

3. Movement and traffic procedures

3.1 Introduction

Maritime Safety Queensland, through the authority of the Regional Harbour Master, has jurisdiction over the safe movement of all shipping within the pilotage area.

The aim of this section is to outline the role and requirements of Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) as well as those key stakeholders interacting with VTS.

The scheduling of ship movements is initiated by the agent submitting movement details for a vessel to Brisbane VTS Centre via the QSHIPS ship planning programme in accordance with this section.

3.2 Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

Vessel Traffic Service is the principal system by which the Regional Harbour Master manages the safe and efficient movement of vessel traffic approaching, departing and operating within the Brisbane VTS area.

This service is provided by Maritime Safety Queensland on a 24 hour, seven days a week rotating roster and operates within for the declared Brisbane VTS area, Brisbane Compulsory Pilotage area and the Port of Brisbane Limits. The VTS will operate under with the callsign "Brisbane VTS" and provides this service in accordance with IMO Resolution A.1158 (32).

VTS is delivered from the VTS centre at the Regional Harbour Master's office and is manned by trained and qualified vessel traffic service operators, under the management of the Manager (Vessel Traffic Services) and the Regional Harbour Master (Brisbane).

The purpose of VTS is to contribute to safety of life at sea, safety and efficiency of navigation and the protection of the environment within the VTS area by mitigating the development of unsafe situations through:

- The provision of timely and relevant information on factors that may influence the ship's movements and assist on-board decision making.
- The monitoring and management of ship traffic to ensure the safety and efficiency of ship movements.
- Responding to developing unsafe situations

In discharging this role, VTS will, within the declared VTS area provide a vessel traffic service that includes:

3.2.1 Timely Information

Brisbane VTS will, transmit essential and timely information to assist in the on-board decision-making process, which may include, position, identity and intentions of other traffic, hazards and other factors which may affect a vessels transit

3.2.2 Monitoring and management of ship traffic

Brisbane VTS will plan vessel movements to prevent congestion and provide for safe and efficient movement of traffic. The VTS will identify and manage potentially dangerous traffic situations and provide essential and timely information to assist the on-board decision-making process and may advise, instruct, or exercise the authority to direct movements.

3.2.3 Responding to developing unsafe situations

Brisbane VTS may provide navigational support to an individual vessel, at the request of the vessel or when deemed necessary by the VTS, to assist the decision-making process on board the vessel concerned. This service consists of navigational matters relating to a specific vessel and may include information, warning, advice and instruction subject to the authority of the VTS. There may be occasions where Brisbane VTS will be unable to provide navigational support and the requesting vessel will be advised of this information.

3.2.4 VTS Business Continuity Plan

Note that in the event of the VTS centre being disabled, all functions of the VTS centre will be temporarily transferred to a remote standby location. VTS will advise all parties of the new communication numbers at such a time.

3.2.5 Brisbane VTS area

The VTS Area is described as follows:

(a) the waters bounded by a line commencing at:

- The coastline of the mainland on northern headland at maroochy river position latitude 26° 38.327' south, longitude 153° 06.108' east,
- Then east to latitude 26° 38.327' south, longitude 153° 15.830' east,
- Then south to latitude 26° 49.000' south, longitude 153° 15.830' east,
- Then south-east to latitude 27° 01.664' south, longitude 153° 28.042' east,
- Then following the western coastline of moreton island in a southerly direction to approximate latitude 27° 19.473' south, longitude 153° 25.096' east,
- Then west-south-west to latitude 27° 22.865' south, longitude 153° 10.769' east,
- Then south-south-west to into the boat passage to latitude 27° 24.041' south, longitude 153° 09.906' east,
- Then following the coastline upstream of the brisbane river to bulimba point at approximate latitude 27° 26.615' south, longitude 153° 03.064' east,
- Then across the river to latitude 27° 26.539' south, longitude 153° 02.855' east at newstead park,
- Then following the coastline downstream of the brisbane river to luggage point at approximate latitude 27° 22.681' south, longitude 153° 09.611' east,
- Then north-easterly to latitude 27° 22.484' south. Longitude 153° 09.765' east,
- Then northerly to latitude 27° 11.659' south, longitude 153° 10.808' east in moreton bay,
- Then north-easterly to latitude 27° 09.690' south, longitude 153° 18.706' east,
- Then north-westerly to latitude 26° 51.833' south, longitude 153° 08.631' east,
- Then northerly to latitude 26° 49.485' south, longitude 153° 08.227' east,
- Then north-east to latitude 26° 48.232' south, longitude 153° 09.849' east,
- Then north to latitude 26° 44.957' south, longitude 153° 09.844' east,
- Then west to the coastline at approximate latitude 26° 44.816' south, longitude 153° 08.173' east,
- Then generally northerly along the coastline to latitude 26° 39.057' south, longitude 153° 06.086' east,
- Then across the river to latitude 26° 38.732' south, longitude 153° 06.856' east,
- The north along the coastline to the starting position northern headland at maroochy river position latitude 26° 38.327' south, longitude 153° 06.108' east,

