

# Customs – Australia

*The following information is obtained from the Australian Customs Service website – [www.customs.gov.au](http://www.customs.gov.au) .*

## Information for yachts travelling to and from Australia

### Yachts Departing

<http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=4362>

#### Passenger Movement Charge

Passengers on board may be required to pay a Passenger Movement Charge (previously called departure tax). From 1 July 2001, this charge will be \$38. Children under 12 years of age are exempt.

#### Clearance

Prior to departure from Australia, Customs and Immigration clearance is required. Customs should be contacted in advance to avoid unnecessary delay. **It is an offence to depart without clearance.**

#### Requirements for departure

Passports and completed Outgoing Passenger card for all persons on board; Masters of Australian or imported vessels may be required to 'enter' the vessel for export if the craft is to be sold or positioned overseas.

#### Registering craft - the Registrar of Ships

Masters of foreign craft not registered under the law of a foreign country must make a declaration about the nationality of their craft when leaving Australia.

All Australian craft or vessels, irrespective of size or type whether owned by an Australian citizen or by an Australian company, must be registered before leaving Australia. State registration does not meet this requirement.

It is necessary to apply for registration of your craft several weeks before leaving Australia. Unregistered craft will not receive Australian diplomatic protection while overseas.

You can do this by contacting the Registrar of Ships at [www.amsa.gov.au](http://www.amsa.gov.au)

#### Ship's gear

Australian residents who are taking articles out of Australia which they already own, including yachting equipment, may require proof of prior ownership on return to avoid paying duty.

These goods should be listed for Customs at your port of departure.

#### Embarking animals

Most countries require animals on board to have health certificates from their countries of origin.

Australian residents are advised not to take their pets overseas because of quarantine and other matters they may encounter visiting certain countries and on return to

Australia. However, if you wish to take an animal on your trip you should consult with the Government/s of your intended for their quarantine requirements.

### **Heritage items**

It is illegal to take out of Australia, without a permit, items identified as being of great importance to Australia's national heritage. These items can include a vast array of objects from works of art and archaeological finds, to objects associated with our history or technological development. Further information can be sourced from Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts website: [www.dcita.gov.au](http://www.dcita.gov.au).

### **Wildlife**

Exportation of endangered and threatened (animal and plant) wildlife and Australian native wildlife is strictly regulated and in some cases is illegal. Information and permits regarding the exportation of wildlife and products made from them is available from:

Environment Australia

Phone +61 2 6274 1900

Fax: +61 2 6274 1921

E-mail: [wildlifetrade@deh.gov.au](mailto:wildlifetrade@deh.gov.au)

All permits must be obtained before you leave Australia. Severe penalties apply for offences against the *Wildlife Protection Act*.

## **Yachts Arriving**

<http://www.customs.gov.au/site/page.cfm?u=4360>

When you arrive in Australia, you must first call at a port of entry where Customs, Quarantine and Immigration formalities can be completed. Ports of entry are shown on the map of Australia at page 11.

When entering Australian waters you are required to clearly display the International Pratique Q-flag (yellow). A further requirement is that the craft travels directly to an appointed boarding station.

### **Berthing**

Customs, Quarantine and Immigration clearance must be completed prior to going ashore.

Please stay on board. No persons other than a Quarantine or Customs officer is allowed to board your craft, nor can any person, animal or article leave the craft until you have been given full clearance;

Depending on your arrival time, Customs and Quarantine may require all persons to remain on board overnight before clearing you the following day;

Don't throw any waste or foodstuffs overboard while you're in Australian waters or while you are moored. Use designated quarantine disposal points;

Keep all food and animals secure until your vessel has been inspected by Quarantine officers;

Don't trade foodstuffs with other overseas vessels;

Keep your vessel free of insects.

**To go ashore without prior clearance is an offence.** Contact with other vessels in port prior to clearance is also prohibited.

### **Documents required on arrival**

All people on board will be required to produce a valid passport, visa and completed Incoming Passenger Card;

The Master will be required to complete a completed [Small Craft Arrival Report](#).

### **Charges**

Customs does not levy any charge for Customs and Immigration clearance. However the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service operates on a full cost recovery basis.

### **Quarantine**

You must declare all personal food, plant and animal items on your Incoming Passenger Card. A Quarantine officer will inspect your galley stores and other quarantineable items to ensure that they do not include prohibited goods or items infested with insects or disease. These could harm Australia's unique environment or introduce plant, animal or human, pests or diseases. Treatable goods will be treated and returned to you. Prohibited goods will be either confiscated, bonded on the vessel for the duration of your stay, or re-exported at the owner's expense.

Vessels with an animal subject to quarantine must remain at a mid-water mooring and keep the animal secure for the duration of your stay in Australia.

