

Public moorings

Public moorings are installed at popular locations and have blue, cone-shaped buoys with a colour-coded band. This band tells you the class (vessel length) and maximum wind strength limits that apply to the mooring*. Mooring specifications and conditions of use are also displayed on the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line.

Many privately-owned moorings also exist within the marine parks. You should obtain the permission of the owner before using a privately-owned mooring.

**Refer to the maps inside for a guide to mooring codes*


Use of moorings

When using public moorings, there are some key points to note.

- Public moorings in the northern GBR have a four hour or 24 hour time limit.
- Between 7am and 5pm, a vessel cannot occupy a mooring for longer than the time limit specified on the mooring tag. This ensures fair and equitable use.
- All public moorings are available for overnight use.
- If a vessel picks up a mooring tag with a four hour time limit on or after 3pm, it may remain on that mooring until 9am the next day.
- Public moorings must not be used by more than one vessel at a time (tenders exempted), unless otherwise stated.
- Care should be taken to comply with all information displayed on the mooring buoy and tag.
- It is an offence to remove, misuse or engage in conduct that results in damage to a public mooring.

Public moorings are generally located near drying reefs or shorelines. Care should be taken approaching and leaving buoys, particularly when mooring in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.



 Mooring buoy and pick-up line (above).
Pick-up tag (right).



How to pick up a mooring


When picking up a mooring:

- take note of the prevailing wind and tides. Approach the mooring buoy by motoring into the wind or tide (whichever is stronger)
- observe the colour-coded band on the buoy to ensure your vessel is within the size and wind strength limitations for the mooring
- take care to avoid running over the pick-up line when approaching the mooring
- use a boat hook to retrieve the pick-up line
- observe the mooring tag attached to the pick-up line for information on the limits of use
- attach the mooring eye to a cleat or strong point on the bow of the vessel.

How to drop a mooring

When dropping a mooring:

- motor slowly towards the mooring to slacken the line slightly
- cast the mooring pick-up lines well clear of the vessel
- reverse away from the mooring buoy and line.

 Mooring buoy, pick-up tag and pick-up line.

Protecting coral

The Great Barrier Reef and its island national parks are home to abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Corals are among the most popular attractions, yet they are the most vulnerable.

Coral reefs can be damaged by:

- a vessel's anchor and chain dropping or dragging on coral
- a vessel grounding when the wind changes or the tide ebbs
- a chain or rope wrapping around coral or breaking pieces off.

It may take many years for coral to recover. Some coral never returns to its original condition.

It is an offence to damage coral in the Great Barrier Reef and Great Barrier Reef Coast marine parks.



Anchor chains damage coral – staghorn coral broken by anchor.

Chris Jones © Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority

Reef protection areas

The Great Barrier Reef contains many well-developed fringing reefs that are particularly vulnerable to anchor damage. To protect these highly diverse coral communities, there are reef protection areas where anchoring is not allowed. Most reef protection areas are marked by reef protection markers; some are unmarked.

Reef protection markers, indicating no-anchoring areas, are white, pyramid-shaped buoys with a blue label. An imaginary line joining the markers forms the boundary of the no-anchoring area.

Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of the buoys or inside the line of buoys. You can anchor directly on the beach provided there are no tidal restrictions. Please note that reef protection markers must not be used as a mooring.



Location of public moorings and reef protection area: Arthur Bay. Never anchor on the reef flat inshore of reef protection markers.

Anchor with care outside reef protection markers

Please ensure you follow best environmental practices when anchoring.

- Carry enough chain, or chain and line, for the water depth.
- Anchor in sand or mud away from corals.
- Motor towards the anchor while retrieving it. If the anchor is stuck, motor the vessel above and slightly ahead of the anchor before retrieval.
- Anchor far enough outside the line of reef protection markers to ensure all parts of the anchor chain and rope remain outside the line of markers should the vessel swing.

