

The Tiwi Pearl

About the Vessel

- The Tiwi Pearl is a 24.15 m steel fishing vessel built in the mid 1960s at Mobile, Alabama in the United States of America.
- It is 6.64 m in maximum breadth and is around 12 m from the keel to the highest point.
- It has a net/registered tonnage of 96 T and gross tonnage of 157 T.
- There was a fire aboard the vessel leading to its write-off and proposed break up for scrap.
- The Tiwi Pearl provides excellent structure for colonisation by fish and its large size and height attracts many species including bait fish, small tuna and mackerel.

The sinking

- The advice of naval architects was sought to develop a flooding and venting plan so that the vessel could be sunk instead of using explosives.
- All machinery was removed from the vessel.
- 32 T of concrete was pumped into the vessel to compensate for the machinery that was removed.
- Four 100 mm diameter pipes have been welded to the hull, each with a butterfly valve—three placed in the main engine room compartment and one in the freezer compartment.
- The old diesel, fresh water and live bait tanks were filled with sea water (85 T)—sunk by flooding rather than explosives.
- The Tiwi Pearl was attached to a four-point anchor system—two lines forward and two at the back, held in place with 500 kg clump weights, chain and wire rope.
- The four valves were opened manually and took approximately 10 minutes for 350 T of sea water to fill

the compartments and for the vessel to sink.

- The exact location of the wreck was determined using sonar and the GPS positioning. The depth allowed for an 8 m clearance at low tide.
- The exact coordinates of where the Tiwi Pearl is sunk is 27 degrees, 24.532 south and 153 degree, 18.304 east (GDA 94) using GPS mapping datum.

The Harry Atkinson Reef

- The Harry Atkinson Artificial Reef was first established in 1975 when more than 17 000 tyres were deployed over a five year period.
- In 1987, 200 shopping trolleys were placed on the reef. While some of this material is still present and is providing good habitat, some has dispersed or been covered by sand.
- The Harry Atkinson Artificial Reef has been enhanced (and five other artificial reefs constructed) to provide alternative recreational fishing opportunities to partially offset the loss of some areas through the rezoning of the Moreton Bay Marine Park in 2009.
- As the focus of the Moreton Bay Marine Park artificial reef program is to enhance recreational fishing opportunities, diving is not permitted on the Tiwi Pearl.

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For general enquiries contact the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing on 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or visit <www.nprsr.qld.gov.au>.