

1. Introduction

1.1 General

Welcome to the Port of Townsville, the principal port of north Queensland.

Shipping legislation in Queensland is controlled by Maritime Safety Queensland, a state government agency attached to Department of Transport and Main Road

The state of Queensland is divided up into five regions, controlled by Regional Harbour Masters. All officers of Maritime Safety Queensland report to the general manager and under the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#), are responsible for:

- improving maritime safety for shipping and small craft through regulation and education;
- minimising vessel sourced waste and providing response to marine pollution;
- providing essential maritime services such as port pilots and aids to navigation; and
- encouraging and supporting innovation in the maritime industry.

The limit of Queensland coastal waters is defined by a line three nautical miles seaward of the territorial sea baseline. The arrangements outlined in these procedures apply to the geographical areas gazetted as pilotage areas in Queensland. Pilotage areas have been gazetted around designated ports and maritime areas to ensure the safe and efficient movement of shipping. These areas encompass the approaches, main shipping channels and waters of the port.

Collectively, the Regional Harbour Master and the Port of Townsville Limited have responsibility for managing the safe and efficient operation of the port. All vessel movements are to be coordinated through Townsville VTS.

1.2 Port description

Townsville is the principal port in north Queensland. Located 1,360 kilometres north of Brisbane this multi cargo port currently has eight operational berths servicing a large area including the mining community at Mount Isa.

Commodities handled in Townsville include motor vehicles, containers, sugar, general and project cargo, cement, sulphuric acid, fertiliser, copper, nickel, lead, zinc, petroleum products, gas, timber, fertiliser, cattle, refrigerated meat, magnetite and molasses.

Townsville is also a regular port of call for cruise ships and naval vessels.

1.3 Purpose

This document defines the standard procedures to be followed in the pilotage area of the Port of Townsville – it contains information and guidelines to assist ship's masters, owners, and agents of vessels arriving at and traversing the area and it provides details of the services and the regulations and procedures to be observed.

Nothing in this publication is intended to relieve any vessel, owner, operator, charterer, master, or person directing the movement of a vessel, from the consequences of any failure to comply with any applicable law or regulation or of any neglect of precaution which may be required by the ordinary practice of seamanship, or by the special circumstances of the case.

Information contained in this publication is based on information available as at the latest date indicated on the document control sheet at the start of this publication. Although every care has been taken to ensure that this information is correct, no warranty, expressed or implied, is

given in regard to the accuracy of all printed contents. The publisher shall not be responsible for any loss or damage resulting from or caused by any inaccuracy produced herein.

Information on external agencies (customs, quarantine, port authority rules, REEFREP and so on) is provided as an example only. Readers are strongly recommended to consult their respective web sites for current information

The latest version of this publication is available on the [Maritime Safety Queensland website](#).

Any significant updates to the content of these procedures will be promulgated on this site. The [Port of Townsville](#) website should be consulted for the latest information on port rules and notices.

Should errors or omissions in this publication be noted, it would be appreciated if advice of these could be forwarded to:

The Regional Harbour Master (Townsville)

Maritime Safety Queensland

Postal address: GPO Box 1921, Townsville Queensland 4810

Phone: +61 7 4421 8100

Email: RHMtownsville@msq.qld.gov.au

1.4 Datum

All water depths refer to the lowest astronomical tide height (LAT). All positions in this manual are in WGS84.

All directions are referenced to true north.

1.5 Definitions

1.5.1 Australian Maritime Safety Authority – AMSA

[The Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#) is the Commonwealth authority charged with enhancing efficiency in the delivery of safety and other services to the Australian maritime industry.

1.5.2 The Australian Ship Reporting System – MASTREP

The Australian Ship Reporting System established under Section 7 of AMSA Marine Order 63

1.5.3 Australian Standard – AS 3846 – 2005

AS 3846 defines the requirements for the transport and handling of dangerous goods in port areas in Australia.

1.5.4 Lowest astronomical tide – LAT

This is the zero value from which all tides are measured.

1.5.5 Manager (Pilotage Services)

The person responsible for the service delivery of pilotage services within the region.

1.5.6 Manager (Vessel Traffic Services)

The person responsible for the management of the VTS centre.

1.5.7 Maritime Safety Queensland – MSQ

The State Government agency responsible for the operations of pilotage, pollution protection services, vessel traffic services and the administration of all aspects of vessel registration and marine safety in the state of Queensland.

1.5.8 Navigation Act

Refers to the [Navigation Act 2012](#).

1.5.9 Overall length – LOA

The LOA is the extreme length of a vessel.

1.5.10 Pilotage Exemption Certificate – PEC

Exemption granted to certain qualified masters who have satisfied the necessary legislative requirements and are authorised to navigate ships in the port pilotage area without a pilot.

1.5.11 Port of Townsville Limited – POTL – Marine Services

The Port of Townsville Limited is a statutory Queensland Government owned Corporation charged with overseeing the commercial activities relating to port infrastructure, including the maintenance of the port infrastructure. To contact Townsville Port via radio, the call sign “Marine Services” should be used.

1.5.12 Queensland Shipping Information Planning System – QSHIPS

An internet-based ship movement booking service that is accessed by the shipping community 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The programme allows shipping agents to book movements, update information and request services as well as provides ability for service providers to acknowledge and accept the requests online. It is a live system providing up to date information, supporting the safe and efficient planning of movements ensuring appropriate resources and services are organised.

All ship movements and resource requests must be entered by the relevant shipping agent at least 24 hours prior to the movement into the QSHIPS portal.

