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Establishing safe engine configuration for pilotage

Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) is the regulator for maritime safety, including pilotage, within Queensland waters. MSQ expects a safe engine configuration to be established before commencing shipping movements (arrival, removal, departure) within a Queensland pilotage area. This expectation applies to ships generally greater than 50m length overall (LOA), subject to pilotage or pilotage exemption as defined by the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*.

Background

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) has adopted measures under the MARPOL Convention requiring certain international ship types to take action to reduce their carbon emission intensity. To comply with IMO requirements, many ships have installed mechanical or software-based power limiters on their propulsion system, and/or use different fuel types for sea passages and manoeuvring within pilotage waters.

To safely manoeuvre a ship within pilotage areas of Queensland, the ship's main engine must be ready in all respects. This includes that the ship's full power range is available with minimal delay and all sub-systems, such as fuel supply, are appropriately configured and tested.

Propulsion system requirements for pilotage in Queensland

These requirements apply to any ship intending to operate within a compulsory pilotage area within Queensland under pilotage or pilotage exemption. This is a requirement under S.171e of the *Queensland Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2016*.

Engine power or shaft power limiter requirements

Any ship equipped with a mechanical or software-based engine or shaft power limiter will:

- disable the device prior to pilot boarding, or
- be able to immediately override or disable the device to have access to the ship's full power capability.

Fuel changeover requirements

- Fuel changeover is to occur and propulsion tested at least 2 hours prior to pilot boarding for arrival and departure/removal from anchor.
- Fuel changeover is to occur and propulsion tested at least 30 mins prior to pilot boarding for departure/removal from berth.
- Fuel changeover is not to occur while underway in a pilotage area.

Inability to achieve safe engine configuration for pilotage

From 1 September 2024, a ship that is unable or unwilling to comply with the above requirements for establishing a safe engine configuration for pilotage, must advise the Regional Harbour Master by contacting the local [Vessel Traffic Services](https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/shipping/vessel-traffic-services) (<https://www.msq.qld.gov.au/shipping/vessel-traffic-services>) centre at least 24 hours prior to pilot boarding.

Failure or inability to comply may result in additional safety controls being placed on the movement or the movement delayed until the appropriate safe engine configuration is established.

Last updated 06 August 2024

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