

7. Port navigation and movement restrictions

7.1 General

Draft figures are related to a draft in salt water of density 1025 kg/m³.

7.2 Speed

The [*Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016*](#) sections 81, 83, 84 and 85 apply and refer to ships not being operated at a speed of more than 6 knots when within 30 metres of any wharf, boat-ramp or pontoon, a vessel at anchor or moored or made fast to a jetty.

7.3 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% of the LOA and the propeller fully submerged. Vessels trimmed by the head or listing may be subject to restrictions and the Regional Harbour Master is to be informed when bookings are made. Ships not meeting trim requirements may experience considerable delays until the problem is rectified.

Masters 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.

7.4 Draft restrictions

Weather, tidal conditions or special circumstances, may require a departure from these guidelines.

7.4.1 Under keel clearance (UKC)

If a tidal window calculation is required, Gladstone VTS will require the following information in order to perform the necessary tidal window calculations. It includes:

- name of ship;
- date of arrival/departure/removal;
- earliest ETA/ETD/removal; and
- ship's draft.

Maximum arrival draft to berth Starboard side alongside is 6.4m + tide height – 0.9m UKC.

Maximum arrival draft to berth Port side alongside is 8.4m + tide height at HW+1:00 – 0.9m (1.2m for laden vessels >180m)UKC.

SST Maximum departure draft 8.4m + tide height – 0.9m UKC.

PST Maximum departure draft 6.4m + tide height – 0.9m UKC

Arrival draft to be confirmed with Regional Harbour Master's office prior to vessel's arrival.

7.5 Approaches to pilot boarding ground

The mouth of the Burnett River is situated on the west side of Hervey Bay, 46 nautical miles west of Sandy Cape. When approaching the coast, the position of the river entrance can be distinguished by the South Head lighthouse.

7.5.1 From the north

The coast should not be approached within five miles until South Head lighthouse bears 203° when course should be altered to make directly for the pilot boarding ground (Chart AUS 243).

7.5.2 From the south

Ships approaching from the south should keep more than one mile off the coast. After passing Sloping Hummock, (an isolated hill 97 metres high), steer for the Pilot Boarding Ground (Lat. 24° 45.6'S, Long. 152° 29.7'E) until South Head lighthouse bears 270° then alter course to bring Sea Reach leads into the white sector bearing 270°.

7.5.3 Dangers

- Shoal and sand banks – lie to the north of the Burnett River entrance and extend some 3 nautical miles seaward.
- Sea Reach – every precaution should be taken in navigating this cutting as strong currents can be experienced seaward of the lighthouse during and after periods of sustained strong winds. Pinnacles of rock are known to exist outside the limits of this cutting. Vessels should not be navigated over this foul ground.
- Cane Ferry Crossing – located upstream of the port in Long Reach adjacent to buoy No 26 and is marked by a light FI R. 3s, shown from the landing on the east bank. While the ferry is underway it exhibits the lights and shapes for a vessel restricted in its ability to manoeuvre as the towing cables obstruct the channel. Traffic may only pass when the vessel is alongside the bank when it exhibits the lights of a vessel at anchor. The ferry may be contacted on VHF channel 16.

Refer to [6.1](#) for information on tidal streams.

7.6 Entering the Burnett River

Ships should not attempt to enter the port without giving prior notice to the Regional Harbour Master (Gladstone); any alterations to ETA or ETD should be given in ample time. Ships entering the Burnett River should bring the white sector of the Sea Reach lead to bear 270° and enter the Sea Reach between beacons 1 and 2 maintaining mid channel until abeam beacon 14 where the ship is brought round to port to steady in the white sector of the Middle Reach leads, (course 252°). Approaching beacons 17 and 18 ship is again brought round to port to steady in the white sector of the Inner Reach leads (course 229°). After passing beacons number 20 and number 21, the ship enters the northern end of the swing basin. The ship should be brought around to port to bring the Long Reach leads in line bearing 169·7°, which longitudinally bisect the swing basin. From this position, the approaches to the berths are made, swinging the ship as required. The channel width of 103 metres requires close attention to maintaining mid channel and exposes ships to interactive forces with the channel sides. To seaward of the breakwater on the northern side of Sea Reach, the tide sets across the channel.

The flood tide sets to the south. Strong currents can be experienced to seaward of the lighthouse during and after prolonged periods of strong wind. Following heavy rain, fresh may

be observed in the river and silting may reduce the depths available in the channels, swing basin and berth pockets. Recent soundings of the port may be obtained from the Regional Harbour Master's office (Gladstone).

Dredges and other plants operating in the channels and cuttings may be contacted on VHF channel 12.

