

INFORMATION ON PILOTAGE SERVICE AND COMPULSORY PILOTAGE ON SVALBARD

As of 1st July 2012 the Act of 16th June 1989 no. 59 relating to the Pilotage Service (Pilotage Act) and regulations issued pursuant to the act were made applicable to Svalbard, thus introducing the state pilotage service, compulsory pilotage and PEC on Svalbard. This follows from the regulations 25th June 2012 relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard.

There are transitional measures whereby compulsory pilotage will be introduced step by step, starting in 2012 and from 2015 there will be full compulsory pilotage on Svalbard, same as on the Norwegian mainland.

Who are subject to compulsory pilotage?

The same rules apply on Svalbard as for mainland Norway. I.e. vessels with at length of 70 meters or more and passenger vessels with a length of 24 meters or more are subject to compulsory pilotage when sailing in Svalbard internal waters. For vessels carrying dangerous cargo the length limits are shorter. See the Regulations 23rd December 1994 no. 1129 concerning compulsory pilotage in Norwegian waters (compulsory pilotage regulations) § 6 for the complete list of vessels subject to compulsory pilotage and exempt vessels.

Where?

The vessels listed in the compulsory pilotage regulations § 6 are subject to compulsory pilotage when navigating in Svalbard internal waters, i.e. on the landward side of the baselines (see map for illustration). However, specific areas in Bellsund and Isfjorden leading in to the pilot embarkations points off Akselsundet, Barentsburg and Longyearbyen are exempt, allowing vessels subject to compulsory pilotage to approach the pilot embarkation points without having a pilot on board (see map for illustration). The pilot embarkation points and exempt areas are set out in the regulations relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard § 2 first indent a) and defined geographically in annex 1 to the regulations.

The compulsory pilotage regulations do not apply to Bjørnøya. The Norwegian Coastal Administration (NCA) is, however, empowered to require a vessel to use a pilot for a specific voyage, by individual decision.

When?

Transitional measures are set out in the regulations relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard § 3. The requirement to use a pilot or to hold a PEC will be introduced step by step:

1. Large vessels (150m<) to Svea from 1. July 2012
2. Large cruise vessels (150m<) from sailing season 2013
3. All vessels listed in § 6 from sailing season 2014, except expedition cruise vessels
4. From 2015 no exemptions, i.e. all vessels listed in § 6 must use pilot or hold PEC

Large cruise vessels may use a pilot for the 2012 season. Vessels voluntarily using a pilot shall, for the 2012 season, pay only half the ordinary pilot fee.

Pilot or PEC

Vessels subject to compulsory pilotage as described above must, in accordance with the compulsory pilotage regulations § 5 either use a pilot or hold a pilot exemption certificate (PEC) when navigating in Svalbard internal waters. A PEC may only be used by vessel with an all over length shorter than 150 meters.

PEC:

A PEC is issued to captains/navigators that have experience from sailing in the fairways or areas covered by the PEC, after passing a theoretical and practical test. Comprehensive information about PEC and midshipman PEC is given on the homepage of the NCA (http://www.kystverket.no/en/EN_Maritime-Services/Pilot-Exemption-Certificate/).

Applicants for a PEC must meet the requirements of experience as set out in the compulsory pilotage regulations § 13, as adjusted by the regulations relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard § 2 first indent b) and c). An applicant for PEC on Svalbard must, in addition to holding a valid deck officer certificate, have:

1. at least one year's effective service as a duty navigator in Svalbard waters, where the area of service includes the waters or areas to which the application for a pilot exemption certificate relates. Up to 10 months of effective service as a duty navigator in polar waters may be counted, or:
2. completed the midshipman pilot exemption certificate programme for Svalbard, or:
3. been responsible, during the last two sailing seasons, for navigation during a total of at least six passings in each direction in the waters or areas to which the application for a pilot exemption certificate relates. For vessels not servicing regular routes, instead of six passings in each direction, service as a duty navigator during 3 representative voyages of at least 1 week in the areas to which the application for a pilot exemption certificate relates, may be counted. The voyages must have been undertaken with the vessel or vessels to which the application for a pilot exemption certificate relates or an equivalent vessel.

