

Hovercrafts – Commercial and Recreational – managed vessels

Listed under the *Marine Parks (Great Sandy) Zoning Plan 2006* as a managed vessel – a permit is required for all zones for both recreational and commercial hovercrafts.

Permit application

- Need to ensure a pre-lodgement meeting as soon as possible.
- Applicant/s need to do undertake a public notice (3 newspapers – 1 local in the area at least (local times))

Permit – Zones – General use zones, habitat protection zones and conservation park zones. Not permitted within Marine National park Zones.

Conduct of hovercraft tour/charter – GSMP CONDITIONS

1. Hovercrafts (managed vessels) are not permitted within the Shorebird Roost and Feeding Area; this includes all of the Great Sandy Strait Ramsar boundary. *Refer to the GSMP designated areas map.*
2. The hovercraft must remain in the water at all times and be operated at a minimum of 200 metres from the real time water mark when within creeks and rivers, except for launching and retrieving from authorised boat ramps.
3. Hovercraft entry and egress to the marine park must only be via formalised access points e.g. boat ramps, which provide a formal navigational channel as per approved Maritime Satiety QLD charts.
4. The permit holder must not:
 - (a) approach closer than 100m of people in the water when not in a formal navigational channel;
 - (b) approach closer than 200m of other people along the beach;
 - (c) traverse seagrass beds, mudflats and sandbanks; and
 - (d) repetitively operate in the same location on any one day.
5. The hovercraft is not permitted within the designated go slow areas.
6. The hovercraft is not authorised to conduct whale watching activities.
7. Refueling of the hovercraft is not to be undertaken on the water or on intertidal areas.
8. The hovercraft must not operate in a way that makes audible noise before 7am or after 7pm on a business day or Saturday or before 8am or after 6:30pm on any other day.

9. The hovercraft must travel past sensitive receptors e.g. visible dwellings, commercial businesses, campgrounds or anchorages, at a distance that keeps the noise levels below 75dB when recorded from the receptor.
10. It is not permitted to operate a hovercraft within a bathing reserve unless authorised by the Fraser Coast Regional Council.
11. The hovercraft is required to be operated at least 200m from Shorebird Roost and Feeding Designated Areas, to ensure minimal impact or disturbance to shorebirds.

Minimal impact meaning operating with minimal noise and/or disturbance within an environmentally sensitive area (i.e. shorebird roost and feeding area).

12. The hovercraft is required to operate a minimum of 500 metres out from the shoreline (i.e. mean low water mark) from Fraser Island Recreational Management Area.

Info Notice - The permit/activity can be reviewed by QLD Parks and Wildlife Service if any complaints are received and/or if any environmental harm or wildlife disturbance occurs.

Commercial Operations

If the operator has approval to access Kingfisher Resort, the permit holder must navigate the vessel within the navigational channel when operating within the Great Sandy Strait whilst transporting passengers.

General

In general, based on the correspondence with the clients to date, the clients seem to feel the issue primarily revolves around noise or hitting wildlife, it will need to be made clear that it is not just about noise and hitting wildlife, it is primarily about preventing any disturbance, interference or conflict with wildlife and other stakeholders including other users and residents.

The client's reference that the vessel is the same as a jet ski is not accurate in that jet skis cannot operate on land (beaches, seagrass meadows/mudflats, saltmarsh) or very shallow water.