(b) the navigable waters of rivers and creeks flowing, directly or indirectly, into the waters in paragraph (a).

Section 15.1 includes a map showing the above boundaries.

3.2.6 VTS Role

The role of the Brisbane VTS is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of shipping within the VTS area and to ensure that a continual program of shipping movements can be affected to the advantage of all commercial shipping in an impartial manner.

Brisbane VTS will:

- Forward plan the movement of vessels to prevent congestion and provide for safe and efficient movement of traffic.
- Wherever possible interact with vessel traffic by maritime VHF radio. Interact with port services in Brisbane
- Provide essential and timely information to assist the on-board decision-making process and may inform, advise or instruct shipping in the VTS area.
- Where necessary communicate the directions of the Regional Harbour Master (Brisbane) or delegate
- Monitor compliance with the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 and Regulation 2016
- Record the details of shipping movements in the QSHIPS programme in real time
- Maintain a situational awareness of traffic in the VTS area to the extent of the available information
- Participate in emergency procedures.

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.

VTS has authority and delegation of the RHM in its operational decision making and can exercise the function of the Harbour Master legislative powers to issue directions to vessels.

For critical matters that have not been resolved, or for a serious concern, the pilot can make a request to VTS to escalate the matter to the DHM's immediate attention.

3.3 VTS communications

Ships 35m or greater in LOA, are not to move within the pilotage area unless satisfactory two-way communications are maintained with the VTS centre, as shown at Section 15.

The Brisbane VTS (call sign 'Brisbane VTS'). The pilot station and launches based at Mooloolaba are also equipped with all selected maritime VHF channels including 6, 12, 16 and 67.

Communications Channels	Call sign	Service
VHF channel 16	User	Initial call up and primary emergency channel
VHF channel 12	Brisbane VTS	Working channel for vessels working in Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River between Point Cartwright and Hamilton Reach (Brisbane Cruise Terminal).
VHF channel 13	Brisbane VTS	Working channel for vessels working in the Brisbane River upstream from Brisbane Cruise Terminal and the Southern Moreton Bay, the area which lies to the south of a line running from the Boat Passage Bridge at Fisherman Islands to North Point, St Helena and then to Reeder's Point, Moreton Island and down to Latitude 27°40'S

VHF channel 14	User	Supplementary port operations
VHF channel 06, 08, 09 and 10	User	Pilots and tugs working channels
VHF channel 63 and 73	User	Water Police/Coast Guard
VHF channel 67	User	Weather and navigational warnings

Table 3 – VHF Communication Channels

3.3.1 Language

The English language is to be used in all communication. The International Maritime Organisation's Standard Marine Communication Phrases (SMCP) 2001 will be used.

3.3.2 Voice recordings

All voice communications with the VTS centre, including telephone and marine VHF, as well as all radio communications on the channels monitored, are recorded against a date and time stamp. Access to the recordings is controlled by the Regional Harbour Master.

3.3.3 Distress and Emergency

Brisbane VTS, as part of the Queensland Marine Coast radio distress network, maintains a safety listening watch for South East Queensland coastal Waters from Sandy Cape to Coolangatta, on VHF channel 16 from 2200 to 0600 daily.

