

# WHAT IS SEDIMENT?

## COMMUNITY FACTSHEET



**Gladstone Ports Corporation**

Growth, prosperity, community.



### WHAT IS SEDIMENT?

Sediment is a naturally occurring material that originates from a variety of sources such as broken down rocks and minerals, or the remains of plants and animals. Sediment comes in many forms and sizes, and can be smaller than the eye can see or as large as boulder.

Most sediment found in the Port of Gladstone, Port of Bundaberg and Port of Rockhampton contain sands, silts and clays and is of a very good quality, showing limited or no signs of manmade contamination.

### HOW DOES SEDIMENT BUILD UP?

In the Port of Gladstone, Port of Bundaberg and Port of Rockhampton, sediment is primarily moved by tides, winds, waves and rainfall, with a variety of other forces including port shipping and other commercial activities. Sediment then settles and builds up on the seafloor in quiet areas of the water where the forces are low, such as our shipping channels.

Of all the sediment naturally moving within the Port of Gladstone, GPC moves less than 2% to keep the channels clear for safe and efficient vessel movement.

### SEDIMENT AND SAFE NAVIGATION

Ports are vital to maintaining and growing our economy, enabling the export of our agricultural, mineral and manufactured commodities and imports such as food, fuel, cars and household goods that support our way of life. Most ports are located in sheltered, shallow inshore areas or river entrances and have constructed channels and berths that provide access for vessels. These deeper areas that allow vessels to move safely also trap mobile sediment as the lower energy in deeper water allows sediment to settle.

As the sediment accumulates, it reduces the depth of water that vessels can use. This can mean that larger ships, and particularly ships with cargo loads, can only enter or leave on higher tides. Without this sediment accumulation being managed, vessels will not be able to enter the port and the port would be forced to operate inefficiently and ultimately to close.



### ABOUT GLADSTONE PORTS CORPORATION

Gladstone Ports Corporation is a Government Owned Corporation responsible for supporting and facilitating the trade of Central Queensland's major resource and primary industries.

As custodians of the waterways, we are committed to sustaining our environment as well as ensuring efficient and effective port services.

### MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Sustainable Sediment Management Project, visit [www.gpcl.com.au/ssm-project](http://www.gpcl.com.au/ssm-project).