

Towage Services Priority Policy

1. Application

The below policy is applicable to all ports Statewide.

2. Objective

The objective of this Towage Services Priority Policy is to assist TasPorts to facilitate trade for the benefit of Tasmania, in accordance with TasPorts' statutory objectives, by:

- providing a safe and efficient towage service across Tasmania's Major Commercial Ports, and
- supporting trading or commercial activities at other Tasmanian ports with towage services from time to time where required and practicable to do so.

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the "Major Commercial Ports" are:

- Port of Burnie
- Port of Devonport
- Port of Bell Bay
- Port of Hobart

4. Background

TasPorts is required to maintain tugs at, or proximate to, each of the Major Commercial Ports in order for those tugs to be available to provide harbour towage and emergency response.

Those services are essential for the operation of the Major Commercial Ports, and the commercial trade carried out at the Major Commercial Ports, which is vital for the State of Tasmania.

As at the date of this policy, TasPorts has approximately two tugs generally stationed at each of the Major Commercial Ports.

From time to time, TasPorts also receives requests for towage services outside of the Major Commercial Ports, including for salvage, coastal towage, offshore platforms, exploration equipment, and barge towage.

5. Priorities

In prioritising customers' requirements for towage services, TasPorts will follow the following principles and procedures, subject to the Exceptions set out below.

1. The availability of towage services is subject to operational matters, TasPorts' policies and procedures (including Port Procedures, Berthing Priorities and Harbour Master Instructions), requirements or advice of the Marine and Safety Authority (MAST) and any other legal or regulatory requirements.

2. TasPorts will consider the requirements of multiple users in determining the prioritisation of towage services, having regard to TasPorts' objective of facilitating trade for the benefit of Tasmania.
3. Towage services required at the Major Commercial Ports (including necessary tug standby) will be given priority over towage services to be provided at other ports, coastal waters and other locations outside the Major Commercial Ports.
4. Subject to the terms of this policy, TasPorts will use its best endeavours to relocate tugs from Major Commercial Ports to other ports when required by customers to facilitate trade and other commercial activities for the benefit of Tasmania.

6. Booking towage services outside the Major Commercial Ports

Towage services required for other ports (outside the Major Commercial Ports) must be booked into TasPorts' Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) seven (7) days prior to the required time.

VTS will confirm the towage resource availability five (5) days prior to the requested towage service.

TasPorts will advise as soon as practicable if a towage service cannot be performed at the requested time.

7. Practical examples

Example 1:

- Towage Services are requested to support the movement of three fish cages at Dover on 20 November with a job booked in VTS 10 days in advance of arrival time.
- Port of Hobart has a calcite vessel arrival on 20 November and a Hobart cruise vessel arrival and departure on 21 November. Both of those vessels require towage services at the Port of Hobart, including Tug Standby requirements. Both vessels have been booked into VTS eight (8) days in advance of their respective arrival times.
- The Towage Services at the Port of Hobart (a Major Commercial Port) for the calcite and cruise vessel on 20 November and 21 November would generally have priority over the Towage jobs at Dover. The Towage Services at Dover would not be provided until 22 November (or as soon after that as practical).

Example 2:

- Towage Services are requested to support a cruise vessel at the Port of Grassy on 12 October with a vessel booking 10 days in advance of arrival time.
- Burnie Port has a log vessel arrival on 12 October and a Burnie cruise vessel arrival and departure on 13 October requiring towage services including Tug Standby requirements. Both vessels at Burnie have been booked into VTS eight (8) days in advance of their respective arrival times.
- The Towage Services at the Port of Burnie (a Major Commercial Port) for the log and cruise vessel on 12 and 13 October would generally have priority over the Towage jobs at the Port of Grassy. The Towage Services at the Port of Grassy would not be provided until 14 October (or as soon after that as practical).

8. Exceptions

Notwithstanding this Policy, TasPorts reserves the right in its absolute discretion to depart from this policy should emergency, weather, vessel dimensions, operational efficiencies, cargo loading timing completions and/or other factors warrant such a decision.

To the maximum extent permitted by law, TasPorts accepts no liability howsoever arising as a consequence of this policy, any action by TasPorts under this policy and any conduct of TasPorts not in accordance with this policy.

9. Reference documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- TasPorts Standard Terms and Conditions of Port Access
- Standard Conditions for Towage & Other Services
- Berthing Priority Policies and Procedures
- Port Procedures Manual
- Harbour Master Instructions
- TasPorts Schedule of Port Charges