



## ASCENSION

### REVISED EDITION OF THE LAWS, 2017

#### MARITIME AND AVIATION

#### **HARBOURS (ASCENSION) ORDINANCE, 2005<sup>1</sup>**

*Ordinance A3 of 2005  
In force 17 October 2005*

*No amendments to 1 November 2017*

*Subsidiary legislation:*

#### **HARBOUR DECLARATION (ASCENSION) ORDER, 2010**

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*Legal Notice A3 of 2010*

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*Legal Notice A4 of 2010*

*Amended by Legal Notice A1 of 2025*

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#### **HARBOURS (ASCENSION) ORDINANCE, 2005**

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<sup>1</sup> Under section 10 of the Revised Edition of the Laws Ordinance, 1999 this text is authoritative and is the sole authentic edition in respect of the law contained in it as at 1 November 2017.

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AN ORDINANCE to provide for the regulation, management and control of harbours in Ascension, and of vessels in the harbours, and for connected or incidental matters.

### Short title

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Harbours (Ascension) Ordinance, 2005.

### Interpretation

2. In this Ordinance—

“**boat**” includes a lighter, barge, hulk, or any open or partly decked craft;

“**boat for hire**” means a boat let for hire for carrying persons, and includes a passenger boat;

“**charges**” includes any fee, charge, rate, toll or due of every description which is for the time being authorised by this Ordinance or any regulations made under it;

“**customs officer**” means any person appointed by the Governor as such under the Customs Ordinance 2002, or any statutory modification to or re-enactment of the same;

“**goods**” includes motor vehicles, and all tangible personal property of any kind;

“**Government**” means the Government of Ascension;

“**harbour**” means any area which is declared to be a harbour under section 22;

“**Harbour Master**” means the person for the time being appointed by the Governor pursuant to section 3 includes the deputies and assistants of a person so appointed;

“**harbour waters**” means the water within any harbour up to a limit of 3 miles from the coast;

“**land**” includes land which for the time being may be covered by water, and any interest in land;

“**landing place**” means wharves and other waterside landing places, piers, jetties and similar installations, and includes approaches from land to such installations;

“**lighter**” includes a barge or other like craft for carrying goods;

“**master**”, in relation to a vessel, means any person having or taking the command, charge or management of a vessel for the time being;

“**mooring**” includes anchorage;

“**navigating**” in relation to a vessel means any time when the vessel is in motion, and “**navigation**” is to be construed accordingly;

“**owner**”, in relation to a vessel, includes the charterer;

“**passenger boat**” means a boat used for carrying passengers, whether or not for reward;

“**pratique**” means clearance or authority to remain in harbour waters granted since the last arrival of a vessel from places outside Ascension;

“**prescribed**” means anything which may be or is provided for by regulations made under section 21;

“**rowing boat**” means a boat capable only of being propelled by oars;

“**summarily**”, in relation to the recovery of expenses or charges, means proceedings issued by way of complaint to the Magistrates’ Court;

“vessel” means every description of ship or boat, however propelled or moved, and includes anything constructed or used to carry persons or goods by water, and a seaplane on or in the water, a hovercraft and a hydrofoil vessel.

### **Appointment, powers and duties of Harbour Master**

3. (1) The Governor must from time to time appoint a person to be the Harbour Master, and may appoint a Deputy Harbour Master and Assistant Harbour Masters whenever the Governor considers it appropriate to do so.

(2) Subject to this Ordinance, the Harbour Master is to have the control and management of harbours in Ascension.

(3) The Harbour Master has the powers conferred upon him or her by this Ordinance and the duties that her or she is required by this Ordinance to perform.

(4) The Governor acting in his or her discretion may give policy directions in writing for the guidance of the Harbour Master, who must comply with them in the exercise of his or her powers and duties.

(5) No civil proceedings in any court lie against the Harbour Master or any other public officer in their respective private capacities for or in respect of any act or matter done or omitted to be done, in good faith, in the exercise or purported exercise of any function under or power conferred by this Ordinance.

### **Orders of Harbour Master**

4. (1) The Harbour Master may order the owner or master of any vessel within a harbour to—

- (a) move the mooring of the vessel to such other place as he or she specifies;
- (b) make a declaration, in writing, containing information sufficient to answer any query made by the Harbour Master in relation to such vessel, its cargo or crew;
- (c) remain at anchor or remain within harbour limits until such time as clearance to proceed has been given.

(2) It is an offence for a person without reasonable cause (which the person must prove) to –

- (a) fail to obey any such order;
- (b) fail to make such declaration when requested; or
- (c) make any declaration the person knows to be false or does not believe to be true or recklessly as to its truth or falsehood.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

### **Boarding of vessels**

5. (1) The Harbour Master may board any vessel which is moored in harbour waters for the purpose of granting pratique, and in consideration thereof must demand of the master payment of the prescribed fee.

- (2) If payment of the prescribed fee is not made upon demand, the Harbour Master may—
- (a) refuse to grant pratique until the fee is paid; or
  - (b) grant pratique and proceed to recover the fee summarily from the master, the owner or agent of the vessel.

- (3) It is an offence for a person to —
- (a) receive any goods from;
  - (b) board or leave; or
  - (c) make fast to,
- a vessel moored in harbour waters, before the Harbour Master has granted pratique to the vessel.
- Penalty: A fine of £10,000.

### **Removal of wrecks**

6. (1) If, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, any vessel is sunk, stranded or abandoned in harbour waters in such a manner as to be a danger or obstruction to safe navigation, the harbour Master may—

- (a) take possession of and raise, remove or destroy the whole or any part of the vessel;
- (b) light or buoy the vessel or part of it until it can conveniently be raised, removed or destroyed.

- (1A) If a vessel has been raised or removed, the harbour master must —
- (a) deliver it to the owner or the owner's agent, on demand, and on payment of all expenses incurred; or
  - (b) in the absence of such demand and payment sell, in such manner as the Harbour Master thinks fit, the vessel or part of it so raised or removed, and also any other goods recovered in consequence thereof, and out of the proceeds of such sale, deduct all expenses incurred by the Harbour Master, and deposit in a bank the surplus (if any) of such proceeds, in trust for the person or persons entitled to them.

