

Marine Information Bulletin

Communication procedures for the Brisbane River and Moreton Bay

Purpose

To revise and reissue the Marine Information Bulletin on the same topic that was issued in November 2007.

Background

Vessel traffic in the area has increased significantly with close quarters situations between ships operating in the Brisbane pilotage area occurring more often. Analysis of incidents concludes that the lack of proper communication is a primary threat to a collision between a ship and another vessel, hence the need to reinforce clear communication procedures.

For the purpose of this bulletin, 'ship' refers to all vessels including those under pilotage, commercial, fishing and recreational operating in the Brisbane pilotage area.

Port control

Call Sign: Brisbane Harbour
Maritime Safety Queensland operates Brisbane vessel traffic services (VTS) in the Brisbane pilotage area. This service advises ships of traffic in both Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River which could affect their safe transit.

Brisbane VTS is the first point of contact for all marine emergencies including marine incidents, marine pollution and navigational hazards. Masters and operators need to be aware that they may be contacted by Brisbane VTS to confirm sightings of hazards to navigation such as an unlit beacon or reports of debris.

Radio communications (Brisbane pilotage area and southern Moreton Bay)

Brisbane VTS keeps a 24 hour radio watch on VHF.

- Channel 16 – initial call up and primary emergency channel.
- Channel 12 – working channel for shipping between the pilot boarding ground at Point Cartwright and Hamilton Reach in the Brisbane River.
- Channel 13 – working channel for ships operating away from the shipping channels: Brisbane River upstream of Hamilton Reach and south of St Helena Island, Moreton Bay.

All ocean trading, commercial, fishing and private ships 35 m or more in overall length (LOA) transiting the Brisbane pilotage area must report to Brisbane VTS on VHF channel 12 on arrival and departure from the Brisbane pilotage area and must maintain a listening watch on that frequency at all times while operating in the area.

Commercial and fishing ships are required to maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 16 and either channel 12 or channel 13 depending on the area of operation.

All ships fitted with a VHF radio and operating upstream of Hamilton Reach must give advisory warning broadcasts on VHF channel 13 when approaching all corners and bridges to alert traffic.

Ship reporting

All ships 35 m or greater LOA should consult the Brisbane port procedures manual which is available at the Maritime Safety Queensland website: www.msg.qld.gov.au.

Recreational ships

A recreational ship equipped with VHF radio is required to maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 16 and either VHF channel 12 or 13 depending on the area of operation.

A recreational ship must maintain a listening watch on VHF channel 12 when operating anywhere near a declared shipping channel and must respond to calls on VHF Channel 12. This requirement applies between the pilot boarding ground near Point Cartwright and the Hamilton Reach of the Brisbane River.

A recreational ship fitted with VHF and tuned to VMR operating and information channels must switch over to VHF channel 12 when approaching a shipping channel.

Recreational ships must always keep well clear of commercial shipping. Where it is safe and practical to do so, recreational ships should navigate along the outer edge of a shipping channel and only cross a shipping channel at recommended locations and at 90° to the channel. (Refer to the boating safety

chart – Manly to Mooloolaba or Beacon to Beacon Directory).

Information

For further information about this Marine Information Bulletin, email msgmail@msg.qld.gov.au. or contact

Manager, Vessel Traffic Management
Brisbane VTS
Marine Operations Base
Pinkenba Qld 4008
Telephone: 3305 1704

Other Marine Information Bulletins covering various topics relating to the safe operation of vessels can be obtained from Maritime Safety Queensland's website www.msg.qld.gov.au and from the following Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices:

Airlie Beach	(07) 4946 2200
Bundaberg	(07) 4131 8500
Cairns	(07) 4052 7400
Gladstone	(07) 4973 1200
Hervey Bay	(07) 4194 9600
Mackay	(07) 4944 3700
Mooloolaba	(07) 5477 8425
Pinkenba	(07) 3860 3500
Southport	(07) 5539 7300
Townsville	(07) 4726 3400