

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING made this 18th day of December 2017

GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY AND QUEENSLAND PORTS ASSOCIATION ON PORT ACTIVITIES IN OR ADJACENT TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding is to establish a collaborative effort between Queensland Ports and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) to strategically improve coordination associated with port activity within or adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Marine Park).

The Memorandum of Understanding is not binding on either party but is provided as a statement of intent and as a vehicle for cooperation.

CONTEXT

The Great Barrier Reef was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1981 in recognition of its Outstanding Universal Value. Every five years, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority prepares an Outlook Report for the Great Barrier Reef Region. The 2014 Outlook Report concluded that:

“The system as a whole retains the qualities contributing to its Outstanding Universal Value as recognised in its listing as a world heritage property.”

However the report also identified a number of threats, including:

- Climate change
- Land-based run-off
- Coastal land use change
- Direct use

The Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan (Reef 2050 Plan) is the Australian and Queensland Governments’ overarching framework for protecting and managing these threats to the Great Barrier Reef. The Reef 2050 Plan contains concrete targets, actions, objectives and outcomes to ensure the protection of the Reef’s Outstanding Universal Value, and allow ecologically sustainable use.

All levels of government, as well as the ports industry, recognise the importance of ensuring port activities are ecologically sustainable and are committed to delivering the actions under the Reef 2050 Plan.

MEETINGS

Queensland Ports will hold a six-monthly ports forum with all state and federal regulators (including GBRMPA) to exchange information and share learnings. The content of the forum will be decided by participants but will include issues such as policy, maintenance dredging, monitoring programs and ecosystem research and management.

In addition, the Queensland Ports Association Environment and Planning Committee also meet on a six-monthly basis and there are opportunities for GBRMPA to attend these meetings to discuss specific issues of mutual interest to the parties.

Beyond this, Queensland Ports and GBRMPA will meet on as needs basis.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Strategic planning discussions are of recognised value to both Queensland Ports and GBRMPA. GBRMPA will involve Queensland Ports at an early stage in any significant strategic planning or policy development that affects ports or port operations, shipping routes, anchorages or dredging.

Similarly, Queensland Ports will advise GBRMPA of long-term plans in relation to maintenance dredging, port expansion or environmental monitoring and research.

The parties to the Memorandum of Understanding will take into consideration the strategic aims of the other party, as well as specific key issues raised in meetings when developing and reviewing strategic plans or policies for their activities.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

a) Climate change

Climate change is a global issue that will affect ports and the Marine Park. Climate change represents a major threat to the long-term environmental values of the Marine Park. GBRMPA has identified that environmental impacts on the Marine Park must be reduced to improve the resilience of the Marine Park to withstand climate change impacts.

Queensland Ports will continue to manage and reduce the climate footprint of their activities. Both parties will maintain a dialogue on greenhouse reduction initiatives to foster dissemination of best practice measures.

b) Dredge Material Management

All ports in Queensland have undertaken maintenance dredging since they were established. Queensland Ports cannot function without maintenance dredging which ensures safe navigation of ships entering and exiting a port.

In managing requirements for maintenance dredging, Queensland Ports will develop Long Term Maintenance Dredge Management Plans (LMDMPs) in accordance with the Queensland Maintenance Dredging Strategy. In developing LMDMPs, Queensland Ports will seek the most sustainable dredge material management option which considers social, environmental and economic values. Queensland Ports may, from time to time, need to place maintenance dredge material in the Marine Park.

In response to LMDMPs, GBRMPA will look to issue long term permits for maintenance dredging activities where possible.

In accordance with the *Sustainable Ports Development Act 2015*, disposal of capital dredge material in the Marine Park is prohibited.

c) Environmental Monitoring

Queensland Ports will maintain an environmental program designed to understand the local environment surrounding each port in Queensland. Queensland Ports will also be actively involved in the Reef Integrated Monitoring, Modelling and Reporting Program (RIMRep) being managed by GBRMPA. GBRMPA will keep Queensland Ports up to date on progress relating to RIMRep and ensure that any issues that Queensland Ports flag as end users are addressed in the design and implementation phases of RIMRep.

d) Environmental Assessment and Approvals

From time to time it will be necessary for Queensland Ports to seek permits for new activities. In these instances, both parties will endeavour to ensure that the assessment process, approval conditions, reporting and review requirements are designed to protect the environment in a cost-effective manner.

e) Introduced marine pests

Introduced marine pests have the potential to have an impact on the environmental values of the Marine Park. Both parties strongly support a risk assessment based approach to marine pest management and the need to ensure consistency between Commonwealth, GBRMPA and State Government regulations with regard to introduced marine pests.

GBRMPA and Queensland Ports will cooperate with all government agencies in their activities to monitor and respond to marine pests.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

At times Queensland Ports will undertake scientific research to support its activities within the Marine Park and the sustainable operation of a port. In developing these scientific research programs ports will engage with GBRMPA and take into consideration any issues that are raised.

MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR PORT ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK

Queensland Ports will consult with GBRMPA when developing environmental management plans for actions that may impact the environmental, heritage or cultural values of the Marine Park, or have an effect on Marine Park users.

GBRMPA will consult with Queensland Ports when developing zoning maps, environmental management plans and programs or and policies that may affect port operations, port development, port users or the environmental, heritage or cultural values of a port property.

GBRMPA will also flag any related actions or activities of other Marine Park users which ports should be aware of.

EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed on an annual basis and opportunities for improvement identified. Where necessary, the Memorandum of Understanding will be amended.

The review will be undertaken by the Queensland Ports Association Environment and Planning Chair and GBRMPA Director Environmental Assessment and Protection.

SIGNED by the **COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA ACTING THROUGH THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY** by its duly authorised delegate

Signature of Witness

N. Goodall

Full name of Witness

Signature of authorised delegate

K. Dobbs, Acting General Manager Reef Protection

Full name of authorised delegate

SIGNED by the **QUEENSLAND PORTS ASSOCIATION** by its duly authorised delegate

Signature of Witness

J. Palethorpe

Full name of Witness

Signature of authorised delegate

P.L. Doyle, Principle Policy Advisor

Full name of authorised delegate