

**Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resource Committee
Public Hearing – Examination of the Planning Bills
28 January 2016**

Questions on notice

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Bruce Elliot, General Manager Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use

Hearing transcript p2

Question:

CHAIR: You spoke about the variations of impacts. Can you just give us an idea of the extremes? What is something that you would really look for that would have a massive impact and what is something that you would have less concern about?

Mr Elliot: In terms of the detail, by trawling through the outlook report—and I do have a copy in front of me, but I do not have the time to find the fine detail in it, so I can probably provide more information on notice as well—it does depend on the location.

Response:

The extent of impacts from development will depend on the nature and location of the development. In considering the potential impacts of a development on the Great Barrier Reef there are a wide range of factors that must be considered, including:

- Current environmental condition;
- Size and scale of the proposed development;
- How long the impacts act on the environment (short and long term);
- Whether the impacts are likely to be acute or chronic;
- Additional pressures within and adjacent to the area proposed for development; and
- Current and future use.

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority applies a risk based approach to the assessment of all development in and adjacent to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's *Environment Impact Management Policy* provides guidance on how developments of differing size and potential impact are currently assessed (http://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/6607/gbrmpa_EIM_Policy_2010.pdf).

Table1 provides examples of assessment levels associated with different types of development in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park.

Table 1: Examples of assessment levels of projects (these examples are for guidance only and are not binding on a GBRMPA delegate)

Level 1 Minor Project Minimal and/or transient impact Example – small navigation marker
Level 2 Small project Low and/or short term impact Example – Jetty or Pontoon (less than 15m long), small boat ramp (1 or 2 lane ramp or widen existing ramp by up to 2 lanes).
Level 3 Medium scale project Public interest , sensitive environment, Moderate and/or medium term impact Example – spoil disposal from maintenance dredging associated with ports
Level 4 Complex or large scale project Public interest, irreversible and/or major impact Example – Large marina development (over 30 berths), large capital dredge and spoil disposal

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Hearing transcript p5

Question:

CHAIR: Bruce, what are your views on section 45(4), which provides that code-assessable development need not be assessed in accordance with the purpose of the act? Do you have any comments regarding those concerns?

Mr Elliot: I would probably have to take that on notice, consider it and get back to you because off the top of my head, no.

Response:

The Australian and Queensland Governments have made significant commitments regarding the future development of Great Barrier Reef catchments. The Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan requires that the cumulative impacts of all developments be determined and that future development should result in a net overall benefit to the health of the Great Barrier Reef. An assessment of the cumulative impact associated with all code assessable developments within an area would be required to ensure that these Government commitments are being met.