



Office of Origin:  
Cardwell  
QF23

7<sup>th</sup> March 2018

State Member for Hinchinbrook  
Attn: Nick Dametto  
PO Box 399  
INGHAM QLD 4850

**RE: Water Concerns – Coast Guard Access Port Hinchinbrook**

Dear Nick,

Thank you for your time and effort you have already put into this issue which we as a region and a flotilla have faced for quiet some time now, with previous representatives failing with attempts to come to some agreement and or discuss this matter with us. Your election within this region we feel has been a breath of fresh air.

Please find enclosed with this letter, reports of rescues as well as photographs which have been undertaken from the volunteers at Cardwell Coast Guard with assistance from other flotilla's neighboring either skippering our vessel/s or manning as crew. Our neighboring flotillas are facing the same concerns with access in and out of there ports due to the sand and silt build up.

Voicing our concern as a Volunteer Marine Rescue Organisation is important that our voice be heard. Before too long, the unthinkable may happen with a marine incident which may cause serious injury or possibly even death.

We are asking for your assistance to get the state-owned water way dredged to allow our Flotilla the water required to ensure our core statement of 'Lives at Sea' is kept.

Please if you require any further information, communication and or assistance with this matter contact myself directly either via email or phone and I will be more than happy to help you.

Safety by all means

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AG".

Ann-Maree Goggi  
Flotilla Commander  
Cardwell Coast Guard

[www.coastguard.com.au](http://www.coastguard.com.au)

Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association Inc

PO BOX 284  
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QLD 4849

ABN 99 392 980 313-024



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At approx. 1138 ten (10) minutes after reaching the distressed vessel our volunteer crew had the vessel under tow and were on the way back to the public boat ramp.

As you will be able to see with the supplied tides on a separate piece of paper in relation to this event that at 1126am the tide was 1.61M. Our Standing operating procedures state that due to the mud and silt build up in the boat ramp neither of our vessels can be operated in with less than 1.5M.

Averaging approx. 23.5 knots per hour with the vessel under tow our primary rescue vessel Stella G was back out the front of the leads at 1232 with technically another forty (42) minutes until low tide. Commander Goggi who was the radio operator for the day had made the decision for the safety of both vessels and all lives on board that the vessels be stood down on the outside of the leads and to wait for appropriate water before entering the canal.

At 1520 the radio operator gave permission for the rescue vessel to head back into the grand canal as their would be enough water to allow for the safe operation of the rescue vessel and the distressed vessel without causing damage to both vessels.

The rescue given adequate water would have been completed by 1250 – 1300 at the absolute latest however due to the circumstances the vessel had to wait in excess of three (3) hours for adequate water.

*Please see corresponding documentation of tide charts and times for this rescue. Also see attached pictures for physical reference. When the tides allowed for a low of 1.18M the gran canal is mainly dry without a small canal for vessels under 4M or who draw less than 0.3M to operate in.*

*Given the circumstances that this rescue was as smooth as possible with no complications in the terms that all persons on board were safe and well and no one required medical attention the distressed vessel was aware of the circumstances and knew the current state of the grand canal.*

*However if the distressed vessel had persons which may have required urgent medical assistance there would have been complication after complication to give the injured or sick person the appropriate treatment required.*

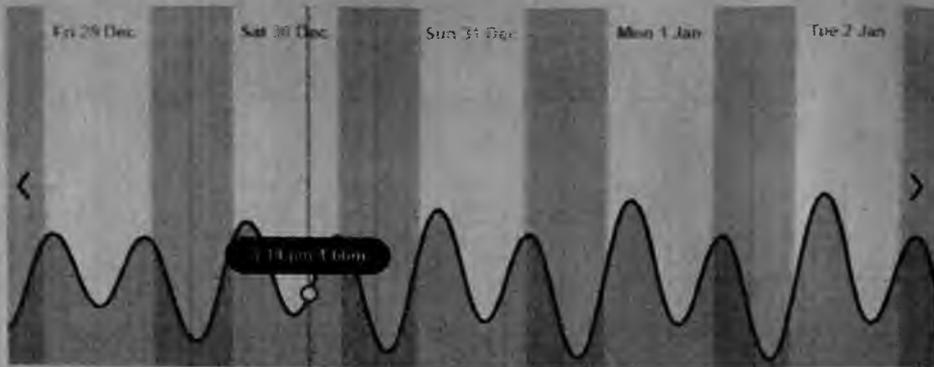
*Attached is also a download of the track map which our primary rescue vessel carried out for your reference to be shown that it was a simple rescue of the northern most point of Hinchinbrook island*

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Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December at 1520 the Commander gave the permission for both vessels, rescue and distressed to resume the tow to get the distressed vessel back into the boat ramp. The current standing operating procedures state that neither vessel can be operated in less than 1.6M of water.

Tides Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2017

0050	0.57m
0711	3.25m
1320	1.18m
1854	2.95m.

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7<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December 2017

Cardwell Coast Guard received an activation via marine radio channel 16 on the 30<sup>th</sup> December at 0925 from a distressed vessel which required assistance that was anchored off the northern most point of Hinchinbrook Island.

The time stable communication was reached with the distressed vessel and QF23 was approximately 0936 which was decided that the distressed vessel monitor channel 16 and talk to QF23 on channel 82.

The radio operator on duty that day, Commander Goggi ensured that all person on board were well and safe with no one requiring urgent assistance and or medical attention. The vessel's marine radio operator confirmed that all five (5) persons on board were well and in a fine condition.

