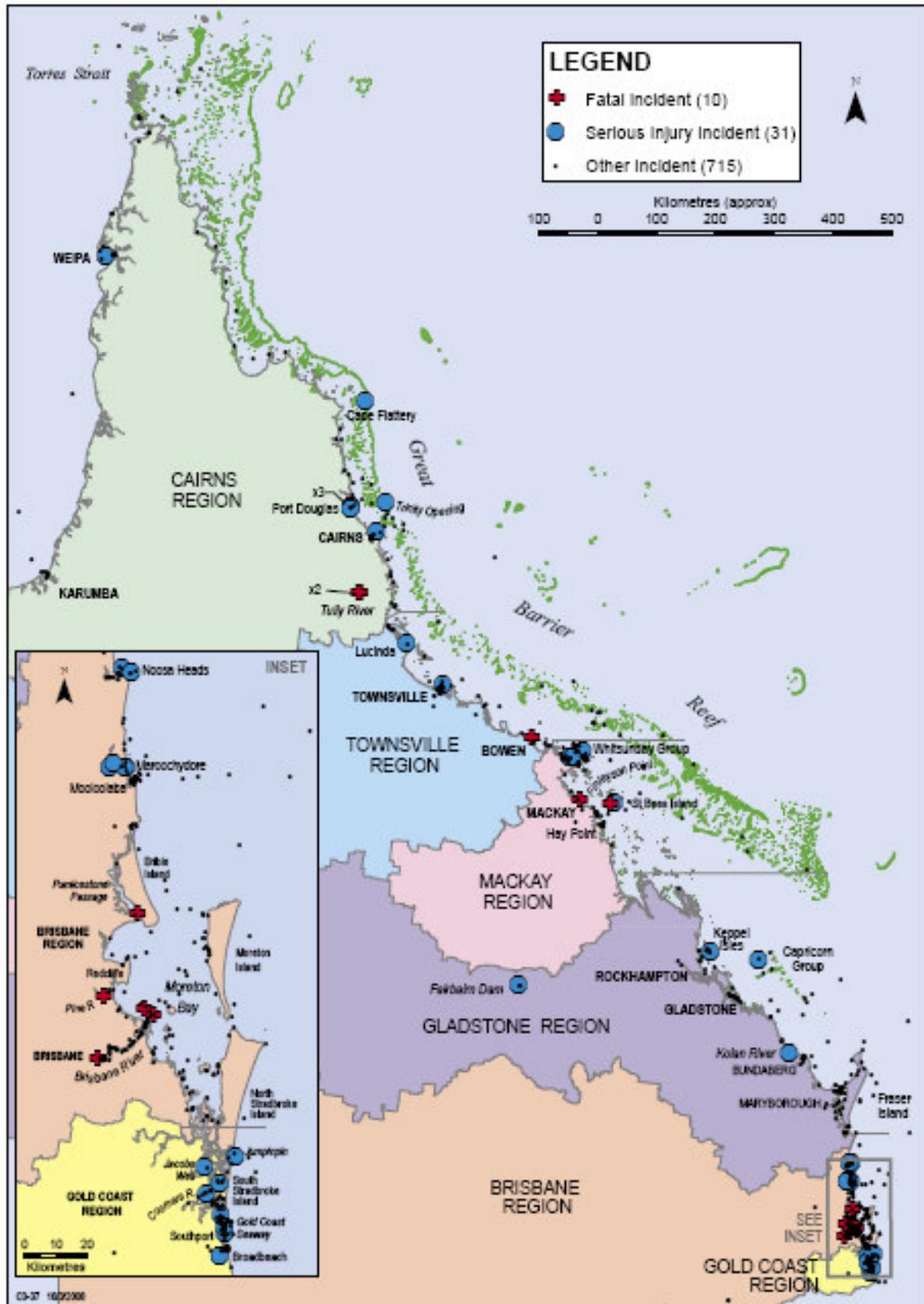
Photo courtesy of the Gold Coast Bulletin & Channel 9

When the water police arrived at 8.50am the owner was in water up to his knees. Until they arrived they had no idea the boat was taking on water. The owner survived his ordeal but the vessel was lost.

