

DARWIN SHIP LIFT FACILITY

Project Bulletin February 2025



























The Northern Territory Government is delivering the Ship Lift to establish Darwin as a thriving maritime services industry hub.

The Ship Lift will establish Darwin as a key maritime maintenance centre in Northern Australia servicing South East Asia, and capitalising on the Territory's strategic position in the Asia Pacific region.

The Defence industry is a key stakeholder and potential future user of the Ship Lift Facility to support naval operations in Northern Australia.

Below is an update on how the Darwin Harbour Infrastructure Project (DHIP) team is continuing to progress the Darwin Ship Lift Facility project.

Ship Lift activity progress

Activity	 Complete  Underway	Progress	Target completion
Construction of temporary material offloading facility (MOF) completed		100%	December 2024
Cutter suction dredging completed		100%	December 2024
Procurement for heavy lift crane package completed		100%	December 2024
Backhoe dredging with BHD Nulla Nulla started		100%	January 2025
Further quarry material package contract awarded		100%	January 2025
Quarry material stockpiling, land reclamation to build the ship hardstand area and earthworks to level the site to design levels underway from May 2024		Ongoing	Ongoing
Environmental monitoring water sampling underway from August 2024		Ongoing	Ongoing
Detailed design progress		97%	February 2025
Caisson and piling template system assembled on site		80%	February 2025
Backhoe dredging with BHD Nulla Nulla progress		65%	February 2025
Backhoe dredging with BHD Woomera preparation to start		80%	February 2025
Construction of temporary access bunds progress		70%	March 2025
Engage with service providers to disconnect and relocate services		90%	March 2025
Procurement for reinforcing steel, cement and concrete supply, precast stormwater drainage, segmental pavers supply, site storage containers		75%	Q1 2025
Procurement for stainless steel fabrication, pile to drilling services construction, seal and asphalt surfacing, electrical services and materials		40%	Q1 2025
Procurement process by CBJV for remaining long lead items – tubular piles, structural steelwork and precast concrete elements		80%	Q1 2025
Caisson construction to start		0%	Q1 2025
Landside infrastructure construction starts (guard house, office, car park)		0%	Q2 2025
Delivery and preparation of sheet piles progress		50%	Q3 2025
Design ship lift and self-propelled modular transporter (SPMT) systems progress		50%	Q4 2025
Fabricate long lead ship lift and SPMT systems		0%	Q4 2025
Heritage interpretive signage project progress		15%	2026
Gain Defence Qualification for the facility		15%	2026
Operational Ship Lift Facility		10%	2026



Caisson templates arrive on site to start marine construction



Construction of marine infrastructure for the Darwin Ship Lift Facility is set to start with the delivery of two caisson templates. These templates will be used to build the first seawalls for the project.

Caisson templates (*pictured above right*) are purpose-built, circular steel structures designed to be lowered onto the seabed by crane and secured using 4 large piles.

Once in place, long lengths of flat steel sheets known as sheet piles will be lifted by crane into the template. The sheets are driven to a target depth and interlock to form a circular structure with a hollow basin inside, which is then filled with compacted rock (-75mm).

After completing each caisson, the template is carefully removed and repositioned adjacent to the completed caisson to begin the next section of the seawall.



To connect the caissons, an arc template will be used. This template uses the sheet piles to form a hollow basin, which is filled with compacted rock (-75mm), to join the caissons to create a continuous seawall (*example picture above right*).

Caisson construction for the project is expected to start in early 2025.

Below: Progress continues on the ship lift site.



Quick stats

- 44% local workers employed on project
- 471 300 tonnes of quarry rock material delivered to the ship lift site
- 78% of temporary access bund constructed