Brisbane VTS is not a coast radio station. Maritime Safety Queensland, Marine Rescue Queensland, Volunteer Marine Rescue (VMR) and the Australian Coastguard have an agreement that the VTS will monitor channels 16 and 67, for emergency and distress calls only when the marine rescue groups are not operational. A distress call should, in the ordinary course of events, be referred to nearest SAR authority.

Any marine incident, for example a collision, grounding or fire, occurring within the port should be immediately reported to Brisbane VTS on:

VHF radio: channel 12 or 16
Phone: +61 7 3623 7500

3.4 Port Contact Details

Organisation	Telephone		Email
VTS Centre	+61 7 3623 3900		vtsbrisbane@msq.qld.gov.au
Regional Harbour Master	+61 7 3632 7500		rhmbrisbane@msq.qld.gov.au
Port of Brisbane Corporation	+61 7 3258 4888		info@portbris.com.au

Table 4 – Port contact details

3.5 Prior Notification of Movements

Sections 168 to 169 of the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016* require that all ship movements for vessels 35 metres in length or more are reported according to the following table:

Action	Minimum notice	Approved form
Prior notification of movement in pilotage area	48 hours prior to entry	Notification via QSHIPS
	24 hours prior to removal or departure	
Transport of dangerous goods in pilotage area	48 hours prior to entry	Refer 15.9 Vessel Traffic Management Forms
	three hours prior to departure	
Loading, removal or handling of dangerous cargo alongside (includes bunkering)	24 hours prior to handling	Refer 10.1
Ship to ship transfer of dangerous cargo	24 hours prior to cargo transfer	Refer 10.1
'Gas/Free Status' (bulk liquid cargo ships)	48 hours prior to entry, departure or removal	Declaration by master if vessel is 'gas free' for movement purposes.

Table 5 – Pre-entry Notification Times

3.6 Reporting requirements

3.6.1 Overview of Reporting Requirements

All ships over 35 metres LOA transiting the Brisbane VTS area must report their movements to VTS on VHF Channel 12 as per the instructions below.

3.6.1.1 VTS Calling Points

All ships over 35 metres LOA are to advise to VTS and all ships via VHF broadcast at the following locations

- Two hours prior to entering the VTS Area
- North–west fairway beacon or NE2 buoy
- 1nm north of North West 12
- Entrance beacons
- Upstream of Pelican Banks; Gateway Bridge, Pinkenba Beacon, Cement Australia Swing Basin and Luggage Point
- berth, anchorage, moorings or designated location.

3.6.1.2 VHF Listening Watch

All vessels, regardless of length and type, equipped with VHF radio must maintain an active listening watch on VHF Channel 12 when navigating in and near shipping channels between the Pilot Boarding Ground (Point Cartwright) and Brisbane River – Hamilton Reach.

3.6.1.3 Movements Upstream of Hamilton Reach

All vessels over 15m LOA and operating upstream of Hamilton Reach must give advisory warning broadcasts on VHF channel 13 when approaching all corners, bends and bridges to alert other users.

- Note requirements of section 3.5.3.5

3.6.1.4 Pilot/Exempt Master Initial Report

Prior to commencing an arrival, departure or removal, the following information is to be reported by the pilot or exempt master prior to commencement.

- Pilot name and onboard time or Exempt Master's name
- ship's LOA, (If LOA differs to that listed by VTS, pilot to confirm ship particulars sighted)
- fore and aft drafts
- Details of damage or defects that could affect the safety of navigation or the environment
- Proposed navigational channel and route to be used
- destination berth/anchorage/moorings; berthing direction and tugs assisting.
- estimated time passing Entrance beacons and arrival at destination

3.6.2 Arrival Reporting Requirements

The following reporting requirements are required for all vessels over 35m LOA entering Port of Brisbane and Brisbane VTS area. Report	Information to Report
Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS, Two hours prior to entering VTS Area	Ship's name and type (fishing, tug, recreational and so on) ETA to PBG/NWFWY or anchorage if the ship has any defects that could affect the safety of navigation or the environment
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Commencement of Movement, passing Pilot Boarding Ground	Confirm details of ship and intended movement pilot's or exempt master's initial report as outlined above
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS VTS Calling Points	Vessel name and current location/calling point Destination and estimated time of arrival at the entrance beacons and berth/anchorage.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Anchoring in Brisbane Roads	Provide anchorage time and position as a bearing and distance off the entrance beacons.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Vessels proceeding upstream of Brett's Wharf Ferry Terminal	To make an 'all ships' broadcast on VHF Channel 13 of their destination and manoeuvring intentions when passing under the Sir Leo Hielscher (Gateway) Bridges.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS When alongside the berth	Confirm time of first line and all fast. berthed 'head up' or 'head down' Pilot disembarkation time