In the end the owner’s survival was due to good fortune not good planning. Had the incident occurred farther up the coast the response times and physical task of locating him would have taken much longer and have been much more difficult. There is every chance the boat would have sunk before authorities located it, leaving the owner stranded, alone and unprepared, in the ocean.

Safety insights

- Know your boat and its capabilities.
- Make sure you have the skills and experience necessary to undertake the voyage.
- Regularly check the seaworthiness of your boat, even those things you might otherwise take for granted.
- Make sure you have all the right safety equipment onboard and that it is operational and accessible.
- Don’t go offshore without a working marine radio.
- Make regular radio checks with volunteer marine rescue and coastguard authorities.



Map 1: Marine incidents by highest level of personal injury, Queensland 2007



2.5 Location of marine incidents

Map 1 spatially depicts all reported marine incidents in Queensland in 2007 by the highest level of personal injury, that is, the two incidents that resulted in both fatalities and serious injuries are shown as fatal incidents.

Evident from the map is the clustering of incidents in confined waterways including bays, channels, rivers and harbour entrances. One of the prominent areas in 2007 is along and at the entrance to the Brisbane River. While two fatal recreational incidents near the entrance to the river received significant media coverage, reported marine incidents near and along the river primarily involve commercial trading vessels, commercial passenger vessels, and tugboats. Overall 71 percent of reported incidents in this area involved only commercial vessels in 2007.

Marine incidents continue to feature heavily in the waterways of the Gold Coast. A review of marine incidents in the Gold Coast region is provided in Section 5.1.

In response to initiatives by Maritime Safety Queensland, marine incident reporting in the Torres Strait appears to have improved with eight marine incidents reported in 2007 compared to 16 for the preceding ten years. There were no fatalities and no serious injuries reported in the Torres Strait in 2007. Section 6.2 provides an update on boating safety initiatives in the Torres Strait and discusses the status of maritime rescue activities in the region.

Regional incident maps are provided in the regional summaries in Section 5.

2.5.1 By waters

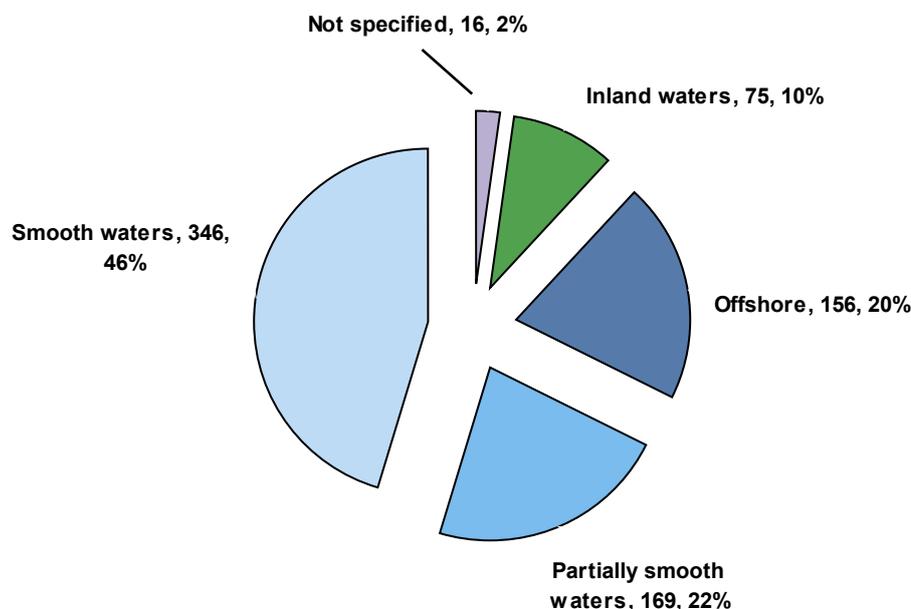


Figure 13: Location of Queensland marine incidents, 2007

As would be expected based on Map 1 the majority (45.5 percent) of marine incidents in 2007 occurred in smooth waters (see Figure 13). Smooth waters include the tidal reaches of rivers and creeks, waters within breakwaters or revetments and within half a nautical mile from land within partially smooth water limits.

22.3 percent of reported marine incidents occurred in partially smooth waters, 20.5 percent in offshore waters and 9.8 percent in inland waters. Inland waters include dams, lakes, creeks, streams and rivers above the tidal reach.