The [Transport Operation \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#) provides penalties for failure to notify the Regional Harbour Master of the arrival of a ship at least

- 48 hours before the expected arrival.
- At least 24 hours before departure or removal

Booking the movements through the QSHIPS portal fulfils the obligation of the owner or master under Section 168 of [Transport Operation \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#).

1.5.13 REEFREP

The mandatory ship reporting system established by IMO Resolution MSC.52 (66), as amended by Resolution MSC.161 (78) and specified in AMSA Marine Order 63 of 2015 (Reef VTS).

1.5.14 Reef VTS

The Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service (Reef VTS) established by Australia as a means of enhancing navigational safety and environmental protection in Torres Strait and the Great Barrier Reef.

1.5.15 Regional Harbour Master – RHM

The person authorised to give direction under the relevant provisions of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#).

1.5.16 Sailing time

The scheduled sailing time is the time of the last line.

1.5.17 Vessel traffic service – VTS

A VTS is any service authorised by a competent authority, designed to maximise the safe and efficient movement of waterborne traffic.

1.6 Contact information

1.6.1 The Regional Harbour Master

For operational maritime questions, marine incidents, pollution, pilotage, buoy moorings, navigation aids, towage requirements and ship traffic scheduling please contact the Regional Harbour Master's office located at:

Physical address: Maritime Safety Queensland 60 Ross St, South Townsville, Queensland 4810

Postal address: GPO Box 1921, Townsville Queensland 4810

Phone: +61 7 4421 8100

Email: RHMTownsville@msq.qld.gov.au

1.6.2 VTS centre

The VTS centre, (call sign 'Townsville VTS' operated by Maritime Safety Queensland) is situated at the Regional Harbour Master's office. For ship traffic scheduling, pollution incidents and reporting defective navigation aids please direct initial enquiries to the VTS centre. The service is provided by Maritime Safety Queensland and provides a 24 hour, seven days a week marine operations service to the port community. They are contactable on:

Postal address: GPO Box 1921, Townsville Queensland 4810

VHF radio: VHF channels 12 and 16

Phone: +61 1300 721 263

Email: vtstownsville@msq.qld.gov.au

In the event of an emergency, the VTS centre is the key notification and communications facility that will activate the appropriate response agencies.

[Ship traffic movements](#) may be accessed on the [QSHIPS](#) website.

1.6.3 Port authority

The primary function of [Port of Townsville Limited](#) (POTL), under the *Transport Infrastructure Act 1994*, is to establish, manage and operate effective and efficient facilities and services within the port relating to port infrastructure, while maintaining appropriate levels of safety and security.

Phone: +61 7 4781 1500

Email: info@townsville-port.com.au

Port authority officers also monitor VHF channels 8, 12 and 16 and may be contacted by calling “Marine Services” on these channels. All vessels intending to use a berth must submit a berth application form to the Port of Townsville Ltd.

1.6.4 Quarantine

Source – [Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry](#)

The Department of Agriculture, fisheries and forestry require vessels from overseas to submit their documentation no more than 96 hours and no less than 12 hours prior to arrival.

Contact details for Department of Agriculture, fisheries and forestry Inspection Service at Townsville:

Phone: +61 7 4789 7888

Email: townsville.seaports@agriculture.gov.au

Street address: Ground Floor—River Quays Building, 7-13 Tomlins Street, Townsville, QLD 4810

Postal Address: GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia.

1.6.5 Australian Border Force

Source – [Australian Border Force](#)

Australian Border Force mission is to protect Australia's border and enable legitimate travel and trade.

Contact details for Australian Border Force at Townsville:

Phone: +61 7 4722 3700 (Office hours only)

Phone: 131881

Street address: Level 5, 61-73 Sturt Street, Townsville, QLD 4810

1.6.6 Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA)

Australia's national agency responsible for maritime safety, protection of the marine environment and maritime aviation search and rescue.

Phone: 1800 627 484

Email: TSVOperations@amsa.gov.au

1.7 Rules and regulations

1.7.1 General

The rules and regulations in the port contribute to the safe, efficient and environmentally responsible handling of shipping traffic. The international rules of the IMO, such as the SOLAS convention and its amendments (for example the IMDG Code) and state, national and local port authority regulations are in force in the port of Townsville.

The port bye laws are the house rules of the port. Based on the [Townsville Port Notices](#), the port rules on dangerous substances contain additional specific regulations for ships carrying dangerous cargoes in the port.

1.7.2 Applicable regulations

The procedures outlined in this document are designed to complement the requirements of the:

- [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994 \(TOMSA\)](#) and [Regulation 2016 \(TOMSR\)](#).
- [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995 \(TOMPA\)](#) and [Regulation 2018 \(TOMPR\)](#).
- Transport Infrastructure Act 1994
- International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code)
- Australian Standard – AS3846 – 2005 – (defines the standards to be observed by masters, berth operators and consignors involved with the transport and handling of dangerous goods in port areas in Australia)
- International Ships and Ports Security Code (ISPS Code)
- Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003 and Regulations.

In addition, it will also complement the procedures of:

- [Port of Townsville Limited](#)
- [Townsville City Council \(TCC\)](#).
- [Maritime Safety Queensland](#).
- [Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#)
- [Quarantine - Department of Agriculture](#).
- [Customs - Australian Border Force](#).
- [Royal Australian Navy \(RAN\)](#).

as they relate to ship movements within the jurisdiction of the Regional Harbour Master (Townsville).

1.7.3 Exemptions and permits

The Regional Harbour Master may grant exemptions from specific regulations. Permission is required for special activities such as repairs hull cleaning and painting, engine immobilisation and so on (see [10 Work permits](#)).