(2) If the proceeds of sale of any vessel or part of it raised or removed and sold pursuant to subsection (1A) are insufficient to fully reimburse the Harbour Master for all expenses he or she has incurred in the exercise of such powers, the Harbour Master may recover the balance of them summarily from the owner.

### **Removal of obstructions other than vessels**

7. (1) Without affecting the powers contained in section 6, the Harbour Master may remove—

- (a) any goods, other than a vessel, causing or likely to become an obstruction or impediment to the safety of any vessel navigating or moored in harbour waters, or persons using the same;
- (b) any other goods causing, or likely to become an obstruction or impediment to the proper use of any landing place.

- (2) If any goods removed by the Harbour Master under subsection (1)—

- (a) are so marked as to be readily identifiable as the property of a particular person or persons - the Harbour Master must, within one month of such removal, give written notice in accordance with subsection (5) to such person or persons, and if possession is not retaken within the period specified in, and in accordance with the terms of such notice; or
- (b) are not so marked, and are not within 3 months of the date of such removal proved to the reasonable satisfaction of the Harbour Master to belong to any identifiable person or persons,

the ownership of such goods thereupon vests in the Government.

(3) The Harbour Master may, at a time and in a manner he or she considers appropriate, dispose of any goods referred to in paragraph (b) of subsection (2) which are of a perishable nature, or the custody of which involves unreasonable expense or inconvenience, notwithstanding that the ownership of such goods has not yet vested in the Government pursuant to this section.

(3A) If goods are sold pursuant to subsection (3), the proceeds of sale must be applied in payment of the expenses incurred under this section in relation to such goods, and any balance—

- (a) must be paid to any person who within 3 months from the date of removal proves to the reasonable satisfaction of the Harbour Master that the person was the owner of them at that time; or
- (b) if within the said period no person proves the person's ownership at the said time, belongs to the Government.

(4) If any goods removed under this section—

- (a) are sold by the Harbour Master and the proceeds of sale are insufficient to reimburse the total expenses incurred in the exercise of such powers of removal and sale; or
- (b) cannot be sold,

the Harbour Master may recover summarily the deficiency or the whole of the expenses, as the circumstances require, from the person who was the owner at the time the goods were abandoned or lost.

(5) A notice given under paragraph (a) of subsection (2) must specify the goods removed, and state that upon proof of ownership to the reasonable satisfaction of the Harbour Master possession may be retaken at the place named in the notice within the time specified in it, being not less than 14 days after the date of such notice, subject to payment of any expenses incurred in such removal.

(6) In the exercise of his or her powers under this section the Harbour Master must not remove anything placed or constructed by the Government or by any person or body of persons exercising statutory functions.

## **Removal of projections**

8. (1) For the purposes of this section, “**projection**” means anything which projects over any part of harbour waters, and includes rocks, stairs, trees, bushes or other plants, but does not include any such thing authorised by Ordinance or by a works licence granted by the Government to be placed or constructed.

(2) If any projection is, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, a danger to the navigation of harbour waters, the Harbour Master may remove it, and may recover the expenses of such removal from the owner or occupier of the land on which the projection was situated.

(3) Before exercising the powers under subsection (2) the Harbour Master must, if it is reasonably practicable to do so, give notice of such intention to the owner or occupier of the land on which the projection is situated.

(4) If any projection is, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, an obstruction or inconvenience to the navigation of harbour waters but not a danger thereto, the Harbour Master may, by notice in writing, require the owner or occupier of the land on which the projection is situated to remove the projection within a time, not being less than 7 days, specified in the notice.

(5) A person aggrieved by a notice served under subsection (4) may appeal to the Magistrates' Court.

(6) If a person to whom notice is given under subsection (4) fails to comply with its terms within the time specified in it, or if the person appeals and the appeal is not allowed, within the time specified in the notice or such other time as the Court may substitute for it, the Harbour Master may in either case exercise the powers contained in subsection (2).

(7) Any notice given under subsection (4) must refer to the right of appeal provided for by subsection (5).

### **Cargo and other items lost**

9. (1) The master of a vessel from which any anchor, cable, cargo, apparel or other goods have slipped or become lost in harbour waters must immediately buoy the spot, and cause to be delivered to the Harbour Master a full report, in writing, of the loss and of the position of the buoy.

(2) All expenses incurred by the Harbour Master in locating, raising and removing any goods lost in harbour waters may be recovered summarily from the master of the vessel to which they belonged.

(3) If the master of a vessel has left Ascension before repaying any and all expenses in respect of the vessel for which the master is liable under subsection (2), the owner, agent and consignee of the vessel at the time of the loss are jointly and severally liable for payment of such expenses.

(4) It is an offence for a person who is the master of a vessel and who is liable to comply with subsection (1) to—

- (a) fail without reasonable cause (which the person must prove) to buoy the spot where any anchor, cable, cargo, apparel or other goods have slipped or become lost in harbour waters;
- (b) fail to supply a report of the event; or
- (c) supply a report containing any information the person knows to be false.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

### **Abandoned equipment of vessels**

**10. (1)** A person who finds or otherwise comes into possession of any abandoned rowing boat or anchor, chain or other equipment which, from its appearance, can be reasonably concluded to have formerly belonged to any vessel, must notify the Harbour Master of the location of the equipment.

**(2)** A person who is liable to comply with subsection (1) and who fails without reasonable cause (which the person must prove) to so comply within 7 days of the finding or coming into possession commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

### **Damage by a vessel**

**11. (1)** There is absolute liability to pay to the Harbour Master the full cost of making good any damage caused by any means whatsoever by any vessel, or by any person employed on or in connection with any vessel, to any harbour or landing place or to any goods on the same, or in harbour waters which belong to the Government.

**(2)** The Harbour Master may recover summarily the cost of making good any such damage from either the master or the owner of the vessel.

**(3)** Without affecting any other remedy available, the Harbour Master may detain and exercise the right of lien upon any vessel causing such damage until the cost of making good such damage has been paid or security therefor, acceptable to the Harbour Master, has been given.

