

1130 AUSTRALIA - Product - Amendment to Seafarers Handbook for Australian Waters AHP20

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (AA704519)

Chapter 6 - The Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait

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Chapter 8 - Torres Strait and the Great Barrier Reef

Page 110 and 111 (8.8) - Pilotage - Torres Strait and the Great Barrier Reef

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Substitute [accompanying block](#)

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6.2 The Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait

1. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef ecosystem and the world's largest living structure. It stretches 2300 kilometres from Lady Elliot Island in the south to the tip of Cape York Peninsula in the north, spanning 14 degrees of latitude. Contrary to its name, the Great Barrier Reef is not one long continuous reef, but a complex of some 2900 reefs, 900 islands, lagoons, seagrass meadows and mangrove forests. It hosts approximately 1500 species of fish, 360 species of hard corals, over one third of the world's soft coral species, 5000 mollusc species, six of the world's seven marine turtle species, and more than 30 species of marine mammals.
2. Many activities take place within the reef including commercial and recreational fishing, scientific research, tourism, commercial shipping, recreational boating and traditional use.
3. Due to its international importance, the Great Barrier Reef is both a Marine Park and World Heritage Area. Under the World Heritage Convention, Australia has an international obligation to protect, and conserve the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area for future generations. Included in the World Heritage Area (348 000 square kilometres) are all islands, regardless of tenure, and Queensland internal waters. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (344 400 square kilometres) is a Commonwealth Marine Park, covering 98.96 percent of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.
4. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP) was established in 1975 under the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975 (Cth) (GBRMP Act). The GBRMP Act confers responsibility for the management of the Marine Park upon the GBRMPA, an Australian Government statutory agency.
5. A combination of legislative and educational mechanisms are used to manage the Marine Park. These include:
 - Legislative provisions under the GBRMP Act and Regulations - including compulsory pilotage requirements for certain ships within prescribed areas, restrictions on

certain activities (e.g. waste discharge, illegal fishing, negligent shipping) and offences and penalties for causing environmental damage to the Marine Park.

- The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan, 2004 (Zoning plan) defines certain activities which are allowed 'as of right' and where activities are allowed with a permit. Under the Zoning Plan, ships may only navigate within the Designated Shipping Area and the General Use Zone. The Designated Shipping Area has been put in place to help minimise impacts from shipping, while having regard for the shipping industry and Australia's international obligations.
- Plans of management are generally prepared for intensively used, or particularly vulnerable groups of islands and reefs, and for the protection of vulnerable species or ecological communities. Plans of Management complement zoning by addressing issues specific to an area, species or community in greater detail than can be accomplished by the broader reef-wide zoning plans. Current plans in effect include Shoalwater Bay (Dugong) Plan of Management 1997; Cairns Area Plan of Management 2008; Whitsundays Plan of Management 2008, and the Hinchinbrook Plan of Management 2004.
- Special Management Areas provide a responsive and flexible approach to implementing appropriate management strategies at various sites in the Marine Park. They are an additional layer on top of zoning. A Special Management Area may be designated for a number of reasons including:
 - conservation of a particular species or natural resource for example turtle, dugong, bird nesting sites or fish spawning aggregation sites
 - public safety
 - to ensure opportunities for appreciation by the public

- response to an emergency (for example, a ship grounding, oil spill or marine pest outbreak).

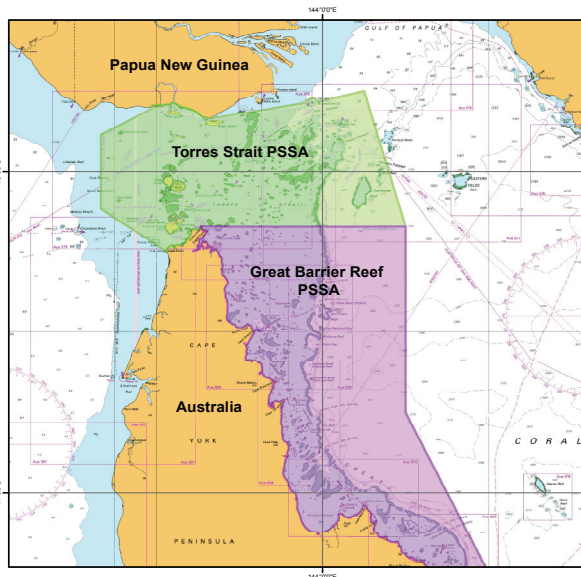
- Best environmental practices or responsible reef practices are designed to complement rather than duplicate legal requirements of environmentally responsible ways to conduct activities such as anchoring near corals and No Anchoring Areas, fuel transfer, waste disposal and marine wildlife watching.

