

The Fremantle Ports issued Pilot Exemption Certificate (PEC) permits the holder to operate a commercial vessel during arrival / departure and within the defined port limit waters, without the services of a Fremantle Ports marine pilot under the following conditions:

- The holder is recorded as the Master of the vessel for the entire duration of the operation.
- The Pilot Exemption Certificate is area specific to the Port of Fremantle

Eligibility

Vessels

The categories of vessels that apply for the purpose of obtaining a Pilot Exemption Certificate are:

- Vessels with a length overall greater than 45m and up to 100m
- Vessels with a length overall greater than 100m shall be assessed on a case-to-case basis depending on the nature and area of the vessel's operations e.g. bunkering, dredging, special operations etc.
- For a vessel carrying out towing operations (except harbour towage) the combined length of the towing vessels and tow shall be the determining factor when granting or declining pilot exemption.

Applicants

The applicant must be:

- A citizen or a permanent resident of Australia, or
- A New Zealand citizen who is entitled to reside and work in Australia

Evidence of the above is to be submitted at the time of application.

The applicant must hold:

- A certificate of competency issued or recognised by AMSA that authorises the person to command a vessel of each kind for which the pilot exemption is sought
- AMSA valid medical certificate

Evidence of the above is to be submitted at the time of application

The applicant must have worked within 2 years before the date of application, as the master or first mate (on duty on the navigation bridge) of a vessel under the control of a pilot and show:

- On at least 4 occasions when the vessel was moved into the port
- On at least 4 occasions when the vessel was moved out of the port, and
- If as the first mate, the person has a written statement signed by the pilot or master of the vessel on each occasion referred to above, verifying that the person complied with the requirements
- For the Master, a written statement from the marine pilot / pilots is required
- For a PEC requiring to be endorsed for night time (sunrise to sunset) operations, at least one out of the above 4 moves (one inwards and one outwards) must be done during night time and within 12 months before the date of application.

The applicant must:

- Successfully complete the written, blank chart and oral examinations conducted by the Harbour Master's office
- Successfully complete the practical check trip run (one) under the supervision of a marine pilot. If requiring night-time endorsement, one additional check trip must be conducted during night-time
- Pay the applicable fee for the Pilot Exemption Certificate

Validity

A Pilot Exemption Certificate is valid for 2 years and expires at the end of that period unless:

- The PEC is revoked by the Harbour Master, or
- Expires due to the holder of the PEC not moving a vessel under the authority of the certificate for a period of 12 months

Renewal / Revalidation

A Pilot Exemption Certificate may be renewed / revalidated for period of 2 years if:

- The PEC holder continues to move the nominated vessel under the authority of the certificate in the last 12 months. Evidence of movements must be provided to the Harbour Master's office.
- The renewal application is submitted before expiry of the existing 2 years period. Special considerations may be given in extraordinary conditions for renewals requested after the 2 years period.
- The applicant continues to hold an AMSA valid medical certificate.
- Revalidation of PECs after expiry and when an application is submitted within 2 years after the applicant last moved a vessel under the authority of the certificate, shall be considered and requirements stipulated on a case-to-case basis.

Conditions for use and Revocation

The following conditions for use and revocation of the PEC apply:

- The PEC applies to the navigable waters endorsed in the certificate. Use of the PEC outside of the endorsed areas will result in revocation of the PEC
- Harbour Master may direct PEC holder to use pilotage services when deemed necessary.
- The PEC is not transferable
- The PEC applies to the size of vessel or category of vessels endorsed in the certificate
- The PEC applies only to day-time operations unless endorsed for night time operations
- The PEC will be revoked by written notice, if used to move vessels not endorsed in the certificate
- The PEC will be revoked by written notice, if used for any other reason outside the intended use
- The PEC must not be used to move vessels within compulsory pilotage areas. E.g.: Deep water channel which is intended for the use of deep draft vessels under pilotage
- The PEC must not be used to provide pilotage service to a vessel which otherwise is required to engage the services of a Fremantle Ports marine pilot. In such cases, the PEC will be revoked by written notice
- The PEC holder / employer is liable for any damage to port infrastructure including damage to nav aids when operating under the authority of the certificate
- Draught of vessel to be less than 12.5 metres at all times.

Application

To apply for a Fremantle Ports Certificate of Local Knowledge please fill out the online application form on the Fremantle Ports website.

A member of the Harbour Masters Office will be in touch regarding booking an examination time.

3 hours should be allocated for the exam.

Examination

Blank Chart Examination

The examination includes identifying, illustrating, locating and naming the navigational information on a blank chart (provided by Fremantle Ports), including but not limited to:

- Port limits
- All navigation aids showing characteristics (i.e. sequence, lights shapes, colour etc)
- Lead lights and alignment
- Sector lights and arc of visibility
- Transit alignments
- Prominent features (i.e. hills, towers, monuments etc)
- Navigable channels indicating design, depth and alignment
- Prominent sand banks

- Designated anchorage areas including prohibited areas
- Ship reporting positions
- Berths and design depths
- Underwater pipelines
- Swing Basins
- Compulsory pilotage areas

Written and Oral Examination

The written exam will include but not be limited to the knowledge of the below information

- Port frequencies (including tugs)
- Tug capacities
- Dynamic Under-Keel Clearance (DUKC)
- Interaction with VTS
- Channel rules
- Bridge Resource Management
- Incident reporting
- Security
- General Port information
- Weather
- Notice to Mariners and Navigation warnings
- Port information Guide

Practical Check Trip

- On successful completion of the blank chart, written and oral exams, the applicant is required to successfully complete the practical check trip run (one inwards and one outwards) under the supervision of a marine pilot. If requiring night-time endorsement, one additional check trip must be conducted during night-time.
- On successful completion of the practical check trip run, the Pilot will submit an assessment report to the Harbour Master. The Harbour Master will then issue a Pilot Exemption for a specific vessel or category of vessels for either part or all of the compulsory pilot area.

Study resources

- AUS 112
- AUS 117
- Port Information Guide
- Admiralty Sailing Directions
- WA Port Authorities Act and regulations

Fees

Application fee for Pilot Exemption examination: \$1,417.53 including GST (fee valid from 01/07/24 to 30/06/25). Renewal fee is \$104.00 including GST.

Harbour Masters Office

Fremantle Ports