

2.0 Marine incidents in Queensland

The analyses included in this report draw on data from 'reported' marine incidents. While the overall level of reporting of marine incidents is considered robust, there is an acknowledged indeterminate level of underreporting of marine incidents in any given year. Maritime Safety Queensland continues to look for ways to improve compliance with statutory incident reporting requirements.

2.1 Reported marine incidents

In 2005, 633 marine incidents were reported in Queensland—the same number as reported in 2004. The number of incidents reported in 2005 is generally in line with the previous four-year average number of reported marine incidents (638.25). 12 fatalities and 45 serious injuries were reported as resulting from 49 of the reported marine incidents in 2005.

2.2 Marine incidents by severity

In this section all reported marine incidents in Queensland are analysed from the perspective of personal injury outcomes and property damage outcomes.

Figure 1 shows that total reported marine incidents in 2005 equalled the number reported in 2004. The aggregate numbers of reported marine incidents in recent years suggest an annual baseline in the low-to-mid six-hundreds. As mentioned earlier, there is an acknowledged indeterminate level of underreporting of marine incidents in any given year. Analyses in subsequent years will continue to monitor this aspect.

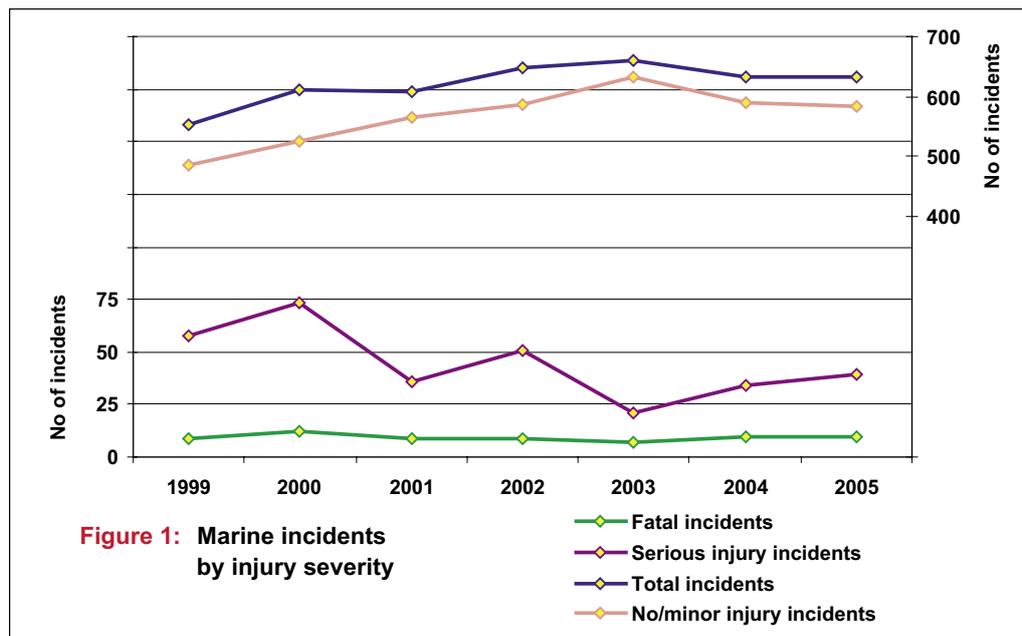
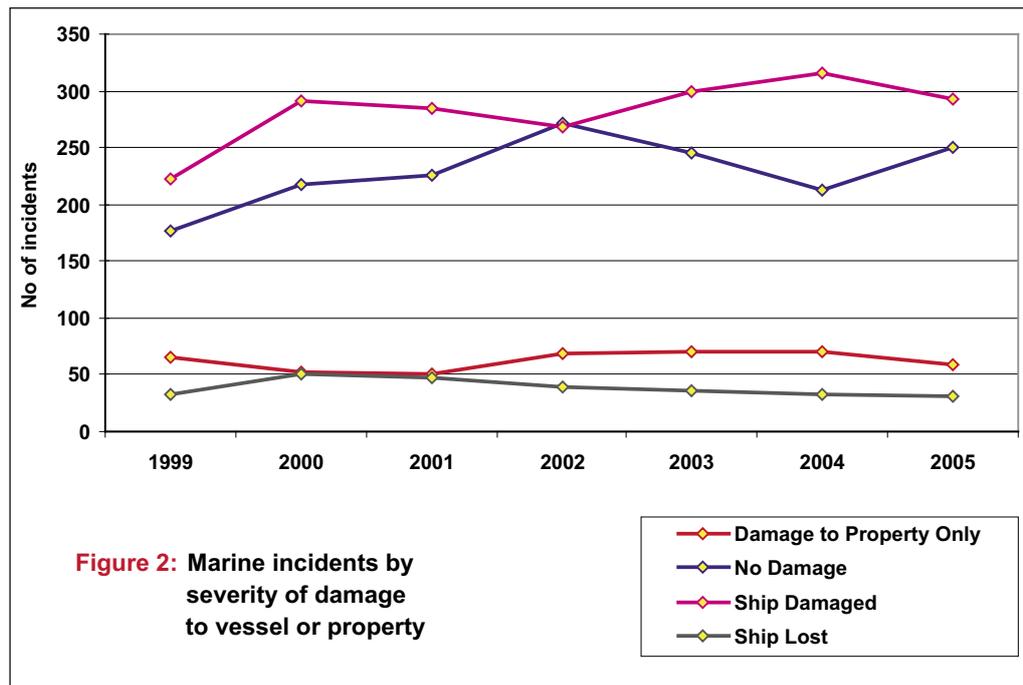