Marked reef protection areas in the northern Great Barrier Reef are located at:

- Picnic Bay (Magnetic Island)
- Florence Bay (Magnetic Island)
- Arthur Bay (Magnetic Island)
- Pioneer Bay (Orpheus Island)
- Yanks Jetty (Orpheus Island)
- The Haven (Hinchinbrook Island)
- Watsons Bay (Lizard Island)
- Anchor Bay (Lizard Island)
- Brook Islands
- Russell Island
- Normanby Island
- Fitzroy Island
- Low Islands



Reef protection marker.



Reef under pressure

The Great Barrier Reef is an irreplaceable icon and one of the world's best managed marine areas. It offers visitors stunning vistas, both above and below the water, but it contains some very fragile environments which are under pressure from growing threats.

Combined, these threats weaken the resilience of the Reef and affect its ability to recover from serious disturbances, such as mass coral bleaching events, which are predicted to become increasingly frequent.

Dropping an anchor on coral can take seconds to damage or destroy it. Under ideal circumstances, it may take years for the coral to rebuild. In some cases, the coral may never return to its former glory.

By taking a little extra care when anchoring and using moorings, where available, you will help protect this diverse and remarkable natural wonder.

How can you help to protect the Reef?

By minimising your impact in the marine park, you can help the Reef withstand the stress of accumulated threats, such as climate change.

While using public moorings and anchoring away from coral are two key actions, here are some more ways you can help to #LovetheReef.

- Anonymously report suspected illegal fishing activity to 24-hour hotline: **1800 380 048** or **[gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident](https://www.gbrmpa.gov.au/report-an-incident)**
- Check your zoning maps, available free at **[gbrmpa.gov.au](https://www.gbrmpa.gov.au)**— know where you're going and what's allowed.
- Use a GPS and cross-check it with your zoning map.
- Avoid taking herbivorous fish like parrotfish, which remove seaweed and provide space for new corals to grow.
- Use and understand best snorkelling practices, such as not touching or standing on corals.
- Take all rubbish with you and put into bins on the shore.

Public moorings and anchoring in the northern Great Barrier Reef

Protecting coral at North Queensland's islands and reefs



Further information

For Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) enquiries, please visit us online at qld.gov.au/NationalParks

This brochure is also available at qld.gov.au/ParkBrochures

Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority
280 Flinders St, Townsville
PO Box 1379, Townsville Qld 4810
Phone: 1800 990 177
Email: info@gbmpa.gov.au
Web: gbmpa.gov.au



Please report any misused or damaged public moorings on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).



©State of Queensland 2019.
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service,
Department of Environment and Science.
BP2225 May 2019.
Printed on eco-friendly paper to save energy and resources.
Photos: © Queensland Government unless otherwise stated

Unmarked reef protection areas

Two no-anchoring areas in the northern Great Barrier Reef—Cod Hole and Lizard Island Locality 1—do not have reef protection markers to identify their boundaries. The limits of these two no-anchoring areas are shown on the maps below. The boundary descriptions provide GPS positions so you can ensure you anchor correctly outside the no-anchoring area boundaries or use the moorings provided within them.

Lizard Island Locality 1 unmarked reef protection area

No-anchoring area (vessels under 7 seven metres excepted)



Boundary description

The area of the Lizard Island sector bounded by a line commencing at the intersection of the Lizard Island coastline at mean low water and the parallel 14°39.185'S (at or about 14°39.185'S, 145°27.041'E) then running progressively as described in the following:

1. South-westerly along the geodesic to 14°39.710'S, 145°26.264'E
2. North along the meridian to the intersection of the coastal 1 500 metre line of Lizard Island (at or about 14°38.289'S, 145°26.264'E)
3. North-easterly along the coastal 1 500 metre line of Lizard Island to the intersection of the meridian 145°27.272'E (at or about 14°37.830'S, 145°27.272'E)
4. South along the meridian to the intersection of the Lizard Island coastline at mean low water (at or about 14°38.770'S, 145°27.272'E)
5. South-westerly along the Lizard Island coastline at mean low water to the point of commencement.

