

**HAMILTON ISLAND  
CYCLONE & NATURAL  
DISASTER  
COMMUNITY AWARENESS  
GUIDE  
2025**

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## INTRODUCTION

Living in the Whitsundays brings the privilege of a beautiful climate and vibrant lifestyle, but also the responsibility of preparing for Queensland's cyclone season, which spans from November to April. Cyclones can unleash destructive winds exceeding 280 km/h, intense rainfall, and dangerous storm surges, each of which poses serious risks to lives and property. Beyond cyclones, our region is susceptible to other natural hazards, including storm tides and, less frequently, earthquakes.

**To safeguard yourself, your family, and our wider Hamilton Island community, it is essential that each resident actively prepares. This Cyclone Emergency Management Plan outlines the practical steps you can take**—from securing your home and gathering supplies to familiarising yourself with local evacuation zones and procedures and the information in this guide. Early preparation, including considering alternate shelter arrangements if needed, can make all the difference between life and harm.

This guide includes detailed instructions to help you secure your property, recognize safe evacuation routes, and, if required, follow protocols for storm tides and other emergencies. Additionally, included specific actions to take during and after such events in the Annex.

Thank you for investing the time to understand these critical safety measures. To ensure ease of access during an emergency, **we recommend saving a digital copy of this guide on your phone and keeping a printed version in an easily accessible location.**

## CYCLONE WATCH ALERT AND CYCLONE WARNING STAGES

In the event of a cyclone threat, the Bureau of Meteorology or 'BoM' issues official 'watch alerts' and 'warnings'. These are communicated to the community by radio, TV, social media, the BoM website.

Hamilton Island monitors these alerts and warnings and will notify its guests, employees and residents via the Hamilton Island website, the Hamilton Island Smartphone App, In room TV and the Hamilton Island Emergency Control Centre (ECC). Hamilton Island Employees will be alerted via our mobile intranet TALK - located on the UKG App.

## HAMILTON ISLAND DEGREES OF READINESS AND WARNING STAGES

### CYCLONE WATCH ALERT PHASE

This advice will be issued upon notification from Bureau of Meteorology, Tropical Cyclone Warning Centre, that a tropical low or potential cyclone threat exists in North Queensland. We will continue to monitor the current weather pattern that is forming. Advice will be issued via UKG Talk and Hamilton Island Website. Timely reminders to Department Heads to re-familiarise with individual department cyclone procedures and commence clean-up of all areas on island. This warning may also be issued when severe storm conditions are expected.

#### CYCLONE **WARNING** Advice Yellow

**Advice** warnings are yellow and declared when the onset of gales is expected within 48 hours but not within 24 hours estimated traveling time of Hamilton Island. Cyclone **WARNING** **ADVICE YELLOW** will initiate the establishment of the ECC. Advice warnings mean you are not in danger, but you need to be alert, listen and watch for warnings in case conditions get worse and we need to move to the next alert phase. Advice will be issued via UKG Talk, the Hamilton Island Website and TV Information Channel



#### CYCLONE **WARNING** WATCH AND ACT ORANGE (Lean Forward Phase)

Watch and Act warnings are orange and will be issued when an extreme weather event or developing event is likely to affect the area within 12-24 hours of estimated traveling time of Hamilton Island. This will mean conditions are changing and we need to act now to be safe. Cyclone **WARNING** **WATCH AND ACT ORANGE** advice will be issued via UKG Talk, Hamilton Island Website and TV Information Channel.



#### CYCLONE **WARNING** EMERGENCY WARNING RED

Cyclone Warning Emergency Red This is the highest level of warning. Forecast of Destructive winds, swell or riverine flooding and full cyclonic conditions are imminent within 6 hours estimated traveling time of Hamilton Island. This will mean you need to act IMMEDIATELY to be safe and follow directions and advice. Cyclone **WARNING** **EMERGENCY RED** advice will be issued via UKG Talk, Hamilton Island Website and TV Information Channel.



