

## 4. Boating incidents

### 4.1 Introduction

Boating incidents are those incidents which involved calls for assistance from volunteer rescue authorities for problems such as mechanical breakdowns, running out of fuel and fouled propellers. These incidents can be viewed as ‘marine incidents that might have been’ and are an important early-warning indicator of safety performance in the maritime environment.

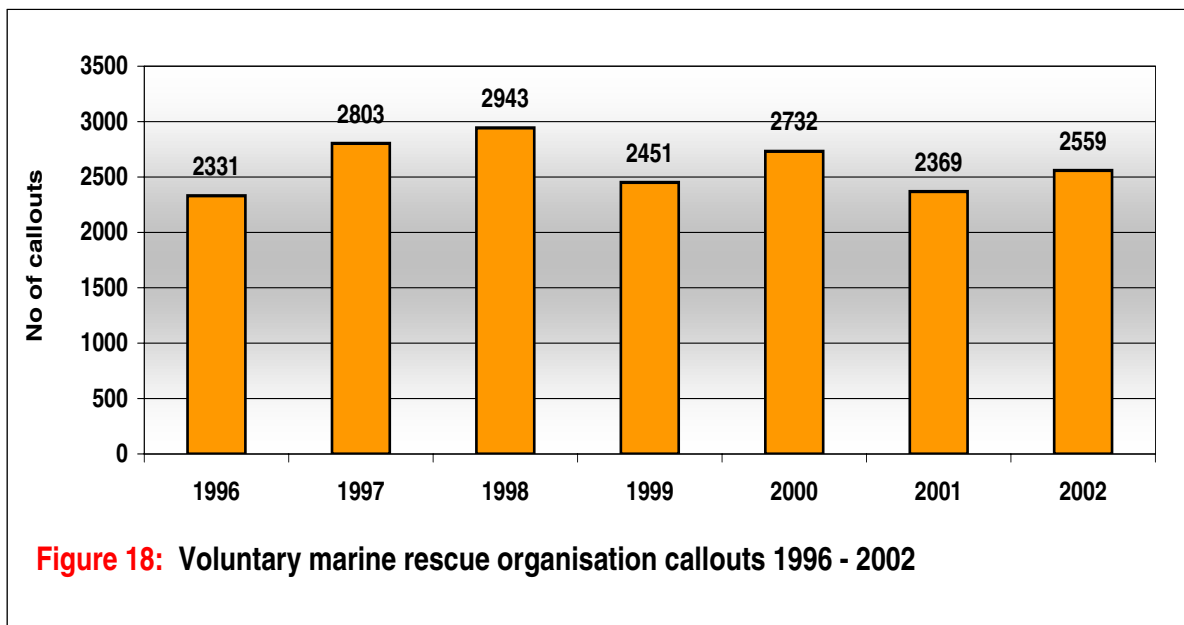
While boating incidents are not counted as marine incidents (unless their severity qualifies them as such), an analysis of the boating incident data provided by regional volunteer marine rescue organisations has been undertaken to supplement the analysis of marine incidents contained in this report. Boating incident reports also provide a useful tool for validation of the level of marine incident reporting by highlighting incidents that might have escaped the normal marine incident reporting process.

In 2002, regional volunteer marine rescue organisations including the Australian Volunteer Coastguard Association and the Queensland Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisation combined to provide a strong safety net for the professional and recreational maritime community in Queensland. As well as attending callouts for assistance, they performed an important extension role for Maritime Safety Queensland in its administration of maritime safety programs.

