

Marine Information Bulletin

Changes to commercial licence operating areas

Purpose

This bulletin is to advise Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) marine safety officers, ship owners and masters of changes to the operational areas of some commercial licence holders which came into effect with the new Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004.

Changes to operational areas

Under the previous regulation some licence holders were able to "island hop" to areas off the mainland coast by using a loop hole in the words used to define the limits of the licence. This practice had the potential for licence holders to operate beyond limits appropriate for their licence competency level.

To reduce the incidence of inappropriate island hopping, the new regulation limits the operational areas of coxswain and master class 4 & 5 licence holders (restricted to inshore limits) to within 15 nautical miles of:

- o the mainland shoreline; or
- o the boundaries of designated partially smooth or smooth waters.

The Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994 requires the master of a ship to be appropriately licensed. Operation of a ship by coxswain or master class 4 & 5 licence holders (restricted to inshore limits) is a breach of the Act if operated beyond these operational areas without a suitable endorsement of their licence

Available Endorsements

The following endorsements of licences are available for affected operations.

Affected operations	Available Endorsements
For operations from a nominated island for a maximum distance of 15 nautical miles.	<p>Perpetual endorsement of an existing open coxswain licence to allow continued operation in these areas.</p> <p>Transitional endorsement of an existing restricted master class 4 & 5 licence to allow continued operation in these areas for an appropriate period determined by an MSQ examiner to enable necessary sea service to be completed to obtain an open licence.</p>

Affected operations	Available Endorsements
For operations between <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o mainland and a nominated island within 30 nautical miles from the mainland shoreline or the boundaries of designated partially smooth or smooth waters. o nominated islands up to 30 nautical miles apart. 	Transitional endorsement of an existing open coxswain licence to allow continued operation in these areas for an appropriate period determined by an MSQ examiner during which the licence will need to be upgraded to a master class 5 licence. Transitional endorsement of an existing restricted master class 4 & 5 licence to allow continued operation in these areas for an appropriate period determined by an MSQ examiner to enable necessary sea service to be completed to obtain an open licence.

The period for the transitional endorsement of a licence will be determined by an MSQ examiner for a maximum period of 12 months to enable the holder to complete required sea service or training as necessary.

Extension of the period for a transitional endorsement will be granted if the holder shows substantial progress towards gaining the required sea service and training.

Application Requirements

Existing licence holders who are affected by these changes should apply at a MSQ marine operations centre for an endorsement of their licence as soon as possible.

Licence holders will need to:

- o Complete a marine licence application form (F3103), including the declaration of sea service recording appropriate sea service accumulated since obtaining the licence to be endorsed (some licence holders may already have enough sea service accumulated to obtain an open licence);
- o Provide the original licence to be endorsed;
- o Provide an original or verified copy of a medical/eyesight certificate (valid for 2 years); and
- o Pay the prescribed fee.

Exemption for companies

A ship owner that employs several masters to operate one or more similar ships in a specific operational area may apply for an exemption under the Transport Operations (Marine Safety) 1994 to allow coxswain or restricted master class 4 or 5 licence holders to operate the ships. The granting of an exemption will be subject to the same operational areas and currency period as available for an endorsement of a licence.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained from a Marine Operations Centre located at:

Cairns	(07) 4052 7400	Bundaberg	(07) 4131 8500
Townsville	(07) 4726 3400	Pinkenba	(07) 3860 3500
Mackay	(07) 4944 3700	Southport	(07) 5583 8300
Airlie Beach	(07) 4946 2200	Mooloolaba	(07) 5477 8425
Gladstone	(07) 4973 1200		