

GPC commences investigations to improve safe passage of vessels through Clinton Channel

7 July 2016

Planning is underway for Gladstone Ports Corporation's (GPC) Clinton Vessel Interaction Project, which will investigate improvements to the safe passage of vessels through the Clinton Channel in front of GPC's RG Tanna Coal Terminal wharf.

As a result of increased vessel traffic from Wiggins Island Coal Terminal (WICT), and in particular an increase in the number of cape size vessels passing RG Tanna wharf, there is a need to investigate long-term options to ensure the continued safe and efficient passage of vessels through the Clinton Channel.

Currently, due to the limited width of the channel, vessels are required to pass within approximately 80 metres of vessels berthed at the RG Tanna wharf.

The displacement of water by the passing vessel can exert significant forces on the vessels at berth and presents the potential risk of vessels breaking lines and moving off the RG Tanna wharf.

GPC is currently managing the interactions of vessels in the Clinton Channel through a number of mitigation activities including reduced vessel speed and additional escort tugs, however a more permanent solution is required as vessel traffic increases.

GPC is currently investigating options to reduce the impact of vessel interactions through the Clinton Channel and to maximise port capacity and efficiency.

As part of the investigation, a preliminary study involving geotechnical and geochemical analysis to determine the nature of soil materials in the Clinton Channel will be undertaken in July 2016.

It is anticipated that geotechnical and geochemical sampling equipment including a large jack up barge will be mobilised from Monday 25 July 2016, with sampling to be undertaken for a period of approximately 11 days.

The Regional Harbourmaster will issue a Notice to Mariners closer to the commencement of the drilling program, providing mariners with details of the locations of the jack up barge during the program.

GPC's Acting Chief Executive Officer, Michael Galt confirmed that GPC is currently investigating various options including the management of vessel speed, a vacuum mooring system, and potential channel development works to effectively manage vessel interactions in the Clinton Channel.

“Following a full investigation, should the approved option require dredging works to be carried out, a full approvals process would be undertaken in conjunction with the State and Commonwealth Governments,” Mr Galt said.

Building Queensland is currently assisting in the development of a preliminary business case for the Clinton Vessel Interaction Project.

The detailed business case, including a recommended option, will be finalised later this year.

Works on the preferred option are anticipated to commence in 2017.

GPC will keep the community fully informed of any developments as the corporation continues investigative work on the project.



It is anticipated that a jack up barge will be mobilised in the Clinton Channel from Monday, 25 July 2016 to undertake geotechnical and geochemical sampling as part of current investigations to reduce the impact of vessel interactions through the Clinton Channel and to maximise port capacity and efficiency.

ENDS

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