

TOWAGE CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

This procedure must be completed if a vessel is to be considered for a variation to the Port of Belfast's minimum Towage Requirements, as defined in the current version of Port of Belfast Towage Requirements HM/2008/001/1. Such variation, if granted, will be valid for weather conditions, as defined within the aforementioned document.

To be eligible, a vessel must:

- Be a regular caller to the Port of Belfast (not less than 3 times per year).
- Be able to demonstrate a record of safety and reliability
- Have specifications in excess of the minimum defined within the Towage Requirements.

To initiate the process, written application must be sent to the Harbour Master providing;

- Vessel name
- IMO number
- Detailed description of vessel, including;
 - o Handling characteristics
 - o Thruster description
 - o Rudder type and size
 - o Engine type and characteristics
 - o Propeller description
 - o The berths for which the certificate is applied

Following receipt of the information, the process will commence with the assessment of the vessel during three successive visits to the named berth(s). For each visit, the vessel's Master and the Pilot will complete the relevant report form and submit these to the Harbour Master's office.

Following the third visit, a consultation meeting will be held between the vessel's Master, a senior Pilot, the Harbour Master's office and any parties the Harbour Master deems essential to the process. Computer modelling may be used, as necessary, to support the analysis.

Following the consultation meeting, a decision with regard to certification will be made by the Harbour Master and advised to the vessel's Master.

In the event of a negative decision, one further consultation between the vessel Master and the Harbour Master will be permitted. Following this meeting, the Harbour Master's decision is final.

Following a positive decision, a Towage Certificate will be issued to the vessel, detailing the level of towage required for specific berths.

Towage Certificates will be reviewed annually and any changes to the status of the Certificate will be notified, in writing, to the vessel Master by the Harbour Master.

Any of the following conditions may permanently or temporarily invalidate the Certificate:

- Any significant modifications carried out to the vessel.
- Any impairment to the manoeuvring characteristics of the vessel.
- Involvement of the vessel in an incident.
- The vessel ceases to be a regular caller to the Port of Belfast.

The Certificate holder will notify the Port of Belfast Harbour Master, prior to arrival at the Port, of any changes which may impact the validity of the Certificate.

The Harbour Master reserves the right to withdraw or suspend a Towage Certificate at any time.