



PORT
of
TOWNSVILLE

EMAIL | info@townsville-port.com.au
WEBSITE | www.townsville-port.com.au

BENWELL ROAD | PO BOX 1031
TOWNSVILLE | QLD 4810

TELEPHONE | + 61 7 4781 1500
FACSIMILE | + 61 7 4781 1525

LATITUDE 19° 15' S | LONGITUDE 146° 50' E

Media Release

8 March 2006
For immediate release

Townsville Port Authority Saves Magnetic Island Swim

Townsville Port Authority has come to the aid of the annual Magnetic Island to Townsville Swim by donating \$6,000 to the association to run the event.

Until today, the future of the event was tenuous, with fears of collapse and concerns about sponsorships.

The Authority has always been a supporter of the swim and in previous years donated the use of one of its vessels, the *Arthur Titley*, and the time of its employees to tow the swimmers in their cages. The Authority also stores on its land the cages in which the swimmers use to race.

Commenting on the move by the Authority, Ron McLean, Chairman, said "We are very pleased to be able to rescue this event which has been part of the history of Townsville for over fifty years. The Port of Townsville values the significance of this event which receives international acclaim. The funds will be used to ensure the future success of the event."

Mr. Bob James, President of the Townsville Magnetic Island Swim Association, expressed his gratitude for the sponsorship. "The commitment by the Port of Townsville to our swim is both a vote of confidence in Townsville's world-unique community event and the basis for a secure future for the swim and for open-water swimming in North Queensland."

The first swim was conducted in 1954 and has since become famous across Australia and the world. It is a unique event in that it is the only race where swimmers race each other in shark-proof cages towed behind boats. The distance is 8 kilometres from Picnic Bay beach on Magnetic Island to Strand Park beach.

Open water distance swimming is widely-recognised and is now an Olympic Games event.

→ **Note to editor/chief of staff:**

For further information, please contact Lesley McMahon, Public Affairs Officer at the Townsville Port Authority on 4781 1551. Mob: 0400 013 622 or email: lmcmahon@townsville-port.com.au.

→ **Media releases are also available at www.townsville-port.com.au**

ENDS