### **Identity of master**

**12. (1)** The Harbour Master may require the owner of a vessel to supply, in writing, all information in the owner's possession as to the identity and present whereabouts of the person who at any particular time was the master of the vessel.

**(2)** It is an offence for a person whom a requirement is made under subsection

(1) –

*(a)* without reasonable cause (which the person must prove) to fail to comply with the requirement; or

*(b)* to supply any information which the person knows to be false.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

**(3)** In any proceedings relating to the vessel or its master, any written information supplied pursuant to subsection (1) is admissible evidence for the purpose of determining the identity of the master of the vessel at a particular time.

### **Directions to vessels in harbour waters**

**13. (1)** The Harbour Master may give directions applicable to a particular vessel, to all vessels, or to a specified class of vessels in harbour waters for the purpose of

ensuring the safety of moored vessels at, or to property at, or forming part of, any landing place, or of securing the efficient conduct of the business of boarding, unloading, arriving at or departing from any landing place; and without limiting that power, such directions may relate to—

- (a) the movement, berthing or mooring of any vessel;
- (b) the dispatch of its business at any landing place;
- (c) the disposition or use of its appurtenances or equipment;
- (d) the use of its motive power;
- (e) the embarking or landing of passengers;
- (f) the loading or discharging of cargo, fuel, water or ships' stores;
- (g) the use of ballast.

(2) The Harbour Master may give a direction requiring the immediate removal of a vessel from or to any other location within harbour waters if—

- (a) it is on fire;
- (b) it is in a condition where, in his or her opinion, it is liable to become immobilised or waterlogged, or to sink;
- (c) it is making any unlawful or improper use of harbour waters or any landing place;
- (d) it is obstructing or interfering with the use of harbour waters or any landing place by other vessels or the despatch of business in those waters or at that place;
- (e) the removal is, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, necessary to enable maintenance or repair work to be carried out to any landing place.

(3) Any direction given pursuant to this section may be given verbally or in writing, as the Harbour Master considers appropriate.

(4) A person who, without lawful authority or reasonable cause (which the person must prove) fails to obey any direction given by the Harbour Master pursuant to this section commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

### **Enforcement of directions**

14. (1) Without affecting any other remedy available to the Harbour Master, if any direction given pursuant to section 13 is not complied with in what, in the opinion of the Harbour Master, is a reasonable time, the Harbour Master may –

- (a) where practicable, put persons on board the vessel to carry out the direction given; or
- (b) otherwise cause the vessel to be handled in accordance with the terms of the direction.

(2) If there is no person on board a vessel to attend to any direction given pursuant to section 13, the Harbour Master may, subject to subsection (2A), proceed as if the direction had been given but not complied with.

(2A) The powers in subsection (2) must not be exercised—

- (a) in relation to a vessel other than a lighter - unless after reasonable enquiry has been made the master or owner cannot be found; or



- (b) in relation to a lighter - unless it is obstructing the access to or exit from any landing place or otherwise interfering with navigation.

(3) The expenses incurred by the Harbour Master in the exercise of the powers conferred by this section in relation to a vessel may be recovered summarily, as if they were a charge of the Government in respect of that vessel.

### **Navigation of vessels by persons under influence of drink or drugs**

- 15. (1)** It is an offence for a person, in harbour waters, to—
- (a) navigate or attempt to navigate a vessel; or
  - (b) have or takes the command, charge or management of a vessel for the time being,

when unfit through drink or drug.

Penalty: (i) on summary conviction - a fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 2 years, or both;

(ii) on conviction on indictment - a fine or imprisonment for 3 years, or both.

(2) A police officer may arrest without warrant a person committing an offence under this section.

(3) In this section “**unfit through drink or drugs**” means under the influence of drink or drugs to such an extent as to be incapable of having proper charge or control of a vessel.

(4) The court may order that a person convicted of an offence under subsection (1) be disqualified from obtaining or holding a certificate of competency in respect of the use of vessels generally, or vessels only of the class or description to which the offence relates, for a period the court considers appropriate.

(5) A person who acts as coxswain of or otherwise uses, manages or controls a vessel in harbour waters during the subsistence of an order made under this section disqualifying the person from holding or obtaining a certificate of competency in respect of any vessel, or of a class or description of vessel of the same type, commits an offence.

Penalty: (i) on summary conviction – a fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 2 years, or both;

(ii) on conviction on indictment – a fine, or imprisonment for 3 years, or both.

And the person must be disqualified for a further period of not less than one year, consecutive to the period of disqualification subsisting at the time of such offence

### **Service of documents**

**16.** Any notice or other document required or authorised by or under this Ordinance to be given to or served upon a person—

- (a) being a corporate body, society or association - may be duly given to or served upon the secretary, manager or other officer of the corporate body, society or association;
- (b) being a partnership - may be duly given or served by addressing the same to the partnership, identifying it by the name or style under which its business is carried on;

- (c) being an individual - may be duly given or served by delivering it to him or her or by leaving it at or posting it to his or her last known address;
- (d) being the owner or charterer of a ship or other vessel - may be duly given to or served upon the master of the ship or vessel.

### **Crown exemption**

**17.** With the exception of the provisions of this Ordinance relating to dangerous projections and the removal of obstructions, nothing in this Ordinance affect prejudicially any estate, interest, right, power, privilege or exemption of the Crown and, in particular, nothing in this Ordinance authorises the Harbour Master to take, use or interfere with any land, goods or rights therein belonging to the Crown in right of the Government or used for the purposes of any Government department.

### **Impersonation of Harbour Master**

**18.** A person who, with intent to deceive, impersonates the Harbour Master, or makes any statement or does any act calculated falsely to suggest that the person is acting under the authority of or on behalf of the Harbour Master, commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 6 months, or both.

### **Taking a vessel without consent**

**19. (1)** A person who, without the consent of the owner or other lawful authority, takes, causes to be taken, or uses any vessel in harbour waters commits an offence.

Penalty: (i) on summary conviction – a fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 6 months, or both;

(ii) on conviction on indictment – a fine, or imprisonment for 3 years, or both.

