

Maintenance Dredging Project

Why is dredging needed?

August 2024



North Queensland Bulk Ports (NQBP) is removing naturally occurring built-up sediment and relocating it, to maintain navigational depths and for operational efficiency of the Port.

NQBP's assessment reports have found the risks to sensitive marine environments including the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA) and GBR Marine Park and sensitive habitats are predominantly low.

The natural build-up of seafloor sediment within port navigation areas occurs over time. The level of sediment build-up can interfere with the way vessels are able to use the Port of Hay Point, including causing loading delays.

Maintenance dredging is only undertaken when appropriate to maintain navigational depths and operational efficiency.

NQBP studies have shown that there is currently no feasible alternative to maintenance dredging.

What if maintenance dredging wasn't undertaken?

Maintenance dredging at the Port of Hay Point is critical for maintaining port infrastructure. Just like roads, shipping channels require maintenance to keep ports operating effectively.

Queensland ports are essential to Australia's economy and financial security. They handled approximately \$47.8 billion of exports during 2015-16. Major commodity ports within the GBRWHA account for 81% of total Queensland tonnage throughput.*

The Port of Hay Point is one of Australia's most important ports and its operations support Queenslanders through thousands of jobs and enabling tens of billions of dollars in exports.

If maintenance dredging is not undertaken, the capacity of the two terminals at the Port of Hay Point will decrease. There will be delays in the loading and unloading of ships, resulting in reduced export earnings and higher costs associated with those delays.

Without maintenance dredging, there would be a significant impact on jobs and the economy. There will be flow-on, indirect negative impacts on other industries, particularly coal supply chain industries.



Low risk
to marine environments



Critical
for port infrastructure



\$47.8b
exports in 2015-16



Prevent \$170.2m
losses / yr



Real time
data available on website

The indirect impacts will also flow through to the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (MIW) regions and Queensland economies. The income losses by residents affect their spending on goods and services.

An economic review found that without maintenance dredging over a 16-year period, the MIW Region economy is projected to reduce by a cumulative total of \$2.7 billion.

In other words, without maintenance dredging, the region is predicted to experience average economic losses of \$170.2 million per year.

* Maintenance Dredging Strategy, Transport and Main Roads, November 2016

What is maintenance dredging?

Maintenance dredging involves relocating sediment which travels along the coast and naturally accumulates over the years where our shipping operation occurs.

For more about this maintenance dredging program contact:
North Queensland Bulk Ports

P 1300 129 255 | E communications@nqbp.com.au

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nqbp.com.au