

4. Port description

4.1 General Information

The Port of Thursday Island is a community port located in a natural harbour in the Torres Strait in the northern-most part of Australia. Wharf facilities are managed by Far North Queensland Ports Corporation (trading as Ports North) and have been established on both Thursday Island and the neighbouring Horn Island where the airport is located.

The port is mainly used by general cargo trading ships which supply goods to the local people, for transhipments to the outer surrounding islands, tourist and passenger vessels and fishermen. It is a designated port of entry for customs and quarantine clearance; hence Thursday Island serves as a base for a number of government agencies.

MARITIME SAFETY QUEENSLAND ADVISES THAT ESTUARINE CROCODILES ARE PRESENT IN THE WATERS OF THE PORT

4.2 Pilotage area

The Thursday Island pilotage area (see section 16.3) is described in Schedule 2 of the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016*](#) as the area of:

- a) Waters bounded by an imaginary line drawn—
 - starting at the high-water mark on the western tip of Smith Point on Horn Island
 - then to the high-water mark at the northern tip of Heath (Kiwain) Point on Prince of Wales Island
 - then to the high-water mark at the eastern tip of Webb Point on Friday Island
 - then along the high-water mark of Friday Island, initially in a westerly direction, to the western tip of Friday Island
 - then to the high-water mark at the western tip of Tucker Point on Goods Island
 - then along the high-water mark of Goods Island, initially in a south-easterly direction, to the eastern tip of Tussy Head on Goods Island
 - then to the high-water mark at the western tip of Hammond Island (commonly known as Diamond Point)
 - then along the high-water mark of Hammond Island, initially in a south-easterly direction, to the eastern tip of Menmuir (Gobau) Point on Hammond Island
 - then to the high-water mark at the northern tip of King Point on Horn Island
 - then along the high-water mark of Horn Island, initially in a westerly direction, to the starting point; and
- b) the navigable waters of rivers and creeks flowing, directly or indirectly, into the waters in paragraph (a).

4.3 Maximum vessel size

- Overall length limit – 90 metres LOA.
- Ship's over 90 metres LOA will require Regional Harbour Master approval.

4.4 Trim requirements

The safe handling of ships within the confines of the channels and swing basins requires certain conditions of trim. Ships should be ballasted or loaded in order to have an even keel or trimmed by the stern with the forward draft not less than 2% LOA and the propeller fully submerged. Vessels trimmed by the head or listing may be subject to restrictions; ships not meeting this requirement may experience considerable delays until the problem is rectified.

Passenger vessels may have to trim by the head up to one meter.

Master's should pay special attention to their loading/ballasting plans to ensure that their ships are suitably trimmed and able to put to sea at short notice, especially during the cyclone season – November to April.

4.5 Time Zone

All Queensland ports: UTC + 10 hours throughout the year.

4.6 Working hours

Port service providers are available 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Subject to prior arrangements.

4.7 Charts and books

For navigation in pilotage areas, masters should refer to the nautical charts produced by the Australian hydrographic office and Admiralty Sailing Directions NP15 (Australian Pilot Volume III / V). Charts of the area include:

- AUS 296 Prince of Wales Channel to Vazrvn Passage
- AUS 299 Approaches to Thursday Island
- AUS 292 Adolphus Channel to Prince of Wales Channel
- AUS 293 Prince of Wales Channel
- AUS 376 Torres Strait
- AUS 700 Western Approaches to Torres Strait
- AUS 839 Cairncross Islets to Arden Islet
- AUS 4060 Australasia and adjacent waters
- The Australian Seafarers Handbook AHP 20
- Admiralty Sailing Directions – Australia Pilot Volume III

4.8 Shipping announcements

4.8.1 Notices to Mariners

Maritime Safety Queensland circulates marine safety information to mariners, organisations and other interested parties, in the form of [Notices to Mariners](#).

Notices to Mariners advise of:

- navigation warnings and hazards (such as aids to navigation which may have been destroyed, missing or unlit)
- changes to the uniform buoyage system (which assists with the correction and updating of marine charts)
- navigation depths (necessary when navigating in channels with depth restrictions)
- any other works which may affect the safe navigation of vessels in Queensland coastal waters and ports (such as dredging operations and construction works).

Faulty navigation aids should be reported to Thursday Island Port Control on VHF channel 12 or to Cairns VTS by phone on (07) 4033 3670.