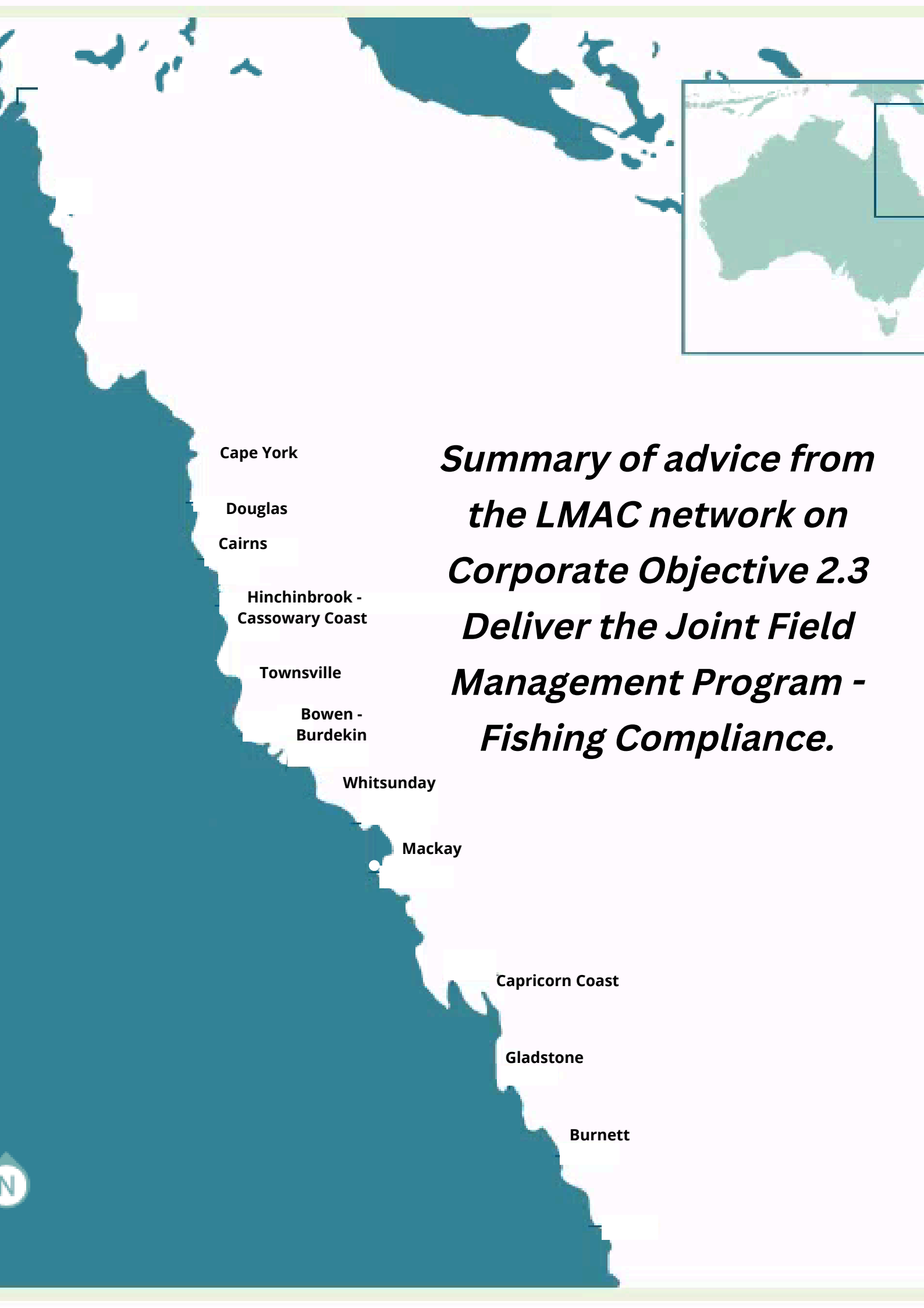




LOCAL MARINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

MARCH 2024





***Summary of advice from
the LMAC network on
Corporate Objective 2.3
Deliver the Joint Field
Management Program -
Fishing Compliance.***

In March 2024, all 11 Local Marine Advisory Committees (LMACs) were involved in discussions with the Reef Authority Compliance team. At the LMAC Chairs' meeting in October 2023, the attendees selected Corporate Objective 2.3 Deliver the Joint Field Management Program (RJFMP) as a priority to receive information and provide advice.

Overview of compliance program

The Reef Authority staff presented on the RJFMP Compliance Program explaining that several managing agencies deliver the risk-based and intelligence-driven compliance patrols to deter and detect illegal activity. The presentation identified 35 compliance risks to the integrity of marine and island protected areas. The RJFMP Compliance Program considers the nature of the risk and effectiveness of controls to mitigate harm or adverse outcomes to the values of the World Heritage Area. Risks to the Marine Park include recreational and commercial fishing, illegal coral collecting, vessel groundings etc. With a reef being larger than Italy, rather than surveillance covering 100 per cent of the Marine Parks to inform patrol planning. Having multiple agencies on patrols provides many benefits.

Technology

The Reef Authority shared the new technologies being considered to enhance the Compliance Program, including the use of drones to; expand surveillance coverage, conduct remote area monitoring and enhance night surveillance operations.

LMAC advice: Members discussed the use of aerial surveillance and compliance in their local region and liked the use of drones for compliance surveillance. The majority of LMAC members across the eleven LMACs agreed that promoting drone surveillance would help deter intentional non-compliant fishers. Members also suggested that the use of vessel monitoring system (VMS) would also be a highly effective control to detect and deter illegal fishing.

Education to promote voluntary compliance

The Reef Authority highlighted that while the RJFMP Compliance Program's surveillance efforts are broad, encouraging fishers to follow zones voluntarily is crucial for managing the Marine Parks in the long term. A big part of improving voluntary compliance is engaging fishers with positive messaging on zoning rules, the benefits of following zoning rules and where to get information on the rules (apps and maps) to avoid fishing in protected areas. The Reef Authority has been delivering targeted Zoning campaigns to reach those with an interest in boating, fishing and outdoors across Queensland, including South East Queensland.

LMAC Advice: Members liked the messaging the Reef Authority has been using in campaigns encouraging people to download the Eye on the Reef and Fisheries 2.0 Apps before they head out. LMAC members felt that people from out of town often lack knowledge of the Marine Park rules.

A number of LMAC members across the Committees suggested that to increase awareness and encourage voluntary compliance the Reef Authority could;

- increase the presence of Zoning maps and informational materials at bait and tackle stores and visitor information centres,
- increase on-ground engagement at local events availability of Zoning maps at boat ramps
- provide more signage around boat ramps
- distribute information through caravan parks to reach travelers.
- engage with Reef Guardian Schools before school holidays to get key messages out into community
- utilise the LMAC networks to share Reef Authority messages
- publish the good news stories as well as the penalties communication targeted to keen fishers explaining the ‘what’s in it for me’ benefits of zoning and compliance
- produce stickers with phone numbers (eg: compliance hotline, injured wildlife, fisheries hotline) and fish ID.

Reporting

The Reef Authority provided a list of contact information for people to use to report: suspected illegal activity, vessel collisions and groundings, sick / dead / stranded marine animals, and Queensland Fisheries hotline.

Members expressed interest in learning more about how to report suspected illegal activity. They sought information about the reporting process, the required information, and how confidentiality of the information is maintained. Members also expressed interest in understanding the number of compliance interactions compared with the number of offences, the breakdown of the different types of offences, the number of infringement notices given to non-locals and the penalties for non-compliance.