#### CYCLONE WARNING (CANCELLED)

This cancels the Red Emergency Warning when it is considered that no further danger from cyclonic conditions exist. Advice will be issued via UKG Talk, Hamilton Island Website and TV Information Channel.

**NOTE:** The timeframes for the various warning stages may be amended by the ECC based on numerous factors i.e. Cyclone's travel speed & intensity, resource availability, forecast closures of commercial shipping and aircraft

## **CYCLONE STRENGTHS**

The Bureau of Meteorology or 'BoM' issues a cyclone warning when a cyclone is expected to hit within 48 hours but not within 24 hours. Warnings identify communities likely to be hit, the name of the cyclone, its position, intensity, severity and movement. Communities under threat will be advised to take certain steps.

There are five categories used to identify the strength of a cyclone:

### **1 - Tropical Cyclone**

Less than 125 km/h Gales: Minimal house damage. Damage to some crops, trees and caravans. Boats may drag moorings.

### **2 - Tropical Cyclone**

126-164 km/h Destructive winds: Minor house damage. Significant damage to signs, trees and caravans. Heavy damage to some crops. Risk of power failure. Small boats may break moorings.

### **3 - Severe Tropical Cyclone**

165-224 km/h Very destructive winds: Some roof and structural damage and vehicles and equipment may be destroyed. Power failure likely.

### **4 - Severe Tropical Cyclone**

225-279 km/h Very destructive winds: Significant roofing and structural damage. Vehicles and equipment destroyed and blown away. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.

### **5 - Severe Tropical Cyclone**

More than 280 km/h Extremely destructive winds: Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR AND WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A CYCLONE

### BEFORE THE CYCLONE SEASON

Important things that you can do NOW to prepare your family, and your home include:

- Ensure you and all members of your household **read and understand the contents of this guide** and can easily locate it.
- **Complete the checklist** on page 7.
- **Prepare an Emergency Kit.** Every residence should have a fully stocked waterproof Emergency Kit, stored safely and readily accessible. Consider using a large plastic bucket with a sealable lid for your kit. A list of what to include in your Emergency Kit is on page 7.
- **Compile a list of emergency phone numbers** and keep it somewhere that is visible to all members of your household. Keep another copy with your Emergency Kit.
- **Nominate an interstate family member or friend to be a point of contact** in case you and family / household members become separated during the cyclone.
- **Identify the strongest part of your residence** (usually the smallest room) and ensure everyone knows where this is in case you need to seek shelter in your home.
- Ensure at least one person in your household **knows where Hamilton Island's closest first aid station is** situated. Mark its location on the island map on Page 10.
- **Clear property of loose items** which could become projectiles in a strong wind. While most cyclone related deaths occur because of drowning, many lives have been lost due to collapsing buildings or flying debris, which can become lethal in high winds.
- **Check that your insurance is up to date and complete.**

### WHEN A CYCLONE WARNING IS ISSUED

The following tasks should be completed when a cyclone warning Watch and Act Orange is issued:

- **Place all outdoor furniture and loose articles inside.** The security of these items is the responsibility of the individual tenant.
- **Fill water containers, close doors, draw curtains, open some windows on the downwind side, charge/fuel your buggy or vehicle and place it in the allocated area.**
- **Use only torches or battery-operated lighting. DO NOT USE CANDLES** in case of a gas leak.
- **Listen for official advice** from the Emergency Control Centre. The Emergency Control Centre is located at the Reef View Hotel (see island map on Page 10). Official advice will be communicated on the Hamilton Island Website and Smartphone App and to Employees also via the Hamilton Island Mobile Intranet – TALK.
- **If told to take shelter,** do so, and remain there until advised it is safe to move around again.
- If you are being relocated from your accommodation or the Marina to the Convention Centre (see island map on Page 10) during *Warning Phase Watch and Act Orange*, you will only be allowed to take a handbag or similar small carry bag. It is suggested that you take your personal papers (e.g. bank details, passports, photographs, insurance details) any required medication, essential toiletries and maybe a book.
- **Wear warm protective clothing.**

- Buses will be used to transport residents being relocated. Prior to the arrival of transport, a Fire or Security Officer will drive through each accommodation area to be evacuated using a loud hailer to advise residents of the proposed relocation.
- **Stay inside your accommodation until you are advised to leave.** Do NOT wander around outside your accommodation.
- **Keep calm** and do NOT panic.
- **Be aware of locations of the FIRST AID STATIONS, the MEDICAL CENTRE in the Reef View Hotel Boardroom and the EMERGENCY CONTROL CENTRE (ECC).** Contact phone numbers are listed on Page 9 with locations marked on the island map on Page 10.

