

3. Movement Notification and Traffic Procedures

3.1 General

Maritime Safety Queensland, through the authority of the RHM, has jurisdiction over the safe movement of all shipping within the VTS and pilotage areas.

The scheduling of ship movements is initiated by the agent or representative submitting movement details for a vessel to Mackay VTS via the QSHIPS ship planning program in accordance with this section.

Pilotage Services accepts notification of movements via the QSHIPS system. Pilotage Services requires 24 hours advance notice for all arrivals, departures and removals.

All vessels, whether commercial or recreational, are to maintain a listening watch on VHF 16 and if equipped on VHF 10, whilst within the Mackay VTS area.

3.2 Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

VTS is the principal tool by which the RHM manages the safe and efficient movement of vessel traffic approaching, departing and operating within the Mackay VTS area.

This service is provided by Maritime Safety Queensland on a 24 hour, seven days a week rotating roster and operates within for the declared Mackay VTS area, Mackay Compulsory Pilotage area and the Port of Mackay Limits. The VTS will operate under the callsign "Mackay VTS" and provides this service in accordance with [IMO Resolution A.1158\(32\)](#).

VTS is delivered from the VTS centre at Hay Point and is manned by trained and qualified VTSOs under the management of the MVTSS and the RHM.

The VTS centre is referred to as Mackay VTS. Contact details are listed under [3.5 Shipping Management Contact Details](#).

The purpose of VTS is to contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and the protection of the environment within the VTS area by mitigating the development of unsafe situations through:

The provision of timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's movements and assist on-board decision making,

The monitoring and management of ship traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements,

Responding to developing unsafe situations.

In discharging this role, VTS will, within the declared VTS area provide a vessel traffic service that includes:

Timely Information

Mackay VTS will, transmit essential and timely information to assist in the on-board decision-making process, which may include, position, identity and intentions of other traffic, hazards and other factors which may affect a vessels transit.

Monitoring and management of ship traffic

Mackay VTS will plan vessel movements to prevent congestion and provide for safe and efficient movement of traffic. The VTS will identify and manage potentially dangerous traffic

situations and provide essential and timely information to assist the on-board decision-making process and may advise, instruct, or exercise the authority to direct movements.

Responding to developing unsafe situations

Mackay VTS may provide navigational support to an individual vessel, at the request of the vessel or when deemed necessary by the VTS, to assist the decision-making process on board the vessel concerned. This service consists of navigational matters relating to a specific vessel and may include information, warning, advice and instruction subject to the authority of the VTS. There may be occasions where Mackay VTS will be unable to provide navigational assistance and the requesting vessel will be advised of this information.

3.3 VTS Area

Mackay VTS will interact with inbound shipping two hours prior to arrival at the outer boundary of the Mackay VTS Area.

Mackay VTS Area

The Mackay VTS Area follows the established Pilotage area and port limits of the Port of Mackay. Adjacent to the Mackay VTS Area is the Hay Point VTS Area which is administered by the same VTS Centre. A map of Mackay Port VTS area is available in [16.4](#).

Mackay VTS Area

The Mackay VTS area is the area of the waters bounded by an imaginary line drawn. A map of Mackay VTS area is also available in section [16.4](#).

- starting at the high–water mark at the southern extremity of the north head of Bakers Creek entrance.
- then generally north-easterly to latitude 21° 10.760' south, longitude 149° 17.730' east,
- then generally north-easterly to latitude 21° 09.910' south, longitude 149° 20.060' east,
- then east along the parallel to latitude 21° 09.910' south, longitude 149° 22.060' east,
- then north along to latitude 21° 02.963' south, longitude 149° 22.060' east,
- then east northeast to Bailey Islet,
- then east along the parallel to 21° 01.850'south, longitude 149° 50'000 east,
- then southeast to latitude 21° 06.580' south, longitude 149° 55.000' east,
- then south to latitude 21° 20.000' south to longitude 149° 55.000' east,
- then west to the high-water mark on the mainland at 21° 20.00' south, longitude 149° 17.918' east,
- then generally in a northerly direction following the shoreline back to the starting point encompassing all navigable water ways of rivers and creeks.

