



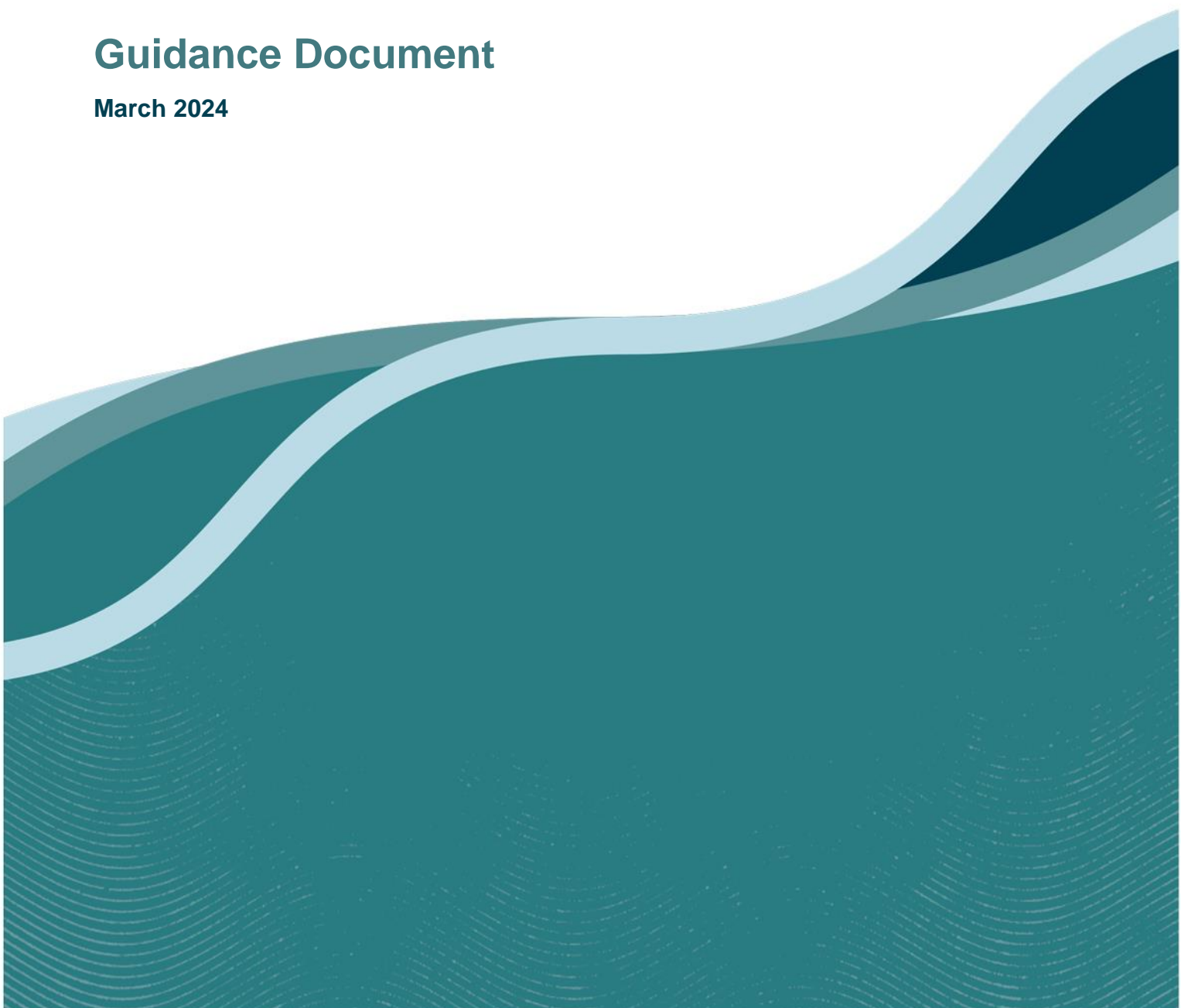
Department of
Primary Industries and
Regional Development

Protect
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Carpet sea squirt (*Didemnum vexillum*) Quarantine Area Guidance

Guidance Document

March 2024



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Background

This Guidance Document provides advice to key stakeholders, including port authorities, vessel owners and masters of vessels on the management controls associated with carpet sea squirt *Didemnum vexillum* (CSS) at the Australian Marine Complex Common User Facility (AMC CUF) Southern Harbour, WA.

Further information regarding CSS can be obtained by visiting:

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/invasive-species/biosecurity-alerts-carpet-sea-squirt>

Quarantine Area Notice

A new Quarantine Area Notice (QAN) has been issued for the AMC CUF Southern Harbour. The previous QAN was revoked on 15 March 2024.