Cod Hole unmarked reef protection area

No-anchoring area



Boundary description

The area of the Ribbon Reefs sector bounded by a line commencing at the intersection of the reef crest of Ribbon Reef No. 10 (at or about 14°40.161'S, 145°39.581'E) then running progressively as described in the following:

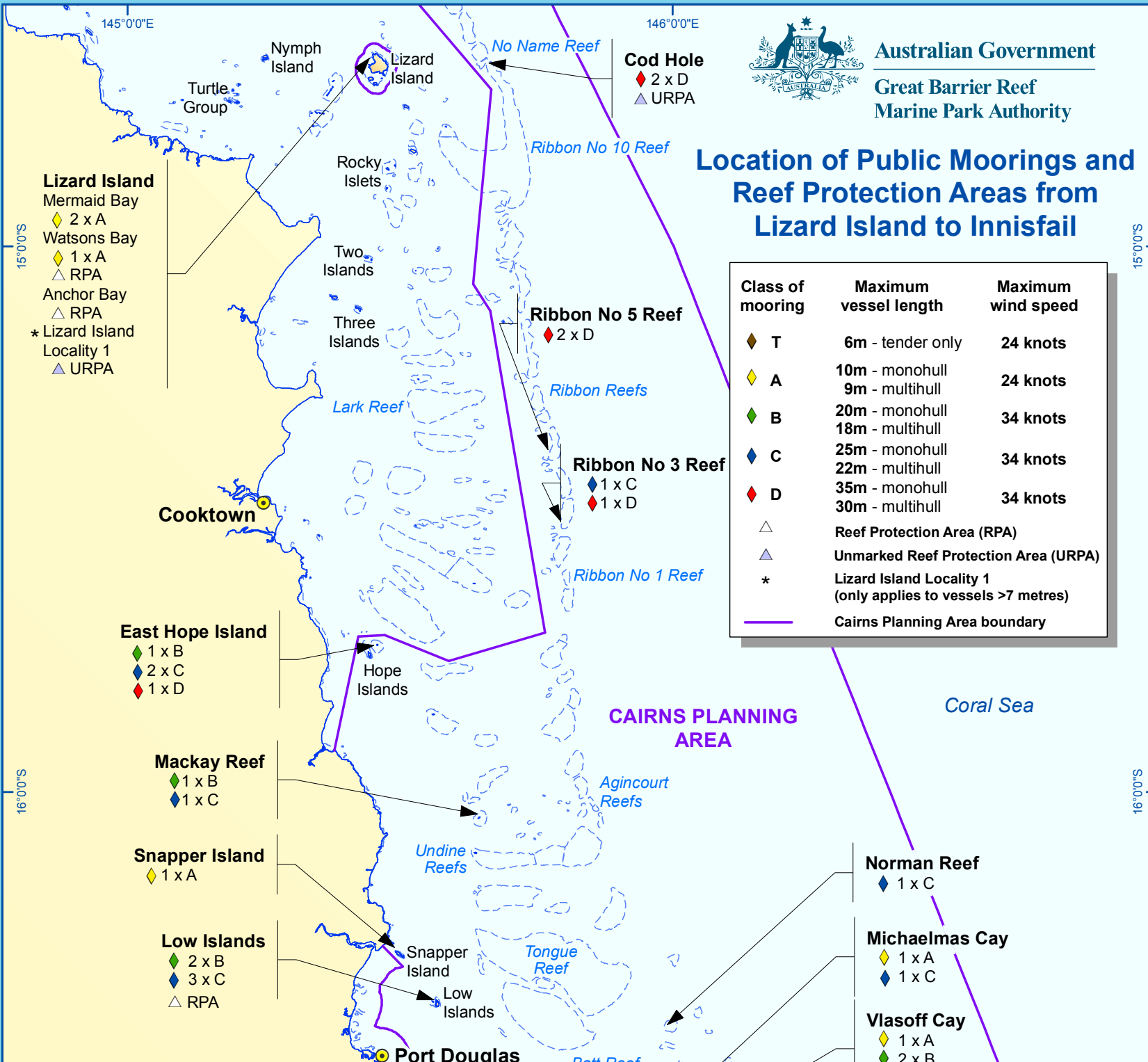
1. West along the parallel to the intersection of the 100 metre line of Ribbon Reef No. 10 (at or about 14°40.161'S, 145°39.524'E)
2. North-easterly along the 100 metre line of Ribbon Reef No. 10 to the intersection of the 100 metre line of Ribbon Reef No. 10 and the meridian 145°40.010'E (at or about 14°39.663'S, 145°40.010'E)
3. South along the meridian to the intersection of the reef crest of Ribbon Reef No. 10 (at or about 14°39.717'S, 145°40.010'E)
4. South-westerly along the reef crest of Ribbon Reef No. 10 to the point of commencement.





