

8. Pilotage

8.1 General

There is no exemption from pilotage applicable to the offshore coal loading facility. Services of a port pilot must be employed for all shipping movements at this facility.

Consideration may be given for an exemption from pilotage for the Materials Offloading Facility (MOF) at Abbot Point and the main wharf located at Edgecombe Bay, Bowen.

The Abbot Point pilotage area is the area of—

- (a) waters bounded by an imaginary line drawn—
 - starting at the high-water mark on the eastern shoreline of the mainland at longitude 147° 59.07' east
 - then north to latitude 19° 47.91' south, longitude 147° 59.07' east
 - then east to latitude 19° 47.91' south, longitude 148° 08.07' east
 - then in a south-easterly direction to the high-water mark at the northern tip of Gloucester Head on Gloucester Island
 - then in a southerly direction by the high-water mark along the western shoreline of Gloucester Island to the southern tip of the island
 - then to the high-water mark on the northern tip of Cape Gloucester on the mainland
 - then by the high-water mark along the shoreline of the mainland to the intersection of the high-water mark and the northern edge of the wharf at Bowen (latitude 20° 01.05' south, longitude 148° 14.91' east)
 - then 123° (T) by a straight line to the port entrance beacon to Bowen Boat Harbour (latitude 20° 01.34' south, longitude 148° 15.39' east)
 - then 106° (T) by a straight line to the high-water mark at the southern tip of Dalrymple Point
 - then along the shoreline of the mainland at the high-water mark to the starting point; and
- (b) the navigable waters of rivers and creeks flowing, directly or indirectly, into the waters mentioned in paragraph (a).

The Abbot Point Compulsory pilotage area (section 16.1) is described in Schedule 3 of the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016 as “All of the Abbot Point pilotage area”.

Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 section 99

A person must not navigate a ship in a compulsory pilotage area unless the person uses the services of a pilot.

Maximum penalty – 200 penalty units

8.2 Night pilotage

The Port of Abbot Point is open for pilotage 24 hours per day.

8.3 Request for pilot

The requirements of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#) shall be observed for all bookings. Port of Townsville provides a pilotage service for ship arrivals, departures and removals. All pilot transfers are carried out by pilot launch. Requests for pilotage

services are described in [QSHIPS \(Queensland Shipping Information Planning System\)](#) booking procedures.

8.3.1 Notice required

Ships requiring the services of a pilot are required to submit arrival, removal and departure notices no less than the indicated number of hours prior to the desired movement:

- Arrivals: 48 hours
- Removals: 24 hours
- Departures: 24 hours

Updates to the pilot boarding time should be sent at 12 hours and six hours prior to arrival.

8.4 Pilot Transfers

Pilot transfer instructions will be given by Abbot Point VTS to the ship two hours prior to pilot boarding.

The instruction shall include:

- Pilot boarding time
- Restriction/Requirements (by the Regional Harbour Master)
- Boarding position

Boarding and disembarkation is generally undertaken with the ship underway proceeding at a Safe speed and providing a good lee.

Pilot transfer instructions from the Pilot vessel may be given to the ship if the Pilot determines the requirement to do so and may include:

- Desired course and speed to conduct the transfer
- Stopping of Engines, and so on

Master must comply if safe to do so and must not obstruct another vessel manoeuvring in the vicinity.

8.4.1 Pilot Boarding Place

For berthing, the pilot will board in position latitude 19° 47.5' S, longitude 148° 03.5' E ([16.2 Pilot Boarding Place](#)).

Ships must proceed to the pilot boarding place at the notified time of pilot boarding as instructed by Abbot Point VTS.

8.4.2 Pilot Disembarkation Place

On departure pilot will disembark in the vicinity of Latitude: 19° 48.5' S; longitude: 148° 06.9' E

8.4.3 Pilot Transfer arrangements

All preparations shall be completed prior to the pilot boarding time; in accordance with the instructions in this section

Ships pilot ladders must comply with the requirements of SOLAS CH V – Regulation 23 – Pilot Transfer Arrangements Resolution A.1045(27).

Ships must complete the Pilot Ladder Checklist (see Section 16.8). The checklist must be submitted port duty officer and VTS Townsville at least 24 hours prior to arrival.

Reference should also be made to [Marine Notice 04/2023 Pilot transfer arrangements](#) and [Pilot Boarding Ladder Arrangement](#)

8.5 Passage planning – bridge resource management (BRM)

The master and pilot should exchange information regarding navigational procedures, local conditions and rules and the ship's characteristics. The proposed manoeuvre should be well discussed with the master and any doubts/queries he/she may have should be resolved prior to commencement of pilotage. The exchange of information should include at least:

- The presentation of a completed standard pilot card (by ship). In addition, information should be provided on rate of turn at different speeds, turning circles, stopping distances and, if available other appropriate data.
- General agreement on plans and procedures including contingency plans for the anticipated passage ([Pilotage – Abbot Point passage plan](#))
- Discussion of any special conditions such as weather, depth of water, tidal currents and marine traffic that may be expected during the passage.
- Discussion of any unusual ship-handling characteristics, machinery difficulties, navigational equipment problems or crew limitations that could affect the operation, handling or safe manoeuvring of the ship.
- Information on berthing arrangements; use, characteristics and numbers of tugs and other external facilities.
- Information on mooring arrangements.
- Confirmation of the language to be used on the bridge (normally English) and with external parties.

Any passage plan is a basic indication of preferred intention and both pilot and Master should be prepared to depart from it when circumstances so dictate.

8.5.1 Departure route

All ships departing the Abbot Point terminal berth 1 and berth 2, port of Abbot Point must proceed to a pilot disembarking place in position latitude 19° 48.500' S, longitude 148° 06.900' E, where the pilot will disembark.

All ships are further directed to proceed in an Easterly direction to position Latitude 19° 48.500' S, Longitude 148°15.000' E in the 2way route; and

- then in a Northerly direction, around the Abbot Point anchorages to join the 2way route if proceeding North; or
- continue along the 2way route if proceeding South.

Refer: s16.3 – map C10 - 37

8.6 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 Regulation, 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.

8.6.1 Fatigue management

Port of Townsville provides professional pilotage services for the port of Abbot Point. The service is provided on a 24 hour basis but is not an 'on-demand' service. A pilot fatigue management plan is followed to ensure that adequately rested pilots are assigned to ships.

8.6.2 Alcohol consumption

The [*Transport Operations \(Road Use Management\) Act 1995*](#) section 79 requires that persons in charge of ships have a zero blood alcohol reading. The Queensland Water Police periodically conduct random breath tests of masters and pilots on ships arriving at Abbot Point, or about to depart. Severe penalties apply to infringements.

8.7 Pilotage delays

A delay fee is payable if the programmed ship movement is delayed for more than 30 minutes but not more than one hour for the first hour. If the ship is delayed for more than one hour but not more than two hours, then for each of the first two hours; a delay in excess of two hours constitutes a cancellation. These charges can be found in section 21 of Schedule 6 Part 2 Division 3 of the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016*](#).

8.8 Pilotage requirements for Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef (GBR)

All merchant vessels 70 metres in length and over and all oil, gas and chemical tankers irrespective of size are required to take a licensed marine pilot when transiting the Torres Strait and Great North East Channel. Pilotage is also required for these vessels transiting the Inner Route from Cape York to Cairns Roads and for transit of Hydrographers Passage.