

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 General

Welcome to Port Alma, the port of Rockhampton, the principal designated port for the handling of large quantities of Class 1 explosives and ammonium nitrate cargoes on the east coast of Australia.

Shipping legislation in Queensland is controlled by Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ), a state government agency attached to the Department of Transport and Main Roads, whose role is to protect Queensland's waterways and the people who use them by providing safer and cleaner seas.

The state of Queensland is divided up into six regions, five of which are controlled by a Regional Harbour Master (RHM) and the sixth by a manager, all officers of Maritime Safety Queensland who 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 aids to navigation
- 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 Gladstone Ports Corporation have responsibility for managing the safe and efficient operation of the port.

## 1.2 Port description

Port Alma is situated approximately 60 kilometres by road from the city of Rockhampton on the southern end of the Fitzroy River delta in position 23° 35'S, 150° 52'E. The principal cargoes handled are Class 1 explosives, ammonium nitrate, bulk tallow, fuel and military equipment for exercises held regularly at Shoalwater Bay to the north of Rockhampton.

## 1.3 Purpose

This document defines the standard procedures to be followed in the pilotage area of the port; it contains information and guidelines to assist ship's masters, owners, and agents of vessels arriving at and traversing the area. 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 in the document control sheet at the start of this manual. 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 the respective websites 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. [Gladstone Ports Corporation](#) 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  
Maritime Safety Queensland  
PO Box 123  
Gladstone Queensland 4680

Phone: +61 7 4971 5200

Fax: +61 7 4971 5212

Email: [RHMGladstone@msq.qld.gov.au](mailto:RHMGladstone@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 Modernised Australian Ship Tracking and Reporting System (MASTREP)

The Australian Ship Reporting system developed under Division 14 of the Navigation Act

### 1.5.3 AS 3846-2005 – Australian Standard

AS 3846 refers to the Australian requirements for the transport and handling of dangerous goods in port areas.

### 1.5.4 Estimated time of arrival (ETA)

The expected time of arrival at a designated place.

### 1.5.5 Estimated time of departure (ETD)

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

### **1.5.6 Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC)**

The Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) is owned by the Queensland government and is charged with overseeing the commercial activities in the port, including the maintenance of the port infrastructure.

### **1.5.7 Lowest astronomical tide (LAT)**

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

### **1.5.8 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.

### **1.5.9 Navigation Act**

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

### **1.5.10 Nett explosive mass (NEM)**

The NEM refers to the nett content of explosive material in any given amount or parcel of cargo (sometimes also referred to as the nett explosive content (NEC) or the nett explosive quantity (NEQ).

### **1.5.11 Non gas-free tankers (NGF)**

A tanker (includes OBO) which has not had its cargo tanks washed, vented and inspected, or been issued with a 'gas-free' certificate.

### **1.5.12 Length overall (LOA)**

Extreme length of the vessel.

### **1.5.13 Queensland Shipping Information Planning System (QSHIPS)**

An internet web based ship movement booking service that may be accessed by the shipping community – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The programme allows port service provider organisations the ability to accept service requests made by shipping agents and streamline ship movement planning by significantly reducing the existing levels of point to point communications that are necessary to ensure a planned ship movement has been adequately resourced with supporting services.

### **1.5.14 REEFREP**

The mandatory [ship reporting system](#) established by IMO Resolution MSC.52 (66), as amended by Resolution MSC.161 (78), and specified in ([Marine Orders](#)).

### **1.5.15 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.

### **1.5.16 Regional harbour master (RHM)**

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

### **1.5.17 Sailing time**

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

### **1.5.18 Vessel traffic service operator (VTSO)**

A person, suitably qualified, delegated by the Regional Harbour Master to monitor the safe movement of vessels and to give direction under the relevant provisions of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#).

### **1.5.19 Vessel traffic service (VTS)**

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

## **1.6 Contact information**

### **1.6.1 The Regional Harbour Master (RHM)**

For operational maritime questions, marine incidents, pollution, pilotage, buoy moorings, navigation aids and towage requirements please contact the Maritime Safety Queensland regional office.

The regional office is located at:

Physical address: Level 7, 21 Yarroon Street, Gladstone Queensland 4680  
Postal address: PO Box 123, Gladstone Queensland 4680  
Phone: +61 7 4971 5200  
Email: [rhmgladstone@msq.qld.gov.au](mailto:rhmgladstone@msq.qld.gov.au)

### **1.6.2 Harbour control – Gladstone VTS**

Harbour Control (Gladstone VTS) is situated at the Regional Harbour Master's office in Gladstone. For ship movement scheduling, pollution incidents and reporting defective navigation aids please direct initial enquiries to the harbour control centre.

Harbour Control (Gladstone VTS) is provided by Maritime Safety Queensland and provides a 24 hour, seven days a week marine operations service to the port community. The contact details are:

Call sign: Gladstone VTS  
VHF radio: VHF 13 and 16  
Phone: +61 7 4839 0208  
Email: [VTSGladstone@msq.qld.gov.au](mailto:VTSGladstone@msq.qld.gov.au)

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

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

## 1.6.3 Port authority

The primary function of the [Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited](#) (GPC), under the [Transport Infrastructure Act 1994](#), is to establish, manage and operate effective and efficient facilities and services within the port and maintaining appropriate levels of safety and security.

Phone: +61 7 4976 1333

Fax: +61 7 4972 3045

## 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 and ILO, 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 Port Alma.

Based on the [Port Alma 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 include the requirements of the:

- [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) and [Transport Operation \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#) (TOMSR)
- [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995](#) and [Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Regulation 2018](#) (TOMPR)
- International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code)
- Australian Standard – AS3846 – 2005
- 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:

- [Gladstone Ports Corporation](#) (GPC);
- [Rockhampton Regional Council](#) (RRC);
- [Maritime Safety Queensland](#) (MSQ);
- [Australian Maritime Safety Authority](#) (AMSA);
- [Australian Customs and Border Protection Service](#);
- [Department of Agriculture and Water Resources](#); and
- [Royal Australian Navy](#) (RAN).

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