**(2)** It is a defence for a person charged under subsection (1) to prove that he or she believed on reasonable grounds that he or she had lawful authority, or that the owner would, if asked, have consented to the taking or use of the vessel.

### **Stowaways**

**20.** A master of a vessel who permits, suffers or facilitates in any way the landing in Ascension of any person who is or has been a stowaway on the vessel, without the written permission of the Administrator, commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £10,000 or imprisonment for 6 months, or both.

### **Regulations**

**21.** The Governor may make regulations for the further and better execution of this Ordinance and, without limiting the power, such regulations may provide for—

- (a) anything which by this Ordinance is required or permitted to be prescribed;
- (b) the repair, maintenance and preservation of any land or landing place, road or goods, and the maintenance of good order and safe navigation of vessels;
- (c) the safety of persons entering upon any landing place or road adjacent thereto for any purpose, including the disembarking from or boarding of any vessel;

- (d) the mooring, removal and general navigation of vessels of all descriptions, and the packing, landing, deposit or removal of firearms and ammunition, explosives or other dangerous goods;
- (e) the watering, ballasting, loading and general discharging of the cargo of vessels, whether within harbour waters or on any landing place;
- (f) the management and control generally of all vessels, or any particular class of vessel, in harbour waters, including any requirements pertaining to the arrival in or departure from harbour waters, and the raising, removal and destruction of wrecks or other obstructions;
- (g) the licensing of vessels, or any class thereof permitted to operate in harbour, coastal or territorial waters, and the fees to be charged for and the conditions attached to such licences;
- (h) the renewal of such licences, and their suspension or revocation;
- (i) tests of competence to be undertaken by applicants for certificates, and conditions which may be attached to certificates issued;
- (j) the condition and examination of vessels, or any class of vessel, the fees to be charged for such examination, and the numbering or marking of such vessels;
- (k) the rates, charges or other expenses permitted to be charged by any vessel licensed as a passenger boat or boat for hire, the number of persons permitted to be carried as passengers in any boat or class thereof, the lights and safety equipment to be carried on board, and provisions for the safety of passengers carried on such vessels;
- (l) the establishment of a Harbours Board, the appointment, resignation, and dismissal of members thereof, and the powers, duties and remuneration of members of the Board;
- (m) authorising any person or class of persons to sell, buy or exchange any goods, including the boarding of any vessel moored in harbour waters for that purpose, and the fees to be charged for such authorisation;
- (n) provisions authorising the Harbour Master or the chief officer of police to permit or prohibit any person boarding or disembarking from any vessel moored in harbour waters, in such circumstances as may be deemed appropriate, and conditions which may be attached to any permission granted;
- (o) the order of precedence between different classes of vessels, whether moored or navigating in harbour waters;
- (p) circumstances which will constitute an offence, and the respective penalties for such offences, not exceeding a penalty of 6 months imprisonment or a fine of £10,000 on summary conviction or both such fine and imprisonment;
- (q) the documents necessary and the procedure for the making, determination and notification of the result of appeals by persons aggrieved by any decision or determination of the Harbour Master or the chief officer of police under this Ordinance;
- (r) the exemption by a specified authority from all or any of the provisions of this Ordinance in respect of any person or vessel, or of any respective class thereof, for such period and in such circumstances as are considered appropriate.

### **Power to declare harbours**

**22.** The Governor may, by order published in the *Gazette*, declare any area of the coast and waters of Ascension to be a harbour.

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## **HARBOURS ORDINANCE, 2005**

### **HARBOUR DECLARATION (ASCENSION) ORDER 2010** (Section 22)

#### **Citation**

1. This order may be cited as the Harbour Declaration (Ascension) Order, 2010.

#### **Declaration of harbour**

2. The following areas of the coast and waters of Ascension are hereby declared to be a harbour—

All the coastal waters between Catherine Point and North Point within the limits delineated as follows: from Catherine Point in a straight line for a distance of 3 nautical miles (5556 metres) to Latitude 7° 54'00" South and Longitude 14° 27' 33" West, from those coordinates in a straight line for a distance of 3.9 nautical miles (7222.8 metres) to Latitude 7° 51'12" South and Longitude 14° 24'51" West, and from these coordinates in a straight line for a distance of 3 nautical miles (5556 metres) to North Point; together with the whole of any beach adjacent to such waters, the Pierhead in Georgetown, and any other land adjacent to such waters for a distance of 100 metres from the high water line.

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## **HARBOURS ORDINANCE, 2005**

### **HARBOURS (ASCENSION) REGULATIONS, 2010** (Section 21)

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### Citation

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Harbours (Ascension) Regulations, 2010.

### Interpretation

2. In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires—
  - “**at Ascension**” in relation to a vessel means at any port, harbour, bay or landing place, or in harbour waters;
  - “**Board**” means the Harbour Board established by regulation 3;
  - “**coxswain**” means the person who for the time being, is exercising the actual control of any vessel navigating in harbour waters;
  - “**jet-ski**” means a motor-powered vehicle for use in water, constructed or adapted to carry a maximum of two persons, whether seated or standing thereon;
  - “**landing steps**” means the steps at the north-west end of the Wharf;
  - “**relevant vessel**” means any vessel but expressly excludes—
    - (a) a ship registered elsewhere in the world;
    - (b) a kayak, canoe, rowing boat or other similar craft propelled or steered by paddles or oars;
    - (c) rafts and inflatable boats, (other than rigid inflatable boats propelled by means of one or more engines);
    - (d) sail boats, yachts, windsurfers, sailing dinghies or other craft whose principal means of propulsion is the wind, whether or not fitted with one or more engines;
    - (e) any vessel used only for the sport or pleasure of the owner and their immediate family or friends and on a voyage for which the owner does not receive any money for or in connection with operating the vessel, other than as a contribution to the direct expenses of the operation of the vessel;
    - (f) any vessel wholly owned by or on behalf of members of a club formed for the purpose of sport or pleasure which, at the time of it being used, is used only for the sport or pleasure of members of that club or their immediate families, and for the use of which any charges levied are paid into club funds and applied for the general use of the club; and
    - (g) any vessel owned and operated by—

- (i) the Government of the United States of America, or of a contractor of that Government;
- (ii) the United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, or a contractor of the Ministry of Defence.