Australian Government
Great Barrier Reef
Marine Park Authority

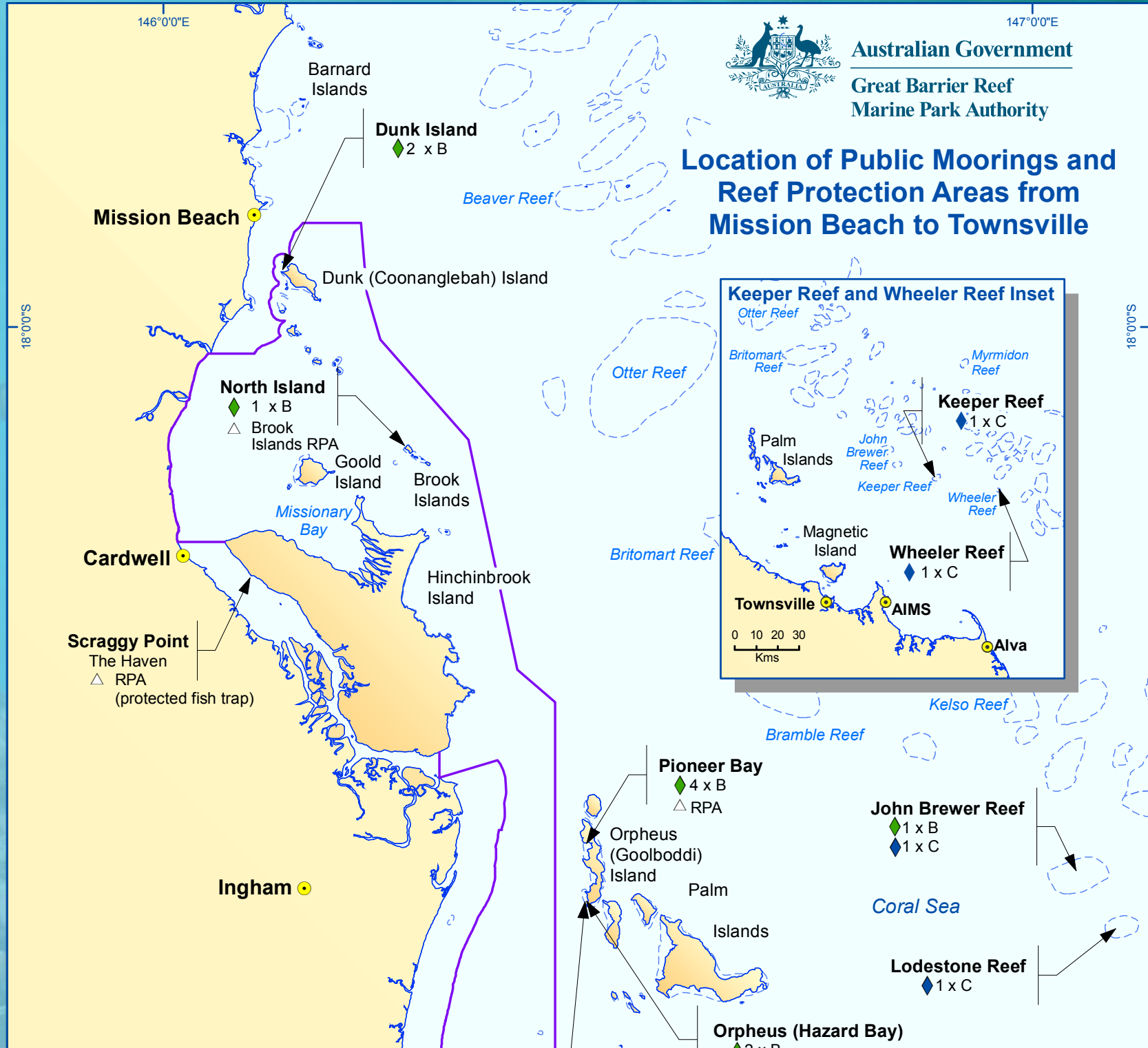
Location of Public Moorings and Reef Protection Areas from Lizard Island to Innisfail