If you declare prohibited items, you may be given the option of re-exporting them. If you do not declare items of quarantine concern, a substantial on-the-spot fine could be imposed or you could be prosecuted.

For further details on Quarantine issues visit [www.affa.gov.au](http://www.affa.gov.au).

### **Human health**

If you have travelled through or landed in Tropical Zone Central Africa or South America within the previous six days before arriving in Australia, you will need a valid Yellow Fever vaccination certificate for each person who is over twelve months old.

This applies even if there was no outbreak of Yellow Fever in the infected area at the time of your visit. You do not need any other health certificates to enter Australia.

### **Drugs**

You must report any drugs on board your craft to Customs on arrival and departure. This includes medications containing narcotics, hallucinogens, amphetamines, barbiturates and tranquillisers in your medical kit. If you use any of these drugs while in Australia you must record this in the craft's logbook. A doctor's prescription may validate certain registered drugs.

**WARNING: Penalties for drug offences in Australia are severe and could result in imprisonment.**

### **Firearms and other weapons**

All firearms/weapons on your craft must be reported to Customs.

Certain firearms/weapons may be detained in safe storage for transshipment to your intended port of departure (at Customs expense).

In cases where a firearm/weapon has been detained the Master will be required to contact Customs at least one week prior to departure so that the weapon can be returned.

### **Currency**

There is no limit on the amount of Australian or foreign cash that may be brought into or taken out of Australia, but travellers carrying \$A10,000 or more, or the equivalent in foreign currency, must declare this on arrival and departure.

Currency includes notes and coins but does not include traveller's cheques. Reporting is required by law and failure to do so is an offence.

### **Temporary import of goods**

Commercial goods brought into Australia with the intention of being sold are subject to the normal rates of duty and tax where applicable.

Goods, commercial or personal, that are brought into Australia to remain temporarily may be admitted duty and tax-free, subject to certain conditions.

Carnets may be obtained for temporary duty free entry of goods such as commercial samples, jewellery, goods for international exhibitions, equipment for sporting events, professional television and film equipment.

For more information on [importing goods](#)

### **Duty free concessions**

The following duty-free concessions are available to travellers arriving in Australia provided that they do not exceed the specified amounts.

#### **Group 1 - general**

A\$900 worth of goods (A\$450 for people under 18 and both air and sea crew members ) including gifts (given to you or intended for others), souvenirs, cameras, electronic equipment, leather goods, perfume concentrates, jewellery, watches and sporting equipment. Alcohol and tobacco products cannot be included in this concession.

These goods can be:

obtained overseas

purchased in Australia duty or tax free before departure

goods for which a tax refund has been approved through the Tourist Refund Scheme

purchased from an inwards duty free shop on arrival.

#### **Group 2 - alcohol**

2.25 litres of alcoholic beverages for each passenger aged 18 years or over.

#### **Group 3 - tobacco**

250 cigarettes, or 250 grams of cigars or tobacco products for each passenger aged 18 years or over. One opened packet containing 25 cigarettes or less is also allowed.

**NOTE: However, if you exceed any of the concession limits set out above, Customs will charge you duty and tax on the entire importation or purchase within that group of items.**

**You can pool your duty free concessions if you are a family travelling together.**

**Family means husband and wife and, if any, a child who is, or children who are, under the age of 18 years.**

Most personal items such as new clothing, footwear, and articles for personal hygiene and grooming (but not fur or perfume concentrates) may also be brought into Australia in accompanied baggage free from duty and/or tax.

**If you have anything in excess of your duty free concession, declare the goods and provide proof of purchase to Customs for calculation of any duty and tax to be paid.**

Failure to declare goods in excess of your concession could result in the application of penalties. If in doubt, contact a Customs officer or call **1300 363 263** (Australia only) for information. If overseas, call +61 2 6275 6666 or email [information@customs.gov.au](mailto:information@customs.gov.au)

#### **Payment of customs duty/taxes**

Payment of Customs duty and/or other taxes may be made in cash or by travellers cheque in Australian dollars or by personal cheque drawn on an Australian Bank or by Credit card (American Express, Diners Card, MasterCard, Visa or Bankcard) - only available at international airports or by electronic funds transfer (EFTPOS) from an Australian bank account only available at international airports.

## Customs Immigration & Quarantine – Port Vila Vanuatu

See: <http://www.cruising-vanuatu.com/>

### Customs Clearance into Vanuatu

These instructions are adapted from the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu Customs and Inland Revenue Department Notice to Masters of Visiting Yachts and Small Craft.

#### Customs Ports:

There are four ports of entry into Vanuatu:

- Port Vila on the island of Efate,
- Luganville on Santo,
- Sola on Vanua Lava, and
- Lenakel on Tanna.

