

Maritime Safety Queensland

Guideline for vetting Bulk Carriers intended for travel through the Great Barrier Reef

The *Reef 2050 Long Term Sustainability Plan* (Reef 2050 plan) was released by the Australian and Queensland governments in March 2015 and contains the overarching framework for protecting and managing the Reef until 2050. The following guideline has been developed to assist the Maritime Industry in adopting ship vetting processes, and managing risk associated with travel through the Great Barrier Reef so not only does the Reef maintain its health and Outstanding Universal Value in 2050, but that it improves in overall health each decades between now and then.

Criteria for Consideration	Indicators
(1) The ship is maintained and operated to a high standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Port State Control detentions in the past year. Port State Control records do not show indications that the ship's operator and ship owner's history contain crew welfare issues. The ship is not registered under a black listed flag state and is surveyed by a class society that is a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS). Port State Control records do not show indications of issues with the operation and maintenance of the ship's navigational system and machinery. The vessel has appropriate equipment to berth or moor at the intended terminal and that annual winch break tests have been conducted.
(2) The construction of the ship is such that if there is an incident the risk of pollution is significantly reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessel has protected fuel tanks. Vessel has double skin construction. Vessel has appropriate manoeuvrability and engine power to travel through the Reef
(3) The crew is familiar with the essential shipboard procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Port State Control records do not show indications the crew is not proficient in use of navigational equipment including ECDIS software and navigation charts, and procedures such as fire and emergency processes are at a satisfactory standard. Ship has good fatigue management procedures in place, especially around port calls. Ship complies with the International Convention for Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW).
(4) Energy Efficiency and Emissions Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ship has adopted operational practices to reduce or mitigate emissions of greenhouse gases. Port State Control records do not show indications the ship has non-compliances with waste reduction practices and manages its waste disposal according to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL). The ship's Design Index is less than the IMO's current maximum limit recommendation The ship complies with the compliance SOx and NOx emissions standards set by the IMO

*Adoption of this guideline is voluntary, however MSQ encourages all charterers, port authorities and terminal operators to consider their corporate social responsibility to the Reef and employ these measures when considering the suitability of a vessel to transport goods.

The Reef and the Guideline

The Reef provides shelter to a vast array of wildlife and coral. It is imperative that Industry operating in the Reef recognise their social licence to effectively manage the impact of their activities on the Reef. It is the responsibility of Industry to preserve the Reef not only for tourism and commercial operators who depend on the reef for their livelihood, but also for locals and visitors to the region, and the ecosystem itself.

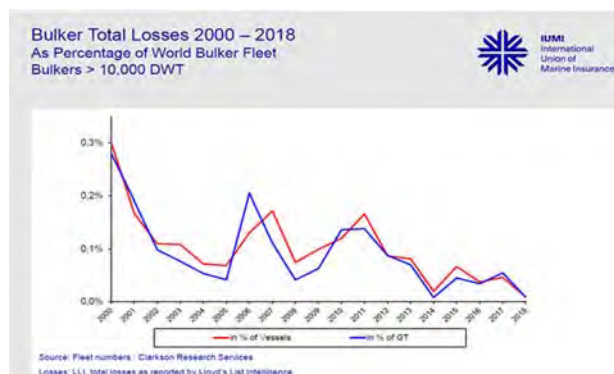
The Reef 2050 Plan highlights priorities for immediate attention and identifying new actions to protect the value of the Reef and improve the Reef's resilience. One of the key shipping action items captured in the Reef 2050 Plan is for the maritime industry to adopt ship vetting practices for bulk carriers.

"Maritime industry to adopt ship vetting practices for bulk carriers to ensure they meet high safety standards. Vetting practices should take into account the quality of the ship, competence of the crew, ship emissions and general protection of the marine environment considerations."

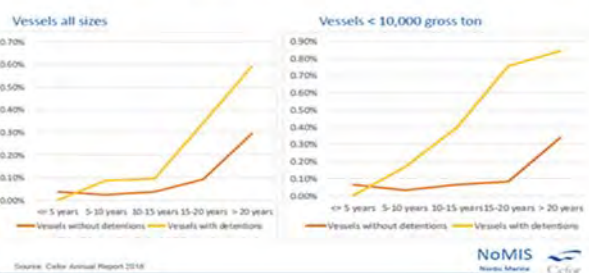
This Guideline has been developed to assist charterers and other stakeholders when considering a bulk carrier that will traverse the Reef and enter a Queensland Port.

Bulk Carriers

Bulk Carriers have traditionally had a poor reputation, being considered one of the major contributors to groundings. There has been a general trend downwards of bulk carriers involved in Marine Incidents, as indicated in the below graph. This can be attributed to the relatively young age of the fleet. However, MSQ notes this age profile is trending up and is eager to ensure that the downward trend in marine incidents continues.



TOTAL LOSS FREQUENCY – HIGHER FOR VESSELS WITH DETENTIONS EXCEPT YOUNGEST



There is a link between the loss frequency of vessels, and vessel detentions. This confirms that a robust inspection routine and consideration of previous incidents and failures as suggested in the guideline should have the effect of increasing the vessel quality and safety within the Reef.

Why this Criteria?

(1) The ship is maintained and operated to a high standard

Examination of a vessel's previous voyages and operations can provide an insight into its suitability for travelling through the Reef. Port State Control examination reports record information relating to the operational standards of a vessel, including crew welfare standards, and can be used to determine a vessel's risk profile.

(2) The construction of the ship is such that if there is an incident the risk of pollution is significantly reduced

A vessel may be constructed with certain features that could mitigate any negative impact on the Reef in the event of an incident.

(3) The crew is familiar with the essential shipboard procedures

When travelling through the Reef, it is imperative that the crew associated with the vessel have the appropriate skill and knowledge to navigate the region safely.

(4) Energy Efficiency and Emissions Management

The biggest threat to the Reef, and to coral reefs worldwide, is climate change. Ship emissions contribute to global warming and reducing them will help protect the Reef.