

12. Emergency, pollution, marine incidents

12.1 General

The aim of this section is to provide guidance to the port community for initial response procedures in the event of dangerous incidents, emergencies, terrorist acts and disasters.

All marine incidents occurring within the Townsville region which includes Abbot Point Port and its Pilotage area must be reported to the Regional Harbour Master (Townsville) regardless of the regulatory agency

Initial reports should be conveyed through to Abbot Point VTS:

Telephone: 1300 721 263 or 1300 721 293

VHF channel: 12, 14 or 16.

Written reports must be submitted within the relevant timeframes as specified in the respective regulations (refer: 12.6.1; 12.6.2; 12.6.3) in the appropriate format to:

The Regional Harbour Master (Townsville)

Maritime Safety Queensland

Postal address: GPO Box 1921, Townsville Queensland 4810

Email: RHMTownsville@msq.qld.gov.au or
vtstownsville@msq.qld.gov.au

12.2 Emergency contact numbers

Organisation	Telephone
Abbot Point VTS	1300 721 263 (24 hours)
Pollution reports	1300 721 263 (24 hours)
Police (Townsville)	000 or +61 7 4759 9777
Water Police	+61 7 4781 8572
Ambulance (Townsville)	000
Fire	000
Abbot Point Control Room	+61 7 4786 0327
Hospital (Townsville General)	+61 7 4796 1111
Regional Harbour Master	+61 7 44218 100 (After Hours contact Abbot Point VTS)
Quarantine (Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment) (Canberra)	1800 020504
Quarantine (Department of Agriculture) (Townsville)	+61 7 4721 5900
Customs (Australian Border Force) (Townsville)	+61 7 4722 3700

Organisation	Telephone
Maritime Safety Queensland (Townsville)	+61 7 44218 100 (After Hours contact Townsville VTS)
Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR)	+61 7 4771 4831

Table 14 – Emergency contacts

12.3 Port Authorities and Terminals

Maritime Safety Queensland's emergency procedures are prepared under the provisions of the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994*](#) and the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995*](#).

North Queensland Bulk Ports (NQBPP) manages port emergencies at the port of Abbot Point in accordance with the NQBPP Ports Emergency Management Plan which details the required response to an emergency within the port.

All emergencies should be reported to Abbot Point VTS on VHF channel 16, 12 or telephone 1300 721 263 as appropriate.

Abbot Point VTS will notify the Regional Harbour Master and relay the emergency call to the appropriate emergency response service (fire/police/ambulance) on 000 if required.

12.4 Marine pollution

The [*Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995*](#) is designed to protect Queensland's marine and coastal environment by minimising deliberate and negligent discharges of ship-sourced pollution. Discharges of oil, noxious liquid substances, packaged harmful substances, sewage and garbage (MARPOL Annexes I, II, III, IV and V) from ships are prohibited in Queensland coastal waters and pilotage areas.

The whole of the Reef VTS area and the Great Barrier Reef is environmentally sensitive and must be protected.

The discharge of any kind of marine pollutant into the sea anywhere in the area is forbidden under Australian and international law. Strict enforcement measures operate throughout the area. There are severe penalties for pollution and failure to report pollution.

The Master of the ship must report a discharge or probable discharge or if pollution (oil, noxious liquid substances, sewage and garbage) is observed on the water, in the vicinity of the ship without delay to the Regional Harbour Master by contacting Abbot Point VTS on VHF channel 12 or 16 or by telephone 1 300 721 263.

Maritime Safety Queensland has the authority to detain any vessel suspected of causing marine pollution and to intervene where there is imminent danger to the coastline.

Ships should dispose of all waste ashore using the waste reception facilities available.

12.4.1 Reporting a pollution incident

Section 67 of the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995 \(TOMPA\)*](#) requires the master of a ship to report a discharge or probable discharge without delay to the Regional Harbour Master.

The Master of the ship (or a person observing pollutants in the water) must report a marine pollution incident immediately to the VTS Centre.

The Master of the ship must also complete form [F3968 Marine Pollution Report](#) and submit the same as soon as possible and in any event within 48 hours of the incident.