A copy of the QAN can be accessed at:

<https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/invasive-species/biosecurity-alerts-carpet-sea-squirt>

This Guidance Document is intended to support stakeholders in meeting the management requirements outlined in the QAN. It should be read in conjunction with, but subject to, the QAN. If there are any inconsistencies between this Guidance Document or Flowchart and the QAN, then the QAN will prevail.

Quarantine Area

A Quarantine Area (QA) remains in place, through the issuing of the new QAN. The QA areal extent is unchanged.

The QA includes waters adjacent to the AMC CUF and BAE Systems Australia sites and is encompassed by seawalls to the north and west and extends 250 m down the coastline south of the AMC CUF (Figure 1). Requirements stipulated in the QAN aim to mitigate the risk of vessels spreading CSS from the QA to other locations.



Figure 1. Map of the *Didemnum vexillum* Quarantine Area at the Australian Marine Complex Common User Facility, Southern Harbour, Henderson WA.

Notification of risk

Notifications to vessels operating within Fremantle Port limits are provided via Fremantle Port's Shipping Agent's Memo, available on the Fremantle Ports website.

Vessels which were at AMC CUF Southern Harbour since the 20 March 2023 have already been contacted and notified of the detection of CSS through Fremantle Port's Shipping Agents' Memo (SAM 05-2023). Vessels subject to clauses in the QAN in place from 20 March 2023 to 15 March 2024 were contacted and notified at the time of becoming subject to the QAN.

Vessels that are present or operating within the QA from 15 March 2024 onwards are considered at risk and should review this document.

Definition of a vessel

For the purposes of the QA a vessel is defined as:

- (a) any ship, boat or other description of vessel used, capable of being used or previously used as a means of transportation by water; and
- (b) any equipment or other mechanical apparatus of any kind that is or has been in water and is not permanently attached to a permanent structure. This can include but is not limited to, items such as ropes, chains, fenders, buoys, pontoons, anchors, aquaculture equipment, sensors, and instrumentation.

Non-Removable Marine Infrastructure

This document does not apply to non-removable marine infrastructure (such as pylons) within the QA. Non-removable marine infrastructure, if found to be infected, will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with advice from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) on treatment options and recommendations.

Calculation of days

When calculating the number of days that a vessel has been in the QA, the following applies:

If a vessel has been in the QA for part of a day, it will be taken to have been in the area for the whole of the day.

For example, if a vessel enters the QA at 10pm on 1 June and moves out of the QA at 8am on 6 June, it will be taken to have been in the QA for 6 days.

If a vessel leaves the QA for less than 120 continuous hours (i.e., less than 5 full days), it will be taken to have not left the QA. However, those days that the vessel was not in the QA will be excluded from the calculation of the number of days.

For example, if a vessel enters the QA at 10pm on 1 June, moves out of the QA at 8am on 3 June, enters the QA again at 7am on 8 June and moves out of the QA at 8am of 10 June, it will be taken to have been in the QA for 6 days.

By way of further example, if a vessel enters the QA at 8am on 1 June, moves out of the QA at 10pm that day, enters the QA again at 8am on 2 June and moves out of the QA at 10pm that day, it will be taken to have been in the QA for 2 days.

If a vessel leaves the QA for 120 continuous hours (5 full days) or more, it will be taken to have left the QA and if it returns to the QA, it will be taken to be entering the QA anew.

For example, if a vessel enters the QA at 10pm on 1 June, moves out of the QA at 8am on 5 June, enters the QA again at 8am on 10 June and moves out of the QA at 10 pm that day, it will be taken to have been in the QA for 2 separate periods of 5 days and 1 day respectively.

If the vessel has previously been in the QA, the number of days a vessel has been in the QA includes any day which the vessel was in the QA prior to the QAN publication date of 15 March 2024, unless those days were prior to the vessel leaving the QA for 120 continuous hours.

Vessel Management Controls

Table 1. Summary of requirements for vessels operating within the Quarantine Area (QA) as issued under the Quarantine Area Notice (QAN).

Vessel time in water (Time in QA)	Control mechanism for the Vessel ¹
Less than 30 days (i.e., 0-29 days inclusive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel notified of entering QA. • The vessel may be moved from the QA. • No further action required.
30 days or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel notified of entering QA. • The vessel <u>must not move</u> from the QA unless it has complied with the following requirements: • The vessel must notify the Department that it intends to move out of the QA, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpird.wa.gov.au. The vessel should notify the Department as soon as is reasonably practicable, with sufficient time to allow for the undertaking of a risk assessment to avoid any undue delays.