## DURING A CYCLONE

- **Stay in shelter.**
- **Beware the calm of the EYE of the cyclone.** The EYE is the calm, clear area at the centre of the cyclone and is usually characterised by light winds, fine weather and often clear skies which can lead to a false sense of security. However, despite its calmness, the eye is surrounded by the eyewall, the most dangerous part of the cyclone, where the strongest winds and heaviest rainfall occur.
- **Remain indoors until advised that the cyclone has passed.** When the EYE has passed over the destructive winds will resume immediately. You **MUST NOT LEAVE** your shelter during the EYE.

## AFTER THE CYCLONE

- **Stay indoors and wait for official advice that the storm has passed.**
- DO NOT wander around in affected areas. **Beware of any gas leaks or water near electric power outlets and fallen debris.**
- **DO not drink tap water** until an official OK has been given by authorities.
- Should the island lose power and/or digital telecommunications, resident information will be communicated by guest room drop, and the Hamilton Island Staff Accommodation notice board.

## INFORMATION WEBSITES

Queensland Government - Get Ready	<a href="http://www.getready.qld.gov.au">www.getready.qld.gov.au</a>
Queensland Disaster Management Services	<a href="http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au">www.disaster.qld.gov.au</a>
Bureau of Meteorology / 'BoM'	<a href="http://www.bom.gov.au">www.bom.gov.au</a>
DOHA Emergency Management	<a href="http://www.homeaffairs.gov.au">www.homeaffairs.gov.au</a>
Geoscience Australia	<a href="http://www.ga.gov.au/scientific-topics/hazards/earthquake">www.ga.gov.au/scientific-topics/hazards/earthquake</a>

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## CHECKLIST: ARE YOU PREPARED?

Complete this checklist in November/ December at the beginning of the cyclone season.

Store a copy with your Emergency Kit.

- Have you trimmed overhanging branches?
- Have you cleared your gutters?
- Have you removed all loose items from your property?
- Is your roof and guttering secured?
- Have you prepared a waterproof **Emergency Kit** that includes the following:
  - Portable radio (tested)
  - Torches (tested)
  - Spare batteries
  - First aid kit
  - Essential medications
  - Non-perishable food
  - Sturdy gloves
  - Waterproof plastic bags
- Important documents in sealed bags (e.g. bank details, passport, driver's license)
- Is your buggy charged with items removed in the event of an evacuation?
- Are all your mobile phones charged with emergency phone numbers stored?
- Do you have an emergency supply of water?
- Do you have an Evacuation Plan, including island map and emergency phone numbers?
- Have you checked your insurance policy to ensure it is up to date and has the necessary cover?
- Are your neighbours safe?

Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## PREPARING YOUR VESSEL

### VESSELS ON TRAILERS

Remove:

- Safety equipment
  - Radios
  - Chart plotters / sounders
  - Batteries
  - LPG Cylinders
  - Bimini and vessel covers
  - Any loose objects in and around your vessel that could become airborne in strong winds
- Strap boat to trailer
  - Strap any covers in place
  - Marina staff will secure the trailer to concrete blocks provided (with chain running through goosenecks of trailer)
  - Small boats half filled with water - place wedges into springs to distribute weight on the axle

### VESSELS IN MARINA

- Know the Marina's Cyclone Plan. Residents, guests and contractors can obtain a copy from the Hamilton Island Marina Office on Front Street. All employees, can find the Marina Cyclone Plan in the folders section of UKG Talk.
- Remove furling sails. Boom sails that cannot be removed need to be appropriately secured
- Strip Bimini tops, BBQs, deck furniture and any other object that could blow away
- Double all lines
- Cover all tie lines to prevent chafing
- Install fenders to protect boat rubbing against dock
- Ensure batteries are sufficient to run bilge pumps throughout storm
- Put duct tape on windows and hatches
- Disconnect shore power
- Close fuel valves

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

## EMERGENCY CONTACT LIST

Once completed, we strongly recommend you save a copy of this list on your phone and print a hard copy and store in an easily accessible location in your property or accommodation.

