

Harbour Master's Instruction HMI 002-2026

Title: Sydney Harbour & Port Botany – Heavy Weather Operational Restrictions, Actions and Precautions

Scope: Sydney VTS, Pilots, Vessel Operators and Agents, Service Providers, and Container Terminal Operators

Mariners are advised that when heavy weather conditions are forecasted for Sydney Harbour or Port Botany, Sydney VTS will provide periodic weather advisory via email. If the weather conditions are deemed to be significant, then the impact will be classified as a **Weather Event** and Sydney VTS will issue regular weather **SITREP** updates via email.

Ships Agents are required to pass on **Weather Advisory** and weather **SITREPS emails** to the vessel Master without delay and be prepared to engage additional towage at short notice.

Shipping operations may be conducted on a CASE-BY-CASE basis or SUSPENDED as determined by the Harbour Master.

Please note for all departures POB time signifies *Commerce Movement Time* or *Last Line Time* as defined in section 2.4 of the [Harbour Master Directions](#).

During declared weather events, vessels are to comply with the following requirements:

- All vessels alongside a berth must maintain a continuous listening watch on VHF 12 for Port Botany and VHF 13 for Sydney.
- All vessels are to contact Sydney VTS and confirm readiness for pilot boarding and departure from berth no less than 2 hours before Booked POB time.
- For departures from port, when Pilot boarding side is advised by VTS in advance, if practicable vessels are requested to rig the pilot ladder arrangement before pilot boards.
- Vessel must notify Sydney VTS immediately if they need to engage their bow or stern thruster or are unable to remain safely alongside the berth.
- Outboard anchor to be lowered to the seabed (if not already done so).
- Mooring lines and winches must be tended at all times, with winches in manual tension mode on the brake.
- Vessels may be requested to run extra mooring lines.
- Vessels should maintain close communication with Sydney VTS and promptly report any operational concerns or limitations so that appropriate assistance or adjustments can be made.

For a list of Harbour Master Instructions currently in force, please see:

[Harbour Master's Instructions | Port Authority New South Wales \(portauthoritynsw.com.au\)](#)

SAMPLE SITREP

SYDNEY VTS - WEATHER EVENT SITREP					
Weather Event No.	2 of 2026	SITREP No.	3		
Date:	2 nd February 2026	Time:	0300 hrs		
CURRENT SHIPPING MOVEMENTS STATUS:					
SYDNEY OPERATIONS as of now		CASE BY CASE			
BOTANY OPERATIONS as of now		CASE BY CASE			
CURRENT CONDITIONS IN PORT BOTANY AND OFFSHORE:					
Wind Direction:	S	Wind Speed Range:	27 to 34kts		
Swell Significant Height:	3.21m	Swell Max Height:	5.15m		
CURRENT WIND CONDITIONS IN PORT JACKSON (SYDNEY HARBOUR – WESTERN WEDDING CAKE):					
Wind Direction:	S	Wind Speed Range:	21 to 28kts		
FORECASTED CONDITIONS NEXT 24 HRS:					
Wind Direction:	SE	Wind Speed Range:	10	To	15 kts
Swell Significant Height:	2.3 m	Swell Max Height:	4.1 m		
FORECASTED CONDITIONS 24 - 48 HRS:					
Wind Direction:	N	Wind Speed Range:	8	To	12kts
Swell Significant Height:	1.7 m	Swell Max Height:	3m		
EXPECTED DEVELOPMENTS:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilots boarded and aborted 2 arrivals during the day on 1st February with wind conditions being outside safety parameters. 2 departures and 2 arrivals were completed during the hours of 1800/01 and 0130/02, before winds began to increase beyond safety parameters, with two movements scheduled for 0215 and 0315 cancelled and put back to expected status to rebooked when parameters are favorable – Agents and Terminals will be advised accordingly. 					

- Movements for the ports continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis in combination with service availability.
- Southerly winds are forecast to increase during the early hours of this morning, with the peak expected at around 0630hrs.
- Swell offshore is expected to gradually increase throughout this morning with the peak due at around 0700hrs and remain high until Tuesday 3rd February.
- Sydney VTS, Duty Pilot and Harbour Master team continue to monitor and assess conditions within the Port precinct and offshore.

INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS:

Agents:

- Sydney VTS request that agents monitor weather forecasts and weather information promulgated by Sydney VTS.
- Agents may be required to add additional towage to movements at short notice as winds increase and should plan as such. Refer Towage tables issued 15th February 2025.

Ships Masters:

- The Harbour Master advises that all immobilisation is prohibited for the duration of this weather event.
- Vessels in Port should have their Bow Thrusters and Main Engines on standby.
- Maintain an active listening watch on VHF 12 / 13.
- Notify Sydney VTS on VHF at any time your vessel is not remaining alongside due to strong winds.
- Lower your outboard anchor to the seabed (if not already done so).
- Mooring winches and lines to be tended to at all times. Mooring winches to be in manual tension mode and on the brake.

Next SITREP due:

1100 hours 2nd February 2026

IF FINAL SITREP:

Last Movement before Stoppage:

Pilotage Resumed:

First Movement after Stoppage: