



VICTORIAN NOTICE TO MARINERS No. 247 (P) - 2026

PORT OF PORTLAND

PILOT LADDER REQUIREMENTS FOR VESSELS CALLING PORT OF PORTLAND

Date: Monday, 27 April 2026

Type of Notice: Permanent

Charts affected: Nil

Publication affected: Nil

Details:

The Port of Portland Port Authority (PoPL) has identified several recent incidents involving pilot ladder failures and related equipment. Investigations indicate that these occurred due to poor condition, improper rigging, lack of supervision, inadequate maintenance, and other factors.

Starting from **1st July 2026**, all vessels arriving at the Port of Portland are required to meet the following requirements.

1. **The maximum age of Pilot ladders is 30 months from the date of manufacture as per the original maker's certificate**, unless the ladder has been subjected to the ladder and step attachment strength test (as prescribed in ISO 799-1:2019) at not more than 30-month intervals. Evidence of this test, where conducted, must be retained on board for verification purposes.
 - 1.1. Pilot ladders must be inspected by the vessel's crew before every use and must be replaced if found to be unsuitable, even if the pilot ladder is less than 30 months old.
 - 1.2. Pilot ladders with side-ropes made of 'Sisal' will not be acceptable.
2. **The maximum age of manropes used with pilot ladders must not be more than 12 months from the date of manufacture as per the original maker's certificate.**
 - 2.1. The man ropes must be of the correct diameter (28-32mm) and construction (Manila), in good condition and properly secured to strong points on the vessel's deck. **Note: Securing of Manropes on handrails is prohibited, and manropes made of 'Sisal' will not be permitted.**

- 2.2. The man ropes must be inspected by the vessel's crew before every use and must be replaced if found to be unsuitable, even if the age of the man ropes is less than 12 months from the date of manufacture.
3. **The maximum age of 'rope stoppers' used for securing the Pilot ladder to the deck strong points must not be more than 12 months from the date of manufacture as per the original maker's certificate.**
 - 3.1. The pilot ladder side ropes should be secured to deck strong points via rope stoppers, which are lashed to the side ropes using a 'rolling hitch', unless secured at the thimble end with shackles. **Note: Securing the pilot ladder with shackles or other means is strictly prohibited.**
 - 3.2. The rope stoppers used to secure the pilot ladder to strong points must be two strong Manila ropes of at least 24 kN each.
 - 3.3. The vessel's crew must inspect the rope stoppers before each use and replace them if they are unsuitable, regardless of whether the stoppers are less than 12 months old. Particular attention should be paid to broken fibres or any signs of abrasion, especially in areas that wrap around the pilot ladder side ropes and securing points.
4. **Additionally, Vessel operators, Masters and crew must ensure that:**
 - 4.1. All pilot ladders in use onboard are SOLAS compliant and in good condition, with required certification and inspection records to be made available upon request.
 - 4.2. Recommendations of the IMO Pilot ladder poster are to be strictly adhered to for Pilot ladder rigging.
 - 4.3. Rigging of pilot ladders must be carried out by properly trained and competent crew. After being rigged, the pilot ladder arrangement must be inspected by a responsible officer.
 - 4.4. Detailed guidance is to be provided in company procedures for the vessel crew to rig pilot ladders, carry out proper inspections and discard non-compliant pilot ladders.
 - 4.5. Vessel operators must provide guidance on the storage of pilot ladders, manropes and rope stoppers, to ensure that they are not exposed to contaminants or elements that may degrade or affect their condition.
 - 4.6. Maintenance routines for the pilot ladders and all associated equipment like stanchions, shackles, manropes, deck fittings etc., must be included in the vessel's Planned Maintenance System (PMS).
 - 4.7. Master must ensure accurate declaration of the vessel's condition (including the pilot ladder and associated equipment) in the Pre-arrival notification process.

5. Any vessel which has a poorly rigged or damaged pilot ladder or a non-compliant pilot ladder or associated equipment will not be permitted to berth until it is rectified to meet the requirements.

All vessels must maintain relevant certificates for the Pilot ladder, Man ropes and Rope stoppers onboard, and these must be produced when requested by PoPL.

6. For additional guidance for rigging and maintenance of Pilot ladders, Man ropes, Rope stoppers and associated equipment, the following documents should be referred to:

- 6.1. ISO 799 -1 Pilot Ladders - Design and Specification

- 6.2. ISO 799 -2 Pilot Ladders - Maintenance, Use, Survey, and Inspection

- 6.3. ISO 799 -3 Pilot Ladders: Attachments and associated equipment

- 6.4. AMSA Marine Notice 04/2023—Pilot transfer arrangements (or superseding notice)

- 6.5. SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 23

- 6.6. IMO Circulars MSC.1/Circ.1428 and MSC.1/Circ.1495

- 6.7. IMO Resolution A.1108(29) and A.1045(27)

All pilot transfer arrangements must comply with the most current applicable international conventions, standards, and Australian regulatory requirements in force at the time of the vessel's call. Where referenced standards are amended, updated or replaced, the latest version shall apply.

For further information, contact the Port of Portland by email:
shipping@portofportland.com.au

This Notice will remain in force until **further notice**.

Issued by:

Capt. Jaspal Buttar
Harbour Master
Port of Portland