3.4 VTS Role

MSQ provides VTS as a traffic organisation service in accordance with IMO guidelines.

Mackay VTS will:

- wherever possible interact with vessel traffic by VHF radio.

- interact with port services in Mackay.
- inform participating vessels of current traffic and safety information pertaining to the pilotage area.
- where necessary communicate the directions of the RHM (Mackay) or delegate.
- monitor compliance with the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) and [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#).
- record the details of shipping movements in the QSHIPS programme in real time.
- maintain a situational awareness of traffic in the pilotage area to the extent of the available information; and
- participate in emergency procedures.

3.4.1 Language

The English language is to be used in all communication. [IMO's Standard Marine Communication Phrases \(SMCP\) 2001](#) will be used.

3.4.2 Voice Recordings

All voice communications with the VTS centre and all radio communications on the channels monitored, are recorded against a date and time stamp. Access to the recordings is controlled by the RHM.

The VTS centre records external communications. For example: 'All voice communications with the VTS Centre and all radio communications on the channels monitored are recorded against a date and time stamp.

3.4.3 Distress and Emergency

Mackay VTS is not a coast radio station. Maritime Safety Queensland, Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) and the Australian Coastguard have an agreement that the VTS will monitor channels 16 and 67 when VMR is not operational for emergency and distress calls only. A distress call should, in the ordinary course of events, be referred to VMR 448 Mackay.

Any marine incident, for example a collision, grounding or fire, occurring within the port should be immediately reported to Mackay /Hay Point VTS on:

VHF radio: channel 10 or 16

Phone: 1300 645 022

3.4.4 VTS Communications

Ships are not to move within the pilotage area unless satisfactory two-way communications are maintained with the VTS centre.

Ships are required to establish two-way radio communications with the VTS centre on VHF channels 10 or 16. The designated port VHF channel is to be used for the communication of all routine operational and safety information.

The VHF channels used in the port are:

Table 3 Port VHF communications

Mackay vessel traffic services (VTS)		
VTS area	Yes	
Level of VTS Service	IALA level IV: Traffic Organisation Service	
	Call sign	Service
VHF channel 16	User	Emergency and initial calling
VHF channel 10	Mackay VTS	Mandatory reporting, vessel traffic management, port working
VHF channel 13	User	Pilots and tugs
VHF channel 6	Mackay Operations	Port working (NQBP)
VHF channel 74	Mackay Marina	Marina working
VHF channel 11	Reef VTS (Townsville)	Coastal ship reporting system

The VTS centre has telephone and email services for administrative and emergency purposes. Any marine incident, for example a collision, grounding or fire, and pollution occurring within the port should be reported immediately to Mackay VTS on **VHF channel 10**.

3.5 Shipping management contact details

VTS centre

Phone: 1300 645 022

Email: vtshaypoint@msq.qld.gov.au

RHM

Phone: +61 7 4944 3700

Email: RHMMackay@tmr.qld.gov.au

North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Limited –

General Enquires

Phone: +61 7 4969 0700

Email: info@nqbp.com.au

Port Operations

Phone: +61 7 4955 8147 or +61 417 761086

Email: portoperations@nqbp.com.au

3.6 Prior Notification of Movements

Sections 168 to 169 of the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016* require that all ship movements for vessels 35 metres in length or more are reported according to the following table:

Table 4 Pre-entry notification times

Action	Minimum notice	Approved form
Prior notification of movement in pilotage area (35m-50m)	24 hours prior to entry	Notification to VTS via phone or VHF.
	2 hours prior to removal or departure	
Prior notification of movement in pilotage area (50m or greater)	48 Hours prior to entry	Notification via QSHIPS/VTS Pre-arrival form
	24 hours prior to removal or departure	
Transport of dangerous goods in pilotage area	48 hours prior to entry	Dangerous cargo report
	3 hours prior to departure	
Loading, removal or handling of dangerous cargo alongside (includes bunkering)	24 hours prior to handling	Dangerous cargo report
Ship-to-ship transfer of dangerous cargo	24 hours prior to cargo transfer	Dangerous cargo report
Gas-free status (bulk liquid cargo ships)	48 hours prior to entry, departure or removal	Declaration by master if vessel is gas-free for movement purposes.

