Technical Advisory Consultative Committee Meeting – Port of Gladstone

Thursday 31 March 2022

Attendees: Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (AWE)
Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)
Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)
Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF)
Department of Environment and Science (DES)
Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR)
James Cook University (JCU)
Central Queensland University (CQU)
Gladstone Conservation Council (GCC)
Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership (GHHP)
Gladstone Area Promotion and Development (GAPDL)
Seafood Industry Australia (SIA)

Apologies: Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ)
Port Curtis Integrated Monitoring program (PCIMP)
Gladstone Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI)
Gladstone Industry Leadership Group (GILG)
Gladstone Regional Council (GRC)

Location: Teams

Item	Description	Action Required
Meeting Open	**Meeting opened at 09:30am by Chairperson** • Acknowledgement to country • Attendees and Apologies • Conflicts of Interest • Agenda overview	GHHP – conflict noted.
Actions from Previous Meeting	**No actions**	
TOR Update	An overview was provided of the review of Terms of Reference (TOR). The TOR is available on www.gpcl.com.au/tacc	Nil
TACC Role	Technical Advisory Consultative Committee (TACC) is a maintenance dredging consultative group, comprising recognised stakeholder organisations, not individuals. The TACC role and responsibilities can be found at www.gpcl.com.au/tacc	Nil
Long Term Maintenance Dredging Management Plan	Long Term Maintenance Dredging Management Plan (LMDMP) and Sea Dumping Permit (SDP) current from 2018 to 2023. LMDMP reviewed in 2022 and using information gathered and learnings. Consultation with TACC is expected to commence in July 2022. GPC will consider all feedback and internally approve. This will then be an applicable document to the new SDP, and form part of the application.	Nil

	A minor amendment has occurred in the past 12 months, to include the Clinton Vessel Interaction Project. This additional footprint has been included in the routine maintenance dredging campaign and will be captured as a change in the LMDMP. **Question**: AWE asked when the application will be lodged. **Response**: September / October 2022.	
Operational Update	**Annual maintenance dredging 2021** Maintenance dredging 2 October to 4 November, with approximately 240,000m³ dredged. There were nil incidents, nil complaints and no non-conformances with approvals. One (1) record keeping anomaly which was communicated under the SDP. Next campaign is schedule for third quarter 2022. **Question**: GHHP asked for more detail on this anomaly **Response**: There is a requirement for GPS logging of the dump run to ensure spoil is deposited in the approved area and without mounding. The vessel had completed dumping and was leaving the spoil ground, when the ship's crew noticed the GPS had not turned off and rectified the signalling. This showed an anomaly in the dump run not reflective the dumping activity.	Nil
Environmental Update	**Compliance Water Quality (WQ) Monitoring – annual campaign** WQ Turbidity and BPAR monitoring to assess, prevent and manage potential environmental impact from activity from 18 September to 18 November 2021 (includes - Pre, during and post monitoring). No non-conformances were identified. Grab sampling results were all below the limit of reporting (LOR) in the vast majority or well below the Australian Water Quality Guidelines (AWQG). Report available at www.gpcl.com.au/maintenance-dredging-gladstone **Question:** GCC questioned the graph suggesting an exceedance in turbidity around 6 November 2021. **Response:** Data outside the dredging window (post dredging), is not assessed for compliance. Compliance considers turbidity as Exponentially Weighted Moving Average (EWMA) and was assessed as well below internal trigger during the dredging activity. **Question**: GCC asked why there was higher turbidity on that date. **Response**: Due to larger tidal range and strong winds resulting in more water movement and energy available to resuspend sediments from the bottom in turn increasing turbidity. **Question**: GHHP inquired what BPAR is. **Response**: Benthic Photosynthetically Active Radiation (BPAR) is a measure of light. This technique together with associated thresholds were developed for Port of Gladstone (PoG) seagrass species reflecting the amount of light required for maintaining health and growth. The BPAR threshold (6mol/m^2/day) are applied on a 14 day rolling average.	