Incidents in offshore waters are 5.1 percentage points lower in 2007 than in 2006.

Table 20 in the appendix provides time series data for the location of reported marine incidents.

In 2008 a closer examination will be made of reported incidents in inland waters as there is some evidence of inappropriate use of the 'inland waters' classification.

2.5.2 By region

In 2007, 29 percent of reported marine incidents occurred in the Brisbane region (see Figure 14). The Gladstone, Mackay, Cairns and Gold Coast regions recorded between 14 percent and 18 percent each. Townsville region recorded 8 percent of Queensland marine incidents.

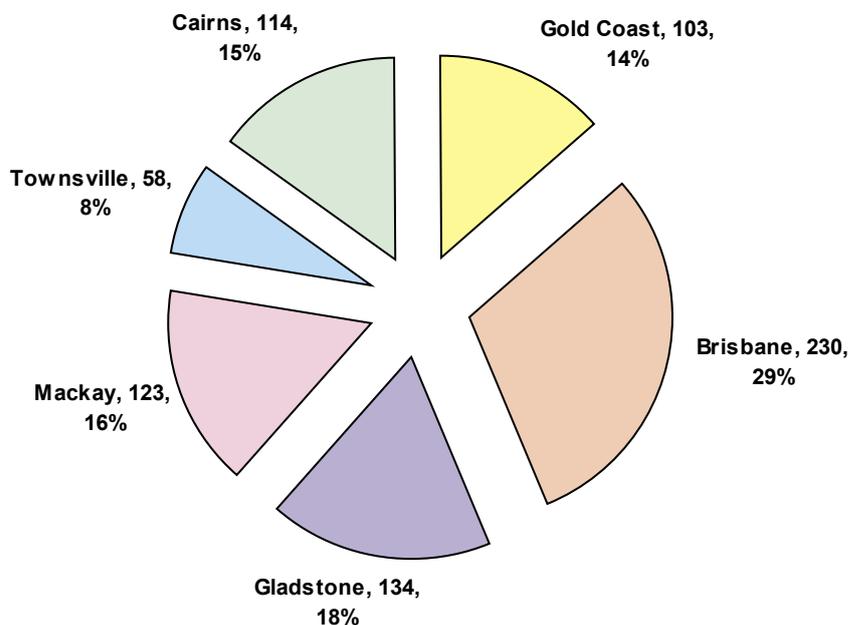


Figure 14: Marine incidents in 2007 by region

Five of the 10 fatal marine incidents in 2007 occurred in Brisbane region, two occurred in each of Cairns and Mackay regions and one occurred in Townsville region.

Reported marine incidents in Townsville region in 2007 have increased 38.1 percent from 2006. Mackay, Gold Coast and Brisbane regions have also increased from 2006 by 18.3 percent, 15.7 percent and 10 percent respectively. Gladstone and Cairns regions each recorded a small decrease in reported incidents.

Section 5 provides a more detailed analysis of marine incidents for each Maritime Safety Queensland region.



Making waves

The wake from fast moving speedboats continues to represent a boating safety challenge. Fast moving speedboats create a sizable wake which can swamp small boats and cause violent motion in boats close by. Each year numerous people are injured in falls caused by the wake of passing speedboats, or worse, fall overboard.

For one family entering a marina in their sailboat the wake from a large Riviera cruiser passing them in the entrance channel at an estimated 20 knots placed their boat in danger, caused injury to the two adults on board and almost knocked a nine year old child into the water.

The Riviera owner was impatient and demonstrated a lack of regard and consideration for the people and boats around him. He was also breaking the law. His subsequent assertion that the sailboat skipper “was obliged to get out of the overtaking vessel’s way” was incorrect and demonstrated inadequate knowledge of the *International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea*. These regulations provide the traffic laws for the sea and all boat operators are bound by them.



Safety insights

- It is the skipper’s responsibility to operate their boat at a safe speed, having regard to the prevailing conditions, circumstances and other waterway users.
- It is the responsibility of a passing boat to do so safely and to keep well clear of the boat they are overtaking.
- Boat operators are responsible for the effect of their boat’s wash on people in the water, other boats and the shoreline.
- Boats must travel at less than six knots when they are within 30 metres of anchored or moored boats, boat ramps, people in the water and in boat harbours and marinas.