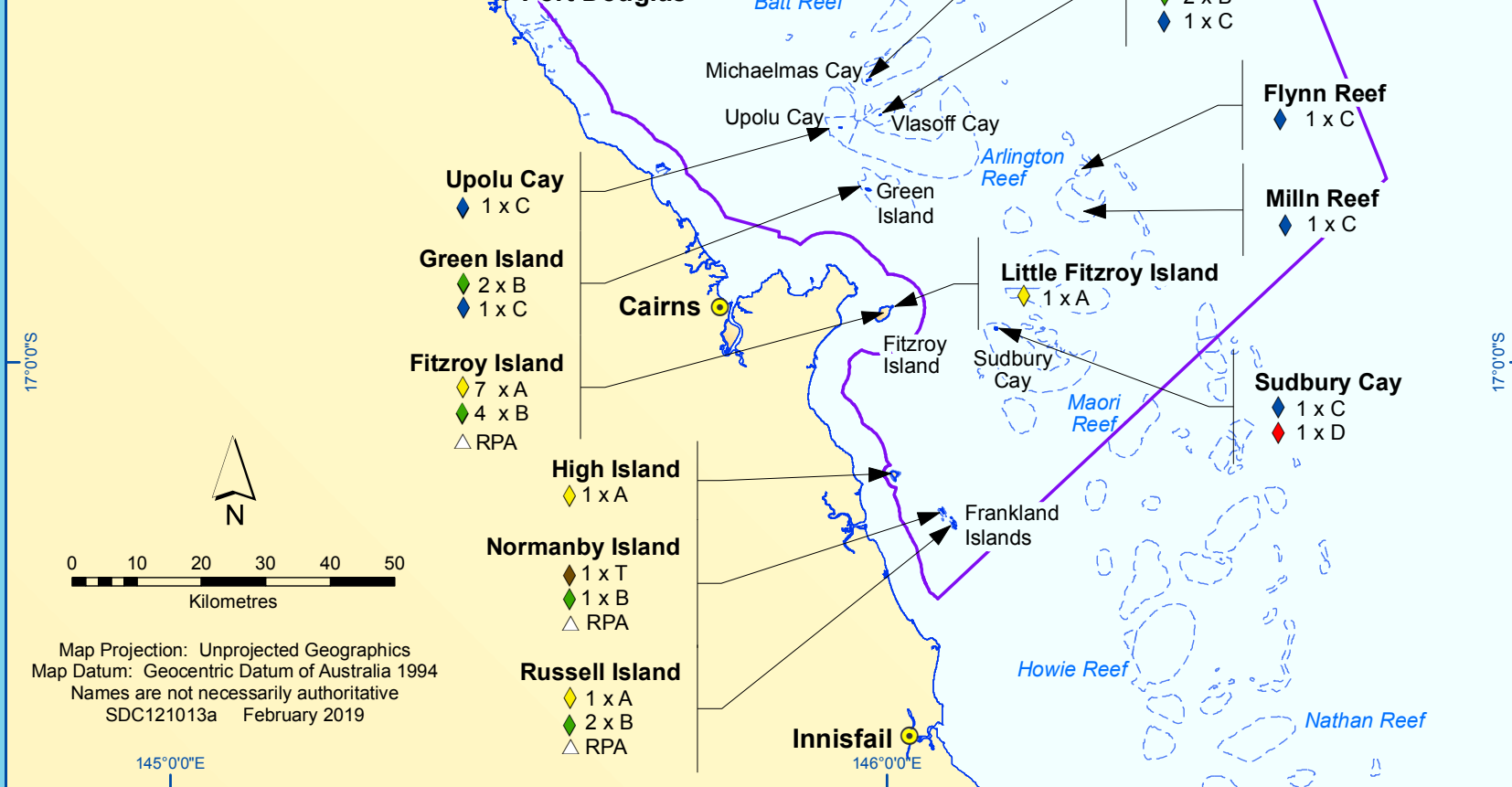


LOCATION	Mooring class	Max. vessel length	In
Cod Hole	D	35m	
East Hope Island	B	20m	
	C	25m	
	D	35m	
Fitzroy Island	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	A	10m	
	B	20m	
	B	20m	
	B	20m	
Flynn Reef	C	25m	
Green Island	B	20m	
	B	20m	
	C	25m	
High Island	A	10m	
Little Fitzroy Island	A	10m	
Lizard Island – Mermaid Bay	A	10m	
	A	10m	
Lizard Island – Watsons Bay	A	10m	
Low Isles	B	20m	
	B	20m	
	C	25m	
	C	25m	
	C	25m	
	C	25m	
Mackay Reef	B	20m	
	C	25m	
Michaelmas Cay	A	10m	
	C	25m	
Milln Reef	C	25m	
Normanby Island	T	6m	
	B	20m	
Norman Reef	C	25m	
Ribbon No 3 Reef	C	25m	
	D	35m	
Ribbon No 5 Reef	D	35m	
	D	35m	
Russell Island	A	10m	
	B	20m	
	B	20m	
Snapper Island	A	10m	
Sudbury Cay	C	25m	
	D	35m	
Upolu Cay	C	25m	
Vlasoff Cay	A	10m	
	B	20m	
	B	20m	
	C	25m	



Installed latitude GDA94 ddm	Installed longitude GDA94 ddm
14° 39.871'S	145° 39.792'E
14° 39.784'S	145° 39.886'E
15° 43.738'S	145° 27.392'E
15° 43.844'S	145° 27.380'E
15° 43.796'S	145° 27.341'E
15° 43.740'S	145° 27.336'E
16° 56.046'S	145° 58.979'E
16° 55.941'S	145° 59.120'E
16° 55.914'S	145° 59.160'E
16° 55.784'S	145° 59.297'E
16° 55.412'S	145° 59.618'E
