

## Latest update – Oil spill response

### Overview

Both HMAS Yarra and HMAS Norman are in port to take on fuel and supplies. They are due to leave port on 24 March, subject to weather conditions at the search point.

The ships will continue to search for ammonium nitrate containers lost overboard from the Pacific Adventurer almost two weeks ago.

The HMAS Yarra has located numerous objects on the seafloor seven nautical miles east of Cape Moreton.

Hand-held sand-sifting equipment has been deployed on the southern beaches of the Sunshine Coast between Kawana and Currimundi Lake.

The sand-sieve machine (named 'Sid') has commenced operations north of Eagers Creek, Moreton Island.

All flagged and patrolled beaches on the Sunshine Coast are open.

Continuing good progress is being made in the oil spill clean-up, with the Disaster Declaration now effectively covering Moreton Island only. It is in force until 26 March.

The transfer of the Pacific Adventurer to Fisherman Island for discharge of cargo is due to be discussed at a meeting today between the vessel owners and Maritime Safety Queensland management.

### Seafood testing

Testing on the first seafood samples, including a small number of crabs and slimy mackerel, taken from oil-affected parts of Moreton Bay, has revealed no evidence of hydrocarbon contamination. Results from more extensive testing is expected within the next few days.

Commercial fishing operators who wish to fish inside the seafood sampling area must contact Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) before taking any fish.

Water quality tests by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) have found the levels of oil (hydrocarbons) to be below detectable levels and nutrient levels to be extremely low.

### Moreton Island

The sand-sieve machine (named 'Sid') has commenced operations north of Eagers Creek, Moreton Island.

150 Brisbane City Council, 100 Roadtek (Main Roads) and 50 QRail workers were deployed to Eagers Creek and Bulwer at the north of the island.

In the past 24 hours, Hawkins Transport has removed 90 tonnes of contaminated sand from the island

### **Camping**

Moreton Island and parts of Bribie Island remain off limits to campers and vehicles to allow oil to be cleaned up quickly and safely.

Moreton Island National Park and recreation area remains closed to campers and vehicles until further notice.

If people want to go to the northern or eastern sides of the island they have to be with a licensed tourism operator. Many international tourists are once again visiting the western side of the island.

### **Sunshine Coast**

All flagged and patrolled beaches on the Sunshine Coast remain open.

Hand-held sand-sifting equipment has been deployed on the southern beaches of the Sunshine Coast between Kawana and Currimundi Lake.

58 operations personnel working in the Wurtulla beach area today (23.03.09)

All contaminate has been removed from Mudjimba beach.

99 personnel were on site at Mudjimba on Sunday (22 March) and 38 tonnes of contaminated waste was removed from the Mudjimba beach area.

Approximately 15 tonnes of waste was removed from other Sunshine Coast work sites on Sunday.

Main clean-up operations concentrated between Lake Currimundi and Point Cartwright.

### **Bribie Island**

Crews on Bribie Island yesterday (22/03) discovered more patches of oil previously covered by sand and uncovered by last night's strong winds and proceeded to clean these.

Continuing oil removal using plant equipment from Dubai on Bribie Island (both tractor-towed and self-propelled walk-behind machines are working on an area from Northern Access to the Spit on Bribie Island).

No oil has been reported in Pumicestone Passage, crews will continue monitoring all local beaches for any oil resurfacing.

Ocean Beach camping area and northern access track on Bribie Island are closed to all campers and vehicles until further notice.

### **Queensland Health advice**

Queensland Health advises that the risk of fish and seafood contamination from oil and ammonium nitrate from the incident is low.

**Wildlife**

The number of wildlife affected by the oil spill remains low. There have been only a few new reports of effected wildlife on Moreton Island. The EPA continues to monitor 20 clutches of turtle hatchlings on the Sunshine Coast.

**More information**

For the latest information on beach openings, affected areas, the clean-up and how you can help, visit [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au) or call **1800 216 723** (toll free, 8am – 6pm)

Media Centre

**3120 7441** (7am – 7pm)