



Australian Government
Department of Defence



Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

MANAGEMENT AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE

AND

THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY

ON

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
OF DEFENCE ACTIVITIES IN THE GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Defence (Defence) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) are strongly committed to continuing to work closely together in a constructive and complementary way to ensure the protection, understanding and sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (GBRMP). Defence and GBRMPA recognise that each has responsibilities and obligations to the community for their respective functions. Both organisations also recognise that their actions can have impacts on the operations and activities of the other and for that reason close cooperation is important.

To help the Commonwealth meet its requirement to protect and manage the GBRMP, Defence will ensure that its activities will be conducted in a way that minimises the effect of the activities on the GBRMP and its users. Defence activities will be consistent with the undertakings made in the *Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Defence Activities in the GBRMHA* (18 January 2006, http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/management/eim/defence) and with the GBRMP legislation, Zoning Plans, Management Plans, directions given by the GBRMPA, any other relevant policies and this Management Agreement.

To help Defence meet its requirements to train its people and provide for national security, GBRMPA will proactively take into account Defence use of the Marine Park and adjacent areas when making decisions about GBRMP management matters. As a general principal, where management controls need to be applied they will be implemented in a way that protects the environment and balances competing pressures aiming to minimise the effect on Defence use to the greatest practicable extent.

To implement this commitment Defence and GBRMPA have decided to enter into this Management Agreement to document the commitments made in the SEA to cooperate and communicate as part of the process that will cement the strong links, shared visions, understanding and close working relationships that have developed between the two organisations.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Management Agreement is to provide for a shared understanding and agreement between GBRMPA and Defence in order to:

- a. Facilitate open and transparent communication and understanding about the activities Defence undertakes, or may wish to undertake in the future, in and/or around the GBRMP and that may impact upon the GBRMP, World Heritage area or Park users;
- b. Facilitate open and transparent communication and understanding about the activities the GBRMPA undertakes, or may wish to undertake in the future, in and/or around the GBRMP and that may impact upon Defence or Defence personnel; and
- c. Strategically improve the environmental management of Defence activities in the GBRMP and enhance opportunities for both organisations to cooperate.

2. Meetings and annual forum

Defence is represented at the local level at several sites adjacent to the GBRMP, providing opportunities for regular day-to-day consultation at a local level. Nothing in this management agreement should be taken to preclude consultation or contact at the local level.

Both organisations recognise that from time to time issues of national or regional significance may arise that require formal coordination and consultation. This Management Agreement proposes that meetings of officials occur at least annually to provide a forum to discuss issues relating to each other's activities.

Matters for discussion at the meetings will include:

- Reporting on Defence activities that have, or are planned to take place in the GBRMP;
- Plans for consultation on any relevant Defence environmental management planning documents;
- Participation in joint risk assessments when activities are being planned in the GBRMP;
- Reporting on GBRMPA operations which might have an impact on Defence activities;
- Discussion and prioritisation of opportunities to cooperate on research and monitoring;
- Communication;
- Resources and costs;
- Staff interchange and training; and
- Emergency response procedures.

For Defence, the attendees will include the officers, or their functional successors, performing the duties of, or representatives of:

- a. Assistant Secretary, Estate Policy and Environment Branch;
- b. Director (Environmental Impact Management);
- c. Representatives of Defence Support Group Regional offices; and
- d. Representatives from the service elements of the Australian Defence Force.

For the GBRMPA, the attendees will include the officers or their functional successors performing the duties of, or representatives of:

- a. Executive Director, GBRMPA;
- b. Director (Program Delivery), GBRMPA; and
- c. Manager (Environmental Impact Management), GBRMPA;

These representatives listed at (a) above will be the principal points of contact for any matters requiring high-level communication between Defence and the GBRMPA.

While an annual meeting is contemplated by this agreement a meeting can occur at any time at the request of either party.

3. Strategic planning

The parties to the Management Agreement will take into consideration the issues raised in the annual forum when developing and reviewing Strategic Environmental Assessments, strategic plans or policies for the environmental management of Defence and/or GBRMPA activities in the GBRMP.

4. Research and monitoring

Defence and GBRMPA recognise that there are opportunities to cooperate in facilitating research relevant to environmental management of the estates of both organisations. The annual meeting will have a standing agenda item that canvasses opportunities to cooperate on applied scientific research and/or exchange information regarding issues that either organisation thinks may be important for the effective management of GBRMPA or Defence managed land or sea. Examples include cooperation on surveys to detect the potential for marine pest incursions, environmental baseline studies or performance indicators associated with major exercises.

5. Legislation, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Management Plans

With regard to specific Defence commitments, Defence agrees to:

- Comply with the provisions of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975*, the GBRMPA Zoning and Management Plans in operation under the GBRMPA Act, and the Regulations made under the Act;
- Consult with the GBRMPA when developing environmental management plans, policies and procedures for actions that may affect the environmental, heritage or cultural values of the GBRMP, or have an effect on Park users;
- Comply with the *Strategic Environmental Assessment of Defence activities in the GBRMP* (18 January 2006, http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/corp_site/management/eim/defence);
- Consult with GBRMPA and develop annual key performance indicators associated with the SEA and other key Defence activities; and
- Provide access to Defence facilities or resources for the conduct of environmental or heritage management tasks, for example for cooperative programs for Commonwealth Islands, threatened species, feral animal or weed control, subject to the usual security and operational requirements for advanced notice.

With regard to specific GBRMPA commitments, GBRMPA agrees to:

- To consider and involve Defence in its environmental decision making process;
- Consult with Defence when developing environmental management plans, policies and procedures for actions that may affect the environmental, heritage or cultural values of Defence property, or have an effect on Defence personnel or their work; and
- Consult with Defence for any planned activity, which will have an impact on Defence operations or training.

6. Performance review

The annual forum will be used to review the effectiveness of this Management Agreement, the arrangements made under it and opportunities for improvement. Key performance indicators will be linked to the GBRMP Outlook Report

7. Communication and consultation


Defence and the GBRMPA commit to informing each other about matters of day-to-day importance that may be of interest to the other party. Examples could include reporting and advising about incidents that may have environmental impacts, impacts on Marine Park users, potential or actual disruption to Defence activities or activities that may be of media interest.

Defence and GBRMPA commit to consult at all stages of the development of planning documents such as environmental management plans, zoning or other GBRMP statutory plans, regulations and/or other management controls.

8. Terms of arrangement and amendments to arrangement

This Management Agreement is a voluntary agreement. The Management Agreement will have a life of three years, at which time it will be reviewed and renewed by agreement between the parties. Any party to the Management Agreement may elect to exit from the Management Agreement if it ceases to meet their requirements by giving three months notice to the other parties. Prior to the termination, dispute resolution processes will be used to try and resolve any issues with the aim to preserve the Management Agreement.

If either the GBRMPA or Defence identifies a need to amend the Management Agreement a notice in writing shall be provided to the other party with the proposed amendment.


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Executive Director

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Date: 12 June 2008


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Assistant Secretary

Estate Policy and Environment Branch

Department of Defence

Date: 25 June 2008