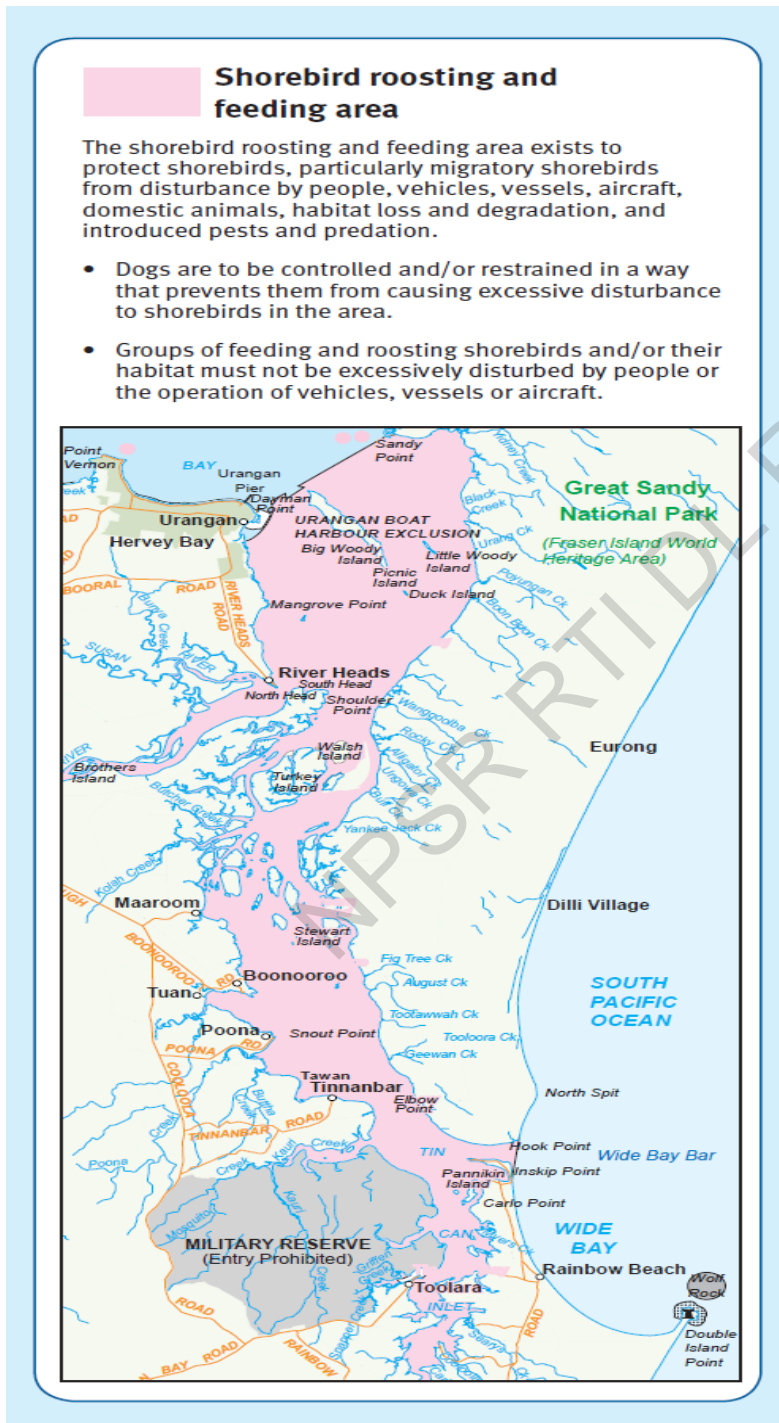
Commercial Operations

If the operator has approval to access Kingfisher Resort, the permit holder must navigate the vessel within the navigational channel when operating within the Great Sandy Strait whilst transporting passengers.

As a commercial operator they should navigate through the channel at all times whether with passengers or not.

Another point is that if he was operating around Kingfisher and there was a cruise ship in he would have to pay due care and attention not to interfere with the ship. I will check to see if there is a mandatory distance to be enforced around a cruise ship both anchored and in transit.

MAP 1 – Shorebird Roost and feeding area within the Great Sandy Strait



Great Sandy Region Management Plan

Access to the Great Sandy Strait area, is not permitted. The Great Sandy Region Management Plan (The Plan) states: **hovercraft (both recreationally and commercial) will NOT be permitted to operate in Great Sandy Strait, Tin Can Bay and the Noosa River** other than to transfer passengers on approved transit routes. As such, this type of use/vessel will not be permitted within those locations as the Great Sandy Strait is listed as a wetland of international importance, which provides for shallow seagrass beds, mangrove forests, salt marshes and saltpans. These areas are also important feeding grounds for shorebirds, dugong, turtles, dolphins and fish.

As such there should be no approvals for hovercraft within the GSS.

NPSR RTI DL Release