

8. Pilotage

8.1 General

The [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Act 1994](#) specifies that, unless a current Pilotage Exemption Certificate (PEC) is held by the Master of a ship, pilotage is compulsory in the “Compulsory Pilotage Area” for:

- a ship that is 50m or more in length
- a vessel towing another vessel where the combined length of the vessels is 50 metres or more
- a ship whose owner or Master requests the services of a pilot; and
- a ship whose owner or Master is directed by the RHM to use the services of a pilot.

8.2 Night pilotage

The Port of Hay Point is open for pilotage 24 hours per day, weather and tidal conditions permitting.

8.3 Request for pilot

The requirements of the [Transport Operations \(Marine Safety\) Regulation 2016](#) shall be observed for all bookings. North Queensland Bulk Ports provides a pilotage service for ship arrivals, departures and removals. Pilot transfers are carried out by pilot helicopter (primary means) and launch (secondary).

Requests for pilotage services are described in the QSHIPS booking procedures ([Section 3.6](#)).

8.3.1 Notice required

Ships requiring the services of a pilot are required to submit Arrival, Removal & Departure notices no less than the indicated number of hours prior to the desired movement:

Arrivals..... 48 hours

Removals..... 24 hours

Departures..... 24 hours

Initial notification should be made via the [QSHIPS](#) website:

8.4 Pilotage area limits

Pilotage areas are fully described in section 4.4 [Pilotage area limits](#)

Vessels must not approach closer to the berths than the pilot boarding positions, without a port pilot on board.

8.5 Pilot boarding position

There are two pilot boarding areas in positions:

Pilot Boarding Areas		
Area Bravo	21° 13.3' S	149° 21.2' E
Area Charlie	21° 17.35' S	149° 22.50' E

Table 21 - Pilot Boarding Position

Hay Point VTS will instruct the vessel as to which boarding place they are to proceed to, based on the berth and direction alongside. Generally, ships should be making way at the pilot boarding place for pilot embarkation and follow instructions from Hay Point VTS. During pilot transfer operations instructions from either pilot helicopter or launch must be fully complied with (see 16.2 [Pilot boarding areas](#)).

8.6 Pilot boarding arrangements

Pilot transfer by helicopter is conducted in accordance with the ICS 'Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations', [AMSA Marine Order 57](#).

Reference should also be made to [Pilot transfer arrangements 04/2023](#) and [Marine order 57—Helicopter operations](#).

The master of a ship, to or from which a pilot is transferring by helicopter, must give the Regional Harbour Master (via VTS) all information necessary to determine the suitability of the ship for landing the helicopter.

Pilot transfers are carried out by pilot helicopter (primary means) and launch (secondary). Ships with a suitable clear landing area and flight path (Refer 8.6.1 below) will generally board and disembark the pilot by helicopter. During periods of restricted visibility or other unsuitable flying conditions, helicopter operations will cease.

When conditions prohibit helicopter transfer, the pilot will transfer by pilot launch. Reference should be made to [16.15 Required Boarding Arrangements for Pilot Launch](#) which draws the attention of mariners to amendments to SOLAS Chapter V/23 when boarding by pilot launch.

The pilot will board the vessel at the nominated time for an inbound movement approximately 30 minutes prior to the commencement of an outward pilotage movement.

Note: Helicopter is by Land on only. There is no Winching at this port.

8.6.1 Helicopter preparation

Ships must comply with the rules set out in [NQB Pilot Helicopter safety sheet Hay Point](#) and complete [Pilot Helicopter \(Landing\) Operations \(Primary Helicopter - EC135\)](#) (All ships should be familiar with the requirements of the ICOS 'Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations' and the requirements for [Helicopter Operations under Marine Order part 57](#)).

8.6.2 Pilot Launch Boarding Arrangements

Pilot transfer instructions will be advised to the ship prior to the pilot boarding by Hay Point VTS. The instructions may include:

- Pilot boarding time,
- Restrictions/requirements (by the Regional Harbour Master),
- Boarding position,
- Desired course and speed to conduct the transfer (this is best done by the pilot or the pilot launch).

Ships are to be at the pilot boarding place at the notified time of pilot boarding, with all preparations for boarding completed in accordance with the instructions in this section. The Master is to listen to instructions from the pilot launch in regard to any changes in course or speed to allow helicopter landing or take off.

If pilot transfer by launch, ships should be underway, proceeding at 6 knots and providing a good lee. The pilot ladder is to be rigged 2 metres above the water, with two manropes and a heaving line standing by. At night, a forward-facing light is required to illuminate the ladder in accordance with IMO requirements and IMPA recommendations. ([16.15 Required Boarding Arrangements for Pilot Launch](#))

8.6.3 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. This information should be a continuous process that generally continues for the duration of the pilotage.

The proposed manoeuvre should be well discussed with the master and any doubts/queries they 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 ([Hay Point arrival passage plans](#) and [Hay Point departure passage plans](#)).
- 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, mooring boats 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.

8.7 Pilot Licence

A person must hold a pilot licence with a pilotage area endorsement for Hay Point in order to have the conduct of a ship within the compulsory pilotage area. The master of a regularly visiting Australian registered ship may hold an exemption from pilotage for his specific vessel in conjunction with a pilotage area endorsement for Hay Point.

8.7.1 Licence Examination

The standard for licensing and training of marine pilots has been included in state legislation. A copy of the document, 'Licensing and Training of Marine Pilots in Queensland', is available upon request through Maritime Safety Queensland.

The examination shall consist of local knowledge exam, practical assessment oral and written sections to enable applicants to fully understand the functions, duties and responsibilities of the role of a pilot, with particular emphasis on the safe handling of ships under all circumstances.

8.7.2 Examination for Exemption

The examination for licence will include an assessment to determine the candidate's ability to safely conduct the navigation of a ship without a pilot whilst within the pilotage area.

The examination will consist of a local knowledge exam, blind chart and oral components. Applicants will be expected to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of port procedures and the ability to navigate a ship through the pilotage area and port without the aid of navigational charts.

8.7.3 Cancellation of Licenses

A licence may be cancelled or suspended when major port changes or developments are taking place. It may also occur where masters fail to comply with port procedures.

8.8 Master/Pilot Responsibilities

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

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 in relation to the navigational conduct of the vessel, 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 RHM. The duty VTSSO is delegated to exercise the relevant functions of the RHM.

Whilst every effort is made to maintain schedule integrity, safe movements are the priority. Once boarded, an allocated pilot may make a further safety assessment which could result in a movement being unable to be completed. In this case, the movement will still incur a full pilotage fee.

8.8.1 Fatigue management

Pilotage services are provided to the port of Hay Point on a 24-hour scheduled basis utilising the QSHIPS system. A pilot Fatigue Management Plan is followed to ensure that adequately rested pilots are assigned to ships and adequate notice of shipping movements is a base requirement of fatigue management. Hay Point licensed pilots also work at the port of Mackay.

8.8.2 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, or about to depart. Severe penalties apply to infringements.

8.9 Pilotage Requirements for Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef (GBR)

For information on pilotage requirements for Torres Strait and Great Barrier Reef (GBR) refer to; [Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service \(Maritime Safety Queensland\) \(msq.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/great-barrier-reef-and-torres-strait-vessel-traffic-service).