

# Maritime Safety Queensland



## Marine incidents in Queensland

2018

## Foreword

The annual marine incident report provides an opportunity for Maritime Safety Queensland to analyse the circumstances and likely causes of serious mishaps that have been reported to us over the previous year.

In 2018, 342 marine incidents were reported; an increase of 20 compared to 2017. These incidents resulted in six fatalities, one less than in the previous year, and 44 hospitalisations, 20 more than in the previous year.

While these year to year variations provide little information about the long-term trend in marine safety, they are a reminder that the boating environment is challenging.

The particulars of the marine incidents reported this year were no different than those reported over the last two years.

Fatalities and serious injuries on our waterways are often the result of a combination of unlikely events that end in a tragedy, and in some cases, may be avoided through better planning or use of safety equipment.

Maritime Safety Queensland will continue to work with the community, volunteer rescue organisations and our compliance partners, to ensure that all those who use and share our waterways are mindful of the risks and how best they might be managed.

### **Neil Scales OBE**

Director-General

Department of Transport and Main Roads



General Manager  
Maritime Safety Queensland  
03/06/2019

## Key points

- This report provides an analysis of reported marine incidents that involved vessels regulated under the Queensland *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*.
- This Act provides for the regulation of Queensland regulated ships — recreational vessels or other vessels expressly excluded from the operation of the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessels) National Law Act 2012 (Cth)* or the *Navigation Act 2012 (Cth)*.
- In June 2018 there were 259,832 recreational vessels registered in Queensland; one vessel for every 19 people or one vessel for every three recreational vessel licensees.
- Queensland regulated ships were involved in 342 reported incidents.
- These 342 incidents involved 427 Queensland regulated ships *and* 38 domestic commercial vessels.
- The most commonly reported incidents were collisions between ships (90), collisions with an object (50), groundings (45), and capsizes (38).
- These incidents resulted in 95 people being injured, including 44 who were admitted to hospital, and six fatalities.
- Fifty-five per cent of those injured were not in charge of the vessel at the time the incident occurred.
- Five of the six people who died were the masters of Queensland regulated ships.
- Only one of the people who drowned or are presumed to have drowned was known to have been wearing a lifejacket.

## Introduction

This report has been prepared by Maritime Safety Queensland in accordance with section 127 of the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*. It provides the particulars of marine incidents reported to Maritime Safety Queensland, that occurred during 2018 that involved at least one Queensland regulated ship.

## Incidents reported in 2018

During the 2018 calendar year, Maritime Safety Queensland received reports of 342 marine incidents that involved at least one Queensland regulated ship.

## Incidents

Queensland regulated ships were the only vessels involved in 309 of the 342 marine incidents reported during 2018. The other 33 incidents involved both Queensland regulated ships and domestic commercial vessels.

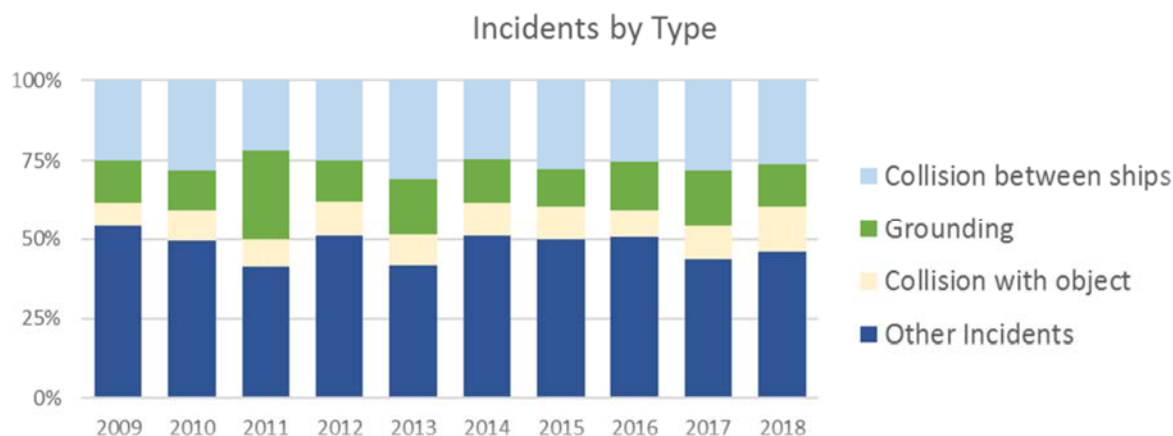
The 342 incidents occurred disproportionately with January (13 per cent) and April (10 per cent) being the most active months while May (5 per cent) and July (6 per cent) had the smallest number of

incidents. Incidents occurred most commonly on a Saturday or Sunday (40 per cent), and in most cases between 9am and 6pm (61 per cent).