Figure 1 also shows reported marine incidents according to the severity of the personal injury outcome. Incidents resulting in fatality have risen from a low of seven in 2003 to 10 in 2005—marginally above the previous four-year average of 8.75 fatality incidents per year. Reported serious injury incidents increased in 2005 to 39 compared with 34 in 2004—also above the previous four-year average of 35.5.

The second overall view of incident severity relates to property damage and loss. The various dimensions of property damage and their relative involvement in marine incidents between 1999 and 2005 are shown in Figure 2.

The numbers of vessels deemed a total write-off/loss in terms of property damage continue to trend downwards. There were 31 vessels lost in 2005—down by two on the reported number of ships lost in 2004 and well below the previous four-year average of 39 ships lost per year.

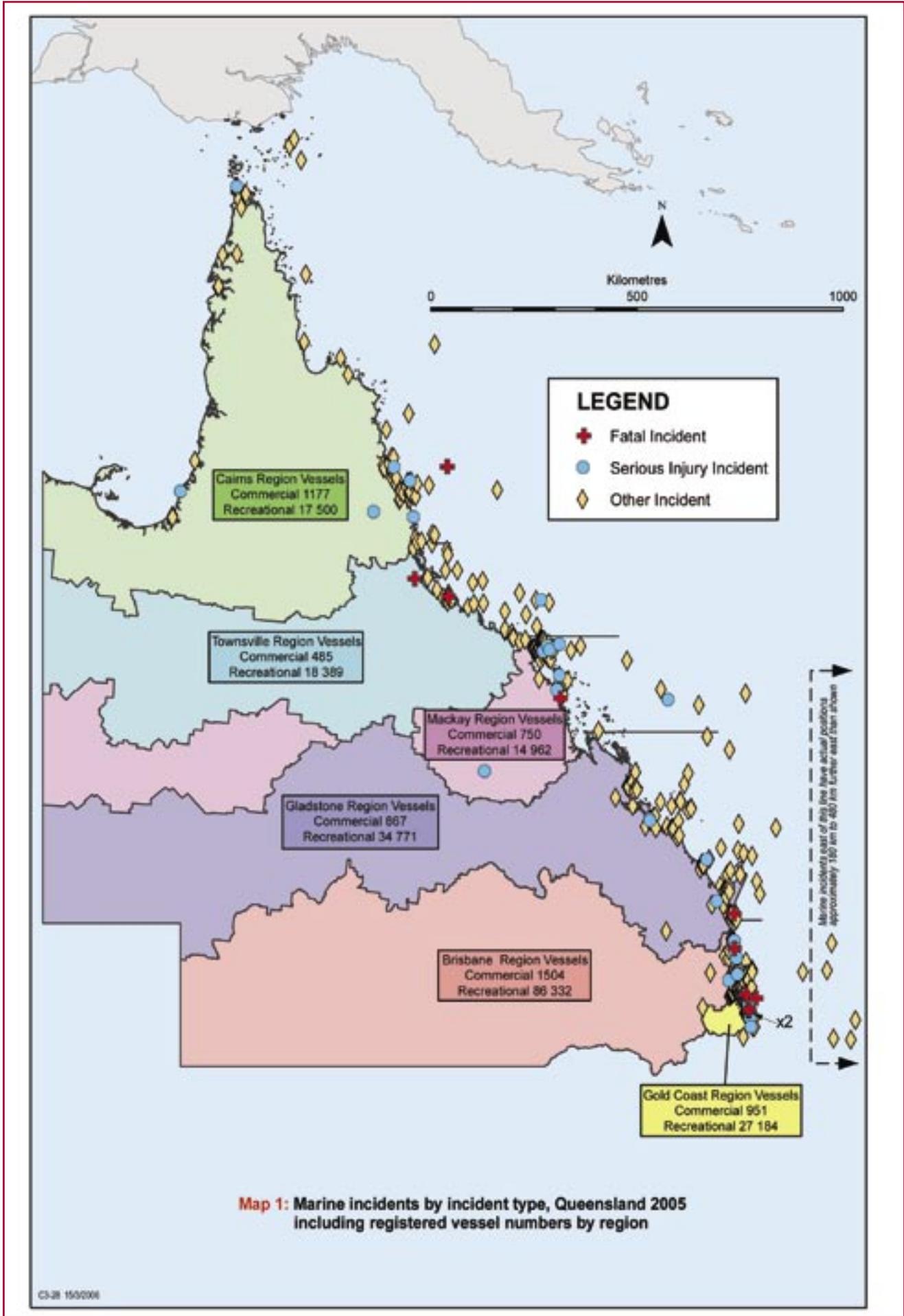


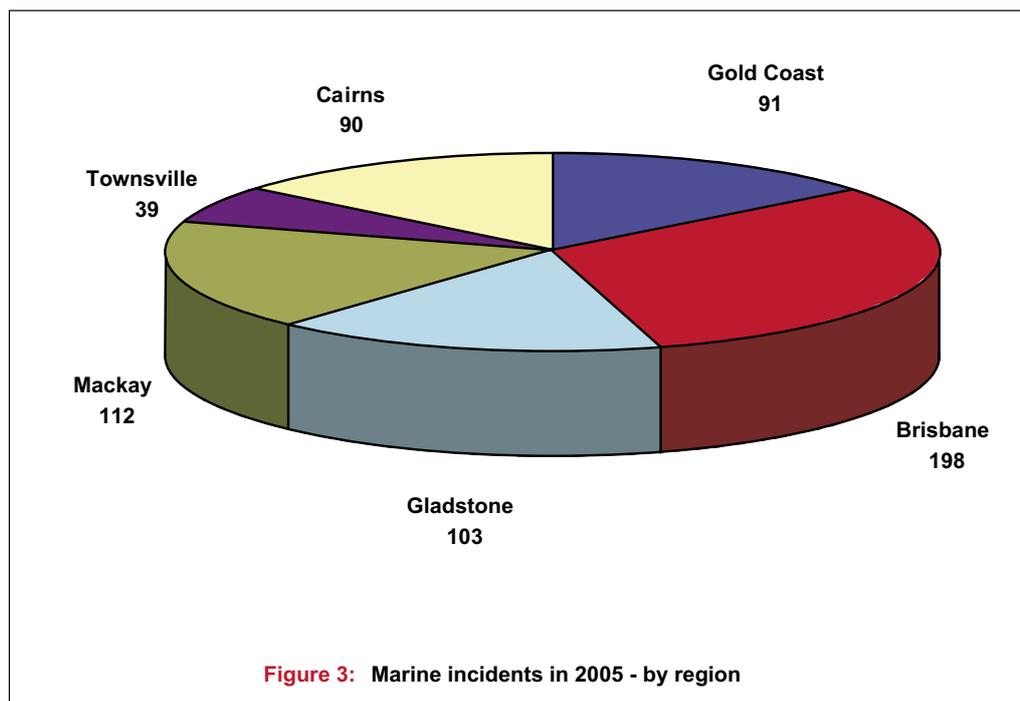
The number of ships damaged decreased from 316 in 2004 to 293 in 2005—in line with the previous four-year average of 292. There were 59 reported incidents where there was ‘damage to property only’ compared to 71 in 2004, well below the previous four-year average of 65. Encouragingly, the number of incidents in which there was no reported damage is up from 212 in 2004 to 250 in 2005—above the previous four-year average of 238.5.

2.3 Marine incidents by region

The Brisbane region recorded the highest number of reported marine incidents (198) in 2005, while the Townsville region recorded the least number of reported incidents (39). Figure 3 shows the number of reported marine incidents according to the region in which the incident occurred.

