



Under Keel Clearance Management (UKCM) in Torres Strait

Purpose

This Marine Notice:

- outlines AMSA's management framework for UKCM in Torres Strait;
- summarises the various responsibilities for UKCM; and
- reminds masters that all coastal pilots transiting ships with draughts of 9m or above through the Prince of Wales Channel, Gannet Passage or Varzin Passage, are required to use the Under Keel Clearance Management (UKCM) system implemented by AMSA, when complying with Marine Order 54 (Coastal pilotage) (MO54).

Background

The UKCM system became operational in 2011 for use in the Prince of Wales Channel and both Gannet and Varzin Passages. The UKCM system contributes to safe marine navigation which facilitates the protection of the marine environment, and enhances the safety and efficiency of transiting vessels.

The purpose of the UKCM system is to ensure that the best possible under keel clearance information, updated in real time, is available to assist in the planning and safe conduct of vessel transits through Torres Strait.

The UKCM system is a web-based aid to navigation (AtoN) for use by ships' masters, pilotage providers and licensed coastal pilots. When a successful UKCM transit plan has been calculated, coastal pilots can also save and print the plan for use and wider promulgation. The hardcopy printed plan is to be used in the event of any potential loss of connectivity to the web-based system during any UKCM transit.

Area of Operation

The UKCM system is designed to cover navigable ship routes through Torres Strait between the longitudes of 141 degrees 50 minutes east and 142 degrees 27 minutes east. Routes are limited to those areas designated by the Australian Hydrographic Service as having a data quality indicator of Category A Zone of Confidence (ZOC).

UKCM system access

Access to the UKCM system is available for approved users through a vetted registration process. To request registration, please follow the registration application process available at <https://ukcm.amsa.gov.au/Security/LogOn>

UKCM Training

UKCMS training can be accessed by registered users via the UKCM system's 'Help' menu. Training for pilots includes a one-on-one competency assessment with an AMSA assessor.

Masters' role in the UKCM system

Masters are strongly advised to provide accurate stability and draught data to pilotage providers in a timely manner. The supply of accurate data by masters will enable appropriate UKCM transit and associated route planning to be conducted by coastal pilots when complying with MO54.

Summary of Roles

Entity	Role
Shipping Company / Ships Agent	Provide the pilotage provider with the required vessel particulars, including ships stability details and ETA at the UKCM area.
Ships' Masters	Provide the required final stability particulars well in advance to embarking a coastal pilot, to ensure appropriate UKCM transit planning.
Coastal Pilots & Pilotage Providers	Use the UKCM system to generate transit plans, manage tidal windows and monitor active vessel transits.
AMSA	Oversee and regulate the use of the UKCM system by coastal pilots and pilot providers in accordance with MO54. Provide training, support and assessment of pilots in the use of the UKCM system. Provide validated metrological, oceanographic and tidal sensor data for use by the UKCM system. Manage access to the UKCM system.
REEFVTS	Receive reports from pilots as required under MO54.

Further information

General information about AMSA's UKCM system can be found on the AMSA website:

<https://www.amsa.gov.au/safety-navigation/navigation-systems/under-keel-clearance-management>

Tutorials and fact sheets for coastal pilots about the UKCM system can be found on the AMSA website: [Under keel clearance management for coastal pilots \(amsa.gov.au\)](#)

Contact us

For technical information about AMSA's UKCM system, contact: coastal.pilotage@amsa.gov.au