“**ship**” means a deep-sea registered vessel under the control of a registered master and authorised to carry passengers or cargo, or both, on a commercial basis;

“**the Wharf**” means the area commonly known as the Pierhead and enclosed by a security fence.

### **Establishment of Harbour Board**

**3. (1)** This regulation establishes a Harbour Board which is to consist of the persons who for the time being hold or are lawfully acting in the following offices:

- (a) Harbour Master;
- (b) Officer in command of the Ascension Island police detachment (or his or her representative);
- (c) Director of Operations (or his or her representative);
- (d) Conservation Officer (or his or her representative);

and the Harbour Master is to be the Chair of the Board.

**(2)** The Governor may appoint such other person or persons as members of the Board as the Governor considers appropriate from time to time, whether by reference to name or office held, and may revoke any such appointment whenever the Governor considers it expedient to do so.

### **Powers and duties of the Board**

**4. (1)** The Board may make recommendations to the Governor regarding the supervision, safety measures, fees to be charged, and any other matters which, in its opinion, will result in the better execution of the objects of the Ordinance or these Regulations.

**(2)** The Board may make any enquiries and carry out any examinations or inspections as it considers appropriate from time to time with respect to the suitability of any vessel (other than a ship) which is moored in harbour waters, and the competency of the owners thereof and their servants or licensees intending to control or use the same in harbour waters.

**(3)** The Board is the licensing authority in respect of relevant vessels permitted to be used in harbour waters, and in respect of persons controlling the same; and, subject to the Regulations, may (for good cause) suspend or revoke any licence or suspend any certificate.

**(4)** In the discharge of its functions under these regulations the Board may procure such expert, technical or other advice and assistance as it from time to time considers appropriate.

### **Meetings of the Board**

**5. (1)** Subject to sub-regulation (2), meetings of the Board must be convened by the Chair as often as he or she considers expedient. A quorum is constituted by 3 Board

members present. No business may be transacted at any time when a quorum is not present, except to adjourn that meeting.

(2) The Chair must convene a meeting of the Board at the earliest possible opportunity—  
 (a) if directed to do so by the Governor; or  
 (b) on receipt of a written request stating the matters to be discussed at such meeting, and signed by at least 2 Board members.

(3) The Chair, when present, must preside at all Board meetings. In his or her absence the members present at the meeting must elect one of their number to preside.

(4) All matters before the Board for decision at a meeting must be decided in accordance with the views of the majority of members present. In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairman or other member presiding has have and must exercise a second or casting vote.

(5) An applicant for a licence to use a relevant vessel in harbour waters, a licence holder, or any other person may attend a meeting of the Board only if requested to do so. Such persons may address the Board but are not entitled to vote.

(5A) No licence or certificate in force may be revoked or suspended by the Board pursuant to its powers under these Regulations, unless the holder of it has been given an opportunity to appear before the Board to make representations, if desired, against revocation or suspension.

(6) The Board must keep minutes of all meetings held, and for that purpose may appoint one of its members or some other person. The Chair must supply, or cause to be supplied, copies of the minutes of any meeting or meetings whenever requested to do so by either the Governor or the Director of Resources.

(7) Subject to this regulation, the Board may regulate its own procedure.

### **Disclosure of interests by Board members**

6. (1) Any member of the Board who has a direct or indirect interest in any matter which is to be considered at a meeting must, if present at such meeting, make full disclosure of the interest, and refrain from participation in discussion or voting on the matter.

(2) A member of the Board who knowingly fails to comply with sub-regulation (1) commits an offence.  
 Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

### **Remuneration of Board members**

7. Board members who are not public officers must receive such fees, allowances or other remuneration as the Governor from time to time determines by notice in the *Gazette*.

### **Duty of confidentiality of Board members**

**8. (1)** A member of the Board who, without reasonable cause (which the member must prove) discloses to any other person who is not a member of the Board information relating to any matter which has been or is to be considered by the Board commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

**(2)** The duty imposed by sub-regulation (1) continues to apply to members of the Board after they have ceased, for any reason, to act as such.

### **Books of account**

**9. (1)** The Board must compile and maintain such separate books of account as are reasonably necessary, and faithfully record all licensing, examination and other fees or charges received, and details of any other financial transactions undertaken.

**(1A)** The Board must comply at all times with any request made by the Director of Resources or the Auditor appointed under the Financial Management Ordinance, 2001 for production of the books of account.

**(2)** The provisions of the Financial Management Ordinance 2001 concerning the audit of accounts apply to the books of account required to be kept by sub-regulation (1), as if they were kept in relation to the income and expenditure of a Government department.

### **Licensing of relevant vessels**

**10. (1)** Subject to sub-regulation (3), no person may use a relevant vessel in harbour waters, unless the person has first obtained from the Board a licence (in a form the Administrator from time to time approves) to use such vessel.

**(2)** An application for a licence must be made to the Harbour Master, in his or her capacity as Chair of the Board, in a form approved by the Administrator for that purpose, and accompanied by payment of the annual fee applicable to a licence in respect of that class or category of relevant vessel, as contained in the Schedule to these Regulations. In this regard—

- (a)* no licence fee is payable in respect of a relevant vessel which is licensed for the purpose of public service; and
- (b)* if the application is in respect of a relevant vessel which is to be licensed in more than one class or category as contained in the Schedule, only one licence fee is payable, being the higher of the fees payable for such classes or categories.

**(3)** A licence granted in respect of a relevant vessel is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue, unless earlier revoked or suspended. Subject to these Regulations, a licence may be renewed from time to time for a further period or periods of one year.

**(4)** A licence must not be issued by the Board in respect of any relevant vessel, unless the Board is satisfied the vessel is in all respects sea-worthy and safe for use in harbour waters for its intended purpose.

