

10. Work permits

10.1 General

A permit to undertake certain work on ships alongside a berth in the Port of Townsville or at anchorage is required.

Masters, owners or their agents must seek approval from the appropriate authority before that work may proceed.

Applications to the Regional Harbour Master may be submitted via QSHIPS or by Email

Applications to other authorities may be submitted by fax or email .

Please refer to the table for guidance on various types of permits.

Permit	Who	To	When	Comments
Immobilisation	All ships	RHM / VTS	Prior to event	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS) via QSHIPS or email
Immobilisation at anchor	All ships	RHM / VTS	48 hours prior.	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS) via QSHIPS
Hot work alongside in port or at anchorage	All ships	Port of Townsville Limited	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Port of Townsville Limited with final approval by RHM required
Diving operations at anchorage	All ships	RHM / VTS	Prior to event	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS) via QSHIPS or email
Diving operations at berth	All ships	Port of Townsville Limited	Prior to event	Lodged to Port of Townsville Limited with final approval by RHM required
Hot work alongside in port or at anchorage	All ships	Port of Townsville Limited	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Port of Townsville Limited with final approval by RHM required
Life boat drill	All ships	RHM & Australian Border Force	Prior to event	Lodged to Customs (Australian Border Force) and VTS
Engine trials Alongside	All ships	Port of Townsville Limited	Prior to event 48 hours prior to undertaking trials	Lodged to Port of Townsville Limited
Tankers at non-tanker berths	All tankers	RHM & Port of Townsville Limited	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master and Port of Townsville Limited. Must be certified as 'gasfree' by an independent chemist on approved 16.18 Example – Chemist's Certificate of Compliance

Gas free declaration	All tankers	RHM	48 hours prior to arrival	Declared by master on approved form – lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS)
Alongside Berth Overside work (Painting, hull cleaning)	All ships	Port of Townsville Limited	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Port of Townsville Limited
Loading or discharging cargo units >50mt	Heavylifts using ships gear (cargo >50mt)	RHM / VTS	72 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS) via QSHIPS or email; Stability calculation during discharge; Procedure; etc
Loading or discharging cargo units >100 mt	Cargo>100 mt	RHM / VTS	96 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Regional Harbour Master (VTS) via QSHIPS or email; Stability calculation during discharge; Procedure; etc

Table 23 – Permit requests

10.1.1 Immobilisation main engines whilst alongside

Ships intending to be immobilised must apply for permission from the Regional Harbour Master in the prescribed form ([16.14 Request to immobilise Main Engines in port](#)), during normal business hours.

During cyclone season (November to April), permission may not be given for more than 24 hours.

Outside of cyclone season April to November permission may not be given for more than 48 hours

A risk of main engine failure exists after immobilisation. All vessels which have been immobilised are required to have tug support for departure berth.

10.1.2 Immobilisation main engines whilst at anchorage

Ships intending to immobilise main engine/s to undertake routine maintenance at Townsville Anchorage must apply for permission from the Regional Harbour Master in the prescribed form ([16.15 Request to immobilise Main Engines at Anchorage](#)). Any such request must be entered into QShips by the agent at least two standard working days prior to the intended works, such entry to also include any sea trial movement that may be required

During cyclone season (November to April), permission may not be given for more than 24 hours.

Outside of cyclone season April to November permission may not be given for more than 48 hours.

Vessels conducting maintenance work which impacts the ability to provide the entire range of engine manoeuvring speeds or engine response may require to undertake a running in navigation trip to ensure it can deliver entire range of engine manoeuvring speeds for the pilotage passage.

10.1.3 Diving /Under water operations – at anchorage

Ships wishing to carry out diving underwater operations (underwater inspection, underwater repairs, and so on) at anchorage must:

- Lodge an application in writing with VTS Townsville stating the reason for the operations.
- If the operations involve repairs to hull and or valves/pipes within the vessels requiring the plugging of ship side openings, – Master should provide complete details of the work to be carried out including (but not limited to):
 - 1) Details of the repairs to be conducted
 - 2) Depth below the water line of the pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired
 - 3) Diameter of the pipes on which the repairs will be undertaken
 - 4) Pipeline drawing showing & highlighting
 - i) sea chest to be plugged
 - ii) pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired
 - iii) Valve(s) between the sea chest & the pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired – that can be closed off as a safety precaution in case the plug blows out – both suction and discharge side.
 - iv) Emergency Bilge pumping arrangement
 - v) Capacity to transfer & hold any water ingress on board.
 - vi) Type of plug to be used and method to confirm plugs are holding, monitoring of sealing and confirmation spare plugs standby
 - 5) Risk assessment specific to this particular task

RHM will assess the request and advice conditions to ensure the task is conducted safely. Masters must comply with all the requirements of the permit.

