



COASTAL PILOTS Advisory Notice

Advisory Notice 1/2016

VHF Channel Usage in Compulsory Pilotage Areas

Purpose

This Pilot Advisory Notice reminds AMSA-licensed coastal pilots of the importance of using appropriate VHF channels monitored by the Great Barrier Reef & Torres Strait Vessel Traffic Service (REEFVTS) when navigating in compulsory pilotage areas - particularly when communicating with other vessels for traffic deconfliction purposes.

VHF Sector Channel Usage in the REEFVTS Area

The concept of VHF 'sector channel' usage is based on the principle of sharing all nautical information pertinent to vessels in a specific geographic location (sector), via a specific VHF channel in order to enhance collective situational awareness.

The use of an appropriate VHF sector channel ensures:

- REEFVTS oversight of intended vessel movements and interaction
- Enhanced ship/ship and ship/shore communications
- Improved situational awareness of other vessels which may be affected
- The availability of valuable historical information in the event of an incident.

REEFVTS monitor VHF communications and provide vessel traffic services throughout the REEFVTS area via VHF channel 11 or 14 depending on the location (sector) of the vessel. Communications conducted on these two channels are digitally recorded by REEFVTS.

When navigating compulsory pilotage areas, coastal pilots are requested to use the relevant VHF sector channel when communicating with other vessels for local vessel traffic deconfliction purposes, including discussions about passing intentions.

It is acknowledged that ship-to-ship VHF communication is often established initially on VHF channel 16, however once communication has been successfully established, both vessels should shift to the appropriate VTS sector channel to conduct all further communication.

REEFVTS VHF Sector Channels

The VHF sector channel to be used will depend on the vessel's position as shown in Table 1 below:

From latitude:	To latitude:	VHF channel:
9° 00' S	13° 30' S	14
13° 30' S	18° 00' S	11
18° 00' S	20° 00' S	14
20° 00' S	22° 00' S	11
22° 00' S	24° 30' S	14

Table 1 – VHF Sector Channels by Latitude

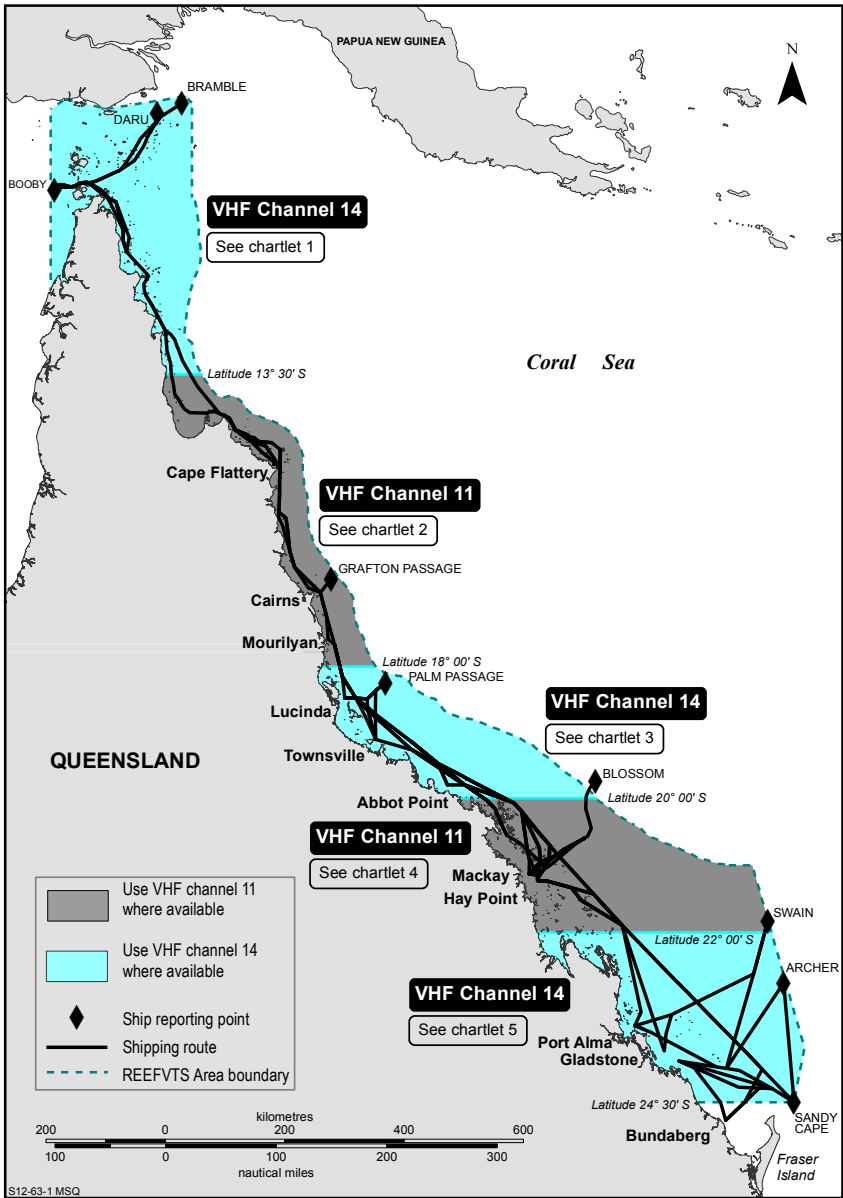


Figure 1 – REEFVTS Sector Channel Overview

Note: The chartlets indicated in Figure 1 above refer to pages 19-23 in the REEFVTS User Guide (Jan 2014).

Further Information:

Further information related to VHF channel usage in compulsory pilotage areas can be obtained from:

- AMSA’s Principal Pilotage Officer
Email: NSIDPILOT@amsa.gov.au
Phone: 07 3001 6806
- MSQ’s Principal Advisor (VTM)
Email: reefvts@vtm.qld.gov.au
Phone: 07 3066 4083
- The REEFVTS User Guide (January 2014 edition)
www.amsa.gov.au/forms-and-publications/Publications/REEFVTS-user-guide.pdf

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