6. The Australian and Queensland Governments have a cooperative and integrated approach to the management of the Marine Park. The GBRMPA is responsible for the overall planning and management of the GBRMP whilst the field based management of the GBRMP (and adjacent Queensland Marine Parks and island National Parks) is carried out in partnership with Queensland State agencies. Maritime Safety Queensland, the Queensland Water Police, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) and AMSA also conduct other day to day management activities in the Marine Park such as enforcement, surveillance, monitoring and education.

6.2.1 Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas

1. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) declared the Great Barrier Reef region a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in 1990. This declaration means that special protection measures apply to shipping activities. Such measures include restrictions on discharges from ships, adoption of ship routing measures and other navigational measures such as compulsory pilotage and vessel traffic management systems.
2. The IMO declared the Torres Strait a PSSA in 2005. Torres Strait is a complex shallow region with extensive shoals, banks and reefs and beds of seagrass. It has very strong currents, a complex tidal regime and a low cyclone incidence. The area has the most extensive dugong habitat in the world and an important breeding ground for other species. The Torres Strait has great cultural significance for local communities.

Torres Strait - Particular Sensitive Sea Area



6.2.2 Zoning Plans

1. Zoning plans provide a framework for the protection of critical habitats and the management of human use, particularly extractive activities such as fishing and collecting. For each zone, certain activities are allowed 'as of right' whereas some activities require a permit. Significant penalties apply for contravention of the Zoning Plan, especially in relation to fishing and environmental damage caused by the operation of a vessel.
2. The current Zoning Plan for the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park came into effect on 1 July 2004. It aims to help conserve biodiversity by protecting representative examples of the different habitats and communities in the Great Barrier Reef region.
3. In relation to maritime activities, a zone may be used or entered without permission or notification:
 - in an emergency, for any of the following purposes:
 - to investigate and respond to an emergency alert
 - to save human life or avoid the risk of injury to a person
 - to locate or secure the safety of an aircraft, vessel or structure that is, or may be, endangered by stress of weather or by navigational or operational hazards
 - to carry out emergency repairs to a navigational aid
4. A zone may be used or entered without permission, after notification to the Authority and subject to any directions given by the Authority, for any of the following purposes:
 - to deal with a threat of pollution to the marine environment under Commonwealth law or a national emergency response arrangement in which the Authority participates
 - under Commonwealth law, to remove or salvage a vessel or an aircraft, or a section of a vessel or an aircraft, or other wreck, that is wrecked, stranded, sunk or abandoned and poses a threat to the marine environment or safety.
 - by a traditional owner for an activity not involving the taking of plants, animals or marine products, for the purposes of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander custom or tradition
 - to perform functions and exercise powers under the Act, the Regulations or a plan of management
 - to enforce a law of the Commonwealth or Queensland by a person authorised under that law, or under another law of that kind
 - to carry out reconnaissance or surveillance for the Commonwealth or Queensland.
 - otherwise than in an emergency, to remove or salvage a vessel or an aircraft, or a section of a vessel or an aircraft, or other wreck, that is wrecked, stranded, sunk or abandoned
 - to construct, operate or service navigational aids, and their ancillary buildings and works, that are authorised under a law of the Commonwealth or of Queensland, including the operation of vessels and aircraft for those purposes
 - to remove, in accordance with an order under the Regulations (being an order to which section 38H of the Act applies) or a deed of agreement, property described in the order or deed