3.7 QSHIPS (Queensland Shipping Information Planning System)

The movement of all vessels of LOA 35 metres or more arriving at Mackay is recorded in an internet-based programme known as [QSHIPS](#).

The programme is operated from the VTS centre; shipping agents submit booking information on line in accordance with the reporting requirements and record their

requisitions for tugs, pilot and linesmen. The ancillary services respond online to acknowledge the booking and allocate their resources; the movement then assumes the confirmed status. Work notifications should be submitted online and to the respective agencies if required ([10 Work notifications](#)).

Since the programme is live, port service providers, agents, government agencies and the general community are able to view scheduled movements in any Queensland port in real time.

3.7.1 Booking a Vessel Movement

When an agent is advised by his principals that a ship is bound for Mackay then that agent should book-in the ship via the QSHIPS programme at least 48 hours prior to the movement as required under [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulations 2016](#) section 169. Request for the supply of a pilot and tugs should also be made via QSHIPS.

The use of the QSHIPS programme is mandatory for notification of the impending arrival and subsequent movements of a vessel unless exceptional circumstances preclude this. If an agent is unable to submit a booking by QSHIPS the [Pre-arrival form](#) must be emailed to the VTS centre.

Details of any removal movement and departure information are to be submitted at least 24 hours prior to the start time in a similar manner to the above.

Request for the supply of a pilot and tugs shall also be made via QSHIPS. The Pre-arrival form must be uploaded to QSHIPS.

Arrival advice should be confirmed to the VTS centre 24 hours prior to the start of the movement.

This section applies to all ships entering the Mackay pilotage area that are of LOA 35 metres and greater and all [vessels that require a pilot](#) including those ships whose master holds a pilotage exemption certificate for the Mackay pilotage area.

3.8 Reporting Defects

AMSA requires notification of any deficiencies or suspected deficiencies on ships visiting Australian ports. Deficiencies are to be reported to VTS via QSHIPS and to AMSA using [Form AMSA 355 – Defects Report](#) (report of suspected non-compliance with Navigation Act or safety/pollution conventions).

3.9 Pilotage delays and cancellations

The following will apply to all piloted vessels when arriving, departing or being removed within the Mackay pilotage area:

Delay fees will apply if a vessel departs after the programmed or booked departure time:

If the pilotage service for the vessel is delayed for longer than 30 minutes but not longer than 1 hour a single fee unit will be charged as per Schedule 6 Part 2 Div 3.

If the pilotage service for the vessel is delayed for longer than 1 hour but not longer than 2 hours than two fee units will be charged as per Schedule 6 Part 2 Div 3.

If the delay exceeds two hours, then pilotage is deemed to have been cancelled and a full cancellation fee applies as per Schedule 6 Part 2 Div 2. When a cancellation fee is applied then the hourly delay fees are not applicable.

A delay exceeding two hours may necessitate a rescheduling of the ship.

A delay fee will not be charged if the cause of the delay is:

Weather affecting a ship's ability to be safely navigated.

When the ship is ready to commence the movement, however, is unable to because to do so would be unsafe (for example, where there is port congestion; or the required port services are unavailable).

Equipment and mechanical failures will constitute a delay and attract a delay fee or cancellation fee as described above.

In determining the delay time, the following criteria will be used:

Inbound – delay fees will be incurred if the pilot boards a vessel more than 30 minutes after the programmed estimated time of arrival of the vessel at the pilot boarding place or the agreed boarding place.

Outbound or removal – delay fees will be incurred if the vessel departs the berth or anchorage more than 30 minutes after the programmed estimated time of departure. The actual time of departure will be taken as 'last line' or 'anchor aweigh' as these times are recorded in QSHIPS and are the acknowledged and accepted time of departure.

