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DUKC® Delivers Torres Strait Draught Increase

The Australia Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has announced that from November 1st, all vessels sailing through Torres Strait may now transit up to a maximum draught of 12.5m with the use of the Under Keel Clearance Management System provided by OMC International. Whilst an exemption has been in place since 2019 for bulk carriers and tankers, container vessels are now also able to benefit from the additional draught delivered by DUKC®.

Previously, draughts have been limited to 12.2m, based on a study in the 1970's by the then Federal Department for Transport. Today, DUKC® integrates real-time IoT data feeds, AI enhanced forecasts, sophisticated environmental modelling, advanced computational analysis of vessel motions, and live transit monitoring to safely deliver increased sailing draughts.

This achievement is the result of a collaborative effort between AMSA, the shipping industry, and OMC International, which saw OMC perform a series of full scale measurements using high precision DGPS equipment to validate the accuracy of AMSA's Under Keel Clearance Management System. The Deep Draught Trials Project, undertaken with Rio Tinto and Maersk, provided evidence of the accuracy of DUKC® calculations, and the certainty that the deeper draughts could be accommodated safely.

The efficiency gains to the shipping industry available with the additional draft are significant. The increased draught allows a container vessel transiting Torres Strait to carry an additional 85 loaded TEUs, or 800 empty TEUs. With an estimated 10% of the world's shipping capacity currently unutilised due to congestion, the ability to enhance operational efficiencies is welcome. Furthermore, the ability to carry more cargo with fewer vessels reduces both the shipping related CO₂ emissions on a per tonne-km basis as well as the risk through these pristine and environmentally sensitive waters.

Trusted to safely optimise thousands of transits annually, DUKC® is the most comprehensive, and extensively validated, UKC management system globally.

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