

# Harbourmaster Guidelines Whangarei Harbour.

## Purpose

- Advising of the reporting and passing requirements for all commercial vessels including commercial fishing vessels and recreational vessels above 100 GRT.
- Providing guidance to ship masters anchoring in the exposed anchorages in Bream Bay.
- Providing guidance to be followed in the case of a pilot transferring from an outbound ship immediately to an inbound ship.

## Notes on this guidance document

- These guidelines provide advice to vessels transiting the harbour, anchoring in Bream Bay, and procedures to be followed when one pilot is managing an inbound and outbound vessel ship. These guidelines are best practice, for the safety of all vessels on the harbour.
- The responsibility to follow these guidelines lies with the individual master of each vessel. Failure to follow these guidelines without due reason may result in the harbourmaster issuing a specific harbourmaster direction pursuant to Section 33F(1)(c) of the Maritime Transport Act 1994 (MTA).

## Liability

- Nothing in these Harbourmaster's guidelines relieves the master (skipper), pilot, crew, or operator of any vessel of his or her obligation to comply with the requirements of maritime rules, local bylaws and safety management systems that may be applicable.
- Northland Regional Council shall not, under any circumstances or conditions, be responsible for any loss arising from the negligence of the master (skipper), crew, pilot, or operator of any vessel.

## Users to ensure they are referring to the most up to date version of the Harbourmaster guidelines

- The current version of this publication is available on the Northland Regional Council website or through the Port Services Centre, Northport. The document may be amended from time to time.
- Users are responsible for ensuring they are referring to the latest version of the publication.

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## 1. Reporting and Passing Requirements

### **Reporting Requirements for all commercial vessels including commercial fishing vessels and all recreational vessels above 100 GRT.**

Vessel masters are required to report to Whangarei Harbour Radio VHF Channel 11 at the following points:

#### **Arrival**

1. 30 minutes before arrival at the Fairway Buoy
2. When passing the Fairway Buoy
3. When passing Snake Bank Beacon
4. When passing Wellington Rock Beacon
5. When berthed (this report should also be made by for vessels berthed at facilities at Marsden Point.

#### **Departure**

1. Prior to leaving the berth
2. When passing Wellington Rock Beacon
3. When passing Snake Bank Beacon
4. When passing the Fairway Buoy

Vessels that pass any of the above reporting points when shifting ship between Whangarei Harbour facilities are also required to report to Whangarei Harbour Radio.

Vessels that anchor anywhere in the harbour or its approaches are required to report their anchoring time and position to Whangarei Harbour Radio. Similarly, vessels must report to Whangarei Harbour Radio prior to weighing anchor.

### **Vessel Passing Requirements for all vessels 100 GT – 500 GT**

Vessel passing restrictions are imposed for certain parts of the Whangarei Harbour navigation channels due to the winding and/or narrow nature of the channels.

Vessels above 100 GRT transiting Whangarei Harbour usually only pass each other at One Tree Point. This is the only place on Whangarei Harbour that affords sufficient sea room for the safe passing of all sizes of vessels. Alternative passing criteria for specific vessels may be approved by the Harbourmaster.

Passing is possible at other locations depending upon weather, tide visibility and the sizes and manoeuvring characteristics of the vessels involved. Such passing is at the discretion of the vessel's masters and pilot (if a pilot is embarked).

Vessel masters are to establish, at the time of reporting at the Fairway buoy inward bound or immediately prior to leaving the berth outward bound, what other vessel movements are taking place, or are imminent, on the Harbour. The master shall then make contact on VHF Ch11 with the master(s) of the other vessel(s) and Whangarei Harbour Radio and agree where vessel passing will occur.

## 2. Guidance to Vessels at anchor or manoeuvring offshore awaiting pilotage.

### Anchorage Areas

Two recommended anchorage areas with numbered anchorages are specified outside of the pilotage limits. However, there will be occasions when pilotage is suspended due to adverse weather conditions and this same weather may preclude safe anchoring. Both anchorage areas are exposed and can experience severe sea conditions. Waves in excess of 10 metres have been recorded at the Northport wave rider buoys. If this is the case Master must make an early decision not to anchor, or weigh anchor and to proceed seaward until pilotage is available.

As a rough guideline forecasts of winds over 30 knots shall prompt the master to consider acting under this guideline. When pilotage is not available the shipmaster shall take the following points into account when deciding if to anchor or stay at anchor:

- Present and forecast weather conditions
- The freeboard and safety of crew who may have to go forward.
- Condition of windlass, known holding ability of the ship's anchors, and handling characteristics of the ship.
- The mechanical state of the vessel, including ships engines, and windlass.
- Reliability and speed, and any known defects or inefficient operating parameters of the vessel.

**An early decision** should be made to either proceed back to sea as soon as the vessel is advised a berth and /or pilot is not available, or to pick up anchor before conditions deteriorate and proceed to sea.

There are no rules at Whangarei regarding staying within harbour limits for queuing reasons. The vessel will be advised in good time when pilotage will be available, so there is no necessity to stay close to the harbour entrance in case they lose a priority. The pilotage providers will liaise with the vessel's agent and provide early advice on berthing opportunities. However, the vessel's priority in adverse weather is to stay a safe distance from the coast until advice is received to proceed to the pilot station.

Once the Master has decided the safest option is to manoeuvre offshore, the following points should be considered:

- A passage plan for the offshore route should be provided and the bridge team briefed, particularly regarding turning points and closest points of approach to hazards.
- The duration and severity of the forecast must be considered.
- A safe distance must be maintained from the shoreline, islands, and any hazards. A minimum closest point of approach of at least 8 nautical miles shall be maintained from the coast, and 5 nautical miles from any islands.
- Allowance should be made for difficulty of turning in heavy seas and due regard given to the manoeuvrability of the vessel. The ship may need to ballast deeper with due regard to free surface effect and overall stability.
- The Area to be Avoided extending from Bream Head to the Poor Knights must not be entered.