Property Name: Lot #:

Landline phone: 07

Property address / Location:

Nearest cross street / Access road:

Spare set of keys held by (name and phone)

**Record your emergency contact numbers in the list below. Record all numbers in your mobile phone(s).**

Police, Fire and Ambulance

**000**

Atticus Health

(07) 4804 5688

Emergency Control Centre

(07) 4946 8892

HI Switchboard

(07) 4946 9999

Island Primary School

(07) 4946 9522

Island Kindergarten

(07) 4948 9371

Marina Office

(07) 4946 8353

Interstate Family Contact

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Neighbour / Others

Island Address

Landline

Mobile

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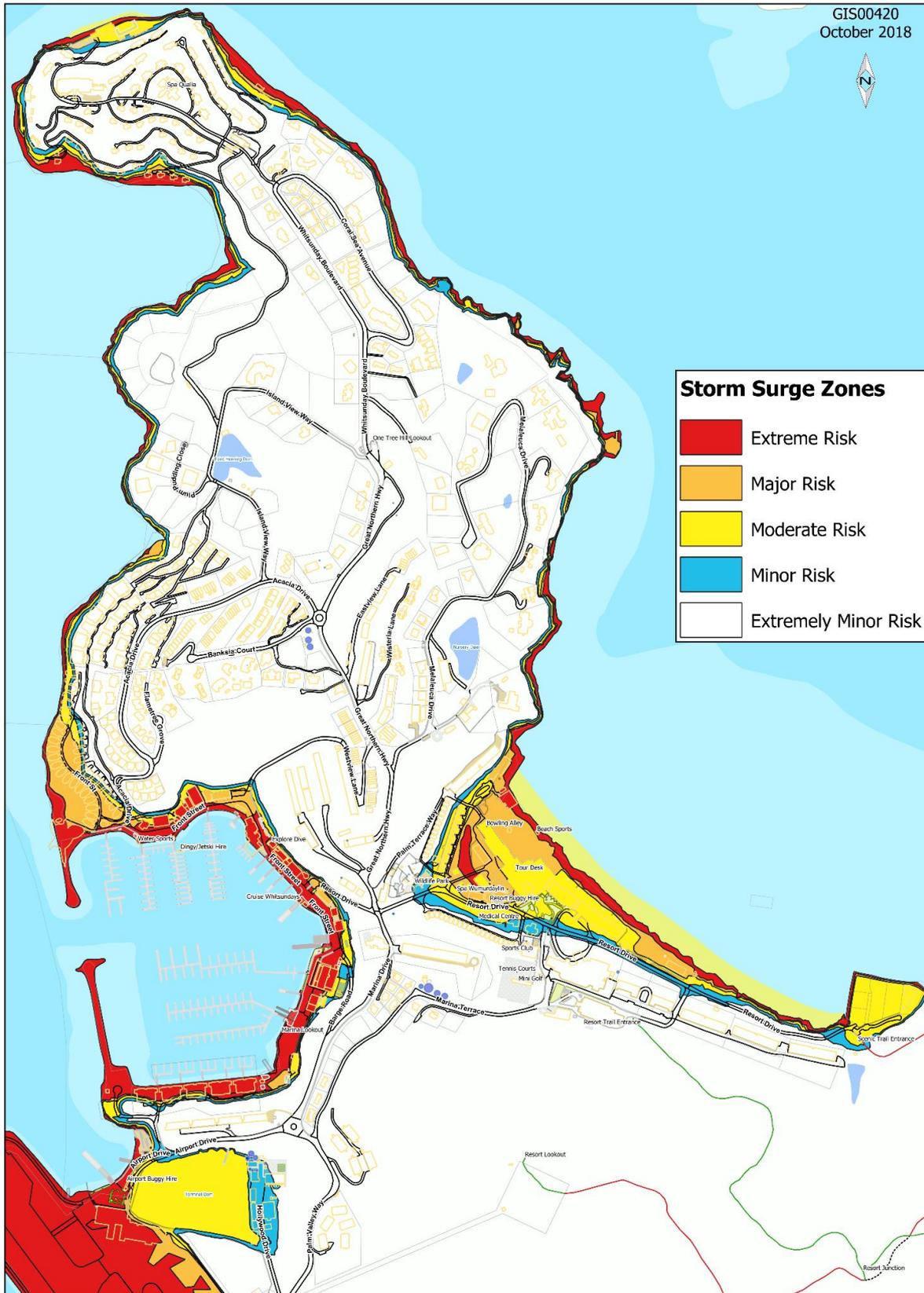
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# ISLAND MAP