**(5)** The Board may attach to the grant of a licence in respect of a vessel, such conditions as it considers appropriate to the use of that class or type of relevant vessel, and



may at any time during the currency of the licence, or on the renewal of it, remove, add to, or otherwise vary it. Without limiting that power, such conditions may relate to—

- (a) the maximum number of persons who may be carried on the vessel;
- (b) the provision of life-belts or life-jackets, flares, radio, first aid, and safety equipment generally which must be carried;
- (c) the lights which must be carried or shown on the vessel when it is navigated and moored during hours of darkness.

(6) The Board may require any applicant for a licence to—

- (a) provide such further information or details as it thinks fit in relation to the relevant vessel specified in the application form;
- (b) permit any member of the Board, or any person authorised by it, to board and inspect the vessel for the purpose of examining the seaworthiness of it,

and must refuse the application if the applicant for a licence fails to comply with any requirement so made.

(7) A person who uses a relevant vessel in harbour waters without having a current licence in respect of the vessel, or in breach of any condition attached to the licence, commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

## Insurance

11. (1) It is an offence for any person to use, or cause or permit any other person to use, a relevant vessel in harbour waters unless there is in force a policy of insurance in relation to the use of the relevant vessel by that person, or other person as the case may be. Penalty: A fine of £5,000 or imprisonment for 6 months, or both.

- (2) It is a defence to a charge under sub-regulation (1) for the person to show—
  - (a) that the relevant vessel did not belong to the person and was not in the person's possession under a contract of hire or loan;
  - (b) that the person was using the vessel in the course of employment; and
  - (c) that the person neither knew nor had reason to believe that there was not a policy in force in relation to the vessel.

(3) *Omitted*

(4) In this regulation “**policy of insurance**” means a policy which—

- (a) is issued by an insurer; and
- (b) insures the persons or classes of person specified in it in respect of any liability which may be incurred by any such persons in respect of the death or bodily injury of any person caused by or arising out of the use in harbour waters of a relevant vessel to which the policy relates.

## Lights on vessels

12. (1) All ships moored in harbour waters must exhibit between sunset and sunrise a clearly visible riding light.

(2) All vessels, other than ships, navigating in harbour waters between sunset and sunrise must exhibit a clearly visible and bright light at a height of not less than 3 feet from the deck of the vessel.

(3) The owner, master or coxswain of a vessel who causes or permits the vessel to be moored or navigated in harbour waters in breach of this regulation commits an offence. Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

### **Marking of certain vessels**

13. (1) Every relevant vessel authorised for use for fishing, or for the conveyance of passengers or goods, must have its name and the licence number assigned to it conspicuously marked on both bows in letters of not less than 9 inches in height and 4 inches in width.

(2) Sub-regulation (1) does not apply to jet-skis.

### **Licensing of coxswains**

14. (1) No person may be the coxswain of a relevant vessel navigating in harbour waters, unless the Board has first granted to the person a certificate of competency in respect of the particular vessel, or of that class or description of vessel.

(2) An application for a certificate of competency must be made to the Harbour Master, in his or her capacity as Chair of the Board, in a form approved by the Administrator for that purpose, and be accompanied by payment of the annual fee prescribed in the Schedule. In this regard —

- (a) no fee is payable in respect of a certificate of competency issued to a coxswain who is employed as such in the public service;
- (b) if the application is in respect of a certificate of competency for more than one relevant vessel, or class or category of relevant vessel, only one licence fee is payable, being the higher of the fees payable for such relevant vessel, classes or categories as contained in the Schedule.

(3) A certificate of competency is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue, unless earlier revoked by a court, or suspended by the Board. Subject to these Regulations, a certificate of competency may be renewed from time to time for a further period or periods of one year.

(4) A certificate of competency must not be issued by the Board unless it is satisfied that the applicant for the certificate has attained 18 years of age, is in good health, has sufficient knowledge or experience, and in all respects can safely be entrusted with the management or control of a relevant vessel of that class or description.

(5) In determining the fitness or otherwise of an applicant pursuant to sub-regulation (4), the Board may, in its discretion, require the applicant to undergo or perform any oral or practical examinations the Board considers appropriate.

**(6)** The Board may attach to the grant of a certificate of competency any conditions it considers appropriate, and may at any time during the currency of the certificate, or on any renewal of it, remove, add to or otherwise vary the certificate.

**(7)** The Board may require any applicant for a certificate of competency (or for any variation or addition to the certificate) to—

- (a)* provide such further information or details as it thinks fit in relation to the person and his or her experience, knowledge or skills in relation to the type of vessel for which the person requires the certificate;
  - (b)* submit to any medical or other examination considered appropriate,
- and must refuse the application if the applicant fails to comply with any requirement so made.

**(8)** *(a)* For the purpose of enabling an applicant for the grant of a certificate of competency to learn to navigate a relevant vessel in harbour waters, the Board may if so requested by the person, and on payment of the fee prescribed in the Schedule, grant the person a provisional certificate of competency to be in force for a period of 3 months; such certificate must be in a form approved by the Administrator for that purpose and granted subject to conditions the Board considers appropriate.

*(b)* If person to whom such a provisional certificate of competency is granted fails to comply with any of the conditions subject to which it is granted –

- (i)* the person commits an offence;

Penalty: A fine of £1,000,

and

- (ii)* the court may order the withdrawal of the provisional certificate.

*(c)* A person to whom a provisional certificate of competency has been granted must not use a relevant vessel in harbour waters unless the person is under the supervision of a person who is present in the relevant vessel with the person and who has held for not less than one year a certificate of competency (not being a provisional certificate).

**(9)** It is an offence for a person to act as coxswain on or of a relevant vessel in harbour waters –

- (a)* without having a current certificate of competency in relation to that relevant vessel; or
- (b)* in breach of any condition attached to the certificate.

Penalty: *(i)* if no passengers were carried at the time of the offence - a fine of £500;

- (ii)* if one or more passengers were carried at the time of the offence - a fine of £1,000.

**(10)** It is an offence for a person knowingly to apply for a certificate of competency—

- (a)* during the currency of an order made by a court disqualifying the person from holding or obtaining such certificate; or
- (b)* having failed to disclose to the Board that he or she has on any occasion been so disqualified.

