

7. Port navigation and movement restrictions

7.1 General

Berth facilities within Skardon River are operated by Metro Mining to facilitate the loading of barges and export of Bauxite.

Typically, dumb barges are loaded via conveyor belt and transferred to anchored export vessels by tugs. Loading is via ships gear.

Metro Mining Company are responsible for the installation and maintenance of navigation aids

7.2 Speed

The following restrictions apply throughout Queensland whether signs are present or not. A speed limit of six knots applies:

- in boat harbours and marinas
- within 30 metres of:
 - boats anchored, moored to the shore or aground
 - a jetty, wharf, pontoon or boat ramp
 - people in the water.
- Within 60 metres of people in the water when operating a personal watercraft.

Under the provisions of the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994* a person must not operate a ship at a speed at which the ships' wash can cause a marine incident or damage to the shoreline. As a general principle, vessels over 20 metres LOA should travel at speeds up to 10 knots within smooth water limits where the speed limit is set at 40 knots.

The Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) will be responsible for all movements within harbour limits. No ships will enter or depart the port without the permission of the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

7.3 Channel depths and SUKCs

Channel	Design depth (m)	UKC (m)
Channel	-2.3m LAT	0.6m
Skardon River Jetty and berth Pocket	-4.2mLAT	0.3m

Table 10 - Channel depths and SUKCs

Please refer to the [Notices to Mariners](#) for the latest depth information.

7.4 Draft restrictions

Weather, tidal conditions or special circumstances, may require a departure from these guidelines.

A vessel is not to enter, depart or maneuver within the pilotage area unless tide, weather, transit time and traffic conditions allow the minimum UKC to be maintained until it is clear of the pilotage area.

The Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) is to be consulted for determining the tidal window for the planned movement of a draft-restricted ship in the port.

7.4.1 SUKCs – alongside berths

The master is to ensure that the ship maintains a SUKC of 0.3 m while alongside; this may require loading operations to be adjusted to suit SUKC conditions.

7.4.2 Dredge Under Keel Clearance Requirements

Vessels conducting dredging operations are exempt from under keel clearance restrictions. UKC limit for dredgers is set at 0.3 m.

7.4.3 Berthing and sailing times

Berthing and sailing times may be varied to take account of ships draft and other shipping movements.

7.4.4 Approaches to pilot boarding ground

Skardon River entrance is well defined opening distinguishable by a large clump of Casuarina trees close to South of the Entrance.

7.4.5 Restricted areas

Mariners should be aware of the Isolated Danger 0.75 nM east of the entrance marked by SR1 and the second Isolated danger just East of the Bulk Loading Facility marked by SR2.

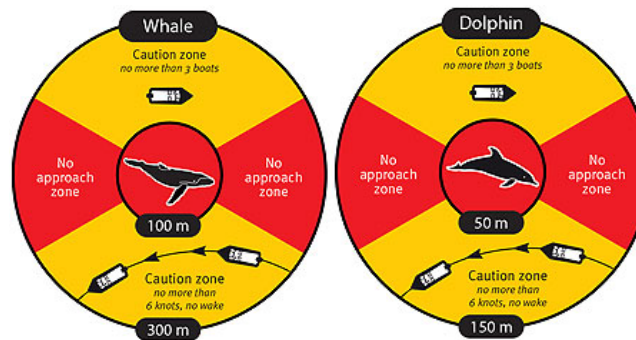
7.5 Advisory Note – Interaction with Marine Mammals

The presence of whales or marine mammals indicates that our ports are seen as environmentally attractive places.

The safety of life and the security of the environment from ship based incidents is paramount.

All vessel masters are required to fully comply with relevant marine mammal legislation, such as the provisions of the [Nature Conservation \(Animals\) Regulation 2020 Chapter 6](#)

Part 1 which prescribes minimum approach distances and maximum speeds within proximity to whales as illustrated in the diagram below.



When whales or marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of port areas and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, then every possible endeavor will be undertaken to manage shipping movements around the marine mammals to keep them safe, provided the safety of life, the ship and other environmental protection objectives are not threatened. Such action may include not commencing transits until the mammals are deemed clear.

In situations where a vessel is underway and restricted in its ability to maneuver or constrained to a channel and marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of the transit and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, the master must take all reasonable action necessary to keep them safe, without endangering the vessel, crew and the environment. Such action may include the reduction of speed to the minimum safe speed to safely navigate the channels.

Masters are required to report collisions with marine mammals to VTS and Department of Environment and Science **1300 130 372**

[Marine wildlife strandings | Environment, land and water | Queensland Government](#)