

3. Movement notification and traffic procedures

3.1 General

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 scheduling of ship movements is initiated by the agent or representative submitting movement details for a vessel to Weipa VTS via the QSHIPS ship planning program in accordance with this section.

All vessels, whether commercial or recreational, are to maintain a listening watch on VHF16 and if equipped on VHF12, whilst within the Weipa Pilotage Area.

All vessels within the Weipa Pilotage Area are to listen out on VHF16 for announcements made by the Weipa Vessel Traffic Service, call sign "Weipa VTS" regarding movements within the port. These announcements will be advised on VHF16 and full details are given on VHF12.

3.2 Vessel Traffic Service (VTS)

Vessel traffic service is the principal tool by which the Regional Harbour Master manages the safe and efficient movement of vessel traffic approaching, departing and operating within the Weipa pilotage area.

Maritime Safety Queensland operates a Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) for the Port of Weipa. The VTS will operate with the callsign "Weipa VTS" and provides this service in accordance with IMO Resolution A.857 (20). VTS is delivered from the VTS centre at Cairns and is manned by trained and qualified vessel traffic service operators, under the management of the Manager (Vessel Traffic Service) and the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

In discharging this role, VTS will, within the declared VTS area provide a vessel traffic service in accordance with the guidelines set out by the International Maritime Organisation.

3.2.1 Weipa VTS area

The Weipa VTS Area is described as the area of:

- Waters bounded by an imaginary line Starting at the southern tip of Jantz Point
- then following the shoreline on an easterly direction at the high water mark into Pine River Bay at latitude 12°29.000' south longitude 141° 39.627' east,
- then east across the river to 12°29.00' south, longitude 141°43.709' east
- then following the shoreline on a south easterly direction at the high water mark to latitude 12°34.557' south, longitude 141°57.000' east,
- then south across the river to latitude 12°35.583' south, longitude 141°57.000' east
- then following the shoreline at the high water mark into Embley River at latitude 12°43.483' south, longitude 141°57.000' east,
- then south across the river to latitude 12°44.604' south, longitude 141°57.000' east
- then following the shoreline at the high water mark into Hey River to position latitude 12°53.400' south, longitude 141°56.787' east,
- across the river to latitude 12°53.400' south longitude 141°56.567' east,
- then west to latitude 12°53.400' south, longitude 141°55.764' east
- across the river to latitude 12°53.400' south, longitude 141°55.363' east

- then following the shoreline north at the high water mark to the mouth of the Hey River
- then following the shoreline at the high water mark south westerly to latitude 12° 57.121' south longitude 141° 36.026' east
- then north west to position latitude 12°16.291' south, longitude 141°33.668' east
- then on a northerly direction to Jantz point

Weipa VTS will interact with inbound shipping two hours prior to arrival at the external anchorages

The area covered by the VTS is shown in Appendix 16.9 - Weipa Vessel Traffic Service Area

3.3 VTS role

The role of the Cairns Vessel Traffic Service ('call sign: Weipa VTS') is to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of shipping within the VTS area, to ensure that a continual program of shipping movements can be affected to the advantage of all commercial shipping in an impartial manner.

Weipa VTS is situated at the Regional Harbour Master's office. For ship traffic scheduling, pollution and marine incidents and reporting defective navigation aids, direct initial enquiries to Weipa VTS.

The service is provided by Maritime Safety Queensland and provides a 24 hour, seven days a week marine operations service to the port community.

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.

3.4 VTS communications

Ships are not to move within the pilotage area unless satisfactory two-way communications are maintained with the VTS centre.

Weipa VTS maintains a continuous listening watch. Contact can also be made with the Regional Harbour Master's office and pilot station through Weipa VTS via VHF radio, telephone, facsimile and email.

Ships are required to establish two-way radio communications with the VTS centre on marine VHF channel 16 or VHF channel 12. The designated port VHF channel is to be used for the communication of all routine operational and safety information.

