

Lighthouse records held in Brisbane

During the mid-nineteenth century new ports were being developed along Queensland's north coast, including Mackay in 1860 and Bowen in 1864. To reach these ports ships had to navigate the dangerous waters inside the Great Barrier Reef. At this time Queensland had only one lighthouse – on Moreton Island – which had been built by the New South Wales government in 1857. In 1864 a select committee of the Queensland Legislative Assembly recommended that four lighthouses be built: Cape Byron (on the northern New South Wales coast), Sandy Cape, Cape Capricorn and Bustard Head. The first – at Bustard Head – was completed in 1868. Many Queensland lighthouses were built by 1915 when the Commonwealth government took responsibility for the function.

Record holdings

The National Archives holds records relating to the operation of Queensland lighthouses. Dating from 1854 these include drawings, logbooks and weather reports of individual lighthouses as well as central administration records. Records relating to lightships are also held.

Most of these records are held in Brisbane. You can identify many of them by conducting searches for items using the [RecordSearch](#) database. Samples of the types of records held are listed below.

Lighthouse drawings and plans

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
Light station drawings	1854–1954	J2775
Light station drawings, 'CN' (Central Navaid) prefix	1860–	A10182
Light station drawings, 'SN' (South Australia/Northern Territory) prefix	1890–1990	J3013
Light station drawings, 'QN' (Queensland Navaid) prefix	1914–	J2776
Original tracings, architectural drawings	1942–59	J153
Plans of works	1878–1971	BP227/1
Plans	1950–72	BP374/1

General administrative and staffing records

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Property correspondence files</u>	1902–98	J56
<u>Correspondence files relating to marine navigation (includes staff matters)</u>	1915–60	BP250/1
<u>Correspondence files relating to marine services</u>	1915–61	J2826
<u>Correspondence files relating to shipping, maritime incidents, coastal navigation, wreck and salvage, and lighthouse facilities</u>	1935–95	J317
<u>Personal history files</u>	1927–92	J1170
<u>Personal history cards</u>	1927–90	J1139
<u>Monthly return of watches kept and duties performed</u>	1952–71	BP283/1

Examples of records on particular Queensland lighthouses

Booby Island

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1934–60	BP306/5
<u>Light station visitors books</u>	1976–92	J2524

Bustard Head

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1962–86	J1135
<u>Light station log books</u>	1935–62	BP306/6
<u>Light station visitors books</u>	1961–86	J1132
<u>Register of equipment</u>	1915–53	BP306/17
<u>Light station daily shipping logs</u>	1954–61	BP306/2

Cape Cleveland

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1935–61	BP306/7
<u>Light station log books</u>	1971–87	J2513

Cape Moreton

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1959–66	BP306/8
<u>Light station log books</u>	1966–91	J2514
<u>Light station visitors books</u>	1973–87	J2873

Dent Island

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1935–66	BP306/9
<u>Light station log books</u>	1970–87	J2518
<u>Light station daily shipping logs</u>	1952–58	BP306/4

Double Island Point

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1936–65	BP306/10
<u>Light station log books</u>	1965–90	J2515

Lady Elliott Island

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1936–59	BP306/12
<u>Light station log books</u>	1971–88	J2519

Sandy Cape

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Light station log books</u>	1936–67	BP306/16
<u>Light station log books</u>	1971–90	J2522

Other holdings of records about lighthouses

Records about Queensland lighthouses in the period before Federation are also held by [Queensland State Archives](#).

For information about records on other Australian lighthouses held by the National Archives, see:

- *Fact sheet 122 - Lighthouse records held in Hobart*
- *Fact sheet 259 - South Australian lighthouse records*