Environmental Update	**Seagrass Monitoring** *1. Seagrass monitoring annually throughout PoG for ambient data collection.* Surveyed 791 points across 14 meadows with results showing biomass and species increase. Western Basin and Pelican Banks improved most with good or very good conditions. Important increase in Pelican Banks, which has been in poor condition for the past 6 years. The Narrows had the highest biomass recorded since 2002. Third year in a row of overall good seagrass, particularly after the significant decline in 2009/2010 due to extreme weather events. It has taken a long time for seagrass to come back but it is now in a stable and good condition which will make it more resilient to weather events. **Question**: GHHP – Pelican Banks meadow last year was discussed as heavy grazing pressure by turtles and dugongs. Do you think this reflects a change in grazing pressure or increase in productivity, or is it unknown? **Response**: This has not been looked at specifically, but options could be the biomass was getting so low the turtles have moved off the meadow and relieved it for the biomass to improve. *2. Seagrass monitoring every 5 years at spoil ground in conjunction with Benthic survey to assess if any long term impact is apparent from activity.* No seagrass in the spoil ground, but just north and east lots of seagrass was abundant. Low biomass deep water seagrass, but patches that were quite dense and had expanded over a big area. From the seagrass perspective the spoil is having no affect, there was lots of seagrass on the eastern side and extended beyond where we stopped sampling and goes off into the deeper waters, suggesting a large seagrass meadow. Benthic survey, looked similar to other areas and consistent around the spoil grounds – same as previous surveys. **Question**: AWE is there any account for tidal action that would push to the south and west (north and east has seagrass) **Response**: While the seagrass distribution map doesn't show a south and west trend. It does indicate that lots of seagrass is present directly adjacent to spoil ground in those directions and hence it does not appear to be affected. Report available at www.gpcl.com.au/maintenance-dredging-gladstone.	
Environmental Update	**Environmental Monitoring – Improvements** 1. Compliance WQ Monitoring – increase pre-dredging BPAR monitoring period for an additional 14 days to establish the rolling average 14 days prior to dredging activity. 2. In-situ sites where vertical profiling and grab sampling is conducted will be rationalised and aligned with the WQ telemetry locations in order to provide the best information and values. In particular vertical profiling and grabs will complement telemetry data. 3. Decommission WQ analysers – ambient water quality monitoring. Three (3) unit's located on wharves across PoG, have yielded patchy data	Nil

	set due to poor reliability over past years. Decision made to de-commission. Ambient monitoring requirement can be satisfied by PCIMP. **Question**: GCC stated - raw data from PCIMP is not publically available. GPC data has outliers removed and averaging affects data quality. **Response**: PCIMP members pay for monitoring and validated data is publically available on the PCIMP website. PCIMP validated data is also used for GHHP healthy harbour report card. GPC reports, which also contain validated data, are available on the GPC website. **Question**: AWE – Explain PCIMP **Response**: PCIMP monitoring is conducted at 54 sites spanning from The Narrows to Rodds Bay. WQ is conducted quarterly whilst sediment annually, these are analysed for comprehensive suite of analysis. The program was recently reviewed by AIMS and CSIRO, as part of a comprehensive independent review process, with minor improvements identified. More info: https://pcimp.aims.gov.au/charts/index.html	
Other Business	**Sustainable Sediment Management (SSM) Project** Four (4) Feasibilities identified from SSM project – Two (2) progressed. 1. Tide Island - in-channel placement, maximum of 75,000m^3, majority from Jacob's Channel as fine sediment. 2. Marina - in channel placement, where 40,000m^3 of fine sediment accumulates annually. Fine material can be kept moving in PoG and re-distributed without causing impacts. The theory is both locations are to be dispersive / not accumulate and be available for seagrass and mangrove habitat. Details are on the website, but if further information is required further information can be arranged. Approval application in progress and would like to trial Tide Island and Marina options in the next respective dredging campaigns. **Questions**: GHHP – Are there two (2) discharge locations for Marina option, as only one (1) marked on the map. **Response**: One (1) suitable discharge location identified. **Question**: AWE – will this increase the maintenance dredging. **Response**: There may be a small increase, but unsure and would need to be assessed and validated from trailing and refining options. **Question**: DES– Will testing of the sediment in the Marina occur. **Response**: Sample and Analysis Plan (SAP) which tests sediment quality every 5 years is planned for 2022. **Question**: GCC – How much sediment is planned to put out in the trial. **Response**: Dependent on approval and operational constraints. Tide Island conservative minimum 10,000m^3 of the expected 75,000m^3.	
General Questions	No General Questions. Chairman thanked everyone for their participation. **Meeting closed at 10:45am by Chairperson**	Nil