Communications:	Call sign	Service
VHF Channel 16	User	Emergency and initial calling
VHF Channel 12	Weipa VTS	Port operations/VTS
VHF Channel 8	User	Tug operations/working
VHF Channel 6	User	Tug operations/working

Table 3 – VTS communications

3.5 Language

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

3.6 Voice recordings

All voice communications with the VTS centre and all radio communications on the channels monitored, are recorded against a date and time stamp.

3.7 Distress and emergency

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

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

VHF radio:	channel 16 or 12
Phone:	+61 7 4033 3670
Fax:	+61 7 4052 7460

3.8 Prior notification of movements

Sections 168-169 of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#) require that all ship movements for vessels 35 m 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, if the vessel is new to the port a vessel nomination email accompanied by ships particulars, pilot card and wheel house poster may be required to determine suitability. In addition, vessels loading bauxite will require a DUKC stability data request (16.1) if the estimated departure draft will be greater than 10 m.
	24 hours prior to removal or departure	
Transport of dangerous goods in pilotage area	48 hours prior to entry	Dangerous Cargo Report
	Three hours prior to departure	
Loading, removal or handling of dangerous cargo alongside (includes bunkering)	24 hours prior to handling	Dangerous Cargo Report
Ship-to-ship transfer of dangerous cargo	24 hours prior to cargo transfer	Dangerous Cargo Report
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 4 – Prior notification of movements

3.9 Reporting defects

The [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulations 2016](#) requires the master of a ship that is

- underway and entering, or about to enter a pilotage area; or
- navigating a ship from a berth or anchorage,

must report to VTS by VHF radio details of damage to, defects and deficiencies in, the ship that could affect the safety of the ship, a person or the environment;

VTS will notify the Regional Harbour Master and AMSA of the damage to, defects and deficiencies.

In addition, 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 AMSA using AMSA forms 18 and 19. Reports of suspected non-compliance with Navigation Act or safety/pollution Conventions –

<https://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels-operators/general-incident-reporting/suspected-non-compliance-reporting-form>

Deficiencies are also to be reported to the Regional Harbour Master, VTS Centre.

Vessels without serviceable bridge equipment will not be allowed to enter the port until assessed and authorisation given by the Regional Harbour Master – Cairns.

3.9.1 Reporting Requirements – Arrival reporting requirements

All ships greater than 24m LOA shall obtain approval from Weipa VTS before entering, leaving or manoeuvring within the Weipa pilotage area.

All ships greater than 10m LOA and less than 24m LOA must advise Weipa VTS before entering, leaving or manoeuvring within the Weipa pilotage area.

The master of a ship entering, or about to enter the pilotage area must report to Weipa VTS by VHF radio according to the following table.

	Report	Information to report
1	<p>Ship master to VTS</p> <p>Two hours prior to entry into the pilotage area or for pilot exempt vessels two hours prior to fairway beacon (SC1 and SC2)</p> <p>Entry to VTS/Port limits</p>	<p>Ships name, position, fore & aft draft, changes to ship details, defects, ETA to pilot boarding ground</p> <p>Master advises VTS passing limits</p>
2	<p>VTS/pilot to ship master</p> <p>Pilot transfer instructions</p> <p>Anchoring instructions</p>	<p>Instructions will include boarding side, course, speed, ETA and anticipated conditions.</p> <p>Instructions will include anchorage allocation and latitude/longitude if required</p>
3	<p>Ship master to VTS</p> <p>Arrival at pilot boarding ground</p>	<p>Ships name, at pilot boarding ground, time of arrival</p>
4a	<p>Ship master to VTS</p> <p>On anchoring</p>	<p>Ships name, anchor position, time of anchoring.</p>
4b	<p>Ship master to VTS</p> <p>Departing anchorage</p>	<p>Ships name, anchor aweigh time</p>
5	<p>VTS/pilot to ship master</p> <p>Confirmation of pilot transfer and instructions for the ship</p>	<p>Instructions will include boarding side, course, speed, ETA and anticipated conditions.</p>
6	<p>Pilot to VTS</p>	<p>Ships name, pilot onboard, pilot onboard time, pilot name, ETA at entrance</p>

	Report	Information to report
	Pilot transfer (when the pilot transfer has been completed)	beacons, Ships fore and aft draft, changes to ship details
7	Pilot to VTS Entering Entrance Channel	Time ship abeam SC1/SC2 beacons
8	Ship master to VTS Secured alongside	Ships name, secured at (berth name), first line time, side to, all fast time

Table 5 – Inbound reporting requirements

Exempt masters must call Weipa VTS before proceeding past the pilot boarding place to obtain clearance before entering the channel and then report their movements as per the above table.