16° 55.393'S	145° 59.529'E
16° 55.377'S	145° 59.782'E
16° 55.711'S	145° 59.261'E
16° 55.712'S	145° 59.306'E
16° 55.750'S	145° 59.297'E
16° 55.757'S	145° 59.258'E
16° 44.053'S	146° 15.908'E
16° 45.145'S	145° 58.322'E
16° 45.145'S	145° 58.365'E
16° 45.317'S	145° 57.981'E
17° 09.183'S	146° 00.242'E
16° 55.321'S	146° 00.314'E
14° 38.759'S	145° 27.219'E
14° 38.846'S	145° 27.253'E
14° 39.768'S	145° 27.056'E
16° 22.883'S	145° 33.579'E
16° 22.892'S	145° 33.532'E
16° 22.937'S	145° 33.836'E
16° 22.906'S	145° 33.839'E
16° 22.864'S	145° 33.848'E
16° 02.611'S	145° 38.693'E
16° 02.603'S	145° 38.632'E
16° 36.289'S	145° 58.433'E
16° 36.271'S	145° 58.421'E
16° 47.310'S	146° 15.961'E
17° 12.556'S	146° 04.429'E
17° 12.241'S	146° 04.434'E
16° 25.894'S	145° 59.218'E
15° 30.468'S	145° 47.869'E
15° 30.289'S	145° 47.953'E
15° 22.745'S	145° 46.488'E
15° 22.831'S	145° 46.589'E
17° 13.550'S	146° 05.398'E
17° 13.508'S	146° 05.372'E
17° 13.455'S	146° 05.374'E
16° 17.540'S	145° 29.464'E
16° 56.984'S	146° 08.952'E
16° 57.043'S	146° 08.865'E
16° 40.142'S	145° 56.019'E
16° 39.228'S	145° 59.417'E
16° 39.116'S	145° 59.223'E
16° 39.295'S	145° 59.133'E
16° 39.010'S	145° 59.367'E