MSQ will not enter into any debate on responsibility for delays and cancellations.

Agents would be aware that some vessels take longer to let go all lines and this fact should be taken into consideration when nominating sailing times.

Full details of the regulations and fees are contained in Schedule 6 Part 2 Division 3 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#).

3.10 Tug and Tow — Requirements

Tug and unpowered tow combinations are classified as a 'small ship' as detailed in section 163(1)(b) of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#).

- Length of tow is considered the combined length of all vessels and does not include workboats assisting with the manoeuvre.

3.10.1 Operational Conditions

All tugs and tows, ocean going or coastal, will be handled in the port of Mackay under the following conditions:

- Daylight hours only. If night boardings required safety analysis to be conducted to the satisfaction of RHM and Manager Pilotage Services.
- All tugs and tows, of 50m or greater as per definition in 3.10, will be required to engage a licensed pilot ([8 Pilotage](#)) 48 hours in advance.
- All tug and tows, of 100m or greater as per definition in 3.10, will be required to enter at slack water.
- Any tow greater than 250 metres that is a multi-unit tow, will require to be either split prior to transit or require the assistance of an accompanying harbour tug for the full passage, and
- Master to confirm with VTS tow line and ship/barge fixed equipment is in survey, in good condition and suitable for port of entry. Workboats should be fit for purpose and manned by a trained competent operator and to be preapproved by the RHM.

Any tow that is in a damaged condition will not be granted entry into the Mackay pilotage area until the RHM is satisfied that the vessel/s does not pose a threat to the marine environment or a hazard to navigation in the port.

Note: a vessel or barge pushed ahead by a tug or lashed and secured alongside is deemed a tug and tow when entering or exiting the harbour. In addition, this combination may be required to be allocated tugs ([9 Tug Procedures](#)).

3.10.2 Notification

For any tug and tow movements within the port of Mackay, notification to VTS via QSHIPS is required. A visit for the towing vessel will need to be created in QSHIPS and then the details of the tow added by using the 'add convoy' tab.

If an agent is unable to submit a booking by QSHIPS, the agent must complete the [VTS Tug and Tow Booking Request form](#).

All tows and combined units shall be deemed to be hampered vessels and subject to varying scheduling arrangements.

3.11 Movement Scheduling

3.11.1 Confirmation of Schedules

On receipt of a movement booking Mackay VTS will cross check tug and pilot bookings and other movements whilst verifying draft restricted vessels and non-gas free requirements when putting the schedule together.

3.11.2 Schedule Changes

Maritime Safety Queensland may make changes to the approved schedule of ship movements up to two hours prior to the commencement of the movement in order to ensure the safe and most efficient movement of shipping.

Changes requested by the master/agent to scheduled movements must be made via QSHIPS greater than 24 hours prior to scheduled time. Changes inside 24 hours are via a phone call to VTS. It is the responsibility of the agent to ensure the QSHIPS booking remains up to date.

3.12 Prioritising of Ship Movements

The principle of "first come, first served" applies to all ships requesting to enter the port of Mackay.

Due to slack water constraints for entering the harbour, arrivals will generally have priority over departures however VTSO's may schedule differently in the interest of safety or port efficiency.

The Port Authority determines priority for the use of facilities at the Port of Mackay. Order of priority details can be found in the [Port of Mackay Operations Manual](#).

3.12.1 Deep draft vessels

Where a ship is at maximum draft or restricted thereby to a narrow tidal/time window it will usually be given first priority. Advice on draft restrictions can be obtained from the VTS centre.

3.13 Movement Clearance Information

All ships **require a clearance** from the VTS centre in order to enter, depart or move within the pilotage area. It is the responsibility of the master or pilot to contact the VTS centre to obtain the necessary clearance and information prior to the movement.

3.13.1 Clearance for externals/arrivals

The master is to report to Mackay VTS to obtain clearance and arrival information two hours before the estimated time of arrival at the pilotage area.