7.7 Small vessels navigating in narrow channels

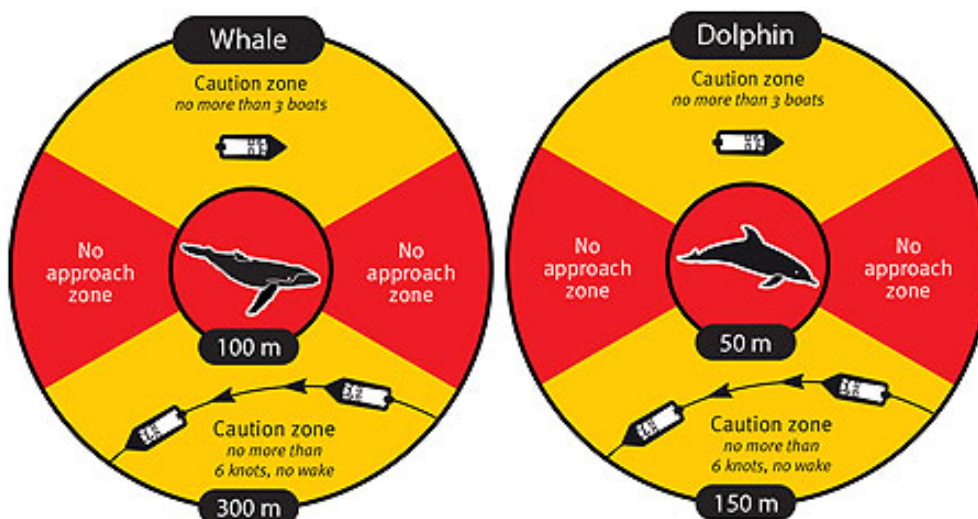
Small vessels traversing the shipping channels in Hervey Bay and the Burnett River are reminded of their obligations under the 'rules of the road' in respect to navigating in narrow channels. A large vessel that is constrained by draft to navigate within the confines of the buoyed shipping channels has 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. They must maintain a listening watch on VHF 13 at all times within the pilotage area. [Small craft ship navigation areas and recommended courses.](#)

7.8 Advisory Note – Interaction with Marine Mammals

The presence of whales or marine mammals indicates that our ports are seen as environmentally attractive places.

The safety of life and the security of the environment from ship based incidents is paramount.

All vessel masters are required to fully comply with relevant marine mammal legislation, such as the provisions of the [Nature Conservation \(Animals\) Regulation 2020 Chapter 6 Part 1](#) which prescribes minimum approach distances and maximum speeds within proximity to whales as illustrated in the diagram below.



When whales or marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of port areas and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, then every possible endeavour will be undertaken to manage shipping movements around the marine mammals to keep them safe, provided the safety of life, the ship and other environmental protection objectives are not threatened. Such action may include not commencing transits until the mammals are deemed clear.

In situations where a vessel is underway and restricted in its ability to manoeuvre or constrained to a channel and marine mammals are reported in the vicinity of the transit and a risk to marine mammals is perceived, the master must take all reasonable action necessary to keep them safe, without endangering the vessel, crew and the environment. Such action may include the reduction of speed to the minimum safe speed to safely navigate the channels.

Masters are required to report collisions with marine mammals to VTS and Department of Environment and Science **1300 130 372**

[Marine wildlife strandings | Environment, land and water | Queensland Government](#)

References:

Nature Conservation (Wildlife Management) Regulation 2006 part 5A, Sections 338A to 338L.

North East shipping Management Plan- Sections 5.5, 5.6 and 9.5

7.9 Personnel transfers to and from vessels using Pilot or combination ladders

Personnel transfers to and from vessels is an inherently dangerous evolution and should only be undertaken after personnel who will be using the Pilot or combination ladder have been thoroughly briefed. Most personnel, including seafarers, are not practised or experienced in ascending or descending the ladders.

AMSA have released [Marine Notice 06/2021](#) in reference to fatal accidents from falling off Pilot ladders. This Notice refers to some earlier documents that should also be consulted with respect to personnel transfers:

[Marine Safety Bulletin Issue 10 – Sep 2019 – Safe Vessel Access](#)

[Marine Notice 4/2023 – Pilot Transfer Arrangements](#)

Personnel Transfers within the Port Limits of Bundaberg are as a minimum to meet the following requirements:

- Daylight only;
- Head Protection (not a construction helmet) to be worn. An example is [Helmets - Petzl Other | Professional](#);
- Auto inflating lifejacket; and
- Back packs and effects are to be passed by heaving line, not on person.

7.10 Personnel transfers to and from vessels underway

Due to the inherent risks associated with transferring personnel to and from vessels that are underway, the only approved transfers while under way within the pilotage area are for Marine Pilots when joining and departing from vessels. No other personnel transfers are to occur without the express approval from the Regional Harbour Master.

7.11 Harbour Transits – fuel changeover (trade vessels)

To ensure that vessels' machinery remains in a stable operating condition throughout their visit to the Port of Bundaberg, fuel changeover on dual/multi-fuelled engines and generators is prohibited:

- From two hours prior to passing the fairway buoy on entry to the harbour to the vessel's securing at berth.
- From two hours prior to departure from berth until departure from the pilotage area.

These requirements take precedence over those relating to safe engine configuration for pilotage which can be found at <https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/shipping/establishing-safe-engine-configuration>