ACTIVITIES GUIDE

(see relevant *Zoning Plans* and *Regulations* for details)

| | General Use Zone | Habitat Protection Zone | Conservation Park Zone | Buffer Zone | Scientific Research Zone ² | Marine National Park Zone | Preservation Zone |
|--|------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Aquaculture | Permit | Permit | Permit ¹ | × | × | × | × |
| Bait netting | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | × | × | × | × |
| Boating, diving, photography | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ ² | ✓ | × |
| Crabbing (trapping) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ ³ | × | × | × | × |
| Harvest fishing for aquarium fish, coral and beachworm | Permit | Permit | Permit ¹ | × | × | × | × |
| Harvest fishing for sea cucumber, trochus, tropical rock lobster | Permit | Permit | × | × | × | × | × |
| Limited collecting | ✓ ⁴ | ✓ ⁴ | ✓ ⁴ | × | × | × | × |
| Limited spearfishing (snorkel only) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ ¹ | × | × | × | × |
| Line fishing | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁶ | × | × | × | × |
| Netting (other than bait netting) | ✓ | ✓ | × | × | × | × | × |
| Research (other than limited impact research) | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit |
| Shipping (other than in a designated shipping area) | ✓ | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | × |
| Tourism programme | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | Permit | × |
| Traditional use of marine resources | ✓ ⁷ | ✓ ⁷ | ✓ ⁷ | ✓ ⁷ | ✓ ⁷ | ✓ ⁷ | × |
| Trawling | ✓ | × | × | × | × | × | × |
| Trolling | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ⁵ | ✓ ^{5,8} | × | × | × |

PLEASE NOTE: This guide provides an introduction to Zoning in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Relevant Queensland Marine Park Zoning Plans or the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management should be consulted for confirmation of use or entry requirements.

1. Restrictions apply to aquaculture, spearfishing and harvest fishing for aquarium fish, beachworm and coral in the Conservation Park Zone.
2. Except for One Tree Island Reef (SR-23-2010) and Australian Institute of Marine Science (SR-19-2008) which are closed to public access and shown as orange, all other Scientific Research Zones are shown as green with an orange outline.
3. Limited to 4 catch apparatus per person (eg. crab pots, collapsible traps or dillies).
4. By hand or hand-held implement and generally no more than 5 of a species.
5. Maximum of 3 lines/rods per person with a combined total of 6 hooks per person.
6. Limited to 1 line/rod per person and 1 hook per line. Only 1 dory detached from a commercial fishing vessel.
7. Apart from traditional use of marine resources in accordance with s.211 of the *Native Title Act 1993*, an accredited Traditional Use of Marine Resources Agreement or permit is required.
8. Pelagic species only. Seasonal Closures apply to some Buffer Zones.

Detailed information is contained in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan and Regulations.

- Permits are required for most other activities not listed above.
- Commonwealth owned islands in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park are zoned "Commonwealth Islands Zone" - shown as cream.
- All Commonwealth Islands may not be shown.
- Special Management Areas may provide additional restrictions at some locations.
- The Zoning Plan does not affect the operation of s.211 of the *Native Title Act 1993*.

ACCESS TO ALL ZONES IS PERMITTED IN AN EMERGENCY.

Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

- to undertake Defence activities that would otherwise require permission under this Zoning Plan
- to undertake government geodetic surveys, government bathymetric surveys or similar government surveys
- to undertake urgent maintenance or works on essential public services (including power, water, sewerage and communication systems), that are authorised under a law of the Commonwealth, Queensland or a local government authority
- to deal with an emergency involving a serious threat to the environment, other than a threat mentioned in subparagraph 5.1 (a) (v) or (vi) of the *Great Barrier Reef Zoning Plan 2004*.