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Options the Master may consider are to leave the area and head towards the Hauraki Gulf to find shelter, or to proceed further out to sea.

### **3. Inbound and outbound vessels with a single pilot**

If shipping movements involve an outbound vessel immediately followed by an inbound vessel, the duty pilot shall take the following points into consideration:

1. If the inbound vessel is not at anchor, or time and tide are critical: the LPS shall relay the following instruction from the harbourmaster to the inbound vessel:
  - a. “must not approach closer than 3 nautical miles from the fairway buoy under any circumstances,
  - b. be ready to approach the pilot boarding station when the pilot is clear of the other vessel and in direct communication with the inbound vessel, and
  - c. the pilot provides them with explicit directions to start their approach.
2. The pilot shall, when on the outbound vessel, not leave that vessel’s bridge until it is safe and clear past the wave monitoring buoys which are a critical part of the harbour safety DUKC system. In any event the pilot shall ensure before departing that:
  - a. The vessel is in the centre of the channel.
  - b. On a steady course following the outbound leads
  - c. The inbound vessel is well clear.
  - d. Passing requirements and intentions are understood by both vessels and the LPS.
3. The inward bound vessel will not pass the outward bound vessel in the area between the pilot boarding ground and the Fairway Buoy. See figure 1.

Nothing in the above instructions shall prevent the pilot from taking actions that he deems safe in the special circumstances of the case for his own safety, or the safety of the harbour and other vessels.

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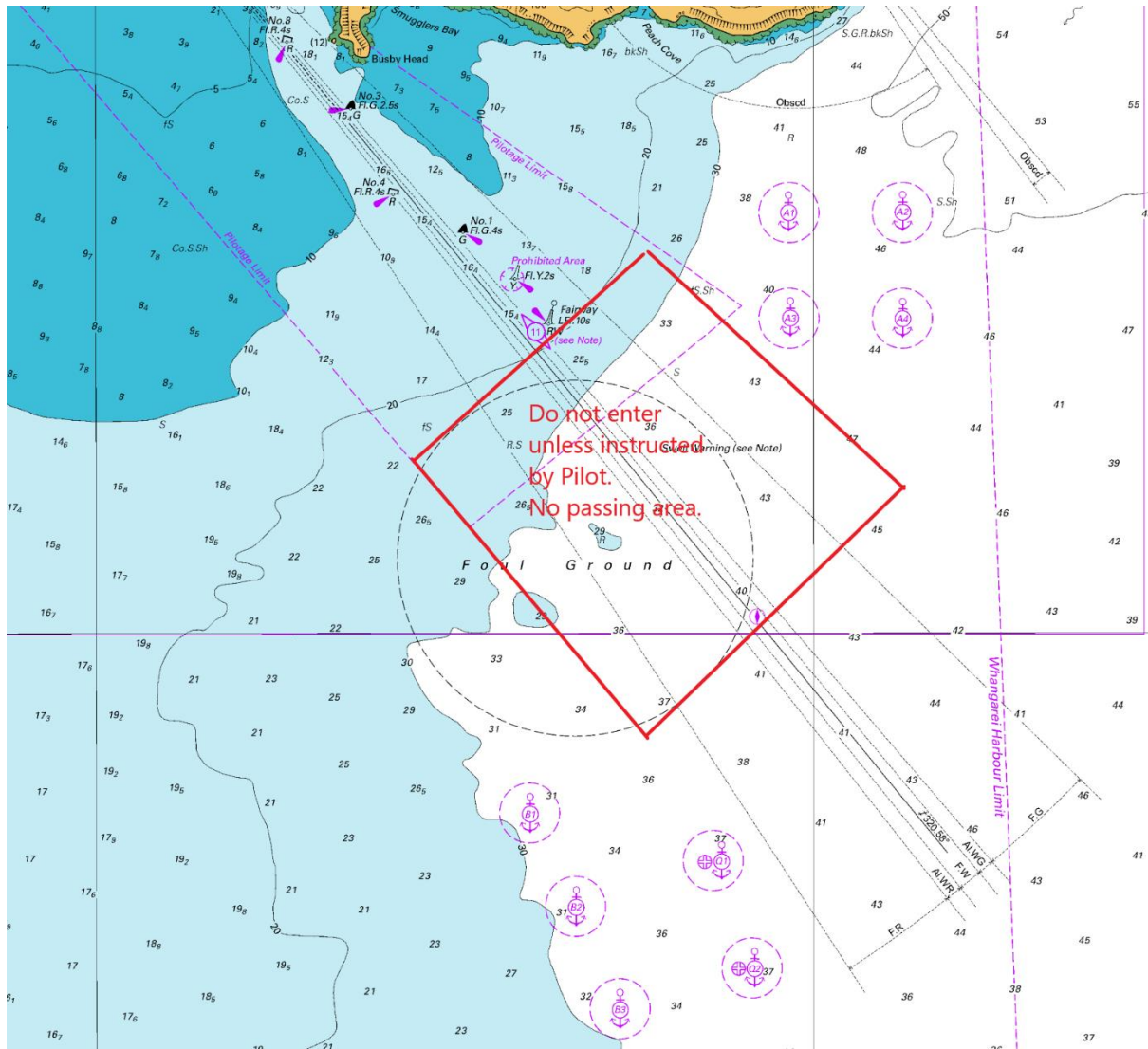


Figure 1