- Prior to departing the QA, the vessel must undergo a risk assessment conducted by the Department.
- If the Department requires the vessel to arrange a biofouling inspection, then the vessel must comply with the Reporting and Treatment requirements as outlined in this document and stipulated in the QAN.
- If the vessel anchors, moors, or docks in protected waters² 12 to 14 weeks after leaving the QA, the vessel must undertake a biofouling inspection, to be carried out on the vessel as soon as is reasonably practicable;
- The vessel must then comply with the Reporting and Treatment requirements as outlined in this document and stipulated in the QAN.
- If the vessel is not required to arrange for a biofouling inspection, for example because it is not in protected waters² 12 to 14 weeks after leaving the QA, if the vessel returns to protected waters² within 1 year:
- The vessel must notify the Department of its return to protected waters² within 24 hours by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpird.wa.gov.au; and if requested, provide the Department with any information to enable the Department to determine whether CSS may be present or is likely to be present on the vessel.

¹. For the purpose of this part, 'The Vessel' also refers to the person in control of the vessel when entering and exiting the QA.

². In this Guidance Document, references to 'protected waters' are to the coastal waters of WA (Figure 2).

Biofouling Inspections

A biofouling inspection means an invasive marine species inspection carried out by a biofouling inspector or by qualified commercial divers under the instruction and supervision of a biofouling inspector. A biofouling inspector means a person approved by the Department to carry out a biofouling inspection.

Guidance documents and information regarding biofouling inspections and requirements to be recognised as an inspector are available on the Department website:

<https://www.fish.wa.gov.au/Sustainability-and-Environment/Aquatic-Biosecurity/Vessels-And-Ports/Pages/Biofouling-Inspectors.aspx>

Biofouling inspectors have been provided with information sheets and standard operating procedures for the collection of suspected CSS specimens for identification.

Vessels and equipment that are removed from the water for the purpose of treatment, are not required to undertake a biofouling inspection providing that the treatment undertaken is in accordance with the Reporting and Treatment requirements as outlined in this document and stipulated in the QAN.

Reporting to the Department (DPIRD)

If the biofouling inspector carrying out the biofouling inspection suspects that CSS is present on the vessel, the person in control of the vessel must inform the Department within 24 hours of the presence or suspected presence of CSS on the vessel, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

The person in control of the vessel must submit samples of the suspected CSS obtained during the biofouling inspection within 24 hours of the biofouling inspection being completed, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au; and providing the samples with a completed chain of custody to the Department's reception at 39 Northside Drive, Hillarys, Western Australia.

The person in control of the vessel must provide the Department with a copy of the biofouling inspection report and any records relating to the biofouling inspection within 5 business days of the biofouling inspection, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

If in-water treatment is undertaken on a vessel, the person in control of the vessel must provide the Department with a report detailing evidence of the treatment, within 24 hours of receiving the report from the biofouling inspector, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

For any treatment that occurs out-of-water, evidence of cleaning is required. The person in control of the vessel must provide the Department with a report detailing evidence of the treatment (e.g., an email which gives a brief description of the method and activities undertaken, and photographic evidence before and after treatment) as soon as is reasonably practicable after the completion of the treatment, by emailing carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au.

Treatment requirements

For any treatment of a vessel or equipment (defined as a vessel in this document) the following conditions must be adhered to:

- (a) All material greater than 50 micrometres in diameter, released from wet areas during the treatment process, must be captured and contained. At no time during treatment or after removal should any viable material be released back into the marine environment.
- (b) All treated surfaces must be free from any visible macro-fouling, or the fouling must have been rendered unviable. i.e., a low biosecurity risk.

- (c) All collected material must be disposed of on land by an accredited waste management company and in compliance with the requirements of all relevant local authorities.
- (d) The integrity of the antifouling coating must remain unaffected by the treatment system.
- (e) Any in-water treatment must be carried out by qualified commercial divers under the instruction and supervision of a biofouling inspector.

In-Water Treatment Approval Process

If in-water treatment of a vessel is required, the person in control of the vessel must arrange for approval, prior to undertaking treatment. The following section outlines the process for obtaining approval to undertake in-water treatment in response to this declared pest incursion **within the QA**. For locations outside of the QA the operator must obtain approval from the relevant port authority and DPIRD to undertake in-water treatment in response to this declared pest.

Within the QA

The operator is to request approval from DPIRD and Fremantle Port Authority (FPA) to undertake in-water treatment and must provide information to demonstrate that by using their proposed methods:

1. Biosecurity requirements will be met, as outlined in Treatment requirements (a) to (e).
2. Environmental contaminant risks will be managed via:
 - a) The treatment system will meet the requirements of the DRAFT Commonwealth *Australian in-water cleaning standards: Minimum standards for in-water cleaning of biofouling on vessels in Australian waters* (DAFF). OR:
 - b) An alternate method of environmental protection is proposed.