At the time of these incidents, the vessels were most commonly operating in smooth waters (61 per cent), in clear weather (67 per cent), with good visibility (65 per cent), and winds below 16 knots (63 per cent). All four of these ideal boating conditions were reported present in respect of 98 (29 per cent) of the 342 incidents.

As in previous years, the most commonly reported incident was a collision between ships accounting for 90 (26 per cent) of the 342 incidents. There were also 50 collisions with objects, 45 groundings, and 38 capsizes that together with the collisions between ships account for 65 per cent of the 342 incidents.

**Figure 1 - Incidents by type**



Source: CASEMAN and MSID, marine intelligence/incident case management database, as at 31/05/2019

Marine incident investigators categorise factors contributing to an incident as human, material or environmental. Human factors contributed to 148 incidents, environmental factors to 107 incidents and material factors to 65 incidents. The commonly cited factors in each category were: inexperience or lack of knowledge, equipment failure, and wind conditions.

Three of the 342 reported marine incidents were also among the 40 pollution incidents investigated and responded to by Maritime Safety Queensland throughout the year.

## Vessels

The 342 reported incidents involved 465 vessels, of which 427 were Queensland regulated ships and 38 were domestic commercial vessels.

The 427 Queensland regulated ships include 269 motorboats, 93 sailboats, 40 personal watercraft, 16 paddle boats and nine houseboats.

Thirty-four of these 427 vessels were lost, 36 sustained major damage, 64 sustained moderate damage, and 121 sustained minor damage.

The damage to these 255 vessels was caused by collisions with another vessel (100), collided with an object (37), capsizing (24), flooding (22) and grounding (25).

The 38 domestic commercial vessels included 13 passenger vessels, 13 non-passenger vessels, eight hire & drive motorboats, three commercial fishing vessels and one personal watercraft.

Four of these vessels sustained moderate damage and seven sustained minor damage. Nine of these 11 damaged vessels were involved in a collision with another vessel, another collided with an object and another flooded.

## People

Of the 342 incidents reported, 73 incidents resulted in 95 people being reported injured, including 44 hospital admissions (36 incidents) and six deaths (five incidents).

The 44-people admitted to hospital included 17 masters, four crew members, 18 passengers and five water skiers. Thirty people were on motorboats, 10 were on personal water craft, two were on sailboats and two were on paddle boats. Hospital admissions were the result of 12 different types of incidents including nine admissions resulting from a collision with an object, four resulting from a collision with a ship, and five from on-board incidents.

The five fatal incidents resulted in six fatalities. Two capsizing incidents (two fatalities), two collisions with an object incident (three fatalities) and one person overboard incident (one fatality).

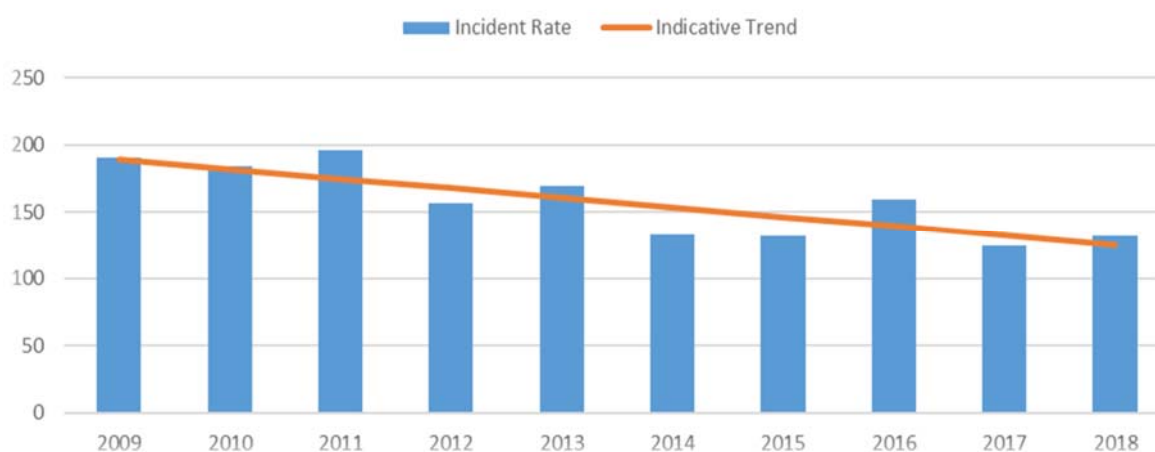
These five incidents involved three motorboats and two paddle boats. Five of these individuals were the masters of the vessels involved while the other person was a passenger. All the vessels and masters were appropriately registered and licensed.