3.6.3 Removal Reporting Requirements

The following reporting requirements are required for all vessels over 35m LOA transiting from one location to another within Port of Brisbane and Brisbane VTS area.

Report	Information to Report
Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS One hour prior to commencing	Confirm estimated time of departure if the ship has any defects that could affect the safety of navigation or the environment
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS 15 minutes prior to commencing	Confirm details of ship and intended movement pilot's or exempt master's initial report as outlined above
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Commencement of movement	Confirm anchor aweigh or last line time Destination and estimated time of arrival at the entrance beacons and berth/anchorage.

Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS VTS Calling Points	Vessel name and current location/calling point Destination and estimated time of arrival at the entrance beacons and berth/anchorage.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Anchoring in Brisbane Roads	Provide anchorage time and position as a bearing and distance off the entrance beacons.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS When alongside the berth	Confirm time of first line and all fast. berthed 'head up' or 'head down' Pilot disembarkation time

3.6.4 Departure Reporting Requirements

The following reporting requirements are required for all vessels over 35m LOA departing from Port of Brisbane and Brisbane VTS area.

Report	Information to Report
Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS One hour prior to commencing	Confirm estimated time of departure if the ship has any defects that could affect the safety of navigation or the environment
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS 15 mins prior to commencing	Confirm details of ship and intended movement pilot's or exempt master's initial report as outlined above
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS Commencement of movement	Confirm anchor aweigh or last line time Destination and estimated time of arrival at the entrance beacons and Fairway.
Pilot/Exempt Master/Ship's Master to Brisbane VTS VTS Calling Points	Vessel name and current location/calling point Estimated time of arrival at the entrance beacons and Fairway.
Pilot to Brisbane VTS and Pilot Launch When passing NW12 and NW2	Provide estimated time of arrival at Pilot Boarding Ground Pilots transferring to the pilot launch should ensure that VTS is informed of the transfer time after the transfer.

3.7 Booking a vessel movement

The movement of all vessels of LOA 35 metres or more arriving at Brisbane is recorded in an internet based programme known as QSHIPS.

The programme is operated from the VTS centre; shipping agents submit booking information on line in accordance with the reporting requirements (see Section 3.5 Prior Notification of Movements) and record their requisitions for tugs, pilot and linesmen. The ancillary services respond online to acknowledge the booking and allocate their resources; the movement then assumes the confirmed status. Permit requests shall be submitted via QSHIPS and to the respective agencies if required (see 15.9 Work permits). QSHIPS will indicate when the approval has been granted and the agent is then able to print the permit for the vessel.

Since the programme is live, port service providers, agents, government agencies and the general community are able to view scheduled movements in any Queensland port in real time.

3.7.1 QSHIPS – (Queensland shipping information planning system)

The movement of all vessels of LOA 35 metres or more arriving at Brisbane is recorded in an internet based programme known as QSHIPS.

The programme is operated from the VTS centre; shipping agents submit booking information on line in accordance with the reporting requirements (see Section 3.6 Prior Notification of Movements) and record their requisitions for tugs, pilot and linesmen. The ancillary services respond online to acknowledge the booking and allocate their resources; the movement then assumes the confirmed status. Permit requests shall be submitted via QSHIPS and to the respective agencies if required (see 9 Work permits). QSHIPS will indicate when the approval has been granted and the agent is then able to print the permit for the vessel.

Since the programme is live, port service providers, agents, government agencies and the general community are able to view scheduled movements in any Queensland port in real time.

3.7.2 Removals

Removals from/to a berth/anchorage within the pilotage area are classified as removals with additional information below.