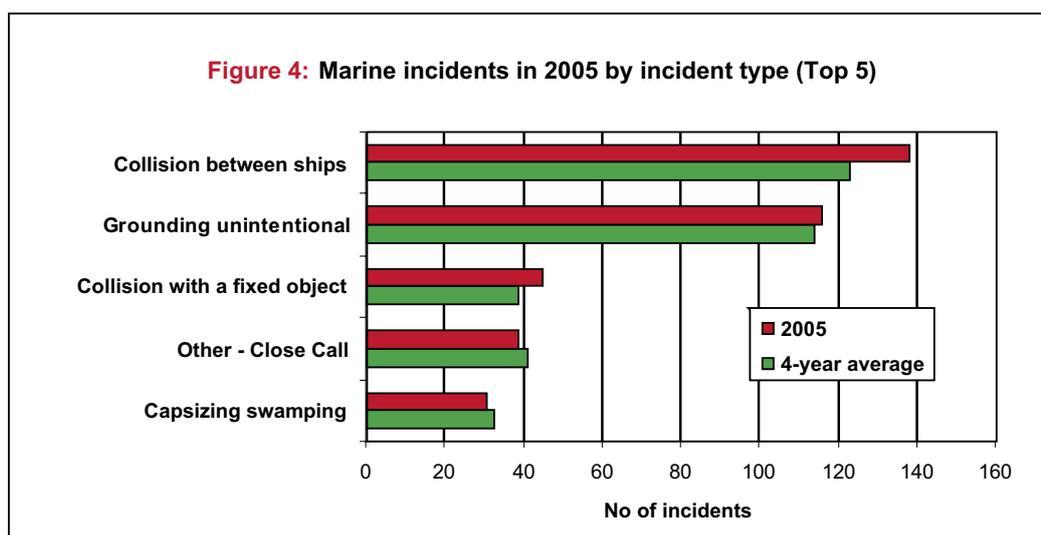
Map 1 shows spatially and by region where each of the reported marine incidents in 2005 occurred, together with the comparative numbers of commercially and recreationally registered vessels for each region.





2.4 Marine incidents by incident type

The five most frequently occurring types of marine incident reported in 2005 accounted for 369 (58.3 per cent) of the all reported incidents (n=633). Figure 4 shows the top five incidents types recorded in 2005 compared with their previous four year average involvement.



The most significant incident types in 2005 were ‘collision between ships’ and ‘unintentional groundings’, with 138 and 116 reported incidents respectively. In 2005 ‘collisions between ships’ were over-represented when compared with their previous four-year average involvement in reported marine incidents (123). ‘Unintentional grounding’ incidents were generally in line with their previous four-year average involvement in reported marine incidents.

2.5 Marine incidents by vessel type

Figure 5 shows the five vessel types that figured most frequently in reported marine incidents in Queensland in 2005 and their comparative representation since 1999. The top five vessel types

account for 492 (60.8 per cent) of all the vessels involved in reported incidents in 2005 (n=809).

Four of the top five vessel types show increases in their proportional involvement in marine incidents in 2005 compared to 2004. It is encouraging to see that commercial fishing ships (63) show a marked decrease in their involvement in marine incidents in 2005 compared to 2004 (89) and in terms of their previous four-year average involvement in reported marine incidents (91).

