

10. Work permits

10.1 General

In order to be able to perform certain work on ships in the port masters, owners or their agents must first apply for and obtain the necessary permits before that work can proceed. Applications for approval by the harbour master must be submitted via the QSHIPS program and by fax or email to the relevant authorities; the required terms and conditions are completed by the Maritime Safety Queensland regional office and the agent may then print off the completed permit for passing to the master of the applicable vessel. Refer to the [port authority port notices](#) for further information.

- Hot works – on or within facilities or ships;
- Bunkering;
- Immobilising a ship;
- Operation of propellers at a wharf;
- Ship to ship/shore transfer operations;
- Lifeboat drills; and
- Night Fuel Transfers.

Table 12 Permit requests

Who	To	Permit	When	Comments
All ships	Ports North	Overside work	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Ports North, copy to RHM via email.
All tankers	RHM/ Ports North	Tankers at non tanker berths	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to RHM and Ports North – must be certified as gas free by an independent chemist on approved form.
All ships	RHM	Lifeboat drill	Prior to event	Lodged to RHM via email and QSHIPS
All ships	Ports North	Hot work	48 hours prior to arrival	Lodged to Ports North, copy to RHM via QSHIPS

Who	To	Permit	When	Comments
All ships	RHM/ Ports North	Engine trials	Prior to event	Lodged to Ports North via QSHIPS and email to RHM.
All ships	RHM/ Ports North	Immobilisation	24 hrs prior to event	Lodged to RHM via QSHIPS or to Ports North
All ships	RHM	Immobilisation at anchor	24 hrs prior to event	Lodged to RHM via QSHIPS
All tankers	RHM	Gas free declaration	48 hours prior to arrival	Declared by master on approved form, lodged to RHM.
All Ships	Ports North/ RHM	Night Fuel Transfer	24 hours prior to event	Lodged to RHM and Ports North

Legend for the comments section above:

RHM Regional Harbour Master

FNQPC Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited

10.2 Work Permit Description

10.2.1 Immobilisation main engines

Ships wishing to immobilise main engines must lodge an application via QSHIPS, through their agent, to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) and to the port authority via email or fax at least 24 hours prior to the requested immobilisation.

Master's wishing to immobilise main engines are to state, when seeking approval, the estimated time to make main engines operational in an emergency. In the event main engines would not be available within a reasonable amount of time the Master is to supply a risk assessment and contingency plan to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) for approval.

Ships are not to immobilise main engines until they have received permission from the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

Permission may not be given for more than 24 hours during the cyclone season (November to April) or more than 48 hours during the rest of the year

Masters are to contact Cairns VTS on VHF 16/12 prior to commencement and again on completion of immobilisation of main engines.

10.2.2 Hot work permit

Ships wishing to carry out repairs and any form of metal work, which includes performing hot work, must lodge an application in writing with the Port Authority, Ports North Qld, via the online web portal.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

Once approval has been granted by the relevant port authority, the ship's agent is to lodge an advice via QSHIPS to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns).

Masters are to contact Cairns VTS on VHF 16/12 prior to commencement and again on completion of any such hot works.

10.2.3 Boat drills

Ships wishing to put boats in the water for painting, maintenance purposes or to carry out lifeboat drills, must first obtain clearance from the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns) and the Port Authority, Ports North Qld via the online web portal.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

This clearance is to be obtained by the vessel's agent.

The ship's agent is to lodge an advice via QSHIPS to the Regional Harbour Master (Cairns)

Masters are requested to contact Cairns VTS on VHF channel 16/12 prior to commencement and again on completion of such drills when the boats have been returned on board and secured

10.2.4 Notification of handling of bulk liquids/Night fuel transfer

Under the [*Transport Operations \(Marine Pollution\) Act 1995*](#) Maritime Safety Queensland is both the statutory and combat agency for response to all ship sourced oil spills. It is therefore a requirement for owners/agents or masters of vessels to notify Maritime Safety Queensland of the intention to load, unload or transfer any form of bulk liquids to, from or between vessels. Such notification is required to be lodged with Cairns VTS via QSHIPS and the port authority, Ports North Qld, via the online web portal

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

For the purposes of this notification, it would be deemed that the liquids will be transferred by pipeline to, from or between vessels.

The operations of bunkering and the pumping of sullage/sludge from vessels, by road, barge or ship transfer, are to be included within this notification.

Masters of vessels conducting bulk liquid transfers, as specified above, are required to notify Cairns VTS on VHF channel 12 of the time of commencement of such transfer/bunkering operation and again the time when the operation is completed.

10.2.5 Overside maintenance work

For environmental reasons, the port authority has strict guidelines on the performance of outside maintenance work on ships within the port limits. Ships wishing to undertake outside maintenance work must:

- Comply with the conditions spelt out in the port authority port notice – outside maintenance; and
- Lodge a request, with the port authority, Ports North Qld, via the online web portal for permission to undertake outside work; when granted, masters must comply with the conditions of the permit.

<https://www.portsnorth.com.au/srp/forms-permits/permit-to-work/>

10.2.6 Gas free status

A tanker or products carrier will be regarded as non-gas free unless a gas free declaration has been received at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

The declaration must include the following:

- Whether the ship is carrying any IMDG class 3 cargo (flammable liquid or gas cargo on board in bulk);
- Empty cargo tanks have been washed, vented and are free of hazardous residues;
- The atmosphere in each cargo tank or residue space has been tested with an explosimeter and a zero reading has been obtained;
- Slop tanks and pump rooms are free of hazardous residues;
- An explosive gas detector meter is held on board and calibrated correctly;
- A current copy of the ISGOTT manual is held on board; and
- Maintain a zero gas reading for the atmosphere in each pump room, cargo tank or residue space.

The declaration should be forwarded to the Regional Harbour Master and VTS centre. Once the above requirements have been satisfied the Regional Harbour Master shall determine the ship's gas-free status for movement purposes and forward written confirmation to the agent and the port authority as appropriate (see Appendix 16.4).

The Regional Harbour Master (Cairns), on receipt of the gas-free declaration, will amend QSHIPS to reflect confirmation of gas-free status. This information is recorded and restrictions on movements of the ship with regard to being non-gas free are lifted.

Failure to comply may result in the ship being considered non-gas free until an approved industrial chemist has tested the spaces, declared the ship to be gas free and issued a gas free certificate. The declaration should be forwarded to the Regional Harbour Master and VTS centre. Once the above requirements have been satisfied the Regional Harbour Master shall determine the ship's gas-free status for movement purposes and forward written confirmation to the agent and the port authority as appropriate.