All the deceased were males aged between 37 and 78 years of age. While one man died as the result of a pre-existing medical condition being exacerbated by the incident, the other men drowned or, given the circumstances, are presumed to have drowned.

## Trends

While the number of incidents reported increased from 322 in 2017 to 342 in 2018 calendar years, they remain lower than the 10-year average of 386.7 incidents.

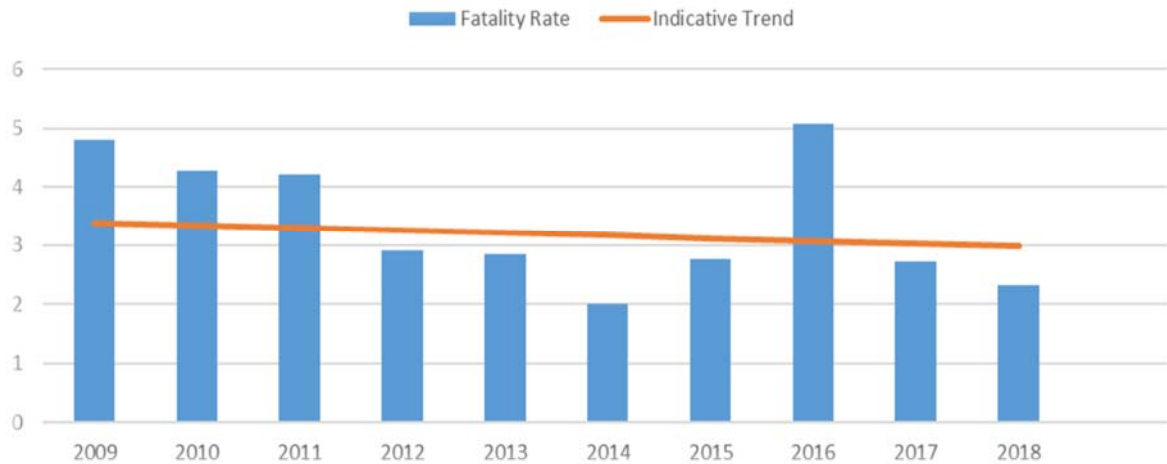
**Figure 2 - Reported incidents per 100,000 registered Queensland regulated ships**



Source: CASEMAN and MSID, marine intelligence/incident case management database, as at 31/05/2019

Fatal incidents fell slightly from six to five, as did fatalities from seven to six. In both cases these were significantly lower than the 10-year averages of 7.6 and 8.3 respectively.

**Figure 3 - Fatalities per 100,000 registered Queensland regulated ships**



Source: CASEMAN and MSID, marine intelligence/incident case management database, as at 31/05/2018

Hospitalisation incidents and hospitalisations increased from 19 in 2017 to 36 in 2018 and from 22 to 44 respectively. These increases reflected an increase in the number of reported incidents in the Cairns Region and the Gold Coast management area. These figures are significantly higher than the 10-year averages of 23.2 and 27.7 respectively.

The incident rate increased from 124.6 to 131.6 incidents per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships and was significantly lower than the 10-year average of 156.8 incidents per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships.

The fatality rate fell from 2.7 to 2.3 fatalities per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships and was significantly lower than the 10-year average of 3.4 fatalities per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships.

The hospitalisation rate increased from 8.5 to 6.9 hospitalisations per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships and was significantly higher than the 10-year average of 11.2 hospitalisations per 100,000 Queensland regulated ships.