3.7.2.1 Notification

All removals whether they are carried out as a pilotage removal or a non-pilotage removal and from:

- one berth to another berth or anchorage or
- an anchorage to another anchorage or berth or
- a warp along a berth to another berth or
- a warp for operational reasons on the same berth.
- A tug and barge combination with a total combination length greater than 80m

The use of the QSHIPS programme is mandatory for notification of the impending removal movement and subsequent movements of a vessel unless exceptional circumstances preclude this. In this case the must be submitted to VTS by email at least 24 hours prior to the movement.

3.7.2.2 Pilotage removals

All [Vessels that require a pilot](#) (see 7.1) and are booked in for a removal from one berth or anchorage to another berth or anchorage must do so under pilotage. Such removal must also have tug allocations per the port requirements and conditions (see 8.2). This requirement also applies to vessels that intend to let go, swing off, and make fast again at the same berth even if lines are still placed on the wharf.

3.7.2.3 Non pilotage removals

Non pilotage removals from **one berth to another** may be conducted by the master of the ship subject to the following conditions:

- the removal is along a continuous uninterrupted stretch of wharf and is restricted for a distance not exceeding one berth length or 250 metres whichever is the greatest
- vessel LOA is 200m or less and not considered to have high windage
- the master confirms the ship's ability to safely conduct the manoeuvre
- the ship's lines are ashore at all times
- the terminal/wharf operator is to have a procedural plan regarding the warping of vessels; the person in charge on the wharf is to discuss procedures of the removal with the master of the vessel prior to the move and is to agree on a VHF channel for communications
- the master is to advise VTS of the time of commencement of the removal and the time of when the vessel is made fast again
- movement to commence and be completed within no more than 0.5 knots of forecasted current
- wind to be 15 knots sustained or less with no thunderstorms to be forecasted
- weather and tidal conditions are favourable.

- The use of a lines launch is required.

Any removal that requires the use of a tug and/or main engines or a removal distance greater than mentioned above will require a pilot to conduct the removal.

The Regional Harbour Master, to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the port, may at any time require the removal to be conducted by a pilot with or without tug assistance.

3.7.2.4 Warping for operational purposes

If a vessel is required to warp along its allocated berth for operational reasons, it must remain securely moored at all times. The master must ensure that a thorough risk assessment, ensuring the vessels windage and the weather conditions are considered.

Operational reasons are defined as the requirement to align loading arms, stern ramps or hoppers.

3.7.2.5 Dead ship removals

Applications for ships requiring a dead ship removal to any berth or anchorage within the port will be assessed on their merits.

3.7.3 Booking a Tug & Tow

When a tug and tow is bound for, due to depart from or to do a removal (except defined as local traffic) within the port, the master, owner or agent is required to book the movements with VTS via the QSHIPS programme using the same arrangements as defined for other vessels. A visit for the towing vessel will need to be created in QSHIPS and then the details of the tow added by using the 'add convoy' tab.

If an agent is unable to submit a booking by QSHIPS, the agent must complete the [15.9.4 VTIS A4 Form – Tug and Tow Advice](#) in addition to the [15.9.1 VTIS A1 – Booking Form](#) to VTS. The information will include:

- Full details of the tug and of the vessel/s making up the tow (dimensions, drafts, and so on)
- The length of the tow at sea and when shortened up for entry into the port
- Details of the makeup of the towline to include lengths and types of tow lines and bridles
- Any special requirements for the handling of the tow within the port.

Tug and tows may be subject to varying scheduling arrangements.

3.8 Movement scheduling

3.8.1 Confirmation of schedules

On receipt of a movement booking VTS will cross check tug and pilot bookings, other movements and terminal schedules whilst verifying draft restricted vessels and tanker status requirements when putting the schedule together.

3.8.2 Schedule changes

Maritime Safety Queensland may make changes to the approved schedule of ship movements up to two hours prior to the commencement of the movement in order to ensure the safe and most efficient movement of shipping.

Agents are to modify scheduled movement times via QSHIPS up to twenty-four hours prior to the scheduled movement time. Changes will remain at the planned status until reviewed and accepted by VTS. Agents will be notified if a change does not comply with scheduling parameters.

Changes within 24 hours of any scheduled movement time must be made by phone to Brisbane VTS. Once accepted and confirmed by VTS, Agents must advise relevant services of the change.

