

## Media Release **No. 497**

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### **TSRA SEA RANGERS TRAINED TO MONITOR CORAL REEF HEALTH**

Sea Rangers from the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) have been trained to play a key role in monitoring the health of thousands of square kilometres of coral reefs in the Torres Strait region.

The TSRA Chairperson, Mr Joseph Elu, has congratulated TSRA staff, including six Rangers, who completed the monitoring training with the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA).

Mr Elu said AIMS staff had been monitoring the health of Torres Strait coral reefs since July 2011 and could now look forward to ongoing support from the TSRA Rangers.

The Rangers worked together with the AIMS team and received training in various coral surveying techniques .

“The Rangers were also shown how to conduct reef health and impact surveys, how to safely snorkel over the reefs and assess reef health to determine the severity and extent of impacts from coral disease and bleaching, crown of thorns starfish and cyclone damage.

“It was an important capacity building exercise helping the TSRA staff including Rangers to learn how to better predict, prepare for and respond to major impacts on Torres Strait coral reefs.”

Mr Elu said the training was an important part of a broader project to establish an early warning system for coral bleaching which included setting up a network of water temperature sensors to record readings.

The TSRA staff who took part in the training included Project Manager Sea, Frank Loban, Natural Resource Management Officer Sea, Ron Fujii and Rangers David Baragud, Iama ; Laura Pearson, Warraber; Troy Stow, Badu; Aaron Ketchell and Amos Sipi, Erub.

The survey was funded through the Australian Government’s National Environmental Research Program Tropical Ecosystems Hub.



Caption: Ranger Supervisor Badu, Troy Stow, marks up an underwater check sheet as part of a Torres Strait reef health survey. (High resolution image available).

**ENDS**

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