



## The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Minister for Infrastructure,  
Transport, Regional Development  
and Local Government  
Leader of the House

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# Media Statement

## NEW MEASURES TO PROTECT THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

The system requiring all ships to regularly report their location and route to authorities, backed up by real-time radio and satellite tracking of their progress, will be extended to the southern portion of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

This action is based on advice from the nation's the independent safety regulator, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA). Once implemented it will improve maritime safety and provide further protection for one of our most precious environmental assets.

The Australian Government will now submit its proposal to extend the mandatory Ship Reporting System to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for their agreement. This process of ratification is required by the fact that around 55 per cent of the proposed new coverage area is beyond Australia's territorial waters.

In the meantime, AMSA in conjunction with Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) will begin rolling out the infrastructure necessary to support the reporting system such as sensors, communications equipment and modified navigational software. By beginning this work now, our authorities will be fully ready for the start of mandatory reporting in July 2011.

In 1997, the IMO approved a mandatory ship reporting system for that portion of the Marine Park north of Latitude 22 degrees south (south of Mackay).

In addition, I have also initiated a review of the offences under the *Protection of the Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983* and the *Navigation Act 1912*, with a view to toughening the penalties for breaches.

Our aim here is simple: to further deter shipping companies and their crews from engaging in unsafe and irresponsible actions at sea, particularly near environmentally sensitive marine ecosystems.

AMSA also considered the option of extending pilotage, concluding that the package of additional measures being announced today is the most effective way forward.

The Australian Government, in partnership with the Queensland Government, is determined to do all we can to reduce the risk posed to the Reef by shipping.

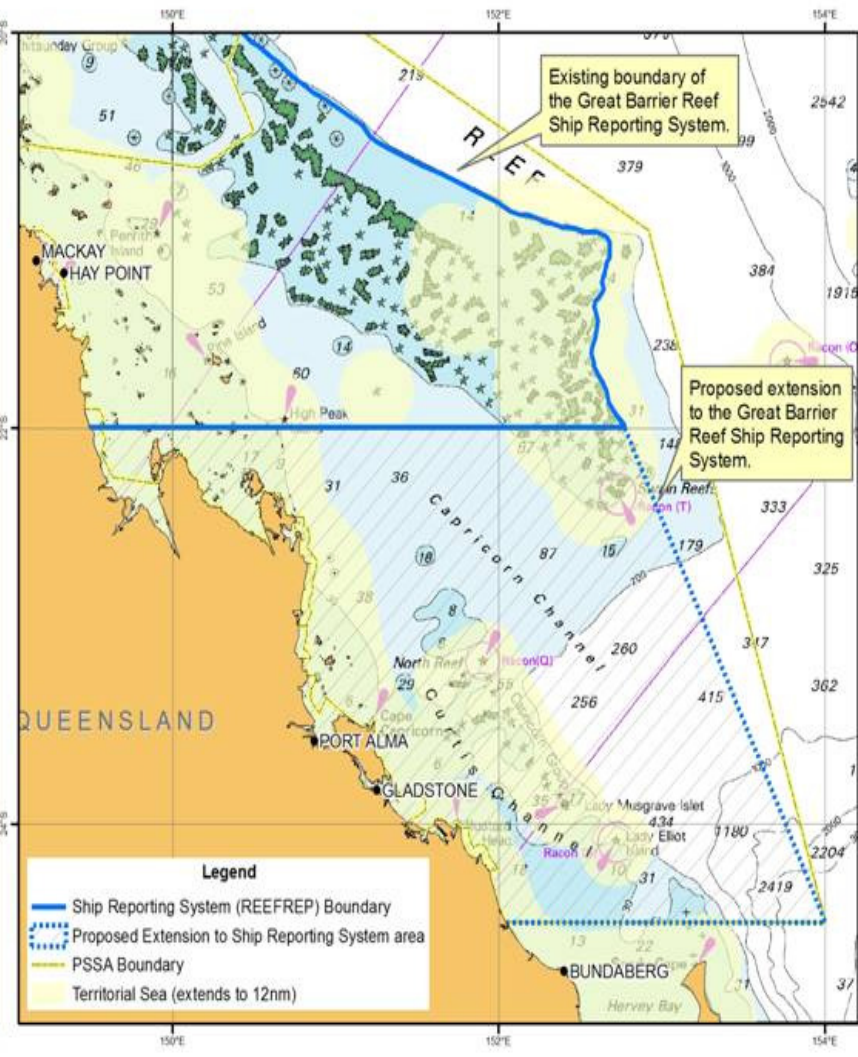
**Media contact: Moksha Watts 0413 389 070**

## **DATE**

### **Regulatory Measures in Place for shipping in the Great Barrier Reef include:**

- In 1990 the declaration of the region as a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area by the IMO allowing Australia to introduce associated regulatory measures in international waters.
- In 1991 the establishment of a pilotage regime for ships transiting navigationally complex areas of the Reef with the pilot providing detailed local knowledge to assist safe passage.
- Establishment of an IMO-adopted ship reporting system in 1997 whereby ships are required to report their position on a regular basis.
- Introduction of a coastal vessel traffic service in 2004 allowing near real time monitoring of ship traffic to provide information to a ship's master on potential traffic conflicts and other navigational information. This area did not extend further south than 22 degrees (south of Mackay) given relatively easier navigation in the open waters.
- In 2004, a system of zoning was introduced by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to allow ships to transit the Reef in designated areas.
- Implementation of an emergency management towage system and associated response arrangements in 2006 which includes the provision of a dedicated emergency towage vessel, the *Pacific Responder*.
- An extensive aids-to-navigation network such as lights, buoys and satellite systems.

**PROPOSED EXTENSION TO GREAT BARRIER REEF SHIP REPORTING SYSTEM**

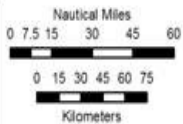


Existing boundary of the Great Barrier Reef Ship Reporting System.

Proposed extension to the Great Barrier Reef Ship Reporting System.

**Legend**

- Ship Reporting System (REEFREP) Boundary
- - - - Proposed Extension to Ship Reporting System area
- PSSA Boundary
- Territorial Sea (extends to 12nm)



Map Datum: WGS84

Coordinate Definition: Geographical

Map not to be used for navigation purposes.

Background chart information obtained from raster nautical chart AUS4602 provided by the Australian Hydrographic Service.

Great Barrier Reef boundary information provided by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

Maritime boundary information provided by Geosciences Australia.



Map prepared 16 April 2010