10.1.4 Diving /Under water operations permit – alongside

Ships wishing to carry out diving underwater operations (underwater inspection, underwater repairs, and so on) alongside a berth in port must:

- Lodge an application in writing with Port of Townsville stating the reason for the operations.
- If the operations involve repairs to hull and or valves/pipes within the vessels requiring the plugging of ship side openings, – Master should provide complete details of the work to be carried out including (but not limited to):
 - 1) Details of the repairs to be conducted
 - 2) Depth below the water line of the pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired
 - 3) Diameter of the pipes on which the repairs will be undertaken
 - 4) Pipeline drawing showing & highlighting
 - i) sea chest to be plugged
 - ii) pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired

- iii) Valve(s) between the sea chest & the pipeline section(s) or Valve(s) to be replaced or repaired – that can be closed off as a safety precaution in case the plug blows out – both suction and discharge side.
 - iv) Emergency Bilge pumping arrangement
 - v) Capacity to transfer & hold any water ingress on board.
 - vi) Type of plug to be used and method to confirm plugs are holding, monitoring of sealing and confirmation spare plugs standby
- 5) Risk assessment specific to this particular task

Port of Townsville and RHM will assess the request and advice conditions to ensure the task is conducted safely. Masters must comply with all the conditions and requirements of the permit.

10.1.5 Hot work permit

Ships wishing to carry out repairs and any form of metal work, which includes performing hot work either at berth or anchorage, must:

- Lodge an application in writing with Port of Townsville Limited. When final approval is granted by RHM, masters must comply with all the conditions and requirements of the permit; and
- Masters are required to advise Townsville VTS on VHF channel 12 when such hot work will commence and again when all work has been completed.

10.1.6 Life boat drills

Ships wishing to carry out life boat drills or put boats in the water for painting or maintenance purposes must first obtain clearance from Customs (Australian Border Force).

Masters are required to advise Townsville VTS on VHF channel 12 prior to launching and again after recovery of the lifeboat.

10.1.7 Engine trials

Masters of vessels will contact Marine Services to seek permission to test engines.

Marine Services will verify and confirm that:

- a) any diving/underwater activity in progress in the vicinity of the vessel has ceased, divers/personal if any are out of the water and it's safe to test engines; and
- b) confirm with the master that he has observed all precautions including but not limited to safety items 2 to 6 in emergency procedures prior to granting permission to test engines.

10.1.8 Notification of handling of bulk liquids

Under the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995* Maritime Safety Queensland is both the statutory and combat agency for response to all ship-sourced oil spills. It is therefore a requirement under section 63 of the act for owners/agents or masters of vessels to notify the Regional Harbour Master of the intention to load/unload or transfer any form of bulk liquids to, from or between vessels between the hours of sunset and sunrise. Such notification is required on the approved form which is a section of the dangerous goods notification available from the Port of Townsville website – www.townsville-port.com.au/operations-

[trade/operations/permits-forms/](#) and is to be lodged with the Regional Harbour Master and Port of Townsville Limited.

For the purposes of this notification it would be deemed that the liquids will be transferred by pipeline to, from or between vessels.

The operations of bunkering and the pumping of sewage or sludge from vessels, by road, barge or ship transfer, are to be submitted to the Port of Townsville on the 'transfer of non-cargo liquid transfer notification' form.

Masters of vessels conducting bulk liquid transfers, as specified above, are required to notify Marine Services on VHF channel 12 of the time of commencement of such transfer/bunkering operation and again the time when the operation is completed as per the checklist.

10.1.9 Gas-free status and OBO's

A tanker or products carrier will be regarded as non-gas free unless a gas free declaration has been received at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

The [declaration](#) must include the following:

- Whether the ship is carrying any IMDG Class 3 cargo (flammable liquid or gas cargo on board in bulk);
- Empty cargo tanks have been washed, vented and are free of hazardous residues;
- The atmosphere in each cargo tank or residue space has been tested with an explosive meter and a zero reading has been obtained;
- Slop tanks and pump rooms are free of hazardous residues;
- An explosive gas detector meter is held on board and calibrated correctly;
- A current copy of the ISGOTT Manual is held on board; and
- Maintain a zero gas reading for the atmosphere in each pump room, cargo tank or residue space.

The declaration should be forwarded to the Regional Harbour Master and Port of Townsville Limited. Once the above requirements have been satisfied the Harbour Master shall determine the ship's gas-free status for movement purposes and forward written confirmation to the agent and Port of Townsville Limited as appropriate.

A combination carrier (OBO) that has carried a bulk liquid dangerous cargo on one or more of its last three voyages must not be loaded with bulk solid cargo in a pilotage area unless an approved chemist has tested the vessel and issued a safety certificate in an approved form.

10.1.10 Overside maintenance work alongside

For environmental reasons, the Port of Townsville Limited has strict guidelines on the performance of oversight maintenance work on ships within the port limits. Ships wishing to undertake oversight maintenance work must:

- Comply with the conditions spelt out in the [Port of Townsville Limited Port Notice – oversight maintenance](#); and
- Lodge a request with the Port of Townsville Limited for permission to undertake oversight work. When granted, masters must comply with the conditions of the permit.

10.1.11 Oversight maintenance work at anchor

For any oversight maintenance work when the vessel is at anchor and outside the Port limits, a permit is required if the work is in GBRMPA areas, then a processing fee and an application assessment timeframe of 16 weeks would be applicable.

The use of permits helps the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) ensure the conservation and sustainable use of the Great Barrier Reef's state and Commonwealth Marine Parks.

More information on GBRMPA [Permits](#) and [Permit Application Assessment Fees](#) are available from their website.