

Exemption from pilotage licence – guidelines for applicants

November 2018

Can I get an exemption from pilotage?

An applicant for exemption from pilotage must have:

- a valid Master's Certificate for the class of ship that he/she would have conduct of, as an exempt Master, within the pilotage area
- appropriate ship handling ability
- a detailed knowledge of the Pilotage Area, or that part of the Pilotage Area for which the exemption is sought.

Training - Observation Trips

You must have observed at least the minimum number of observation trips outlined in the Record of Qualifications and Training for Queensland Exempt Masters in the Pilotage Area within 12 months.

Observation trips must have been conducted with a licensed pilot for the port or an exempt Master for the ship or class of ship for which the exemption is sought. However, not more than one half of the total observation trips may have been conducted with an exempt Master.

Observation trips undertaken with an exempt Master must have been in the capacity of an observer and not as part of the ship's crew performing duties at the time of the pilotage voyage.

To be eligible for an endorsement for night navigation, you must have observed the prescribed minimum number of trips at night, the entire duration of which must have taken place between the hours of sunset and sunrise.

As an observer, you must have received theoretical training and maintained a record of your observation trips. This record must be endorsed by a licensed Pilot or other exempt Master for the ship for which the exemption is being sought and form part of your Record of Qualifications and Training.

Written/Oral Examinations

Written and oral examinations will be conducted by the relevant Regional Harbour Master or their delegate and will test your knowledge of:

- all lights, buoys, other marks, headlands, channels, soundings, shoals, tides, currents, features and phenomena connected with or incidental to navigation within the Pilotage Area, or relevant part of the Pilotage Area
- operational procedures including bridge resource management, passage planning and VTS
- relevant legislation, current codes, guidelines and procedures applicable to the Pilotage Area, including the role of the Regional Harbour Master
- the correct procedures for radio communications
- the availability and proper use of towage facilities
- environmental and pollution reporting requirements for the Pilotage Area
- contingency planning, risk management and other pilotage techniques.

Getting a temporary exemption from pilotage

Upon successful completion of the minimum number of observation trips and the written and oral examinations, receipt of satisfactory medical certificates, and the payment of the prescribed fee, you will be issued with a temporary exemption, in the form of a letter from the Regional Harbour Master, or delegate, which empowers you to temporarily perform the role of an exempt master in a declared Pilotage Area:

- while under the instruction of a mentoring Pilot/Master
- while being assessed by a Check Pilot/Master.

You will now be required to complete a specified number of pilotage trips under the instruction of a mentoring Pilot.

Practical examination for your Pilotage Exemption and Area Endorsement

Upon completing the required number of mentored pilotage trips, you will undertake a practical test which will:

- be conducted by a Check Pilot/Master
- consist of the number of check trips specified in the Record of Qualification and Training for Queensland Exempt Masters for the Pilotage Area include at least one check trip conducted during the hours of darkness, if an exemption from pilotage that includes night pilotage is sought
- upon successful completion of a practical examination, the check pilot will submit an assessment report to the relevant regional harbour master. Based on the recommendations of the check pilot, the Regional Harbour Master may issue a Pilotage Exemption certificate and/or Pilotage Area Endorsement for a specific ship or class of ship within the Pilotage Area or part of the Pilotage Area.

How long does my Pilotage Exemption Certificate and Pilotage Area Endorsement last?

- A Pilotage Exemption Certificate is valid for a period of 5 years from the date of issue, but its validity is subject to you holding a valid medical/eyesight certificate at all times.
- A Pilotage Area Endorsement is valid for a period of two years from the date of issue, with renewal subject to you undertaking at least one arrival and one departure trip (one of which is at night if night endorsement is sought) for the Pilotage Area every six months.
- If you have not completed at least one arrival and one departure trip for the Pilotage Area every six months, you must be rechecked by a Check Pilot/Master before being able to act as an exempt Master for that Pilotage Area.
- In addition to the above, you must at intervals not exceeding four years, undertake an assessment to the satisfaction of the Regional Harbour Master for each Pilotage Area for which you have an exemption.
- Once successfully rechecked, the Check Pilot/Master will complete another Check Pilot/Check Master Assessment Report.
- You will also be required to undertake a “refresher” local area knowledge test for the renewal of your Pilotage Area Endorsement(s), as set by the Regional Harbour Master.
- You must lodge an application for renewal with the relevant Regional Harbour Master's office, not less than 28 days prior to the expiry of the Pilotage Exemption Certificate or Pilotage Area Endorsement.

Exempt Masters

As an exempt Master you will be required to:

- comply with any rules, regulations and directions in force with respect to Pilots and exempt Master's for the Pilotage Area
- obey and execute all lawful directions issued by a Regional Harbour Master
- use utmost care and diligence in piloting any ship of which you have pilotage charge
- not attempt to undertake pilotage duties when, through illness or other circumstances, you consider yourself unable to perform those duties in a fit and proper manner

Application and Renewal Checklist

Do you have:

- a copy of a current and valid master's licence
- a valid medical certificate
- a valid eyesight certificate
- two colour passport size photographs taken not more than 12 months from the date of the application (this is required for initial issue or if a new Exemption from Pilotage Licence is issued as a renewal)
- completed Application for Marine Pilotage Qualification Form (available from Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices)
- the original of your existing Pilotage Exemption Certificate (this is required for renewal only)
- a current Check Pilot/Check Master Assessment Report (this is required for first issue of an exemption and area endorsement)
- for the renewal of a Pilotage Area Endorsement have you undertaken at least one arrival and one departure for the Pilotage Area every six months?

Further Information

More detailed information and application forms may be obtained from the office of the relevant Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices

Brisbane	(07) 3632 7500	Gladstone	(07) 4973 1200	Mackay	(07) 4944 3700
Townsville	(07) 4726 3400	Cairns	(07) 4052 7400		

Disclaimer: All information is correct at the time of publication. To avoid any inconvenience it is advisable to check with a regional office for current accuracy.