

Dear Sir/Madam,

Subject: Introduction of Special Recreational Vessel (SRV) Permit

Port Authority of New South Wales (Port Authority) advises Masters, vessel owners, operators, and agents of recent changes to the Marine Safety Regulation 2016 (NSW) relating to the operation of Special Recreational Vessels (SRVs) in NSW pilotage ports.

These regulatory updates introduce compulsory pilotage for SRVs over 35m in NSW pilotage ports, unless the Master of the vessel holds a Special Recreational Vessel Permit (SRV Permit) issued by Port Authority.

The updated framework aims to strengthen navigational safety within the Pilotage Ports of NSW and ensures consistent oversight of SRVs (commonly referred to as superyachts).

Why has the SRV Permit been introduced?

The SRV Permit ensures that navigational risks within port limits posed by SRVs are appropriately managed through defined eligibility criteria.

What the SRV Permit enables

The SRV Permit provides flexibility by allowing eligible Masters of SRVs who may not hold a valid Certificate of Local Knowledge and are not permanently based in a NSW Pilotage Port, to navigate their vessels within those port limits without the need for embarking a Marine Pilot.

This maintains a high standard of safety and operational control within NSW pilotage waters.

Eligibility requirements

To obtain an SRV Permit, Masters must:

- hold an applicable Certificate of Competency for the vessel that they are the Master of
- successfully pass a Harbour Master–approved local knowledge assessment; and
- unless otherwise authorised by the Harbour Master, embark an approved Marine Pilot for the first inbound arrival as part of the local knowledge assessment process (booking of pilot required through the vessels agent).

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Permit fees and duration

- The application fee is \$1,600 (non-refundable)
- SRV Permits have a 60 day validity
- A one off 60 day extension may be granted if the vessel's stay is extended within the applicable NSW Pilotage Port. Any further extensions will require a new application and payment of the application fee, including resitting the assessment.

The Harbour Master retains discretion regarding permit duration, extension and conditions.

Conditions of holding an SRV Permit

Permit holders must comply with:

- Harbour Master Directions
- Sydney VTS reporting requirements
- Conditions outlined in the issued permit
- The limits of their Certificate of Competency

Failure to comply may result in suspension, cancellation or enforcement action.

How to apply

Applicants must:

- Download the SRV Permit Application Form from the Port Authority website
- Email the completed form and supporting documents—including vessel specifications, arrival date and proposed length of stay to: colkexams@portauthoritynsw.com.au.

Applicants should allow a minimum of five (5) working days for the assessment of new applications.

The Master must complete a local knowledge assessment as part of the application process. If the assessment is failed, the applicant must wait seven (7) days before resitting the local knowledge assessment. Bookings for the local knowledge assessment may be made online on Port Authority's website.

Further details (including assessment structure and practice exams) are available on the Port Authority website - <https://www.portauthoritynsw.com.au/port-operations/sydney-harbour/notices-forms-and-permits/special-recreational-vessel-permit-sydney>.

Yours sincerely,

Myron Fernandes

Harbour Master – Sydney and Botany Bay Harbour

4 June 2026