

2. Arrival and departure procedures

2.1 General

For a quick reference of what and when to report please consult the following tables.

Masters of vessels arriving at, staying in or departing from the port are obliged to make previous notification on a variety of subjects, ranging from health to immigration to dangerous goods.

This section lists all the requirements for notifying the port authorities.

2.2 Arrival Checklist

Sequence	Time	Report
1	48 hours before arrival	Arrival information to RHM via QSHIPS
2	48 hours before arrival	Dangerous goods report to RHM and FNQPCL (see section 11 Dangerous goods)
3	48 hours before arrival	Gas-Free Status
4	96 hours before arrival	2.5 Customs- Australian Border Force
5	48 hours before arrival	Arrival/Departure Report to MSQ regional office
6	Not more than 96 hours or less than 12 hours before arrival	See section 2.4 Quarantine
7	24 and 12 hours before arrival update ETA if necessary.	Arrival information update to RHM via QSHIPS
8	24 hours prior to loading / handling dangerous goods (includes bunkers)	11 Dangerous goods report to RHM, AMSA and FNQPCL
9	Two hours before arrival pilotage area	Call Cairns VTS on VHF channel 12
10	In transit	VTS reporting points (see 3.10.1 Reporting Requirements – Arrival reporting requirements)

Table 1 - Arrival checklist

2.3 Departure checklist

Sequence	Time	Report
1	24 hours before arrival	Arrival information to RHM via QSHIPS
2	Three hours before departure	Dangerous goods report to RHM and FNQPCL (see section 11 Dangerous goods)
3	Two hours before departure	Pre entry report to Reef VTS (see 2.6 MASTREP Reporting and 2.7 (Reef user guide) call Cairns VTS on channel 12
4	In transit	VTs reporting points (see 3.10.1 Reporting Requirements – Arrival reporting requirements)

Table 2 - Departure checklist

2.4 Quarantine

Source: Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) requires vessels from overseas to submit their documentation no more than 96 hours and no less than 12 hours prior to arrival:

Contact details for DAFF at Cairns:

Phone: +61 7 4030 7800

Fax: +61 7 4241 7843

Email: nqldsea@aqis.gov.au via general enquiries on the website

Website: www.agriculture.gov.au

Postal address: GPO Box 858, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia

2.4.1. Ballast water information

Ships with ballast water from ports that are considered a high risk for introduced marine species and that have not exchanged water ballast in mid ocean or use an approved ballast water treatment system are now forbidden to discharge this ballast into Australian waters. Vessels that do not need to discharge ballast in Australian waters are exempt from these requirements.

The Department of Agriculture (Biosecurity) provides a Ballast Water Management summary sheet for use by Masters/Agents which can be found at the following link:

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/avm/vessels/ballast/australian-ballast-water-management-requirements>

<https://www.agriculture.gov.au/biosecurity/avm/vessels/marine-pest-biosecurity/ballast>

2.5 Customs

Source: Australian Border Force (ABF)

Vessels arriving from overseas must submit their documentation 96 hours prior to the nominated date of arrival. If the voyage from the last port is likely to take less than 96 hours, the following timeframes will apply –

72 hours or more but less than 96 hours – submit documentation 72 hours prior

48 hours or more but less than 72 hours – submit documentation 48 hours prior

24 hours or more but less than 48 hours – submit documentation 24 hours prior

All [Australian Border Force forms](#) may be accessed on their website.

2.5.1 Customs – yacht arrivals

All yachts arriving in Queensland from overseas must first proceed to a designated port of entry for Customs and Quarantine clearance at Cairns, Weipa, Thursday Island, Townsville, Mackay, Gladstone, Bundaberg or Brisbane. At Thursday Island notification should be given to Customs at least 96 hours prior to arrival.

Details may be given by:

Email: yachtreport@customs.gov.au

Fax: +61 2 6275 6331

Phone: +61 3 9244 8973. Australian Customs National Communications Centre

The Thursday Island customs office is located at:

Physical address: Customs House, 2 Victoria Parade, Thursday Island QLD 4875

Phone: (07) 4083 1800 (office hours) or 1800 061 800

Fax: (07) 40691211

Vessels arriving at Thursday Island requiring customs clearance can call Thursday Island customs on VHF channel 16.

The boarding station for arrival will be as directed by Customs or the port authority; complete details are available on the Australian Border Force website.

2.6 MASTREP reporting

[Marine Order 63](#) issued by AMSA makes the provision of Position Reports mandatory for:

- Foreign vessels from the arrival at its first port in Australia until its departure from its final port in Australia; and
- All regulated Australian vessels whilst in the MASTREP area.

Domestic commercial vessels fitted with Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and AIS technology are also encouraged to participate in the system as MASTREP assists AMSA in carrying out SAR activities.

To assist Master /Agents, the MASTREP and Australian Mandatory Reporting Guide can be found on the [AMSA website](#).

2.7 Reef user guide

The Queensland and Australian Governments established Reef VTS in 2004. Its purpose is to:

- make navigation in Torres Strait and the inner route of the Great Barrier Reef safer by working with shipping to give the best possible information on potential traffic conflicts and other navigational information;
- minimise the risk of maritime accidents, and therefore avoid the pollution and damage which such accidents can cause to the marine environment in the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait; and
- assist with quick response if a safety or pollution incident does occur.

Reef VTS is operated by Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) as a VTS authorised by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) under Marine Order 64 (Vessel Traffic Services). AMSA is an agency of the Australian Federal Government; whilst MSQ is an agency of the Queensland State Government.

Reef VTS operates 24 hours a day from the VTS Centre, situated at Townsville on the Queensland coast. Reef VTS uses information from many sources, including the Automatic Identification System (AIS); Radar; Automated Position Reports (APR) via Inmarsat C and the route plans that vessels provide to Reef VTS.

To assist Master /Agents, the reporting requirements for REEFREP can be found on the [MSQ website](#) in the [Reef VTS User Guide](#).

2.8 Security

All commercial vessels with a gross tonnage of 500 tonnes or more and passenger ships are required to report their security information to the port authority. For further information refer to the following websites:

[Ships \(cisc.gov.au\)](#) [FNQPCL \(Trading as Ports North\)](#)