Changes requested within two hours will incur delay or cancellation fees in accordance with [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulations 2016](#).

Estimated time of departure (ETD) cannot be brought ahead between 2200 hours and 0600 hours. Final notification to all port services, including VTS are to be made by 2130 hours daily.

3.8.3 Prioritising of ship movements

The principle of 'first come, first served' applies to all ships wishing to enter the port. For ships requiring a pilot it means first to the boarding ground, for exempt ships, it means first to the fairway beacon, however this principle may be modified under certain conditions.

The confirmation of all movements is the responsibility of VTS, who will ensure that all ships should move through the port efficiently and safely.

3.8.3.1 Tide restricted ships

Where a ship is restricted by draft or tidal current to a narrow tidal window, it will usually be given first priority.

3.8.3.2 Passenger ships

Passenger ships operate to fixed schedules that are booked months in advance; where possible, their schedules will be adhered to.

3.8.3.3 Commercial considerations

When the schedule dictates that certain ships must be delayed, those ships likely to suffer the greatest commercial disadvantages, such as those having labour standing by may be given priority.

3.8.3.4 Non gas-free (NGF) tankers

Non gas-free tankers generally require a clear river and additional passing restrictions apply (see [5.6 River Transits – advice of movement to other vessels](#)). Movements of other ships may need to be adjusted in order to meet the restrictions. However, NGF tankers do not enjoy any special priority above the movement other ships.

3.8.3.5 Clearing after industrial delays

Subsequent to any industrial dispute, vessels which have suffered the longest delay may be given preference subject to the previous scheduling priorities and suitable environmental conditions for the ship type.

3.8.3.6 Late modification advice

The guidelines regarding tide restricted ships and non gas-free tankers apply. Those agents who maintain their booked in arrival, removal and/or departure times will usually be given preference over late or modified bookings.

3.8.3.7 Naval ships

Naval ships are expected to observe the commercial considerations and procedures of the port.

3.9 Movement clearance information

All ships with a LOA 35 metres or more require a clearance from VTS in order to enter, depart or move within the VTS area. It is the responsibility of the master or pilot to contact VTS to obtain the necessary clearance and information prior to the movement.

Clearances are valid for uninterrupted passage to a specified location or until the voyage is interrupted, completed (for example, by anchoring, berthing or due to a breakdown) or cancelled by the Harbour Master. Ships will require a new clearance for any subsequent movement.

3.10 Tug and Barge/Towing Operations

3.10.1 Operational Rules

All tugs and tows entering or departing Port of Brisbane will be handled under the following conditions:

- All tug and tows departing or arriving in the Brisbane Pilotage area and all operating solely within the pilotage area with a total combination length in excess of 80m are to be booked through QSHIPs, including submission of VTIS A4 Form - Tug and Tow Advice.
- Tug and Tow configurations are to be scheduled so that the transit of Moreton Bay is conducted in daylight conditions unless approved by VTS.
- All arriving and departing tugs must have a total combination length of no greater than 250m. Tow combinations greater than 250m will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Regional Harbour Master.
- All tug and tows are required to engage a licenced pilot unless the master is a suitable endorsed exempt master.
- Piloted tug and tow configurations are to be scheduled to ensure that the pilot transfer and majority of the Bay transit are completed in daylight conditions.
- Tug and tow combinations are to ensure that the towline and barge are well lit for night and reduced visibility operations.
- Multi-unit tows, regardless of length, are not permitted to transit the Brisbane River upstream of the Entrance Beacons without the approval of the Regional Harbour Master. It is expected that tows are assembled/dis-assembled in Brisbane Roads.
- On a case-by-case basis, The Regional Harbor Master may require or direct harbour tugs to take charge of the tow or tows when transiting the Brisbane River upstream of the entrance beacons.
- Tug and tow combinations, other than local traffic, should be configured as a composite unit (for example, Hipped up) for movements above the Fisherman Island Swing Basin.

Any tow that is in a damaged condition will not be granted entry into the Brisbane pilotage area until the Regional Harbour Master is satisfied that the vessel/s does not pose a threat to the marine environment or a hazard to navigation in the port.