The following details should be provided in a report of marine pollution to the VTS centre:

- Date/time of incident;
- Location (latitude, longitude and physical site);
- Report source and contact number;
- Nature, extent and estimated quantity of spill;
- Type of oil or description;
- Spill source and point of discharge from source;
- Identity and position of nearby ships or name of alleged polluter;
- Nature and extent of spill and movement and speed of spill;
- Local weather/tide/sea conditions;
- Whether a sample of the substance spilled has been collected; and
- Any additional information that relates to the spill.

The VTS centre will

- Notify the relevant authorities
- If the report is from **a person observing pollutants in the water, vts will complete form [F3968 marine pollution report](#)** and submit the same.

12.5 Marine incidents

Section 125 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) requires the master of a ship to report an incident to a shipping inspector.

All marine incidents occurring in the Townsville Region which includes Abbot Point Port and Pilotage area must be reported immediately (as soon as safe and practical) to a shipping inspector or the Regional Harbour Master (Townsville) through Abbot Point VTS

Telephone: 1300 721 263 or 1300 721 293

VHF channel: 16 or 14.

Written reports must be submitted within the relevant timeframes as specified in the respective regulations (refer: 12.7.1; 12.7.2; 12.7.3) in the appropriate format to:

The Regional Harbour Master (Townsville)

Maritime Safety Queensland

Postal address: GPO Box 1921, Townsville Queensland 4810

Email: RHMTown@msq.qld.gov.au or vtstownsville@msq.qld.gov.au

12.6 Marine incident reporting

12.6.1 Ships under port pilotage or command of a Pilot Exempt Master

A **marine incident** is an event causing or involving

- (a) the loss of a person from a ship; or
- (b) the death of, or grievous bodily harm to, a person caused by a ship's operations; or
- (c) the loss or presumed loss or abandonment of a ship; or
- (d) a collision with a ship; or
- (e) the stranding of a ship; or
- (f) significant damage, or danger of significant damage, to a ship; or
- (g) significant damage caused by a ship's operations; or
- (h) danger of significant damage to a structure caused by a ship's operations; or
- (i) danger to a person caused by a ship's operations.

A **near miss** is an unplanned event which the potential to develop into a marine incident and required action to prevent an incident occurring.

Where a marine incident or a near miss occurs during the pilotage, the pilot must

- I. As soon as practical notify Townsville VTS of the situation, requesting assistance as required; and
- II. Within 48 hours of the incident or near miss submit a written report to the Regional Harbour Master providing details of the incident or near miss. The report must be made on the approved [Marine Incident Report Form F3071](#).

12.6.2 Recreational Vessels (vessels regulated under TOMSA)

Under the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#), a marine incident is classified as an event causing or involving:

- (a) the loss of a person from a ship; or

- (b) the death of, or grievous bodily harm to, a person caused by a ship's operations; or
- (c) the loss or presumed loss or abandonment of a ship; or
- (d) a collision with a ship; or
- (e) the stranding of a ship; or
- (f) significant damage, or danger of significant damage, to a ship; or
- (g) significant damage caused by a ship's operations; or
- (h) danger of significant damage to a structure caused by a ship's operations; or
- (i) danger to a person caused by a ship's operations.

A marine incident must be reported to a shipping inspector within 48 hours of the incident unless there is a reasonable excuse. Shipping inspectors are marine safety officers (located at Maritime Safety Queensland marine operations bases), and officers of Queensland Water Police and Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol. If you are unable to access one of these offices, contact a shipping inspector by phone. They will advise you what to do next.

The report must be made on the approved [Marine Incident Report Form 3071](#). These forms are also available from Department of Transport and Main Roads customer service centres, Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices, Queensland Boating and Fisheries Patrol and Water Police offices. This form is used to report all incidents, no matter the type of ship involved.

The form may be completed with the assistance of a shipping inspector to ensure the information is accurate, unbiased and as reliable as possible. It is important that the form is filled in completely, with the incident described in as much detail as possible. The shipping inspector who receives the form will check to ensure it has been correctly completed.

If the initial report is not made in the approved form, the owner or master must make a further report to a shipping inspector in the approved form as soon as possible. The master would normally report a marine incident but the owner would report if the master, for some justifiable reason, was not able to make the report. Each marine incident reported will be investigated by a shipping inspector and the results of the investigation reported in the approved form.

