

Towing Permit Procedure (including Tasman Bridge)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe the issue and control of towing permits for vessels under 35m LOA, towing barges within Primary Port pilotage areas and fish pens within the Hobart pilotage area, including the Tasman Bridge.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to vessels under 35m LOA operating within the Ports of Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie pilotage areas, including the Tasman Bridge. towing barges or other vessels that are under 35m in length, where the **combined vessel length** exceeds 35 metres.

If either the towing vessel, or the vessel being towed exceeds 35 metres in length overall, this permit process does **not** apply, and a pilotage exemption certificate or employment of a Pilot is required. It also includes the towing of fish pens within the Port of Hobart Zones A and Zone B.

This procedure is **not** applicable to port tug operations associated with vessels moving under pilotage.

3. DEFINITIONS

1. **Combined vessel length** - The length of towing vessel + length of the vessel being towed. (Excluding the towline).
2. **Length of Tow** means length of towing vessel + towline + vessel or fish pen being towed
3. **LOA** – Length Over All
4. **Trip** – a single transit into or out of a port or zone, as well as a shift ship between berth(s) and or anchorage(s).
5. **VTS** – Vessel Traffic Services

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

1. Marine and Safety (Pilotage and Navigation) Regulations 2017
2. Towing Permit Application form

5. TOWING PERMIT APPLICATIONS

Applicants for a towing permit must include the following:

- a. Written evidence of 4 trips, within the last twelve months, in each of the zones or pilotage areas where a permit is required.
- b. Full copy of master's Certificate of Competency
- c. Copy of master's AMSA medical certificate of fitness (AMSA 559 or AMSA 232 as appropriate)

Applications must be made via email to: Pilot Exemption pilotexemption@tasports.com.au
Applicants will be required to complete an oral local knowledge test with a local Duty Pilot.

6. FISH PEN TOWING REQUIREMENTS – PORT OF HOBART

- 6.1. Tows must be shortened prior to entering Port of Hobart, Zones A and B
- 6.2. The length of tow (towing vessel + tow lines + vessel or pens) must not exceed 150 metres in length in zones A and B.
- 6.3. The master must report to VTS prior to entering and leaving a port pilotage area, and prior to departure from a berth within a port pilotage zone.
- 6.4. The master must maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 12 whilst within the Port of Hobart pilotage area.
- 6.5. The master must contact Tasports VTS when approaching the Tasman Bridge and report when clear of the bridge.
- 6.6. The tow vessel must be less than 35 metres LOA. If not, evidence of a current pilot exemption certificate for the relevant area must be provided or the engagement of a pilot will be required.
- 6.7. Passage must be through the main navigation span.
- 6.8. The Master of the vessel intending to pass under the main navigation span must signal that intention by means of sounding one long blast as soon as any part of the vessel enters the main navigational channel. One long blast means 10 second duration. Regulation 41.
- 6.8. Tows within zones A and B must only be undertaken in daylight.
- 6.9. Tows through the bridge cannot proceed if:
 - 6.9.1 Wind is over 25 knots
 - 6.9.2 Current in the upper water column (0-4m) is greater than 2 knots (reading obtained from Tasports VTS)
 - 6.9.3 Visibility is less than 1,000 metres, Reg 47(1).
- 6.10. The permit will be valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

7. BARGE TOWING REQUIREMENTS – HOBART ZONES A, B AND C, LAUNCESTON ZONES D & E, DEVONPORT AND BURNIE

- 7.1. The tow vessel must be less than 35 metres LOA. If not, evidence of a current pilot exemption certificate must be submitted or the engagement of a pilot is required.
- 7.2. The length of tow (towing vessel + tow lines + barge) must not exceed 150 metres in length.
- 7.3. The master must report to VTS prior to entering and leaving, and prior to departure from a berth within a port pilotage zone.
- 7.4. The master must maintain a listening watch on VHF channels 12 or 14 whilst within a pilotage area.
- 7.5. The master must contact Hobart VTS when approaching the Tasman Bridge and report when clear of the bridge.
- 7.6. Tows must be shortened prior to entering a pilotage area.
- 7.7. The Master of the vessel intending to pass under the main navigation span must signal that intention by means of sounding one long blast as soon as any part of the vessel enters the main navigational channel. One long blast means 10 second duration. Regulation 41.
- 7.8. Tows within zones A and B must only be undertaken in daylight.
- 7.9. Tows through the bridge cannot proceed if:
 - 7.9.1. Wind is over 25 knots
 - 7.9.2. Current in the upper water column (0-4m) is greater than 2 knots (reading obtained from Hobart VTS)
 - 7.9.3. Visibility is less than 1,000 metres.
- 7.10. To retain permit currency, masters must undertake a trip in the zone to which the permit applies at intervals not exceeding six (6) months, otherwise the permit will be cancelled.
- 7.11. The permit will be valid for 12 months from the date of issue.

Notes:

1. Should a pilotage exemption be required for towing barges (not fish pens) the certificate will be limited to 75 metres for the vessel being towed.
2. For vessel/barge towing outside port areas (between ports or port zones) a Towage Permit issued by MAST under Section 10 of the *Marine and Safety (General) Regulations 2013*, will be required.

8. PERMIT RENEWALS

Applicants must provide:

1. A current AMSA medical certificate (AMSA 559 or AMSA 232 as appropriate)
2. Full copy of Certificate of Competency
3. A completed and signed Towing Permit Application form
4. Written evidence of trips