



Commonwealth Fact Sheet



UNDERWATER CULTURAL HERITAGE 2018

If your project accesses, interferes with or enters the protected zone around one of the thousands of protected shipwrecks, submerged aircraft or other underwater cultural heritage in Australia, you should obtain approvals in accordance with this Act.

1. What approvals do I need?

Projects that damage or interfere with an historic shipwreck or relic in Australian waters or with a submerged aircraft or associated artefacts in Commonwealth waters requires a permit.

A general search for submerged cultural heritage can be undertaken on the [Australasian Cultural Heritage Database](#).

In addition to the general protection provided to underwater heritage sites, the [Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018](#) also provides that an area containing protected underwater heritage may be declared to be a protected zone. These zones may be established for a number of reasons including conservation, management or public safety considerations. Further information on protected zones is [here](#).

Permits are required to carry out certain activities in a protected zone located around any shipwreck, submerged aircraft or artefact.

2. Who provides approvals?

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, in collaboration with the state and territory governments, regulates activity around shipwrecks and submerged aircraft in jurisdictional waters from the low

water mark out to the limits of the continental shelf through the [Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018](#).

For updates on the implementation of the new [Underwater Cultural Heritage Act 2018](#) visit this [website](#).

3. How do I get Commonwealth approval?

Applications are available on the Agriculture, Water and the Environment [website](#). Further information on environmental planning advice related to underwater cultural heritage is available [here](#).

4. More Information

Commonwealth

The locations of historic shipwrecks, submerged aircraft, protected zones and other underwater cultural heritage are available on the Australasian Underwater Cultural Heritage Database.

For more information, visit the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment [website](#) or phone 02 6274 2116.

Major Projects Facilitation Agency

If you would like assistance to identify the regulatory obligations for your project, please visit our [Online Tool](#) or contact us:

Email: mpfa@industry.gov.au