5. See GBRMPA website for information of the *Great Barrier Reef Zoning Plan 2004*.

| | |
|------------|-------------------|
| Website: | www.gbrmpa.gov.au |
| Telephone: | +617 4750 0700 |

6.2.3 Permits

1. Before any activity is undertaken in the Marine Park it is essential to check the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2004 or the Activities Guide (p.72) to see if the activity is allowed, and whether the activity requires a Marine Parks permit.
2. As a general guide, the following activities require a Marine Parks permit:
 - most commercial activities, including tourist operations
 - installation and operation of structures, such as jetties, marinas, pontoons and aquaculture facilities
 - any works, such as repairs to structures, dredging and dumping of spoil, placement and operation of moorings
 - waste discharge from a fixed structure
 - research except for limited impact research
 - educational programs

3. Most visitors to the Marine Park will NOT require a permit for recreational activities.

1. Permits to conduct activities within the Marine Park are generally issued as joint permits by both the GBRMPA and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Applications should be lodged as early as possible, preferably four months prior to the date required.
2. See the activities guide above or the GBRMPA's website for permit application forms and further information.

| | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|
| Website: | www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/permits |
| Telephone: | +617 4750 0700 |
| Fax: | +61 7 4772 6093 |
| email: | permitenquiry@gbrmpa.gov.au |

3. For information about activities undertaken outside of the Marine Park which might affect either the World Heritage Area or any one of a number of protected matters (e.g. endangered species), contact the Department of Environment.

| | |
|----------|------------------------|
| Website: | www.environment.gov.au |
|----------|------------------------|

6.2.4 Designated Shipping Areas

1. Ships may transit the Marine Park through the General Use Zone (GUZ) or the Designated Shipping Areas (DSA). The GUZ or the DSA may be used or entered without permission for the navigation of a ship, subject to any requirements for a compulsory pilot, or if any equipment that is normally used for fishing or collecting is stowed or secured when the vessel is in part of the zone in which the use of the equipment is not permitted. A ship is generally defined as a vessel greater than 50 metres in overall length.
2. Ship operators require a permit from GBRMPA to navigate outside the DSA and GUZ.
3. For further details regarding the definition of a ship (see Ch.8) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983.

6.2.5 Cruise Ship Activities

1. To provide safer navigation through the Great Barrier Reef waters, cruise ships are required under Commonwealth law to carry a licensed pilot in designated compulsory pilotage areas. These areas are:
 - The inner route of the Great Barrier Reef Region bounded by the northern boundary of the Great Barrier Reef Region, latitude 16°39.91'S, the Australian mainland and the outer edge of the Great Barrier Reef
 - Hydrographer's Passage
 - The Whitsundays compulsory pilotage area.
2. Cruise ship operators are required to have a Marine Parks permit to conduct a tourism program on a cruise ship in the Marine Park. When applying, operators should detail their proposed itinerary and activities to ensure that an appropriate permit is issued.
3. The GBRMPA has identified 32 designated anchorages (for cruise ships) throughout the Marine Park. These anchorages provide access to a range of reefs and islands which meet safety and environmental factors. There are 11 anchorages in the Far Northern Management Area of the Marine Park, 7 in the Cairns Area, 1 in the Dunk Island Area, two in the Hinchinbrook Area, eight in the Whitsundays Area and three in the Mackay/Capricorn Management Area. Some anchorages, such as the far northern anchorages, specifically cater for smaller cruise ships which are less than 120 metres and carrying less than 150 passengers.
4. All anchorages must be booked with the GBRMPA prior to use. Generally only one cruise ship is allowed to use a cruise ship anchorage at any one time. Geographical coordinates for the anchorages are available online at GBRMPA's website.
5. Cruise ship anchorages are shown on Australian Nautical Charts with the symbol below containing unique anchorage letter identifiers. The GBRMPA has also identified 9 cruise ship transit corridors that enable cruise ships to transit outside the Designated Shipping Area and General Use Zone for sightseeing and to discharge waste external to the Marine Park. No anchoring is permitted in

these corridors. Geographical coordinates for the transit corridors can be found on cruise ship permits and on the GBRMPA's website.