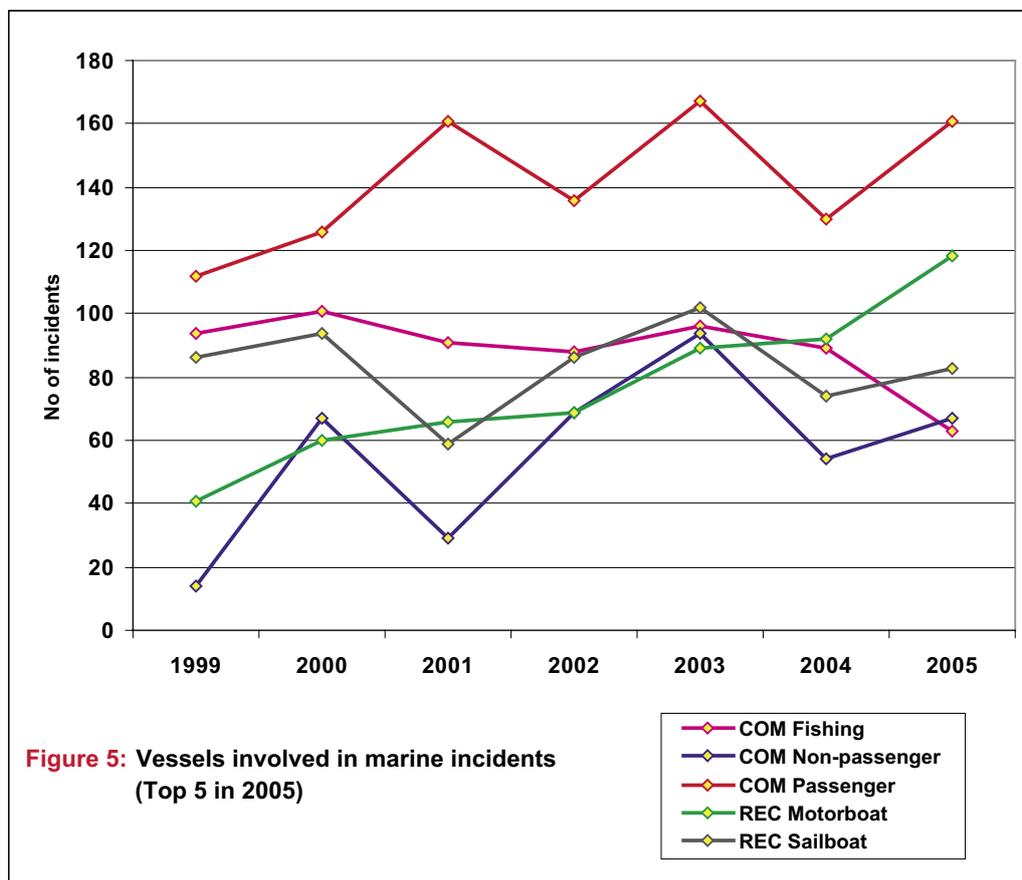


Figure 5: Vessels involved in marine incidents (Top 5 in 2005)

Commercial passenger vessels (161) were appreciably over-represented when compared with their involvement in 2004 (130) and their previous four-year average involvement in marine incidents (148.5). Likewise, recreational motorboats (118) were significantly over-represented when compared with their involvement in 2004 (92) and their previous four-year average involvement in reported incidents (79).

In terms of overall vessel involvement, commercial vessels accounted for 55.4 per cent of all vessels involved in incidents and recreational vessels made up 39.5 per cent of all vessels involved in incidents. Approximately five per cent (41) of the vessels involved in reported marine incidents in 2005 were not satisfactorily identified.

Recreational sailboats and recreational motorboats account for 25 per cent of all vessels involved in incidents and over 62 per cent of the recreational vessels involved in incidents. It is noted that from 1 September 2005, new recreational licensing provisions came into effect requiring operators of any recreational vessel powered by an engine of more than 4.5kW to be licensed. Previously, operators of recreational motorboats and auxiliary powered sailboats were permitted to operate these types of vessels without a licence.

2.6 Marine incidents by location

298 (47 per cent) of the reported marine incidents in 2005 (n=633) occurred within smooth water

limits. This compares with 281 incidents in smooth waters in 2004 and a previous four-year average involvement of 257.5. Incidents in offshore waters (133) were marginally over-represented when compared to 2004 (124) and a previous four-year average involvement of 127.5.

Incidents reported as occurring in inland waters and partially smooth waters showed decreases in both their absolute and relative representation in 2005. This could be due in part to more rigorous application of the location definition for incidents, particularly those occurring in non-tidal streams, impoundments and catchments. The decrease in the number of reported inland water incidents could also be related to impoundment closures due to low water levels. A number of major inland impoundments were closed to boating during 2005. Figure 6 shows reported marine incidents in 2005 according to the location in which they occurred.

The location descriptors used for recording marine incidents in Queensland are:

- Inland waters – any navigable water that is not tidal, for example, non-tidal rivers, creeks, lakes and dams
- Smooth waters – any enclosed navigable tidal water other than waters defined by legislation as partially smooth waters, for example, tidal creeks, rivers, estuaries, harbours and bays
- Partially smooth waters – open stretches of water defined by legislation as partially smooth waters where wave heights under normal conditions do not exceed 1.5 metres, for example, open sections of Moreton and Hervey Bays
- Offshore waters – those waters that are beyond smooth and partially smooth waters including exposed coastal waters.