3.9.2 Departure and removal reporting requirements

The master of a ship that is departing, moving or about to depart or move within the pilotage area must report to Weipa VTS by radio according to the following table.

	Report	Information to report
1	Ship master/pilot to VTS Pilot on board and ship ready to depart (not less than 30 minutes prior to ETD)	Ships name, pilot on board time, pilot name, fore and aft drafts, changes to scheduled movements
2	Ship master/pilot to VTS Departing berth	Ships name, anchor aweigh/last line time, destination
3	Ship master /pilot VTS Exiting Entrance Channel	Time ship abeam SC1/SC2 Beacons
4	Ship master to VTS Pilot transfer (when the pilot transfer has been completed)	Ships name, pilot disembarked, pilot off time
5	Ship master to VTS Exiting port limits	Ships name, vessel clear of port limits

Table 6 – Outbound and removal reporting requirements

3.10 Movement scheduling

3.10.1 Confirmation of schedules

On receipt of a movement booking Weipa VTS will cross check tug, pilot bookings and other movements while verifying draft restricted vessels and NGF requirements when putting the schedule together.

3.10.2 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.

Changes requested by the master/agent to scheduled movements may be made via QSHIPS, phone or email and are to be communicated to the VTS centre and marine services as soon as practicable advising the revised schedule. Changes to the ship management database will be

made as they occur. Changes within 12 hours of the scheduled start time must be made by phone.

3.10.3 Ship movements priorities

The standard shipping priority guidelines, in order of precedence, for the movement of vessels in the Weipa pilotage area are:

- Any ship that is in an emergency situation shall have priority of movement and services over all others.
- Rio Tinto vessels arriving or departing from Lorim Point loading facility and Evans Landing fuel berth.
- Any ship whose movement is governed by tidal or navigational conditions.

Removals and/or departures booked first will usually be given preference over late or modified bookings.

Any conflict of vessel booking times that arises will be referred to the Regional Harbour Master for resolution.

3.11 Movement clearance notification

All ships require a clearance from the Regional Harbour Master in order to enter, depart or move within the pilotage area. It is the responsibility of the master or pilot to contact Weipa 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 Regional Harbour Master. Ships will require a new clearance for any subsequent movement.

Refer to arrival / departure and removal reporting requirement table for applicable timings

3.12 Master/pilot responsibilities

Masters and owners of vessels are responsible for due compliance with the provisions of *the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994* (the Act) and *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016* (the Regulation).

When a vessel is under the direction of a pilot, the pilot is responsible for due compliance with the provisions of the Act and Regulations, however the responsibility of the pilot does not relieve the master and the owner of a vessel of their responsibility.

Arising from these responsibilities is the obligation of persons directing the navigation of vessels to comply with directions of the Regional Harbour Master. The duty Vessel Traffic Service Operator (VTSO) is delegated to exercise the relevant functions of the Regional Harbour Master.

3.13 Shipping management contact details

Organisation	Telephone	Facsimile	Email
VTS centre	+07 4033 3670	07 4052 7460	vtscairns@msq.qld.gov.au
Regional Harbour Master (Cairns)	07 4052 7400	07 4052 7451	RHMCairns@msq.qld.gov.au
North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation	07 4069 7749	07 4069 7518	info@nqbp.com.au

Duty pilot	07 4041 4214	07 4040 6368	cns_pilot_duty@bigpond.com
Rio Tinto Weipa terminal	07 4069 8962		weipashipping@riotinto.com
Rio Tinto Marine Operations	07 4069 8336		weipamarineoperations@riotinto.com

Table 7 – Shipping management contact details