6. A map showing cruise ship anchorages and transit corridors can be ordered from the GBRMPA by email or in the website.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| email: | cruise.bookings@gbrmpa.gov.au |
| Website: | www.gbrmpa.gov.au www.onboard.gbrmpa.gov.au |
| Anchorage and transit corridors | http://onboard.gbrmpa.gov.au/home/ what_you_do/cruise_ships/cruise_ship_ anchorages |

Example of a cruise ship anchorage
symbol on a nautical chart



6.2.6 Environmentally Sensitive Sea
Areas (ESSAs)

1. These seas have specific environmental protective measures that apply for domestic commercial activities including tourism, fishing, mining, scientific and recreational purposes. To undertake these activities in an ESSA , a permit must be obtained from the Director of National Parks. ESSAs are marked upon navigational charts, however there are no restrictions upon international shipping activities or commercial vessel transit undertaking voyages in conformance with MARPOL and SOLAS. Vessels should note the environmental significance of ESSAs and take extra care while transiting through these areas.

6.3 Depiction of Zones on
Australian Nautical Charts

6.3.1 Marine Protected Areas



1. Where appropriate and practical, Marine Protected Areas are charted as Environmentally Sensitive Sea Area (ESSAs), Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSAs) or Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs). The Australian Hydrographic Service will include the outer limits of the area, the outer limits of restrictions, and chart notes. Mariners are

advised to seek guidance on the restrictions within these areas from the responsible agency.





6.3.2 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zones

- The following bounded areas will be shown on Australian Nautical Charts:
 - The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park outer boundary - to alert mariners when they are entering the area in which Marine Park and PSSA restrictions apply.
 - The Designated Shipping Area - where in addition to the General Use Zone the GBRMP, vessel transit is allowed through other Great Barrier Reef Marine Park zones.
- The tables below show how the bounded areas are depicted on a nautical paper chart.
- Mariners should note that the “shaded” side of the boundary indicates which side the boundary navigation should be undertaken.
- The symbology on Australian Nautical Charts can also be found in Admiralty Publication NP 5011.

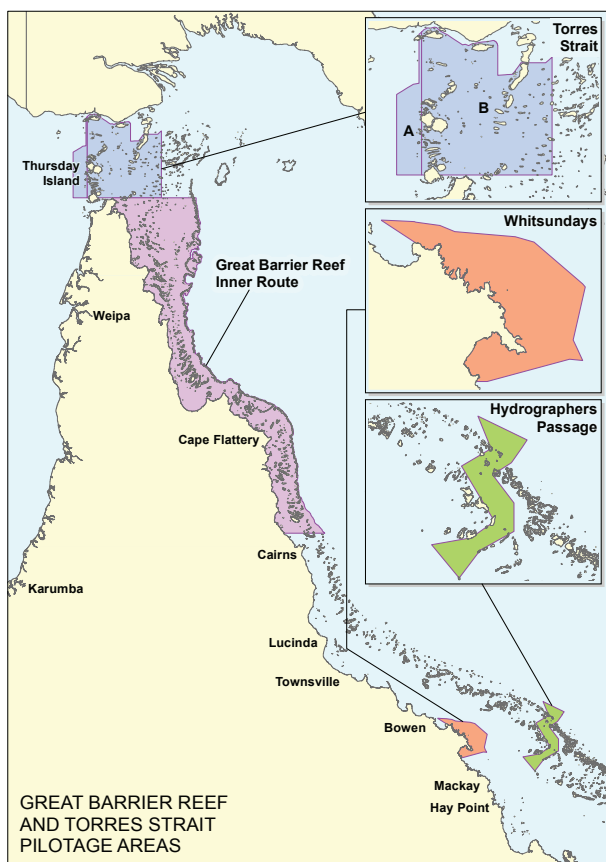
Zones depicted on a nautical paper chart

| NP 5011 Reference | Description | Depicted on Chart |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| N 22 | Particularly Sensitive Sea Area |  PSSA (see GBRMP Note) |
| N 22 | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park |  GBRMP (see Note) |
| N 22 | Environmentally Sensitive Sea Area |  ESSA (see Note) |
| N | Designated Shipping Area |  DSA (see Note) |

Zones depicted on an ENC

| NP 5011 Reference | Description | Encoded in an ENC as a: | Display on ECDIS |
|-------------------|--|-------------------------|---|
| N 22 | Particularly Sensitive Sea Area | Administration Area | Traditional boundary turned on  |
| | Designated Shipping Area | | Non - traditional boundary  |
| N 22 | Environmentally Sensitive Sea Area (e.g. Great Barrier Reef Marine Park) | Restricted Area | Traditional boundary turned on  |
| | Great Barrier Reef Marine Park High | | Non - traditional boundary  |

