



Marine incidents

IN QUEENSLAND

2007



**Queensland
Government**

Maritime Safety
Queensland

For enquiries please contact

**Marketing and Education Unit
Maritime Safety Queensland**

Level 22 Mineral House
41 George Street
Brisbane Queensland 4000

GPO Box 2595
Brisbane Queensland 4001

Facsimile: 07 3120 7355

E-mail: maritime.safety@msq.qld.gov.au

Web: www.msq.qld.gov.au

This report is also available electronically in
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Queensland, GPO Box 2595, Brisbane, Queensland 4001

or by e-mail at maritime.safety@msq.qld.gov.au

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Director General's Foreword

As Director-General of Queensland Transport, I am pleased to formally report on Queensland's marine safety performance in 2007, as measured by marine incident numbers and outcomes.

In the last year we witnessed the unabated growth of boating in Queensland. Almost one in every 15 Queenslanders aged 16 years or older owns a boat, and incredibly around one in five people of the same age hold a boat licence. During the year we also witnessed one of the worst boating accidents in Queensland's history when four people died and three more were seriously injured in a recreational boating collision at the mouth of the Brisbane River.



Not only are there more boats on the water, but advances in boat building and technology mean that many boats are faster, bigger, and capable of longer trips. The number of boats over 12 metres is growing faster than any other boating market segment. Currently this segment is increasing at more than eleven percent per year compared with overall growth in boat numbers of five percent.

Couple this growth with new people becoming interested in boating, associated on-water traffic and congestion issues, expanding marine and eco-tourism markets in Queensland and the expanding development of waterfront residential precincts. This is the reality we now face on our waterways. Continuing growth is inevitable, and with it comes challenges.

With more and more people using Queensland's waterways, it is important that marine safety programs are current and address emerging trends in boating to ensure a continued high level of marine safety into the future. This report makes a significant contribution to understanding emerging trends and the safety challenges they present.

Despite the quadruple fatality incident, Queensland's overall marine fatality toll fell in 2007 compared with the 17 recorded fatalities in 2006. Queensland recorded 13 marine fatalities in 2007, in line with the rolling four-year average. In the context of growth in boating exposure this could be argued to be a good result. But any fatality is one too many. Marine incident fatalities are not inevitable and every opportunity must be grasped to improve boating safety.

A cooperative, strategic approach is needed and Maritime Safety Queensland is continuing its work of encouraging and fostering safety as a core value and culture within the commercial, fishing and recreational sectors of the boating community.

During 2007, Maritime Safety Queensland worked closely with the commercial fishing industry to trial and assess new types of personal flotation equipment and to enhance crew understanding of safety procedures when trawl gear becomes snagged or trawlers capsize. Happily, there were no recorded commercial fishing fatalities in 2007.

It is not just Maritime Safety Queensland that carries the responsibility for driving and maintaining Queensland's marine safety performance. It's a joint effort between government, industry and the boating community alike, to ensure that boating is both safe and enjoyable and continues to meet Queensland's maritime transport, commerce, tourism and recreational needs.

I want to again extend my thanks to Maritime Safety Queensland's partner agencies, the Queensland Water Police and the Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol for their assistance and support in 2007. I look forward in 2008 to continued cooperation between Maritime Safety Queensland, commercial, fishing, and recreational boating communities and our partner agencies to make boating on our waterways both safe and enjoyable.

Bruce Wilson
Director General
Queensland Transport





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Marine incidents in 2007—a snapshot

- 762 marine incidents were reported in Queensland in 2007, an increase of 7.9 percent from 2006 (refer Section 2.1.1).
- 13 people were fatally injured in marine incidents in Queensland in 2007 compared to 17 in 2006, the 13 fatalities occurred in 10 separate marine incidents (refer Section 2.1.1).
- One multiple fatality incident occurred in 2007 claiming four lives (refer Section 3.1).
- Two fatalities occurred in two separate commercial white water rafting incidents (refer Section 3.1).
- 10 fatalities involved recreational vessels and 3 involved commercial vessels (refer Section 3.1).
- Queensland's 13 fatalities represented 25.5 percent of Australian reported marine incident fatalities in 2007 (refer Section 3.2.3).
- The number of fatal incidents in Queensland in 2007 is in line with the long term average of 10.5 fatal incidents per year, (refer Section 2.1.1).
- 35 people were seriously injured in 33 marine incidents. The number of reported serious injury incidents and number of persons reported as seriously injured is continuing to trend downwards (refer Section 3.2.1).
- 41 percent of fatal and serious injury incidents in 2007 occurred in smooth waters, 29 percent in offshore waters and 15 percent in each of partially smooth and inland waters.
- Growth in reported marine incidents is occurring within the recreational fleet. The increase is likely to be due to both increasing incidents and improved reporting.
- The involvement of commercial non-passenger vessels in marine incidents has increased 60 percent from 2006 (refer Section 2.2).
- The involvement of commercial fishing vessels has decreased 30 percent from 2006 (refer Section 2.2).
- Commercial fishing vessels were not involved in any reported fatal or serious injury marine incidents in Queensland in 2007 (refer Section 3.3).
- Recreational vessels over 10 metres have a higher rate of involvement in reported marine incidents than recreational vessels less than 10 metres (refer Section 2.2).
- Collisions between ships and unintentional groundings are the most frequently reported incident types for recreational, commercial and hire and drive vessels (refer Section 2.3).
- Of the 111 reported collisions between ships that involved a recreational vessel, 49 or 44.1 percent involved a moving vessel colliding with a stationary vessel (refer Section 2.3).
- 46 percent of reported marine incidents occurred in smooth waters, 22 percent in partially smooth waters, 20 percent offshore and 10 percent on inland waters (refer Section 2.5.1).