The vessel that required assistance on this day was a 6.9M trihull lifestyle vessel with an outboard motor on the stern. The vessel had five (5) persons on board three (3) being adults and two (2) being of teenage adolescent age.

A crew was organised for the rescue vessel operation – being the week between Christmas and New Year not all our volunteers where home as they had gone away for Christmas. Crew members where coming out of Ingham to make the required numbers to operate the primary rescue vessel.

The time the crew were all present and accounted for at the mooring of 'Stella G' (our primary rescue vessel) was 1030 being approx. one (1) hour and five (5) minutes from the initial call for activation. The crew were on board the vessel and were steaming out of the Grand Canal by 1041.

The tide was going out at this stage with 2.05M of water the crew were advised by the commander that water maybe an issue with the outgoing tide on return with the distressed vessel under tow.

The rescue which our volunteers undertook on this day was one of what we class as a simple rescue for the fact their was no complications with the Distressed vessel, no one required urgent assistance and or urgent medical attention. It was simply a tow of the distressed vessel back to the boat ramp which was the Public Boat Ramp located at the now known Hinchinbrook Harbor (formally known as Port Hinchinbrook).

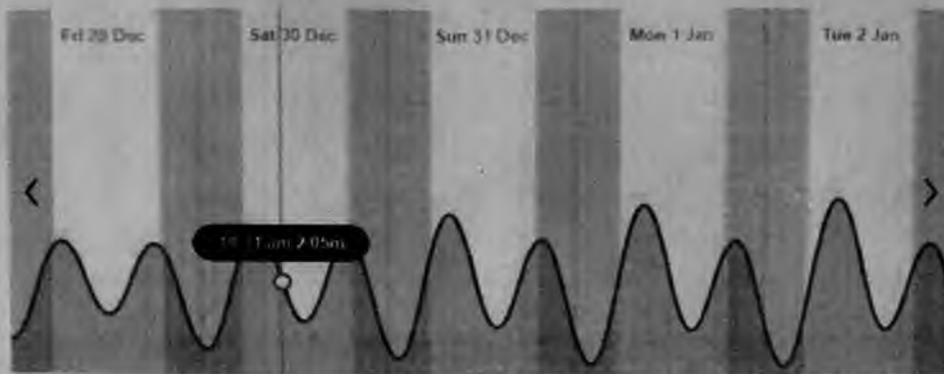
The time our vessel got to the distressed vessel was approx. 1128 which was one (1) hour since leaving the birth. Stella G reached speeds up to 46 knots per hour on the way out to the vessel which is normal speeds with great weather conditions for our primary rescue vessel without towing at this stage.

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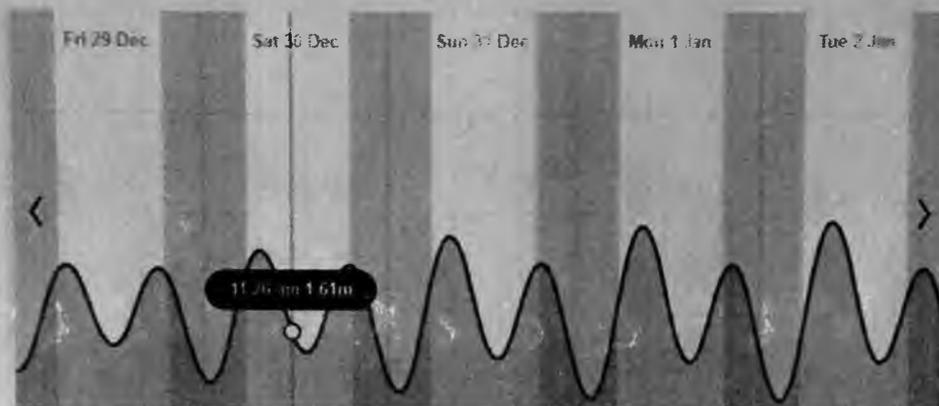
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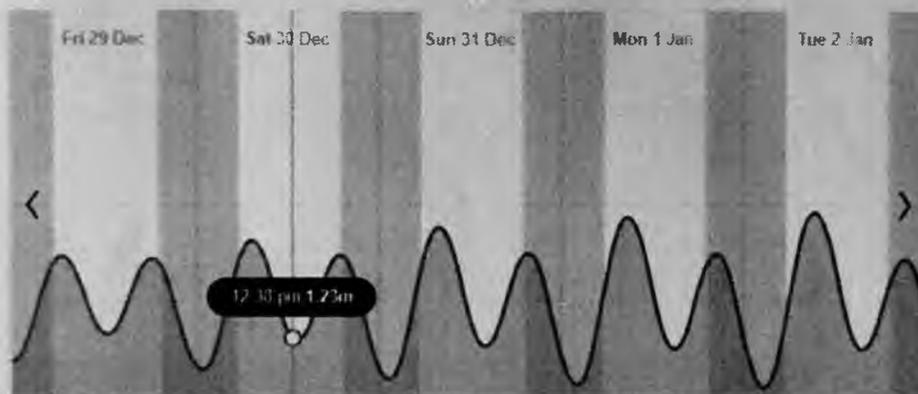
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Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December at 1031 the tide was going out recording 2.05M at the time of departure



Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December at 1128 the rescue vessel was at the distressed vessel with 1.61M at the boat ramp



Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> December 1238 the decision was made by the Commander that the Rescue vessel along with the distressed vessel to be stood down out the front of the navigational leads and wait for the approval to enter the marina when sufficient water. At this time there was still 42 minutes until low tide.