### 4.2 Callouts for assistance

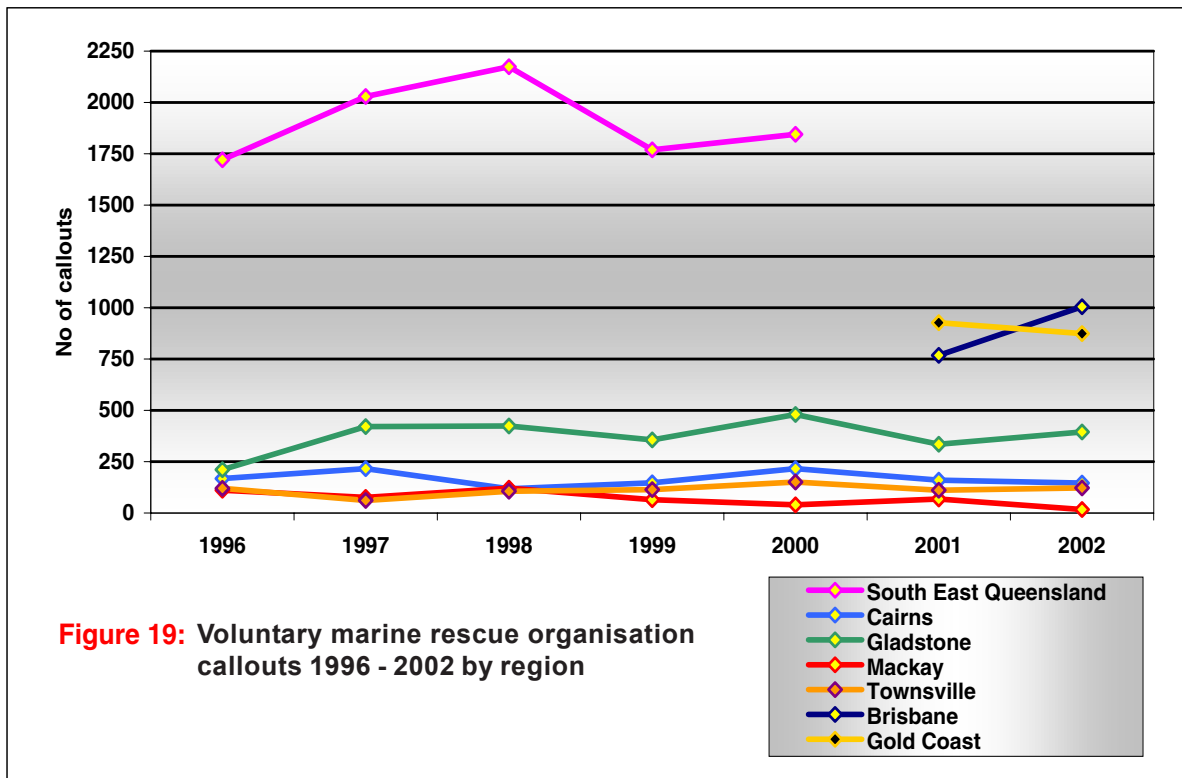
Voluntary marine rescue and coastguard flotillas reported responding to 2559 callouts for assistance statewide in 2002—190 more callouts than in 2001 but below the previous four-year average of 2623.

Figure 18 shows comparative boating incident callout numbers for the past seven years.



South-East Queensland (Brisbane and Gold Coast regions) with more than 56 per cent of the state's registered vessel fleet, reported 1879 (73.4 per cent) of the state's callouts in 2002. This is significantly higher than this region's corresponding proportion of marine incidents (42.4 per cent), and marginally above the combined region's four-year average number of callouts of 1870 callouts. After the combined South-East Queensland region, the next most significant number of callouts occurred in the Gladstone region with 395 (15.4 per cent) callouts—in line with the region's four-year average number of callouts of 399.

Figure 19 provides a comparative regional breakdown of boating incident callout numbers over the last seven years. Disaggregated data from boating incident callouts was not available to Maritime Safety Queensland for the South-East Queensland area until 2000. In 2001 and 2002, South-East Queensland data is broken up according to regional areas—Brisbane and Gold Coast.



### 4.3 Reasons for callouts

During 2002 the predominant reasons for the assistance provided by volunteer organisations included:

- breakdowns—1644 callouts (64 per cent)
- grounding of the vessel—228 (9 per cent)
- vessel sinking (taking on water)—136 (5.3 per cent), and
- fuel problems—134 (5.2 per cent)

Fuel problems mentioned above included contaminated fuel, leaking fuel lines and running out of fuel.

