

MEDIA RELEASE

1/8/19

Dredge inaction leads to life-threatening incident

A MAN who went into anaphylactic shock on a house boat was left helpless after the Cardwell Coast Guard vessel was unable to respond due to low tide at One Mile Creek yesterday.

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto said the incident was “solid proof of the urgent need to dredge One Mile Creek before a life is lost”.

“I have continuously warned about the serious safety risk posed by the silt build-up in One Mile Creek, which renders the Coast Guard unable to respond at low tide should there be a vessel in distress. Yesterday, we saw an incident that could have very easily become a situation where a person could have lost their life,” the Katter’s Australian Party MP said.

“This incident should be ringing alarm bells for both State and Federal governments. The next time could be far worse. What will it take for them to fund this dredging project? They need to act now before it’s too late.”

Cardwell Coast Guard skipper Kathy Goggi said she was contacted by a local paramedic around 1:20pm yesterday afternoon requesting assistance to get to a man who gone into anaphylactic shock on a nearby house boat.

But with the Coast Guard vessel left “high and dry” in mud due to low tide, the pair quickly needed to devise a Plan B.

“There was no way the boat was going to move so he asked for the next best option and I suggested they try the end of the jetty if they can get the boat in far enough and close enough,” Mrs Goggi said.

“As far as I know, they were bringing him in that way. They couldn’t get in via One Mile Creek and we couldn’t get out of there to take the paramedic out to him.”

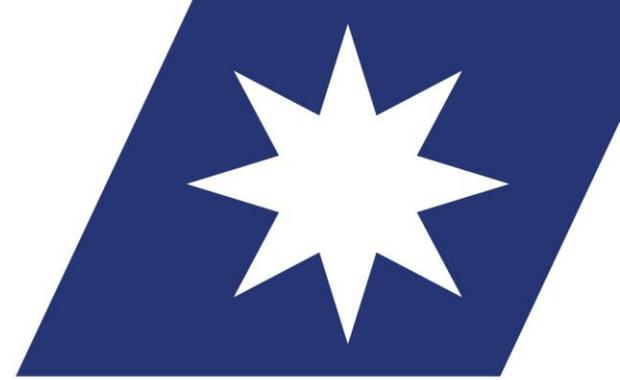
Mrs Goggi said she and her colleagues felt “gut-wrenched” over their inability to assist the man due to their boat being stranded. She added she did not know what his condition was currently.

“Our boat was sitting down there high and dry like the mudskippers and we couldn’t do anything about it,” she said.

“There has been some very close calls in the past like this one. We’ve had a couple of incidents where we’ve gone out to do rescues and there’s been parents with young children on board and we’ve had to sit out there with them for 12 hours while we wait for the water to come in so we can bring them in.”

NICK DAMETTO

Member for Hinchinbrook



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Mrs Goggi, who has more than 20 years experience with the Coast Guard and is Deputy Squadron Commodore for North Queensland operations, said One Mile Creek was in the worst state she had ever seen.

“Every day that the government sits on their hands and tells us that we don’t need it dredged, it’s getting worse,” she said.

“If it wasn’t for the KAP’s Nick Dametto, Robbie Katter and Shane Knuth, we wouldn’t have any attention on this issue because they’re standing behind us and lobbying for us.”

During a meeting with Mr Dametto in Canberra on Tuesday, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack refused to commit to a Coalition election promise of up to \$1.5 million to dredge One Mile Creek.

Meanwhile, the State Labor Government refuses to fund the project, hiding behind an antiquated conformed deed that states dredging is the responsibility of Port Hinchinbrook’s developer, despite the developer in liquidation and One Mile Creek being a State-owned waterway.

Mrs Goggi urged both the State and Federal governments to take action.

“I just hope it’s not going to take a death for them get up off their butts and do something about it,” she said.

—ENDS—

Photo/video caption:

One Mile Creek and the Port Hinchinbrook marina at low tide.

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