

10. Work permits

10.1 General

In order to be able to perform certain work on ships in the port masters, owners or their agents must first apply for and obtain the necessary permits before that work can proceed. Applications for approval by the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) must be submitted via the QSHIPS program and by fax or email to the relevant authorities; the required terms and conditions are completed by the Regional Harbour Master's office and the agent may then print off the completed permit for passing to the master of the applicable vessel.

Works requiring permits include:

- hot work
- engine immobilisation
- bunkering
- ship to ship/shore transfer operations
- lifeboat drills
- overside work
- live flare (pyrotechnic) demonstration.

Ship's masters must comply with all requirements specified in the permit.

10.2 Permit requests

Who	Permit	When	Comments
All ships	Overside work	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Ports North and copy to the RHM
All ships	Lifeboat drill	Prior to event	Lodged to the RHM
All ships	Hot work	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to wharf operator
All ships	Engine immobilisation	24 hours prior to commencement	Lodged to Ports North and RHM

Table 11 - Permit requests

10.3 Work permits

10.3.1 Immobilisation main engines

Ships may not be immobilised without first obtaining written permission from the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns). Permission may not be given for more than 24 hours during the cyclone season (November to April), or more than 48 hours during the rest of the year (see 16.5 [Permission to immobilise main engines](#))

Ships wishing to immobilise main engines must lodge an application via QSHIPS with the Regional Harbour Master and to the port authority at least 24 hours prior to the requested immobilisation.

Skardon River Port Control is to ensure that the duty and allocated marine pilots are advised of any work being carried out to main engines in Skardon River.

10.3.2 Hot work permit

Ships wishing to carry out repairs and any form of metal work, which includes performing hot work, must lodge an application in writing with the Port Authority, Ports North Qld, via the online web portal.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

Once approval has been granted by the relevant port authority, the ship's agent is to lodge an advice via QSHIPS to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

Masters are to contact Skardon River port control on VHF 16/09 prior to commencement and again on completion of any such hot works.

10.3.3 Lifeboat drills

Ships wishing to put boats in the water for painting, maintenance purposes or to carry out lifeboat drills, must first obtain clearance from the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) and the Port Authority, Ports North Qld via the online web portal.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

This clearance is to be obtained by the vessel's agent.

The ship's agent is to lodge an advice via QSHIPS to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns)

Masters are requested to contact Skardon River port control on VHF channel 16/09 prior to commencement and again on completion of such drills when the boats have been returned on board and secured

10.3.4 Diving Operations

Diving operations in Skardon River should be conducted with the appropriate safety infrastructure relevant to protect against the threat of Estuarine (Saltwater) Crocodiles and other marine life, which are known to inhabit the area.

10.3.5 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 for owners/agents or masters of vessels to notify Maritime Safety Queensland of the intention to load, unload or transfer any form of bulk liquids to, from or between vessels. Such notification is required to be lodged with Cairns VTS via QSHIPS and the port authority via the [online web portal](#). 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 sullage/sludge from vessels, by road, barge or ship transfer, are to be included within this notification.

Masters of vessels conducting bulk liquid transfers, as specified above, are required to notify Skardon River Port Control on VHF channel 09 of the time of commencement of such transfer/bunkering operation and again the time when the operation is completed.

10.3.6 Overside maintenance work

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

- comply with the conditions spelt out in the port authority port notice – overside maintenance
- lodge a request, with the port authority, Ports North Qld, via the online web portal for permission to undertake overside work; when granted, masters must comply with the conditions of the permit.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

Scraping of the hull is not permitted within port waters.