Mark your accommodation on this map



# EVACUATION MAP NORTH – STORM TIDE





# EARTHQUAKE – ANNEX

## PERSONAL PROTECTION DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

- **If you are indoors - Drop, cover, and hold on (unless you are in bed).** Drop to the floor; take **cover** under a sturdy desk or table and **hold on** to it firmly. Be prepared to move with it until the shaking stops. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor against the interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances, and kitchen cabinets with heavy objects or glass. **Do not go outside!**
- **In a high-rise: Drop, cover, and hold on.** Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Do not be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarms activate.
- **In a convention centre / meeting room:** Stay at your seat and protect your head and neck with your arms. Don't try to leave until the shaking is over. Then walk out slowly watching for anything that could fall in the aftershocks.
- **If you are in bed - Stay, cover and hold on:** If you are in bed, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow. You are less likely to be injured staying where you are. Broken glass on the floor has caused injury to those who have rolled to the floor or tried to get to doorways.

### *Outdoors*

- **Walking:** Move to a clear area if you can safely do so. Avoid trees, signs, buildings, vehicles, and other hazards.
- **Driving:** Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid signs and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over.

## TSUNAMI WATCH

COUNT how long the earthquake lasts. If the shaking lasts longer than 60 seconds evacuate to a safe area (high ground) as soon as you can safely walk. Counting is also a good idea - it will help to keep people calm.

For a large local earthquake, feeling strong ground shaking may be the only warning that a tsunami is on its way.

- **If at the beach**, move to higher ground immediately if the shaking lasts longer than 30 seconds.
- **If the earthquake is very strong or lasts longer than 60 seconds**, immediately gather your family members / work colleagues / guests and CALMLY WALK to a safe area – the nearest high ground.
- **If evacuation is impossible**, go to the upper floor of a sturdy building. This should only be a last resort.

**Do not wait for an official warning.**

**STAY WHERE YOU ARE** if you *are not* in a low-lying area.

Unnecessary evacuation will put you at risk and hamper the evacuation of people who really need to get away from danger.

**Once evacuated to higher ground, stay there until advised by Emergency Services that it is safe to return.**

## AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE/AFTERSHOCK

- Watch for hazards and tend to injuries.
- Turn off electricity, gas and water. Don't light matches. Check for fuel leaks and damaged wiring and pipes.
- Check on your guests and work colleagues.
- Check for injuries. Apply first aid. Don't move the seriously injured unless in immediate danger.
- Check for broken water, sewerage, gas or electrical mains or lines.
- Don't use the phone immediately (to avoid congestion) unless there is a serious injury or fire.
- Check for cracks and damage in the roof and walls.
- Expect aftershocks, so evacuate if the building is damaged.
- Heed warnings on damage, service disruptions and evacuation
- Don't waste food or water because the supply may be interrupted.
- Avoid driving unless for an emergency (keep the streets clear for emergency services).
- Don't go sightseeing or enter damaged buildings.
- Stay calm and help others if possible.

