



Australian Government

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Decade of Protecting the Great Barrier Reef and the Torres Strait

Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport and Regional Services De-Anne Kelly represented the Australian Government today at the 10th anniversary celebration of the opening of the original Reef Centre at Hay Point, near Mackay.

The centre is a joint Australian and Queensland Government facility operating the Coastal Vessel Traffic Service, REEFVTS, for the Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef.

Mrs Kelly said the REEFVTS system played a leading role in the range of measures protecting the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef and equally sensitive Torres Strait from the risk of damage from a shipping incident.

“It is wonderful to be here to celebrate a decade of co-operation between the Australian Government and the Queensland Government in providing this essential service,” Mrs Kelly said.

The original Reef Centre was officially opened in 1997 as one of the world’s first mandatory ship reporting systems approved by the International Maritime Organization.

“The introduction of sophisticated monitoring and predictive capabilities and advances in technology allowed the upgrade to a Coastal Vessel Traffic Service in 2004, including long range identification and tracking of ships via satellite and Automatic Identification Systems,” Mrs Kelly said.

“REEFVTS now provides a surface picture of ships transiting the Great Barrier Reef and the Torres Strait. It has been instrumental in improving situational awareness and preventing potentially hazardous navigational situations through its ability to interact with shipping and provide information to assist onboard decision-making.

“REEFVTS is at the heart of the range of measures by the Australian and Queensland Governments to protect this pristine and unique marine environment.

“I am proud of the role played by the Australian Government in conjunction with Queensland to ensure its continued success and I congratulate the centre staff for their dedicated work over the past 10 years.”

Media Contact:

Sharon Davidson

02 6777 4818 or 0419 401 214