

Extreme Weather Event Contingency Planning

Introduction

The probability of a severe storm or cyclone striking the Gold Coast is greatest between the end of October and April. Although the event of a cyclone crossing the Coast is very rare, winds and rain of cyclone intensity are quite commonly encountered during severe thunderstorms so all boat owners and users need to be aware of essential precautions and preparations needed to ensure safety and minimise risk of damage.

Preparation

Before the onset of the Cyclone and Storm season and particularly if you are planning to leave your vessel unattended for more than 48 hours:

1. Ensure that the Marina Office has a current e-mail address or telephone number with which to contact someone (*'Emergency Contact'*) who will take responsibility for your vessel within 24 Hours of being notified.

2. Check all mooring lines for adequacy to withstand high loads, replace any sun damaged lines and protect from chafe. **Do not use chain** to secure your boat.
3. Check all cleats and attachment points for mooring lines for strength and integrity
4. Ensure that you have enough extra lines on board to double up mooring lines during a 'Watch Period'
5. **Reduce windage** to a minimum, stow any loose gear (including lifebuoys) below.
6. Check that all bilge pumps are operational
7. Ensure all self draining openings are clear and will remain so.
8. Dinghies; Deflate and stow inflatables, any dinghies left in davits or on deck should be clear of gear, free draining and securely lashed. No dinghies are to be left on marina fingers or walkways.
9. Secure all hatches
10. Remove self furling sails and covers, if this is not possible double wrap or tie them up so that wind cannot tease them out and allow them to flap.
11. Monitor weather forecasts.

Emergency Weather Updates:

ABC Gold Coast 91.7 FM or ABC Brisbane 612AM

Gold Coast Seaway Tower:

VHF Channels **16, 67 & 73**

Bureau of Meteorology: www.bom.gov.au

Maritime Safety Queensland:

www.msq.qld.gov.au

Responsibility and Authority

Masters and Owners of vessels are obliged at all times, under the *'Transport Operation and Marine Safety Act 1994' (S41)* to **take appropriate precautions for the safety of their vessels, passengers and crew.**

Nothing done by Hope Harbour Marina Management or Staff will impact on or override the absolute responsibility of Master and Owners in this respect.

In extreme weather conditions the Regional Director of Maritime Safety Queensland may give directions in relation to the operation and movement of vessels in the Marina and Masters and Owners are required under the Act to follow those directions.

In the absence of directions from the Regional Director, or Marina Management; Masters or owners who choose to berth at or exit the Marina when extreme weather is forecast do so entirely at their own risk.

Where a vessel remains in the Marina, it is the Owner or Masters responsibility to ensure that they and their passengers or crew immediately comply with any directions given by Marina Management or Emergency Services Personnel.

When an Extreme Weather Event is Approaching

Terminology:

Watch – Extreme weather event is likely to affect the area within 48 Hours

Warning – Extreme Weather Event is likely to affect the area within 24 Hours

Phase One: Watch

In the event an extreme weather event watch is issued by the Regional Director of Maritime Safety Queensland, Hope Harbour Marina will contact all 'Emergency Contacts' to advise that vessels should be checked and prepared for extreme weather. Marina staff will do what they can to assist, but beware that staff are likely to be busy and that it is the Owner and Masters Responsibility to ensure their vessel and equipment are as secure as possible. In addition to all the measures listed under preparation, during any watch period you should also, if you plan to remain on board your vessel in the marina you must advise the marina office.

1. Double up mooring lines – do not run lines to the same attachment points on board if these could fail, leave the additional lines slightly slack so that they only come under strain if the original lines chafe through or are under extreme load.
2. Set out extra fenders

3. Ensure the boat is positioned in the berth so that if lines fail or stretch no part of the boat can come into contact with other boats, the marina walkway or piles.
4. Remove any sails, covers or clears and stow below decks.
5. Check VHF communication on Ch 16.
6. Monitor radio broadcasts or websites for updates on conditions.
7. Any vessel considering leaving the Marina to seek shelter elsewhere must do so before conditions deteriorate.

Phase Two: Warning

An extreme weather event warning will be issued when an extreme weather event is expected to affect the area within 24 Hours, it is critical that during this period all preparations detailed above are completed, beware that:

1. Marina Management may determine the time when personnel are barred from pontoons or hardstand areas, and that you will be required to abide by any such direction.
2. If you choose to remain on board your vessel conditions may deteriorate to the point where it is impossible to leave.



Phase Three: Actual Extreme Weather Event

By this phase all vessels are expected to have enacted their own safety plans, the Marina and Port are likely to be closed and/or vessel movements will be restricted due to the threat posed to safety of vessels movements and the environment.

By this time it is likely to be too late to consider the safety of your own vessel and the capacity of the emergency services to assist may well be limited if you run into difficulties. **Your actions should be directed towards your own personal safety.**

Mariners on board their vessels should maintain a listening watch on VHF for weather and conditions updates.

Phase Four: After the Extreme Weather Event has passed

Do not assume that as the extreme weather event has passed that it is now safe to move your vessel.

Broadcasts will be made over key VHF Frequencies to advise the lifting of any restrictions on movements imposed by Maritime Safety Queensland, and of any navigational hazards that may have been identified in local waters.

Check with the marina office before moving that it is now considered safe to do so, and to be warned about any hazards that may have arisen around the marina basin during the course of the event.