3.11 Mooring requirements

Masters are reminded that Brisbane is a river port and can be subject to very strong currents caused by storms and river flooding. It is the responsibility of the master, agent and terminal to assess the risk and ensure that sufficient mooring personnel are engaged to moor and unmoor a ship in a safe and efficient manner.

Passing vessel traffic is also likely throughout a vessel's stay at a berth. Masters are to ensure that their ship is securely moored alongside, and that the gangway is tended at all times. Masters are advised to exercise caution when using tension winches and to have contingency measures in place.

Best mooring practices are always to be followed. This includes dipping lines and a maximum of two pairs of lines in opposite directions on each bollard. The departure time is the last line time. Mooring gangs should be ready to commence the unmooring sequence at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time.

Further information regarding mooring consideration during extreme weather events can be found at [11.7.1 Mooring Considerations](#).

3.11.1 Separation distance between ships at the berth

It is important to ensure that there is adequate separation between vessels at terminals. This is to ensure that there is adequate space to safely manoeuvre the vessel and minimal interference with mooring lines between vessels. Outlines below are the minimum lengths which must be maintained for the duration of the vessel's call.

- For ships 300m or less LOA, the minimum separation between vessels is 20m.
- At the time of berthing, +300m vessels are to have a minimum of 50m separation to vessels at adjoining berths. A minimum separation of 20m is permitted once alongside, providing safe mooring configuration can be achieved.

It should be noted that vessels with extra ordinary dimensions, such as carrying quay cranes, may require additional separation. If there is a specific requirement to reduce the separation between vessels for operational purpose, the Regional Harbour Master is to be contacted through VTS to make an assessment.

3.11.2 Moorings – Fisherman Islands and Luggage Point

Masters of vessels, especially high windage vessels such as container ships, car carriers and RORO ships, berthing at Fisherman Islands berths are advised that these berths are affected from time to time by strong south easterly offshore winds. Extra attention to moorings is required due to the open nature of the wharf area. The effectiveness of the mooring arrangement must be assessed and moorings tended on a frequent basis.

Masters are advised that the protracted use of push up tugs at berths during adverse weather conditions will not be sanctioned. Tugs are a valuable resource required to maintain safe vessel movements within the port and should only be used for the purpose that they are intended for or at the direction of the Harbour Master for marine safety reasons.

Fisherman Island container and vehicle carrier berths have bollards recently upgraded to 150 tonne SWL. With high windage vessels regularly calling, berthing perpendicular to the dominant wind forces, it is important that the vessel is moored safely. Whilst this responsibility lies with the Master, Pilots and terminals will provide support including recommended mooring arrangements. On boarding, pilots are to discuss the mooring plan and requirements with masters. It should be noted that bollards should only have a maximum of two mooring lines attached.

Storm Bollards are available at some berths however are not held at immediate readiness. If a master believes these may be required, VTS is to be contacted to discuss requirements.

Masters of ships fitted with hull rubbing bands, "Panama fenders" and other hull protrusions are warned of the particular risk of entrapment upon the wharf fenders.

3.11.2.1 Moorings - +300m LOA Container Ships

Outlined below are additional requirements for the mooring of container ships greater than 300m at Fisherman Island;

- The vessel is to be moored in accordance with approved plans issued by Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd.
- The mooring gang is to consist of a minimum of 6 personnel, including the supervisor. The mooring supervisor is to be equipped with a marine VHF radio, monitoring VHF channel 12 from 30mins prior to scheduled arrival to discuss the mooring sequence.
- The mooring personnel at the bow and stern are to be in communication with the mooring supervisor at all times via radio.
- Lines launch is required to support the arrival of the vessel.

3.11.3 Moorings – Above Pelican Banks

There is a risk of berth surge and interaction in the Brisbane River for berths above Pelican Banks. Berth surge is caused by a variety of environmental, poor mooring arrangements and overall vessel preparedness. The surge event is normally triggered by the berthed vessel being passed by another. A berth surge event can result in broken mooring lines, damaged gangways, impacts to the environment and injury to persons in the vicinity.