8.8 Pilotage - Torres Strait and the Great Barrier Reef

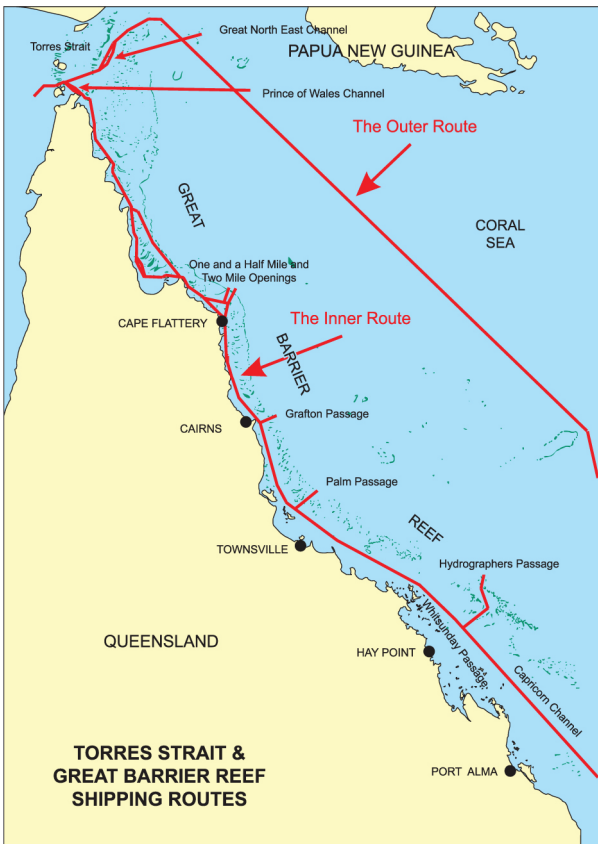


1. In 1991, the Australian Government imposed a scheme of pilotage on all regulated ships within the pilotage areas of the GBR Region and in 2006 extended the system of pilotage to the Torres Strait (Great North East Channel).
2. These pilotage requirements are contained in The *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* (Cth). The requirement to carry a pilot in the Inner Route (Cape York to Cairns Section), Hydrographers Passage and Torres Strait (Great North East Channel) has been endorsed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) under *Resolutions A710 (17)* and *MEPC 133 (53)*.
3. Regulated Ships are:
 - any vessel that is 70 metres or longer in overall length, or
 - any loaded oil tanker or chemical carrier or liquefied gas carrier
 - other than a vessel belonging to a Defence Force or which has a pilotage exemption issued by Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

4. There are four areas where pilots licensed by AMSA must be carried:
 - The Inner Route - Cape York to Cairns
 - Torres Strait - Great North East Channel
 - Hydrographers Passage
 - Whitsunday Passage.
5. A master or owner may apply to GBRMPA AMSA to seek an exemption from the requirement to navigate with a pilot in a pilotage area of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Torres Strait. A technical assessment of the vessel and a review of the qualifications and recent GBR experience of the entire bridge team will be taken into consideration when deciding on the granting of a pilotage exemption.

8.9 Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef - Shipping Routes

1. There are stringent management arrangements for commercial shipping in the waters of the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait, designated Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas by the IMO in 1990 and 2005.
2. There are several measures in place to increase navigational safety and reduce the risk of ship groundings and collisions include:
 - Designated Shipping Areas (see *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003*)
 - Recommended pilotage
 - Mandatory vessel reporting and monitoring
 - Aids to Navigation
 - Automatic Identification Systems (AIS)



8.9.6 Further Information on Shipping Routes

1. More information on navigating through the Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef can be found at AMSA's Coastal Pilotage Portal, latest nautical charts and the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Zoning Plan 2003* and the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 1983*.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| AMSA Pilotage Portal: | www.amsa.gov.au/navigation/shipping-management/pilotage |
|-----------------------|--|