

Country Report on Ship Strikes

Submitted by the Government of Australia to the Conservation Committee

Background

This paper is a summary of ship strikes on cetaceans and the associated issues and legislation in Australian waters for the calendar year of 2010.

Legislation

Under Australia's national environmental legislation, the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, ship strikes involving cetaceans in Commonwealth waters, whether resulting in injury or death, must be reported. State governments have similar reporting requirements.

Reported Incidents - calendar year 2010

State/Territory	Ship Strikes numbers for 2010 (small and large cetaceans)
Northern Territory	Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin, fluke, dorsal and pectoral fins cut-off, Darwin, post mortem undertaken by Department of Natural Resources, Environment, The Arts and Sport.
Western Australia	Humpback whale, unknown sex, off coast of Broome, Reported by crew, vessel travelling at 10.5 knots.
	Bottlenose dolphin, female, hit by small watercraft, Bunbury Surf Club, post mortem undertaken by Department of Environment and Conservation/Murdoch University Cetacean Research Unit.
Victoria	Blue whale species, Male, Possible large impact to head region, beach-washed.
	Humpback whale calf, large cuts in whale consistent with ship's propeller, Gippsland, beach-washed
New South Wales	Humpback whale, unknown sex, beach-washed.
South Australia	Humpback whale, male, 1.4 km WSW Port Wakefield, post mortem undertaken by SA Museum.
	Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin, male, fatal propeller wound, 0.6 Km NNW St Kilda.

Management Measures

The Australian Government has commenced the development of a National strategy aimed at preventing vessel-cetacean interactions. The strategy will focus on public awareness and education, and improved protocols for reporting vessel-cetacean incidents. The Australian Marine Mammal Centre (AMMC) has developed a national ship strike database and associated web-based questionnaire, based very closely on the IWC data collection questionnaire. This will ensure that the data collected in Australia is compatible with the IWC ship strike database. Attempts to submit data from Australian waters directly to the IWC will be redirected back to the AMMC-based portal to ensure all reporting will have national verification.