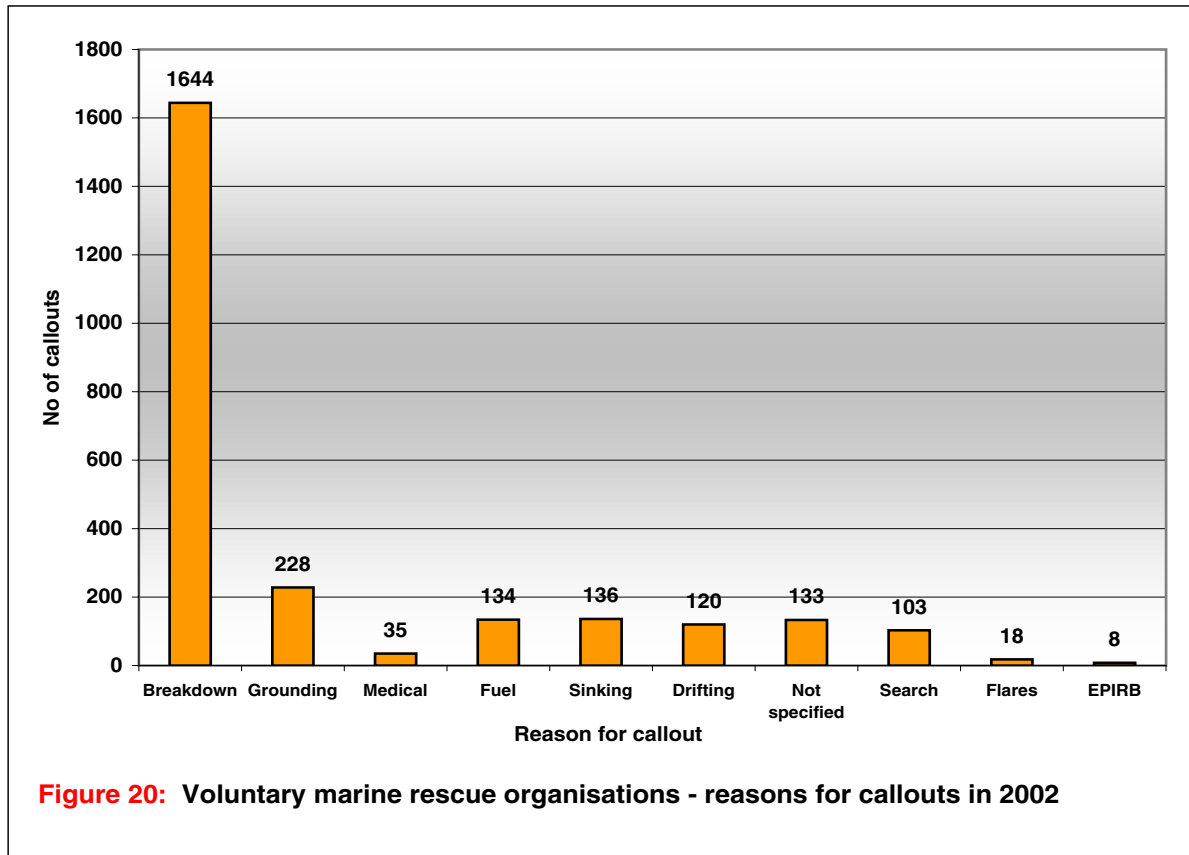


Figure 20 shows the top ten reasons for callout. These reasons for callout reinforce the ongoing need for marine safety education and awareness programs to address basic operational boating issues. Maritime Safety Queensland uses this data to regularly update the focus of its *Know Know Know Your Boat* campaign and other boating safety educational campaigns.

Tables 30 and 31 in Appendix 1 of this report provide further data relating to boating incidents.