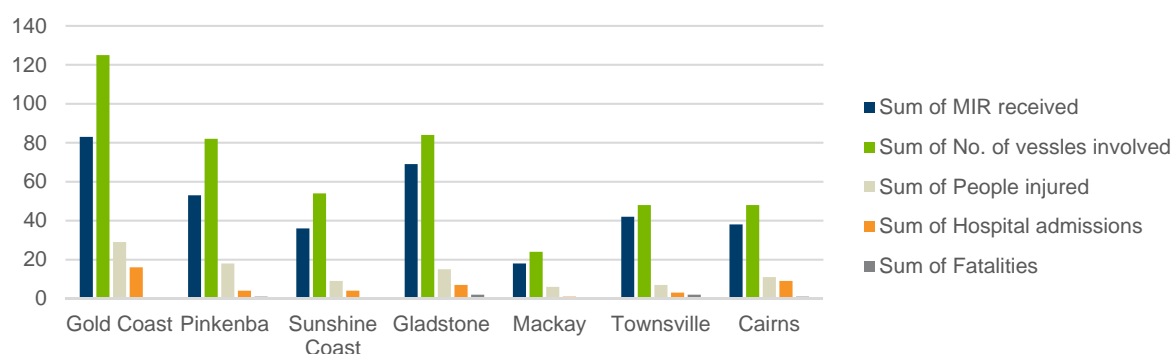
## Trends in reported incidents

Table 1 - Summary of key indicators

Indicator	Indicator 2018	Average 2009-2019	Statistical Relationship	Statistical range
Total incidents	342	386.7	Significantly lower	350 to 424
Total fatal incidents	5	7.6	Significantly lower	6 to 9
Total fatalities	6	8.3	Significantly lower	6 to 10
Total hospitalisation incidents	36	23.2	Significantly Higher	19 to 27
Total hospitalisations	44	27.7	Significantly Higher	22 to 34
Incident rate per 100k vessels	131.6	156.8	Significantly lower	152 to 162
Fatality rate per 100k vessels	2.3	3.4	Significantly lower	3 to 4
Hospitalisation rate per 100k vessels	16.9	11.2	Significantly Higher	10 to 13

## Regions

Figure 4 – Regional Marine Incident Report data



Source: CASEMAN and MSID, marine intelligence/incident case management database, as at 31/05/2018

The administration of the Brisbane maritime region is organised around three management areas: Pinkenba, Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast.

### Gold Coast

The Gold Coast management area received 83 marine incident reports involving 125 vessels — 115 Queensland regulated ships and 10 domestic commercial vessels. Twenty-nine people were injured in these 83 incidents including 16 who were admitted to hospital. No fatalities occurred in this management area.

## Pinkenba

The Pinkenba management area received 56 marine incident reports involving 82 vessels — 73 [Queensland regulated ships](#) and nine [domestic commercial vessels](#). There were 18 people injured in these 56 incidents including one fatality and four hospital admissions.

## Sunshine Coast

The Sunshine Coast management area received 36 marine incident reports involving 54 vessels — 51 [Queensland Regulated Ships](#) and three [domestic commercial vessels](#). Nine people were injured in these 36 incidents including four who were admitted to hospital. No fatalities occurred in this management area.

## Gladstone

Gladstone maritime region received 69 marine incident reports involving 84 vessels — 79 [Queensland Regulated Ships](#) and five [domestic commercial vessels](#). Fifteen people were injured, including two fatalities and seven admitted to hospital.

## Mackay

Mackay maritime region received 18 marine incident reports involving 24 vessels — 23 [Queensland regulated ships](#) and one [domestic commercial vessel](#). Six people were injured, including one hospital admission and five other injuries. There were no fatalities recorded in the Mackay region.

## Townsville

Townsville maritime region received 42 marine incident reports involving 48 vessels — 43 [Queensland regulated ships](#) and five [domestic commercial vessels](#). Seven people were injured, including two fatalities, three admitted to a hospital, and two other injuries.

## Cairns

Cairns maritime region received 38 marine incident reports involving 48 vessels — 43 [Queensland regulated ships](#) and five [domestic commercial vessels](#). Eleven people were injured, including one fatality, nine hospital admissions, and one with other injuries.

## Summary

Analysis of the incident figures for 2018 demonstrates a consistent pattern with recent years.

Maritime Safety Queensland will continue to encourage the reporting of incidents, the investigation of which will allow Maritime Safety Queensland to more effectively target strategies to minimise incidents and injuries.

Based on the incidents reported in 2018 and the commitment of the Government to creating a safer environment, there is no reason to expect that Queensland's maritime safety performance will not continue to improve.



# Creative Commons information

© State of Queensland (Department of Transport and Main Roads) 2019



<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence. You are free to copy, communicate and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the authors.

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of information. However, copyright protects this publication. The State of Queensland has no objection to this material being reproduced, made available online or electronically but only if its recognised as the owner of the copyright and this material remains unaltered.



The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders of all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. If you have difficulty understanding this publication and need a translator, please call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 13 14 50 and ask them to telephone the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads on 13 74 68.

**Disclaimer:** While every care has been taken in preparing this publication, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, expressed or implied, contained within. To the best of our knowledge, the content was correct at the time of publishing.