Lizard Island to Innisfail (Cairns Area Plan of Management)

Some places in the Cairns Area have special values so there are rules in place to protect these areas. Some of the rules relating to anchoring and mooring are summarised below. You should consult the Cairns Area Plan of Management for more information (including maps), available at gbrmpa.gov.au.

Anchoring near moorings

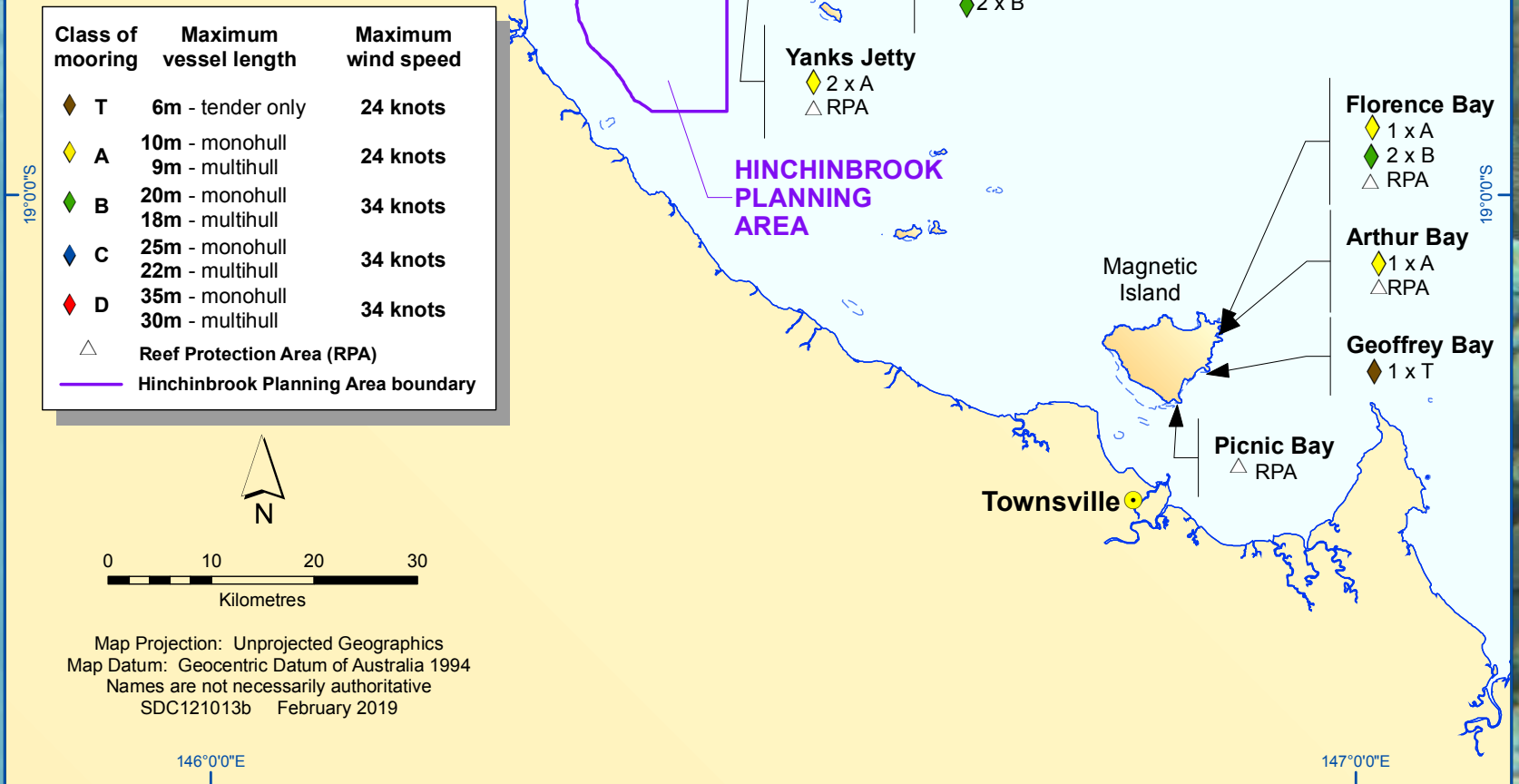
You cannot anchor within 50 metres of a mooring or 200 metres of a pontoon, except at the following Locations:

