



Senator Anne Ruston
Chair
Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Ruston

On 23 February 2015 Dr Russell Reichelt appeared as a witness before the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Estimates hearing.

During the hearing Senator Rice asked in relation to shipping in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park: "Have you done any work on whether the areas covered by mandatory pilotage should be expanded?"

In response Dr Reichelt said: "I am not aware of anything right at the minute. As I say, I understood it was fully reviewed about 12 months ago, but I should check that I am correct in that, I think."

Dr Reichelt is currently overseas and I wish to provide the following advice to the committee on this matter.

As part of the assessment work to inform the development of the North-East Shipping Management Plan (2014), the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) engaged Det Norske Veritas Australia Pty Ltd (DNV) to estimate the risk of shipping incidents, mainly due to collisions and groundings, in the Great Barrier Reef, Torres Strait and Coral Sea region.

The risk assessment concluded that while the incidence of large commercial vessel groundings is very low, current risk mitigation measures in the region reduce incident risk by around 38 per cent. On the basis of the risk modelling results, DNV added that of the possible options to further reduce risk as traffic levels increase, the extension of the pilotage geographical area and/or measures to improve the effectiveness of pilotage, such as fatigue management, would be one of the most effective.

To improve protective measures for navigation safety, the North-East Shipping Management Plan makes two recommendations that are directly related to pilotage areas:

1. Taking into account predictions of traffic density, existing aids to navigation and risk, AMSA and Maritime Safety Queensland to investigate the benefits of mandatory pilotage for the areas of the upper middle inner route of the Great Barrier Reef by 2020.
2. AMSA to work with pilotage providers to consider the implications of voluntary pilotage in the southern area of the Great Barrier Reef.

GBRMPA will continue to work with AMSA as they progress these actions to further manage the risks posed by shipping in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Requests for further information should be referred to AMSA Chief Executive Mr Michael Kinley.

Yours sincerely

Bruce Elliot
Acting Chairman

cc Michael Kinley, AMSA

2 March 2015