A PEC-test must be passed in order to obtain a pilot exemption certificate. The examination consists of a theoretical and a practical part that is carried out on board. A NCA pilot will conduct the examination and evaluate the candidate's effort. The evaluation form used by the pilot is available on the NCA homepage. The theoretical knowledge and practical skills that are tested during the PEC-test are set out in the compulsory pilotage regulations § 14. In addition the applicant for a pilot exemption certificate for Svalbard waters shall demonstrate sufficient knowledge of ice navigation and the weather conditions on Svalbard, and skills in ice navigation. This follows from the regulations relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard § 2 first indent d) and e).

More information on how to get a PEC and application forms are available here:

http://www.kystverket.no/en/EN_Maritime-Services/Pilot-Exemption-Certificate/How-to-get-a-Pilot-Exemption-Certificate/

Fees

The pilotage fees consist of the pilotage readiness fee, pilotage service fee and pilot exemption certificate fee, in accordance with the [regulations on pilotage fees](#). Vessels must pay pilotage readiness fee when they become subject to compulsory pilotage in accordance with the transitional measures.

The rates of fees are the same for Svalbard as on mainland Norway. More information and rates are available here: http://www.kystverket.no/en/EN_Maritime-Services/Fees/Pilotage-Fee/.

While the rates of fees are similar to mainland Norway, 4 specific adjustments to how the fees are calculated are given in the regulations relating to the pilotage service on Svalbard § 2 third indent:

1. According to the main rule of § 8 pilotage readiness fees for single voyages are payable when crossing the borders into and out of waters subject to fees (crossing the baseline). However, multiple crossings of the baseline shall not generate additional fees when crossing the baseline is part of a natural voyage along the coast of Svalbard. This includes voyages to Kvitøya, Kong Karls Land and Hopen.
2. There are no additional pilotage readiness fees for voyages between the Norwegian mainland and Svalbard.

3. When calculating the annual pilotage readiness fee in accordance with § 9 the year shall be counted from May until October for vessels that solely sail in waters subject to fee during the sailing season on Svalbard. Such vessels shall pay the pilotage readiness fee as an annual fee when they during one sailing season operate for more than 2 months in total in waters subject to fees or between ports on Svalbard.
4. According to § 12 a pilotage fee is payable for all hours where a vessels has a pilot on board, independent of the hours of active pilotage carried out. However, the number of hours to be paid for shall be reduces with up to 12 hours per day when having a pilot aboard during a coastal voyage on Svalbard, ensuring however that all hours of active pilot service in waters subject to compulsory pilotage shall be paid for.

Practical information:

The NCA is responsible for the pilotage service on Svalbard, in the same way as on the mainland. The pilotage service on Svalbard is organized under NCA Region Troms og Finnmark, and is administered by the chief of pilotage services of Troms, Finnmark og Svalbard sjøtrafikkavdeling.

The NCA will have pilots in both Longyearbyen and on Svea, subject to need. The pilots of Longyearbyen cover vessel traffic to both Barentsburg, Longyearbyen and Ny-Ålesund, including the long distance cruise ships. Vessels arriving in and leaving Svalbard must embark/disembark the pilot at one of the pilot embarkation points. Vessels already in port and vessels with a pilot already on board can embark/disembark the pilot in port.

Ordering a pilot/pilot dispatch services:

Pilot dispatch services are carried out from the dispatch service in Lødingen. As on the mainland, the vessel or agent must register in Safe Sea Net, notify the voyage and book pilots electronically. User manual for Safe Sea Net is available on the NCA homepage (<http://www.shiprep.no/ShipRepWebUI/Documents/usermanual.pdf>) along with the contact information of the pilot dispatch service (http://www.kystverket.no/en/EN_Maritime-Services/Pilot-Services/Pilot-Dispatch-/#). To book a pilot there is a 24h prenotification requirement. However, due to the extra logistical challenges of Svalbard we kindly ask for prenotifications to be made as early as possible.