



MARITIME ZONES

Border Protection Command is the lead agency for security in Australia's offshore maritime domain, overseeing surveillance and response operations within our maritime zones.

WHAT ARE 'MARITIME ZONES'?

Maritime zones delineate the sovereignty or sovereign rights a coastal state has over the offshore environment. These zones, have been established in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (LOSC), 1982. Those parts of the Convention dealing with the establishment of maritime zones have been incorporated into Australian law by amendments to the Sea and Submerged Lands Act 1973.

WHAT ARE AUSTRALIA'S MARITIME ZONES?

Under the LOSC there are four principle maritime zones. These are:

- ▶ the territorial sea
- ▶ contiguous zone
- ▶ exclusive economic zone
- ▶ the continental shelf.

Each of these zones is measured from the territorial sea baseline. The normal baseline is the low waterline; however there are a number of exceptions to this.

The territorial sea extends to a maximum of 12 nautical miles (nm) from the baseline. In some areas such as the Torres Strait the territorial sea is only three nm. Australia's jurisdiction extends to these areas including the seabed, subsoil and airspace above the territorial seas, subject to the right of 'innocent passage' which enables vessels to transit without interference through the territorial sea of a coastal state. Again this is subject to some exceptions.

Within Australia there is an additional zone known as coastal waters, which extend three nm seaward from the baseline and form part of the territorial sea. Within these waters the States and Northern Territory can exercise jurisdiction, although these waters do not actually form part of the State or Northern Territory.

The contiguous zone extends to a maximum of 24 nm from the territorial

baseline. In this zone, Australia is able to enforce our customs, fiscal, immigration or sanitary laws and regulations.

The exclusive economic zone (EEZ) extends to a maximum of 200 nm. Within the EEZ, Australia has sovereign rights for the purpose of exploring and exploiting, conserving and managing all natural resources of the waters, seabed and its subsoil. It is also permitted to establish and make use of artificial islands, installations and structures, marine research and the protection and preservation of the marine environment. In the waters north of Australia, this zone overlaps with the Australian Fishing Zone (AFZ).

WHAT INTEREST DOES BORDER PROTECTION COMMAND HAVE IN MARITIME ZONES?

Border Protection Command is part of a whole-of-government strategy to manage Australia's maritime zones



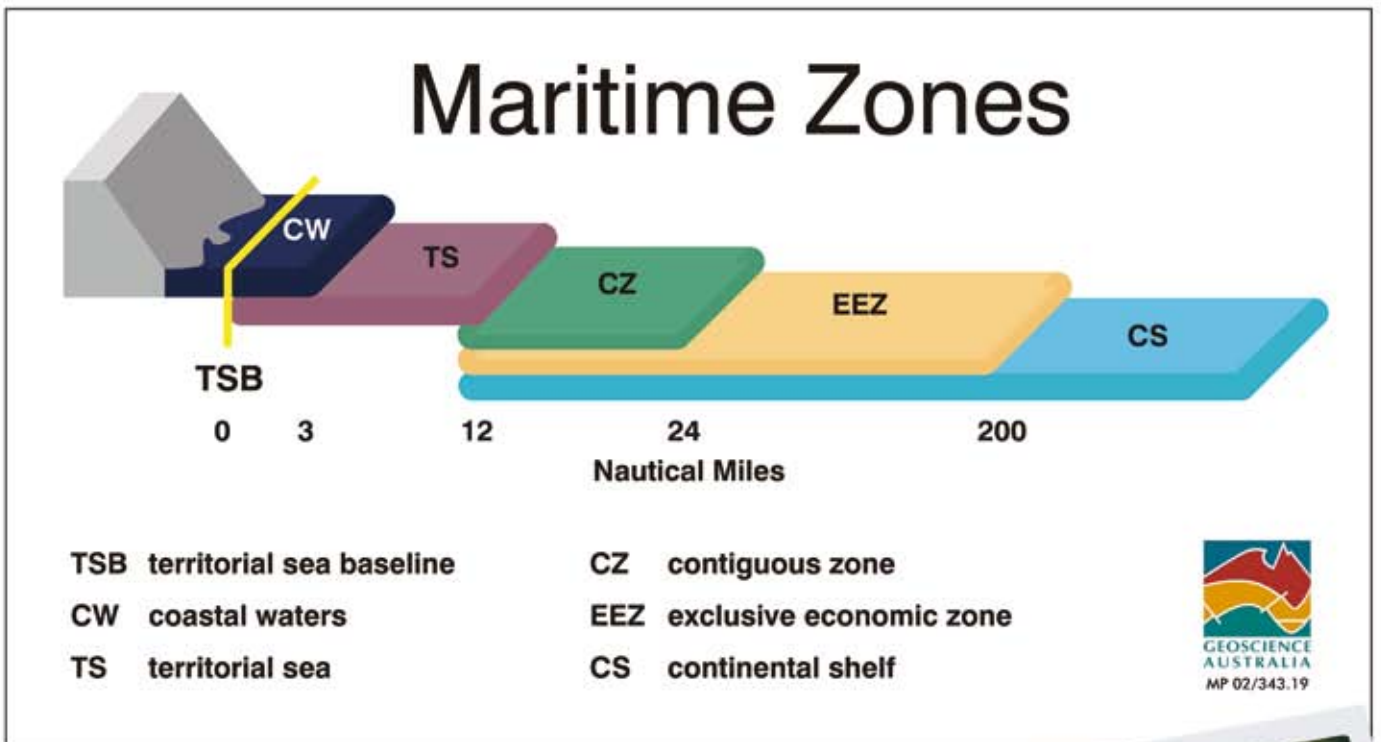
thereby securing Australia's resources and protecting the economic interests of the Australian people.

The protection of natural resources within the AFZ and EEZ is important for the future sustainable development of Australia's offshore environment. This needs to be balanced with the

economic advantage that can be obtained from the careful management of the oceans' natural resources.

Border Protection Command coordinates surveillance and response operations that detect and deter maritime threats within Australia's maritime domain. Border Protection Command

enforces relevant legislation within maritime zones on behalf of principle agencies, including the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS), Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) and the Australian Customs Service (ACS).



Report suspicious border activities to the

CUSTOMS hotline

1800 06 1800

Border Protection Command website: www.bpc.gov.au

Border Protection Command's Headquarters are located at Customs House, 5 Constitution Avenue, Canberra, ACT 2600.

Telephone 1300 558 287.

Border Protection Command has regional offices in Broome, Cairns, Darwin and Thursday Island. They can be contacted on 1300 558 287.