3.11.4 Berths prone to interaction

Berth surge is known to occur at the following terminals;

- Ampol Products
- Cement Australia
- Wagner
- BP Products
- Viva
- Quantem Liquid
- Incitec North
- Pinkenba Common User Berth

3.11.4.1 Requirements for all vessels alongside

Outlined below are the requirements for all vessels moored at the terminals listed at [3.11.4](#) to assist in reducing the risk of berth surge events.

- The ship is to maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 12
- The ship's agent is to provide VTS with an alternative contact telephone number if the vessel does not have the facilities to maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 12.
- VTS will call the ship at least 30 minutes prior to the passing of any large vessel; the call is to be acknowledged by the duty officer
- The ship is to ensure that all mooring lines and the gangway are tended before the other ship passes
- VTS may subsequently provide a broadcast if the passing vessel cannot maintain the operational speed limit and is required to pass at a higher speed for the purpose of steerage, particularly in high wind (above 20 knot) conditions.

3.11.4.2 Additional Requirements for Tankers alongside

In addition to the requirements listed at [3.11.4.1](#), the following applies to tankers berthed at terminals listed at 3.11.4

- a vessel handling bulk liquids is required to cease pumping; the manifolds on the ship and shore are to be closed during transit of such passing vessels

Terminals may apply to the Regional Harbour Master for approval to relax the above restriction following a thorough risk analysis and development of other mitigating strategies.

3.11.4.3 Requirements of passing vessel

- The following applies to vessels passing another at terminals listed at 0. scheduling will achieve a minimum separation of 30 minutes between consecutive passing movements of ships that are on a through transit of the area, for all berths between the Gateway Bridge and Pelican Banks
- note operational speed limit requirements at section 0.
- VTS will advise the transiting ship of the tidal current flow at 2F beacon
- wind speeds more than 20 knots, high windage ships and ships with critical steering speeds may attract additional restrictions
- VTS standard notifications to berthed ships and radio advisory calls still apply (Refer to 3.11.4.2).
- Anchoring

Ships are only to anchor in the area designated by VTS. Upon anchoring, ships are to advise VTS of their anchoring time and position. Ships at anchor in the area are to maintain a continuous listening watch on VHF channel 12 and are to report to VTS if dragging their anchor.

Ships are not [Permitted to Immobilise Main Engines](#) without the written approval of VTS.

3.12 Superyacht

On occasion, superyachts have transited above Hamilton Reach to moor in Town Reach. Each proposal is to be assessed by the RHM. The proposal will consider the suitability of the vessel, proposed location and timings of the movement. Listed below are examples of possible limitations that might be placed on this operation.

- Requirement for licenced pilot, regardless of length
- Daylight transit from/to mooring location.
- Mooring head down stream to allow quick departure in the event of extreme weather
- Vessel moored fore and aft to reduce impact on passing traffic.
- Arrival/departure from/to mooring location scheduled for slack water and clear of peak ferry operations

Mooring of Superyachts in the Town Reach temporarily suspended during infrastructure developments in the area.

3.13 Detained Vessels

Confirmed bookings for vessels under Port State Control detention will not be accepted until clearance from AMSA is received. This is to ensure efficient application of port resources. A tentative booking may be accepted to aid in future scheduling but no timings will be allocated.

3.14 Reporting defects

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) requires notification of any deficiencies or suspected deficiencies on ships visiting Australian ports. Deficiencies are to be reported to VTS via the QSHIPS programme and the Australian Maritime Safety Authority using [Form AMSA 355 – Defects Report](#) (report of suspected non-compliance with Navigation Act or safety/pollution conventions).

3.15 Small vessels navigating in and near shipping channels

Small vessels traversing the shipping channels between the Fairway Buoy to the Brisbane River are reminded of their obligations under the “collision regulations” in respect to navigating in narrow channels. A large vessel that is constrained by draft to navigate within the confines of the buoyed shipping channels has limited manoeuvring capability within these channels. Small vessels are therefore required to keep clear of or to the side of the channels and are not to impede the passage of large ships.

For reasons of safety, a recreational ship should only cross a shipping channel at recommended locations and at 90° to the channel (refer to MSQ Boating Maps, formerly Beacon to Beacon, Guides for recommended crossings).

A recreational ship equipped with VHF radio is required to maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 16 and either channel 12 or 13 depending on its area of operation.