- Lizard Island Locality 2 and 3
- Cape Tribulation Bay Locality 1
- East Hope Island Reef (15–065)
- Low Island Locality
- Green Island Reef Locality
- Fitzroy Island

Using public moorings

To protect fragile reefs in high-use areas, rules to help stop misuse of public moorings and reef protection markers are in place. While there have always been rules around the use of moorings, the rules have been updated to outline what is considered misuse of public moorings. This includes:

- exceeding time limits
- attaching more than one vessel to a public mooring
- rafting-up—attaching multiple vessels in a chain when one vessel is attached to the mooring
- altering the mooring
- not following the instructions on the mooring.



These rules are to help make sure public moorings continue to be available for everyone's use. It's about playing fair while out on the water. Anyone found to be misusing a public mooring or public infrastructure may be issued with a penalty infringement notice.

The appropriate use of public moorings is outlined in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Regulations 2019.

Instructions to vessel masters

1. Vessel masters are solely responsible for the safety of their vessel while using the public moorings.
2. A watch must be kept at all times while the vessel is on the mooring.
3. Be aware of changing weather and sea conditions and your proximity to obstacles, including coral and other vessels, and how these may be affected by mooring swing.



Disclaimer: The published positions are correct to the best of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service knowledge at May 2019. No guarantee is given that the moorings are in the location shown in the tables. Vessel skippers should verify the moorings position with their own GPS equipment prior to attempting to access the moorings. Particular care should be taken in accessing the moorings in poor weather, reduced visibility or at night.

LOCATION	Mooring class	Max. vessel length	Installed latitude GDA94 ddm	Installed longitude GDA94 ddm
Brook Islands (North Island)	B	20m	18° 08.292'S	146° 16.629'E
Dunk Island	B	20m	17° 55.976'S	146° 08.251'E
John Brewer Reef	B	20m	17° 56.034'S	146° 08.094'E
	C	25m	18° 37.331'S	147° 03.149'E
Keeper Reef	C	25m	18° 37.170'S	147° 03.368'E
Lodestone Reef	C	25m	18° 44.617'S	147° 15.994'E
Magnetic Island – Geoffrey Bay	T	6m	18° 41.289'S	147° 05.777'E
Magnetic Island – Arthur Bay	A	10m	19° 09.291'S	146° 52.113'E
Magnetic Island – Florence Bay	A	10m	19° 07.775'S	146° 52.686'E
Orpheus Island – Pioneer Bay	A	10m	19° 07.376'S	146° 52.810'E
	B	20m	19° 07.327'S	146° 52.937'E
	B	20m	19° 07.361'S	146° 52.867'E
Orpheus Island – Hazard Bay	B	20m	18° 35.995'S	146° 29.335'E
	B	20m	18° 35.770'S	146° 29.242'E
	B	20m	18° 35.724'S	146° 29.211'E
	B	20m	18° 35.723'S	146° 29.267'E
Orpheus Island – Yanks Jetty	B	20m	18° 38.561'S	146° 29.423'E
	B	20m	18° 38.909'S	146° 29.209'E
Wheeler Reef	A	10m	18° 39.119'S	146° 29.150'E
	A	10m	18° 39.193'S	146° 29.180'E
Wheeler Reef	C	25m	18° 47.713'S	147° 31.279'S