3.13.2 Clearance for removals

The master is to report to Mackay VTS to obtain a clearance and removal information prior to commencement of the movement within the pilotage area.

3.13.3 Clearance for departures

The ship should be ready for departure, with all documentation completed and marine services in attendance not less than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time. Lines are not to be released until clearance has been obtained to depart the berth. Lines are not to be slacked down and let go unless instructed by the master or pilot. The master is to seek approval from the terminal and VTS for the engine to be tested, 30-60 minutes prior to departure as per section 10.1.4

The master or pilot is to obtain VTS clearance prior to schedule departure time. Ships at anchor prior to departure from the pilotage area require clearance before departure from anchorage to continue, which is to be obtained two hours before the estimated time of departure from the anchorage area.

If there are any issues identified during engine testing, the terminal and VTS must be notified immediately.

3.14 Anchoring

Ships are only to anchor in the area designated by Mackay VTS. Upon anchoring, ships are to advise Mackay VTS of their anchoring time. Ships at anchor in the pilotage area are to maintain a continuous listening watch on VHF channel 16, 10 and any other channel as instructed. Ships are not permitted to immobilise engines without the written approval of the RHM ([10.1.1 Immobilisation main engines](#)) and are to report to VTS if dragging their anchor.

Vessels are to advise VTS **prior to any change** to draft so as VTS can assess UKC safety margins for the anchorage.

3.15 Reporting Requirements

3.15.1 Arrivals

The master of a ship entering the pilotage area must report to 'Mackay VTS by VHF radio according to the following table:

Exempt masters must obtain clearance from Mackay VTS before proceeding past the pilot boarding place. Exempt masters must report to Mackay VTS the time of first line and the time that they are secured alongside the berth.

Table 5 Inbound Reporting Requirements

	Report	Information to report
1	Ship master to Mackay VTS Two hours prior to entry into the VTS Area	Ship's name, position, fore and aft draft, changes to ship details, defects, estimated time of arrival to port limits. Any further information requested by VTS as required.
2	Ship master to Mackay VTS Arrival at VTS Limits	Ship's name and time of arrival at VTS limits,
3	Ship master to Mackay VTS On anchoring	Ship's name, anchorage position and time of anchoring
4	Ship master to Mackay VTS Heaving Anchor	Ship's name and heaving anchor time
5	Ship master to Mackay VTS Departing anchorage	Ship's name and anchor aweigh time
6	Mackay VTS to Ship master Pilot Boarding Instruction	Time of boarding and transfer method, confirmation of berthing drafts and propeller immersion
7	Pilot to Mackay VTS	Ship's name, pilot onboard time, defects, drafts, berth & side to, permission to proceed, request traffic information
8	Mackay VTS All Ships call When pilot is safely aboard	Ship's name, intentions and arrival berth
9	Pilot to Mackay VTS When secure in berth	Ships name, first line time, and pilot disembark time. Changes to ship details

Mackay VTS are to broadcast on VHF channel 16 and all ships call for the arriving vessel at half distance between the pilot boarding place and Mackay Harbour entrance.

3.15.2 Removals and Departures

The master of a ship that is departing, moving or about to depart or move within the pilotage area must report to Mackay VTS by radio according to the following table.

Table 6 Outbound reporting requirements

	Report	Information to report
1	Ship master/pilot to Mackay VTS Ship ready to depart (5 to 15 minutes prior to estimated time of departure)	Ship's name, radio check, destination port/anchorage, departure drafts, permission to proceed, traffic information
2	Ship master to Mackay VTS Unassisted removal along the berth	Ship's name, time of commencement of movement Ship's name, time of completion of movement
3	Mackay VTS All Ships call Upon release of last line	Ship's name, departure berth and ships intentions
4	Pilot to Mackay VTS Shortly after departure, before pilot disembark	Ship's name, last line time and request for traffic information
5	Ship master to Mackay VTS Departing anchorage Mackay VTS	Ship's name, anchor aweigh time, destination and request for traffic information

Mackay VTS are to broadcast on VHF channel 16 an all ships call for the departing vessel at last lines.