Applicants are to contact DPIRD at carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au, and FPA via Environment@fremantleports.com.au, CC to HarbourMaster@fremantleports.com.au. DPIRD will only assess the biosecurity requirements, before sending the application on to FPA to assess the environmental contaminants risk. If DPIRD and FPA are satisfied requirements are met in the application, then an approval will be issued by the FPA Harbour Master.

The FPA Harbour Master will inform the applicant, FPA, DPIRD and AMC CUF of the outcome, only then can treatment be undertaken.

Vessels that remain in the QA

No treatment or inspection is required unless a vessel wishes to leave the QA.

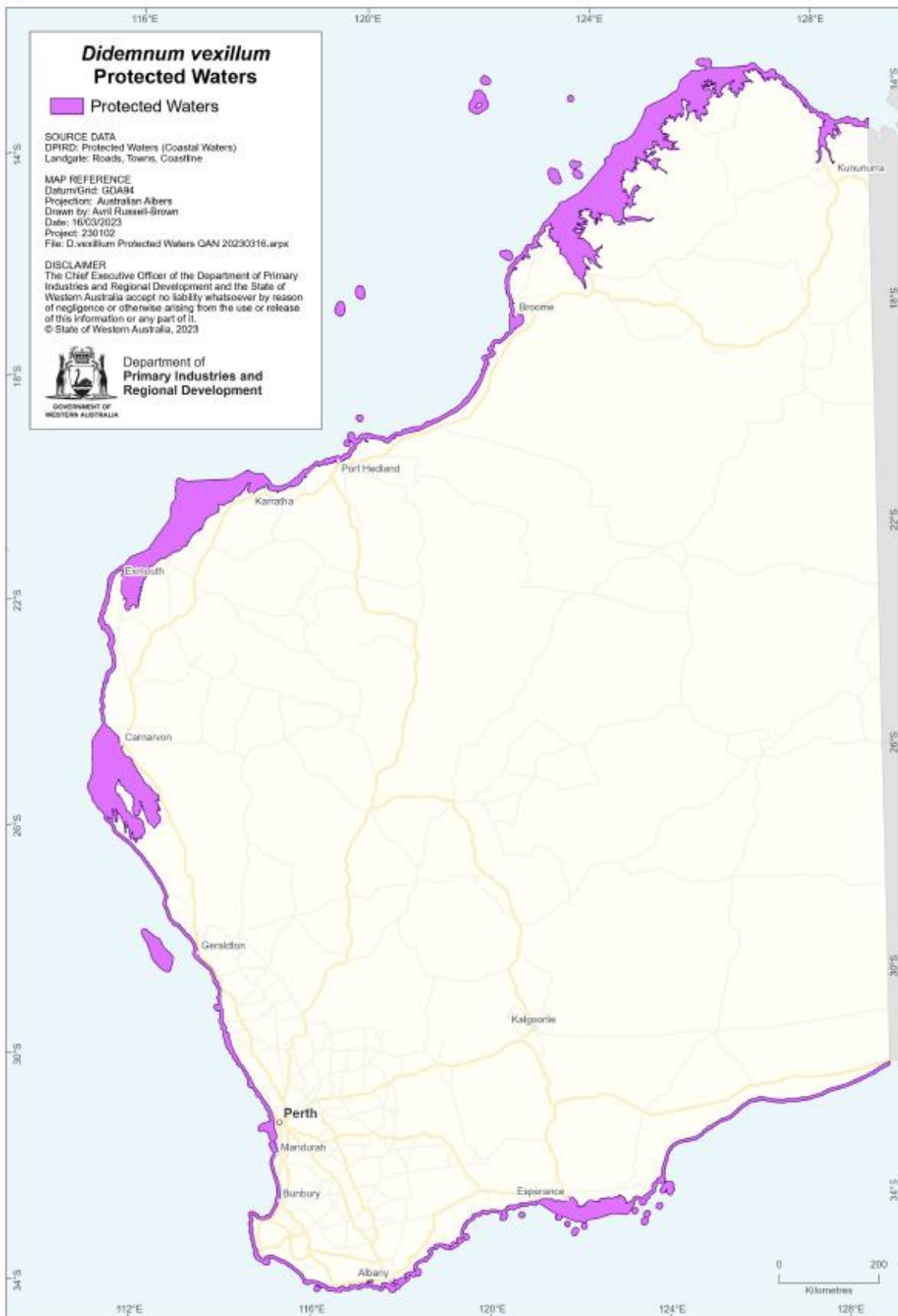


Figure 2. A Map of Protected Waters in Western Australia as defined in the Quarantine Area Notice (QAN).

Enquiries

For all reporting and enquiries to DPIRD please email:

carpetseasquirt@dpiird.wa.gov.au

For marine pest reporting in other jurisdictions:

www.marinepests.gov.au/report

Important Disclaimer

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