

Revised Pilotage Requirements for Torres Strait

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to advise ship-owners and operators of new requirements for pilotage in the Torres Strait to be introduced by the Australian and Papua-New Guinean governments in 2006.

On 22 July 2005, the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee approved the extension of the Great Barrier Reef Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) to include the Torres Strait. As one of the associated protective measures for the area, the Committee also adopted Australia's proposal to extend the system of pilotage within the Great Barrier Reef to the Torres Strait. Australia has operated a system of compulsory pilotage within the Great Barrier Reef since 1991.

These decisions are reflected in IMO Resolution MEPC.133(53), which recommends that Governments recognize the need for effective protection of the Torres Strait and inform ships flying their flag that they should act in accordance with Australia's system of pilotage for merchant ships 70m in length and over or oil tankers, chemical tankers, and liquefied gas carriers, irrespective of size, when navigating the Torres Strait and the Great North East Channel.

Amendments to the Commonwealth *Navigation Act 1912* (the Act) make it an offence under new section 186I to navigate in a compulsory pilotage area without a pilot.

A new compulsory pilotage area for the Torres Strait will be specified in Marine Orders Part 54 and further details of that area are reproduced below. Significant penalties will apply to a master or owner who fails to comply with the compulsory pilotage requirements in the Navigation Act and Marine Orders Part 54.

Under the new requirements, section 186J of the Act will require the pilot to provide a certificate to the master in the approved form specifying details about the completed piloted voyage before disembarking the ship. Such a certificate will provide an owner and master evidence that they engaged a pilotage service and complied with the compulsory pilotage requirements of the Act.

In certain circumstances, a master or owner may apply to AMSA to seek an exemption from the requirement to navigate with a pilot in a compulsory pilotage area – see section 186K of the Act and provision 11 of Marine Orders Part 54. The latter will shortly be made available on the AMSA internet site, www.amsa.gov.au.

The compulsory pilotage requirements under the Act and Marine Orders Part 54 will complement the existing pilotage requirements under the *Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act 1975* concerning pilotage through the Great Barrier Reef.



The new requirements concerning pilotage will commence on 06 October 2006.

Owners, operators, or Masters of vessels which routinely use Torres Strait routes, but are not currently engaging pilots to do so, are encouraged to make at least two piloted transits before 06 October. This will allow the masters to become familiar with the pilots' operating procedures.

Application

Marine Orders Part 54 specifies the Torres Strait as a Compulsory Pilotage Area in the following terms,

The Torres Strait Pilotage Area is bound on the south by the line of latitude 10° 41' S, and on the north by Australia's EEZ, and divided into the following two parts: ([see map](#)).

Torres Strait Pilotage Area A is bound by the longitudes 141° 50' E and 142° 05' E.

Torres Strait Pilotage Area B is bound by the longitudes 142° 05' E and 143° 24' E.

The application is as follows:-

All vessels of 70 metres or more in overall length, and all loaded tankers, chemical tankers and liquefied gas carriers, except defence force vessels, when transiting through Torres Strait Pilotage Area A with a draught of 8 metres or more must have a pilot on board.

All vessels (irrespective of draught) of 70 metres or more in overall length, and all loaded tankers, chemical tankers and liquefied gas carriers, except defence force vessels, when transiting through Torres Strait Pilotage Area B must have a pilot on board.

Pilot Boarding Places PBP

Vessels requiring a pilot are to arrange for the pilot to board at the following locations: East-bound vessels of draught of 8 metres or more:-

Booby Island 10° 36'.30 S, 141° 49'.80 E

East-bound vessels of draught less than 8 metres:-

Goods Island 10° 33'.90 S, 142° 04'.40 E

West-bound vessels:-

Dalrymple Island 09° 34'.00 S, 143° 24.50 E

Masters of east-bound vessels with a draught of less than 8 metres can request the services of a pilot from Booby Island if they wish to do so.

Navigation

Vessels embarking a pilot for a transit of Torres Strait must carry the following Aus charts fully corrected to the latest Notices to Mariners:

Aus 289, Aus 292, Aus 293, Aus 296, Aus 839 and Aus 840.

These charts may be obtained from authorised Australian chart agents, (listed at www.hydro.gov.au) and UKHO Admiralty chart agents, (listed at www.ukho.gov.uk).

Vessels relying on ECDIS must use the following ENC cells produced by the Australian Hydrographic Office:-

AU 411141, AU 499142, AU 411143, AU 410143, AU 410144.

ENC cells are available from the International Centre for ENC's (IC-ENC) appointed Value Added Resellers (VARs), for details see www.ic-enc.org

Pilotage Providers

Pilots licensed by AMSA to pilot vessels through Torres Strait are provided by two Australian companies:-

Australian Reef Pilots Pty Ltd
Torres Pilots Pty Ltd

operations@reefpilots.com.au
operations@torrespilots.com.au

Additional Information

Queries on the amendments to the pilotage requirements for Torres Strait may be addressed to AMSA Manager Ship Operations & Qualifications, phone 02 6279 5908, fax 02 6279 5056 or via the internet using the [Contact Us](#) query tool on the AMSA site www.amsa.gov.au

Clive Davidson
Chief Executive Officer
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Australian Maritime Safety Authority
GPO Box 2181
CANBERRA ACT 2601

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www.amsa.gov.au

142°00'E

142°30'E

143°00'E



TORRES STRAIT PILOTAGE AREA

The Torres Strait Pilotage Area is bound on the south by the line of latitude 10° 41' S, and on the north by Australia's EEZ, and divided into the following two parts:

Torres Strait Pilotage Area A is bound by the longitudes 141° 50' E and 142° 05' E

Torres Strait Pilotage Area B is bound by the longitudes 142° 05' E and 143° 24' E

All vessels of 70 metres or more in overall length, and all loaded tankers, chemical tankers and liquefied gas carriers, except defence force vessels, when transiting through Torres Strait Pilotage Area A with a draught of 8 metres or more must have a pilot on board.

All vessels (irrespective of draught) of 70 metres or more in overall length, and all loaded tankers, chemical tankers and liquefied gas carriers, except defence force vessels, when transiting through Torres Strait Pilotage Area B must have a pilot on board.

Darlymple Island pilot boarding ground

10°00'S

10°00'S

10°30'S

10°30'S

141° 50' E

142° 05' E

143° 24' E

Varzin

Gannet

* Booby Island

Booby Island pilot boarding ground

Prince of Wales Channel

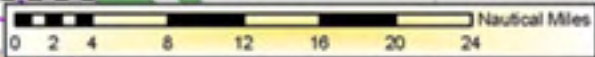
Goods Island pilot boarding ground

10° 41' S

Great North East Channel

Great North East Channel

Great North East Channel



Legend

- Pilotage Limits
- Routing Measures

142°00'E

142°30'E

143°00'E