Penalty: A fine of £5,000 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

**(11)** For the purpose of sub-regulations (1), (7) and (9) the reference to “**certificate of competency**” includes a provisional certificate of competency.

**(12)** (a) For the purpose of sub-regulation (5) the Board may appoint suitably qualified or experienced persons to be Examiners of Coxswains to assess and grade any oral or practical examination required to be taken under the said sub-regulation.

(b) The fee prescribed in the Schedule is payable by an applicant in respect of any examination taken pursuant to sub-regulation (5).

### **Suspension or revocation of licences for relevant vessels**

**15.** (1) The Board may suspend a licence granted in respect of a relevant vessel, pursuant to regulation 10, for such period as it considers appropriate, not exceeding the remainder of the currency of the licence, if—

- (a) the relevant vessel is damaged in a manner which renders it for the time being not seaworthy, but in the opinion of the Board can be satisfactorily repaired expeditiously and within the currency of its licence; or
- (b) a condition attached to the licence has been breached, but it is of such a minor nature that it can be rectified easily, and the owner has, to the satisfaction of the Board, undertaken to do so.

(2) The Board may carry out such tests or examinations of a relevant vessel as it considers appropriate before deciding whether or not to remove any balance remaining of a period of suspension imposed pursuant to sub-regulation (1).

(3) The Board may revoke a licence issued in respect of a relevant vessel if, in the opinion of the Board, there has been a breach of any condition attached to the licence in a manner which has or could have endangered the safety of persons carried on any relevant vessel.

(4) The Board must revoke a licence issued in respect of a relevant vessel which has been damaged to such an extent that, in the opinion of the Board, it cannot be repaired in a manner which will render it seaworthy during the currency of such licence.

(5) A person who knowingly uses or permits the use in harbour waters of any relevant vessel whose licence has been revoked or for the time being is suspended commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £5,000 or imprisonment for 6 months, or both.

### **Suspension of certificates of competency**

**16.** (1) Without affecting the powers of the court under the Ordinance to order that a person should be disqualified from obtaining or holding a certificate of competency, the Board may suspend any such certificate currently in force for a period it considers appropriate, not exceeding the remainder of the currency of the licence if, by reason of information supplied to it, the Board is of the opinion that the holder of the licence—

- (a) is suffering from any disability or illness which, for the time being, renders the person unfit to undertake the management and control of either vessels

generally or, in particular, a relevant vessel of the class or description to which the certificate relates; or

- (b) a condition attached to the certificate has been breached, but is capable of being rectified, and the holder of the certificate has, to the satisfaction of the Board, undertaken to do so.

(2) Before deciding whether to remove the balance remaining of any period of suspension imposed in respect of any certificate of competency, the Board may require the holder of it to submit to such test or examination, and to provide such information as the Board considers appropriate.

(3) A person who acts as coxswain on or of any relevant vessel in harbour waters at any time when his or her certificate of competency is suspended commits an offence.  
 Penalty: (a) if no passengers were carried at the time of the offence - a fine of £500;  
 (b) if one or more passengers were carried at the time of the offence - a fine of £1,000.

### **Payment of pratique**

17. When boarding any ship which is moored in harbour waters for the purpose of granting pratique, pursuant to the provisions of section 5 of the Ordinance, the Harbour Master must demand payment of the fee prescribed in the Schedule.

### **Communication between coxswain and passengers**

18. A person who is a coxswain of a relevant vessel licensed for the purpose of carrying passengers must ensure that—

- (a) all passengers on board are informed of the location of life jackets or belts and safety equipment generally which is carried, and the use of them;
- (b) at all times when the passengers, or any of them, are deposited on or at any place other than Georgetown Wharf, the relevant vessel remains at such a distance that both visual and vocal contact or communication is possible between the coxswain and any such passenger or passengers on shore.

### **No person to remove sand etc. without permission**

19. (1) A person who takes or removes or causes to be taken or removed any sand, stone or gravel, from any beach or any part of the ocean floor, within any harbour waters, without the permission in writing of the Administrator, commits an offence.  
 Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

(2) Any permission granted under sub-regulation (1) may be given subject to conditions affecting the quantity of and manner in which the materials may be taken or removed, and further subject to payment of any fee the Administrator specifies in that regard.

(3)<sup>1</sup> *If the beach or part of the ocean floor in question falls within an area declared by order under section 3 of the National Protected Areas Ordinance, 2003, to be a marine protected area, the Administrator must, before granting permission under this regulation—*

- (a) *consider all management plans devised in relation to the protected area which is in force at the time under that Ordinance,*
- (b) *consult the Director of Conservation and Fisheries as to any conditions that may be required if permission is granted, and*
- (c) *have paramount regard to ensuring safe and efficient navigation in harbour*

<sup>1</sup> Inserted by Legal Notice A1 of 2025

*waters.*

### **Materials deposited on landing places**

**20.** A person who, without the permission of the Harbour Master, deposits or permits to be deposited, any sand, shingle or gravel on any landing place within 6 feet from the sea edge thereof commits an offence.

Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

### **Discharging missiles at birds or wild animals**

**21. (1)** Subject to sub-regulation (2), a person who discharges any firearm or throws any stone or other missile at any sea bird, dolphin or other wild animal within the limits of the Wharf commits an offence, and liable.

Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

**(2)** Sub-regulation (1) does not prohibit such birds or animals from being killed for the protection of property, or obtained by or with the consent of the Government for scientific research.

### **Requirement to establish radio communication**

**22.** The master of a vessel intending to enter the harbour must, before doing so, establish radio communications (on VHF channel 16 (156.800 MHz)) with Ascension Radio.

### **Vessel Movements**

**23.** The master of a vessel other than a fishing vessel of less than 20 feet must, if required by the Harbour Master, give prior notice to the Harbour Master of the vessel's arrival at, departure from, or movement within the harbour.

### **Laying down moorings, anchors, buoys and other tackle**

**24. (1)** A person must not lay down any mooring, anchor, buoy or similar tackle without prior consent of the Harbour Master.