Section 124 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) requires ships masters to assist if a marine incident involves two or more ships. The master of each ship involved in the marine incident must to the extent that he can do so without danger to his ship or persons on board his ship:

- give the other ship involved in the incident, its master and persons on-board the ship the help necessary to save them from danger caused by the marine incident
- stay by the other ship until no further assistance is required
- give the master of the other ship reasonable particulars adequate to identify the ship and its owner.

Section 129 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) requires the master of a ship to promptly report dangers to navigation including, an abandoned ship, a damaged aid to navigation, severe weather conditions and so on.

12.6.3 Domestic Commercial Vessels - Ships regulated under the Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessels) National Law Act 2012

Under the [Marine Safety \(Domestic Commercial Vessels\) National Law Act 2012](#) (National Law), a **marine incident** means any of the following:

- (a) a death of, or injury to, a person associated with the operation or navigation of a domestic commercial vessel;
- (b) the loss or presumed loss of a domestic commercial vessel;

- (c) a collision of a domestic commercial vessel with another vessel;
- (d) a collision by a domestic commercial vessel with an object;
- (e) the grounding, sinking, flooding or capsizing of a domestic commercial vessel;
- (f) a fire on board a domestic commercial vessel;
- (g) a loss of stability of a domestic commercial vessel that affects the safety of the vessel;
- (h) the structural failure of a domestic commercial vessel;
- (i) a close quarters situation;
- (j) an event that results in, or could have resulted in:
 - (i) the death of, or injury to, a person on board a domestic commercial vessel; or
 - (ii) the loss of a person from a domestic commercial vessel; or
 - (iii) a domestic commercial vessel becoming disabled and requiring assistance;
- (k) the fouling or damaging by a domestic commercial vessel of:
 - (i) any pipeline or submarine cable; or
 - (ii) any aid to navigation within the meaning of the *Navigation Act 2012* of the Commonwealth;
- (l) a prescribed incident involving a domestic commercial vessel.

The [*Marine Safety \(Domestic Commercial Vessels\) National Law Act 2012*](#) (National Law) requires that both the owner and master of a Domestic Commercial Vessel that is involved in a marine incident, report the incident within the time frames provided for by the National Law, to the National Regulator.

As soon as possible and within 4 hours after becoming aware of the incident, you must complete and submit incident alert form 18.

You can either complete the online form below to submit an incident alert, or download form 18 and email the completed form to reports@amsa.gov.au.

It is important that incidents are reported so that AMSA can analyse the occurrence and, if necessary, take steps to improve vessel safety.

For further information regarding 'what is a marine incident?', 'when do I report a marine incident?', and 'who do I report it to?' – please refer to the [Incident Report Guidance Notice](#) and [Incident Report Form](#).

12.6.4 Marine incident reporting – Australian Maritime Safety Authority

Under section 19 of the [Transport Safety Investigation Act 2003](#) any incident involving a ship in Australian waters including:

- breakage of gear or injury to any person during cargo work
- damage or defect to ship, machinery or equipment
- peril or a close quarters situation
- stranding or disappearance
- death, serious injury or a dangerous occurrence
- a birth.

These must be reported to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) using form 18 [incident alert](#) within four hours of the incident occurring. A detailed [incident report](#) must be submitted to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Canberra on form 19 within 72 hours of the incident occurring.

Reports are to be submitted by fax: +61 2 6230 6868 or 1800 622 153 or email: reports@amsa.gov.au.

Complete details of these requirements are available on the Australian Maritime Safety Authority website.

12.6.5 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority incident report form

To report an incident where a breach of Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority regulations is observed witnesses are asked to complete the [GBRMPA incident report form](#). Urgent matters should be reported by phone to the appropriate number listed on the form.

12.6.6 Procedures subsequent to serious marine incidents

In the case of a vessel grounding or if structural damage has occurred, the vessel is to be removed to a position of safety. Immediate advice from the Regional Harbour Master and the manager (pilotage services) should be sought in this instance.

The vessel is to be surveyed by the appropriate authority (Australian Maritime Safety Authority or classification society) to ensure the seaworthiness of the vessel before it leaves port limits.

12.6.7 Port community responsibilities

As a responsible member of the maritime community, any person witnessing an incident which was/or is capable of becoming an emergency is obliged to report the matter to the Regional Harbour Master's office and/or the emergency response agencies of police, fire or ambulance.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority requests pilots, stevedores, NQBP officers and others to notify them of suspected deficiencies on ships.