

Media Release

15 May 2014

Port support vital for Great Barrier Reef research

Ports North is continuing its support for a vital program to control the Crown of Thorns starfish, one of the most significant threats to coral on the Great Barrier Reef.

Ports North Chairman, Brett Moller, said he was delighted to announce Ports North would continue its sponsorship of the Crown of Thorns Starfish (COTS) Control Program for the ninth year as part of its long-term commitment to studying and protecting the Great Barrier Reef.

“This is a critical program for fighting a serious threat to the health of the Great Barrier Reef and the spectacular coral cover which attracts millions of visitors to Far North Queensland,” he said.

“We welcome the opportunity to support the Crown of Thorns Starfish Control Program for another year by providing berths at Cairns Marina for the program vessels, MV Hero and MV Venus 2.”

Mr Moller said Ports North was directly involved in a range of environmental programs and scientific studies in the region through research partnerships and community sponsorships.

“Ports North is committed to the highest standards of environmental practice in our own operations as well as partnering with other organisations that deliver vital regional programs helping to protect our Great Barrier Reef for future generations,” he said.

The COTS Control Program is managed by the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO) and Executive Director Col McKenzie said the port’s support was critical.

“Ports North’s support means we can employ an extra two divers and employing more people means the program is more productive,” he said.

“Ports North has been involved with the Crown of Thorns Control Program for a long period of time and this ongoing support means we have a 10% increase in productivity with 10 divers on each boat now.”

For further information, please contact:

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