

BERTHING PROTOCOL

Port of Portland has worked with customers to develop a berthing protocol that manages berth allocation.

It is based on the 'first come-first served' principle but the Port retains the right to vary berthing rotation to maximise efficiency. The protocol is reviewed regularly to take into account the ever-changing environment and customer needs.

BACKGROUND

This berthing protocol guides the Port of Portland's decisions about allocation of berths to ships competing for available berth space.

BERTH ALLOCATION

At all times, berth allocation will be at the discretion of the Port Company. The Port of Portland always reserves the right to vary the berthing rotation or order the shifting or removal of any vessel(s) from any berth(s).

PRIORITY BERTHING PROTOCOL

In general the principle of "first come-first served" applies - that is a ship arriving first at the designated anchorage (as marked on chart AUS 140) has priority access providing:

- The vessel declares readiness to work the nominated cargo;
- The vessel has labour booked to work the cargo immediately or at the earliest next normal shift on a 24 hours/day, 7 days a week basis.
- The vessel agrees to work in accordance with the Port Productivity Rules (available at www.portofportland.com.au)

The principle of "first come-first served" may not apply where: the agents/principals reach agreement amongst themselves or with the cargo terminal to change the order, subject to the approval of the Port of Portland.

Special consideration will be given, in Port of Portland's discretion, to vessels restricted to working at a particular berth or whose cargoes are subject to time based quarantine clearance.

Where any local council/statutory restrictions prevent vessels from working cargo 24 hours/day, the Port of Portland will exempt such vessels from having to work cargo 24 hours/day. Vessels affected by this and working cargo two shifts a day will have the same right to a berth as a competing vessel scheduled to work cargo 24 hours/day.

Notwithstanding the above and weather permitting, all vessels at a berth are required to undertake cargo loading on a 24 hours per day, 7 days per week basis whenever there is a vessel waiting and ready to use the berth in question.

When vessels pause, or plan to pause, cargo loading/discharging activities for more than 4 hours, the Port may move the vessel to another berth or to anchorage at the moved vessel's expense to allow a waiting vessel to berth and commence loading/discharging. When the paused vessel has resolved its delay, it will return to the next available/suitable berth at its own expense.

OPERATING DELAY

A vessel that for any reason other than natural causes, orders cargo work to be suspended, when another vessel is competing for that berth and where the delay is in excess of 4 hours, the Port Company will, at its discretion, remove the vessel to anchor, or an alternative berth if one is available.

When Australian regulatory authorities detain a vessel it may not be allowed to be moved to the anchorage due to safety, stability, draft restrictions or other reason. It may remain alongside to solve the problem, or move to another berth within the harbour, if another vessel is not waiting or competing for that berth.

All costs associated with moving a vessel from a berth will be charged to the owner or the principal of the vessel.

ADVERSE DEPARTURE

Upon completion of cargo work a vessel shall depart from the berth at the first opportunity unless there are special circumstances preventing it from doing so or if an agreement has been reached with the Port of Portland for an extension of time alongside.

ADVERSE WEATHER

Berthing and un-berthing of vessels during severe weather conditions occurs at the Duty Pilot's discretion. Once a decision to cease berthing/un-berthing operations has been made the Port Company will advise all interested parties.

It should be noted that under certain climatic conditions it may be possible to berth/un-berth one vessel and not another. Such decisions are made at the discretion of the Harbour Master.

STATUTORY RESPONSIBILITY

Notwithstanding any of the above, the Port Company's actions in relation to marine operations will at all times be governed by the Victorian Marine Safety Act 2010.

