

## 2019 State-Wide Maintenance Dredging Program for Queensland Ports

### Background

In accordance with Action 3 of the Queensland Maintenance Dredging Strategy all Queensland Ports are required to:

*“...work together to ensure that an annual state-wide maintenance dredging program for the TSHD Brisbane is developed to optimise environmental outcomes and operational efficiencies by:*

- *ensuring identified environmental windows, as well as any restrictions imposed on maintenance dredging permits are applied*
- *minimising the net risk of impacts at each port by adopting site-specific operating procedures, and*
- *avoiding unnecessary dredger travel and relocation...”*

This memo addresses the above action and will be made publicly available on the Department of Transport and Main Roads website.

### Proposed Program

In preparing the proposed 2019 maintenance dredging program, each port conducted a risk assessment which considered the following issues:

Issue	Implications for scheduling
<b>Minimise dredging requirements</b>	The schedule is best initiated after the wet season when most sedimentation occurs. Accordingly, the schedule for this year will begin in late March.
<b>Minimise environmental risks</b>	<p>Port specific risk assessments have confirmed that maintenance dredging is a low risk at all ports. However, dredging should be avoided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At Bundaberg from October to February when turtle nesting occurs at Mon Repos.</li> <li>• At Hay Point from mid-November to mid-January when coral spawning is most likely to occur.</li> <li>• At Karumba from October to April to avoid the prawn migration period.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, dredging in the sea channel and in the seaward section of the Platypus Channel at the Port of Townsville during October to November will be closely and proactively managed to reduce potential impacts on coral spawning (the timing of which varies slightly from year to year).</p>
<b>Volumes of material to be dredged</b>	The degree of siltation and its location within the channel, berth or swing basin determines the volume of material to be dredged and the duration of dredging required. Current forecast volumes at all ports are generally consistent with long term averages except in the ports of Weipa and Karumba where they have been impacted by recent floods and cyclones. The Port of Hay Point is dredged infrequently and was last maintenance dredged in 2010. Given sediment build up over the last 9 years, Hay Point will be dredged in 2019.

Issue	Implications for scheduling
<b>Urgency of dredging requirements</b>	Based on our current understanding Weipa, Karumba and Hay Point have identified an urgent need to undertake maintenance dredging in 2019. Material has accumulated in the channel during the wet season and designated channel depths need to be restored quickly to ensure these ports remain fully operational.
<b>Dredge refit</b>	The only viable location for annual refit (servicing) of the <i>Brisbane</i> is in the shipyards at Cairns. This has been scheduled for mid-October 2019 and will take approximately 2 weeks. Shipyard availability times are limited.
<b>Efficiencies in dredge travel</b>	The schedule has been designed to ensure ports are visited in a linear fashion and avoid “backtracking” wherever possible. Increased requirements for the dredge to travel between ports results in increased costs, fuel usage and vessel emissions.

After reviewing the above issues, a proposed program was developed for 2019:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
<b>Bundaberg</b>			→									
<b>Hay Point</b>			→	→	→							
<b>Townsville</b>					→							
<b>Cairns</b>					→							
<b>Weipa/ Amrun</b>						→	→	→	→	→		
<b>Karumba</b>						→	→	→	→			
<b>Refit</b>										→		
<b>Townsville</b>											→	
<b>Gladstone</b>												→

Notes:

1. The above program may be influenced by unanticipated factors such as weather, dredge breakdown, logistical or provisioning issues.
2. In addition, some ports (in particular Weipa and Karumba) are still analysing the recent impacts of TC Oma and other monsoonal events on sedimentation of berths and channels. Once this analysis is complete, the dredger that is used to execute maintenance dredging activities may change along with the duration of dredging.
3. Ports will continually monitor maintenance dredging activities to determine whether such changes are likely to result in increased environmental risk. In instances where the environmental risk increases, TMR will be notified and existing environmental controls reviewed to determine whether they are still effective.