



MEDIA RELEASE

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Immediate Use

EXTENSIVE SEA SEARCH CONTINUING OFF QUEENSLAND

Australian Search and Rescue is continuing to coordinate a search for two men from the sunken fishing trawler *Eastern Leader* in the Great Barrier Reef near Innisfail.

Today's search, using 11 fixed wing aircraft and four helicopters, will cover a 2000 square nautical mile region between Hinchinbrook Island and Cairns.

The search commenced after a third man, clinging to an upturned dinghy, was picked up by the cruise vessel *Reef Endeavour* about 8 pm on Saturday night (20/7) about 12 nautical miles (22kms) offshore.

He had been in the water for more than 40 hours after the *Eastern Leader* snagged a trawl line and sank near Otter Reef about 20 nm (37km) offshore.

The survivor said he and another deckhand had clung to the swamped dinghy for several hours before the other man left to attempt to swim to shore.

He said the fishing boat's skipper had not been sighted since the vessel overturned and sank.

The weather in the search area today is moderate with 25 knot south easterly winds and two metre seas.

Further information:

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