**(2)** If the Harbour Master so directs, a mooring, anchor, buoy or similar tackle must as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event as soon as possible, be removed by its owner or any other person claiming possession of it. If a direction by the Harbour Master under this sub-regulation is not complied with, the mooring, anchor, buoy or tackle in question may be removed and the amount of the cost incurred in so doing may be recovered from the owner of the mooring, anchor, buoy, or tackle.

### **Mooring of vessels**

**25.** All vessels in harbour waters, except when being navigated, must be securely moored or otherwise fastened. Absolute liability attaches to the owner of a vessel not so moored or fastened which drifts and causes damage to any other vessel or other property.

### **Order of precedence and navigation in harbour waters**

**26. (1)** The following provisions have effect and must be observed by all vessels navigating in harbour waters.

- (2)** The order of precedence in harbour waters is as follows—  
**(a)** ships;

- (b) lighters, tenders, barges, and other vessels supporting ships or with other vessels under tow;
- (c) sail boats, windsurfers, sailing dinghies or other craft whose principal means of propulsion is the wind;
- (d) all other power operated vessels (excluding jet-skis);
- (e) jet-skis;
- (f) kayaks, canoes, rowing boats or other similar craft propelled or steered by paddles or oars.

(3) When 2 vessels of equal precedence meet bow to bow on the same course, both must give way to starboard, passing port to port.

(4) When the courses of 2 vessels of equal precedence cut across each other, the vessel having the other to starboard must give way.

(5) Except with the permission of the Harbour Master, no jet-ski or windsurfer may be navigated in harbour waters during the hours of darkness.

(6) A person who contravenes or fails to comply with any of sub-regulations (1) to (5) commits an offence.  
Penalty: A fine of £2,500 or imprisonment for 3 months, or both.

### **Landing of fish**

27. Every person who is in possession of fish when arriving at the landing steps must remove from the steps all offal, blood and other residue arising from such fish, and must not cause or permit any offal to be left on any part of the Wharf.

### **Charges by and obligations of boats carrying passengers**

28. (1) The following charges are the maximum rate permitted to be charged for the use of relevant vessels under these Regulations to carry passengers—

- (a) journeys which commence and are completed between 6.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m.- for each person carried from or to any ship at Ascension: single journey; £1.00
- (b) journeys which commence between 6.00 p.m. and 6.00 a.m.- for each person carried from or to any ship at Ascension: single journey; £1.50.

(2) A person in charge of a relevant vessel licensed to carry passengers in harbour waters must not, unless already engaged, refuse at any time to carry a passenger from or to any ship at Ascension when so required by the Master of such ship, the Harbour Master, a customs officer or a police officer.

### **General penalty, and aiders and abettors**

29. (1) A person who contravenes any provision of these Regulations in respect of which no specific penalty is prescribed commits an offence.  
Penalty: A fine of £1,000.

(2) A person who aids, abets, counsels or procures the commission of an offence under any provision of these Regulations commits the like offence and is liable to be punished as if the offence had been committed by the person.

### **Appeal provisions**

30. (1) A person who is aggrieved by any determination of the Board under any provision of these Regulations may appeal to the Governor, whose decision is final.

(2) If it has not already done so, the Board must give written reasons for its decision, if required to do so by any person intending to appeal pursuant to this regulation.

(3) Notice of appeal, in writing, addressed to the Governor through the Administrator, must be given within 7 days of the decision complained of, or if a request for written reasons is made pursuant to sub-regulation (2), within 7 days of receipt of the request.

(4) A notice of appeal given pursuant to sub-regulation (3) must state the grounds of the appeal, and may include any other information which the appellant wishes the Governor to take into account in determining the appeal.

(5) Within 7 days of receipt of such notice of appeal, the Governor must cause a copy of the notice (and copies of any accompanying documents submitted) to be delivered to the Board, who may respond in writing to the notice of appeal within 7 days of receipt.

(6) The Governor must cause to be delivered to the appellant a copy of any response made to the notice of appeal pursuant to sub-regulation (5) (and copies of any accompanying documents submitted) within 7 days of the receipt of the response.

(7) The appellant may reply, in writing, to any response made by the Board to the notice of appeal within 7 days of the receipt of the response.

(8) The Governor may, in his or her discretion, extend any of the time limits prescribed by this regulation, in any case where the Governor considers it is just to do so.

(9) After the expiry of the time prescribed for the Board's response, or of the appellant's reply, or on receipt of such reply, as the case may require, the Governor must, as soon as practicable, determine the appeal and cause notice of his or her decision to be notified, in writing, to both the appellant and the Board.

- (10) In the determination of any appeal under this regulation, the Governor may –
- (a) confirm, overrule, or in any manner he or she considers appropriate vary the decision of the Board; and
  - (b) if the appeal is allowed, give such directions or instructions to the Board as the Governor considers necessary for the purpose of fully implementing the determination.

(11) The Board must comply with any directions or instructions given pursuant to sub-regulation (10) in a manner and within period the Governor specifies.



**SCHEDULE**  
(Regulations 10, 14 and 17)

**ANNUAL FEES AND CHARGES**

**For a licence for a relevant vessel authorised to be used as a fishing boat:**

(a)	overall length up to 20ft	£20.00
(b)	overall length exceeding 20ft but not exceeding 30ft	£30.00
(c)	overall length exceeding 30ft but not exceeding 40ft	£50.00
(d)	overall length exceeding 40ft	£100.00

**For a licence for a relevant vessel authorised to be used to carry passengers:**

(a)	carrying up to 20 passengers	£40.00
(b)	carrying more than 20 passengers	£60.00

**For a licence for a relevant vessel authorised to carry goods (including, without prejudice to the generality, a lighter or a barge:**

(a)	if exceeding a burden of 3 tons, per ton of carrying capacity	£50.00
(b)	if less than a burden of 3 tons, per ton of carrying capacity	£30.00

**For a licence for any other type or class of relevant vessel:** £10.00

**Fees in relation to licensing of coxswains:**

(a)	For the issue of a certificate of competency	£10.00
(b)	For the issue of a provisional certificate of competency	£10.00
(c)	For an examination	£5.00

**Fee on granting Pratique:** £50.00

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