Yachts may not stop at any other island or anchorage in Vanuatu until first clearing in one of these four ports of entry.

#### Entering in Tanna

Many yachts wish to enter in Tanna so they can visit Tanna, Aneityum and Erromango without having to beat to windward from Efate. Clearing in there is now routine and you should have no problems, although there are some important things to consider.

The anchorage at Lenakel on Tanna is small and subject to heavy swell during winds from the Northwest through the south to ESE, making landing difficult. Yachts now regularly clear in at Port Resolution, but this means that the Customs and Quarantine officers have to arrive by truck or taxi from Lenakel and this is a 4 hour round trip. Each yacht is being charged 6600 Vatu (about US\$50) to clear into Vanuatu at Port Resolution. The officers now regularly come on Wednesday each week but will come on other days if there are yachts present.

Yachts must put up the quarantine flag on approach to Port Resolution and to leave it up until they are completely cleared in by both Customs and Quarantine. The captain may go ashore at the small yacht club on the SE corner of the anchorage to find out when the clearance officers are arriving but everyone else should stay aboard and nobody may visit the incoming yacht until after clearance. Note that the officers require cash - Vatu, Australian, American, New Zealand dollars - they do not take credit cards, travellers cheques or personal cheques. Also, the bank in Lenakel does not accept credit cards.

**Port Vila and Luganville are the main ports of clearance and most yachts clear into Port Vila.** Obtain instructions on VHF Channel 16 for inward clearance procedures in Lenakel, Luganville or Sola.

#### Days and Times to obtain clearance

The international and inter-island outward clearance will be granted only on Monday to Friday from 07:30 to 11:00 hours and 13:30 to 16:00 hours. The offices are closed on public holidays and weekends.

#### Arrival

When you arrive in Port Vila anchor in the quarantine zone near the yellow buoy. This is

just north of the lead markers in some 8 to 20 meters depth. Have your yellow quarantine flag flying. Call Port Vila Harbor Control on Channel 16. They keep radio watch from 7:30 to 16:30. If they do not answer, try Yachting World on Channel 16. They will contact Customs and Quarantine for you. These officials will arrive with their own skiff. If you arrive on Saturday or Sunday or a public holiday you might as well catch up on sleep and chores on the boat as you won't be clearing in except during working hours. Do not go ashore without first clearing in without explicit instructions by radio or telephone from customs officials instructing you otherwise.

### **Allowed Stay and Conditions**

Immigration officers will issue each member of the crew with an entry permit for one month providing you live aboard and do not take up paid employment. Should you wish to extend your stay you must apply to the Immigration authorities 4 weeks in advance (e.g. when you clear in) in any of the ports of entry except Sola on Vanua Lava. The maximum stay is four months.

Anyone on board ceasing to be a crew member must obtain a return air ticket immediately. Responsibility for advising the immigration authorities when a crew member wishes to leave lies with the master who will be liable for crew member repatriation unless and until released from this obligation.

Sea-going yachts or other vessels for pleasure temporarily visiting Vanuatu may be admitted free of duty provided that in each case the vessel:

- (a) has entered Vanuatu under its own power on a voyage from a foreign port or place; and
- (b) belongs to or has been hired, chartered or otherwise loaned to a person or person travelling on board the vessel at the time of its arrival in Vanuatu; and
- (c) is intended for the personal use of the person or persons on board and shall not be used for any commercial purpose in Vanuatu; and
- (d) shall not be sold, lent, hired pledged or otherwise disposed of and shall not be used for any commercial purpose in Vanuatu; and
- (e) shall not remain in Vanuatu for a period or periods exceeding a total of 18 months in any period of 24 months, save for reason of circumstance (including a change of residence) accepted by the Director of Customs as being of an exceptional and unavoidable nature.

**Yachts will become liable for duty if it is disposed of in Vanuatu, if it is used for commercial purposes, if it remains in Vanuatu for a period exceeding 18 months in any two years, or if it is imported by a resident of Vanuatu.**

### **Commercial Goods**

Any commercial goods carried on board that will be landed in Vanuatu or are in transit through Vanuatu, must all be declared to Customs authority on arrival by the Masters of the vessels or its crew members. Failure to do so may result with the confiscation of the yacht(s)/pleasure boat(s).

### **Arms and Ammunition**

On arrival all arms and ammunition must be declared and surrendered to the Customs Officer for safe keeping. If Customs is satisfied the firearms and ammunition can be safely secured under seal onboard this may be allowed. In cases where no suitable secured

sealing arrangements exist, the goods will be held by Customs until departure. You must notify Customs 48 hours in advance of your intended departure from the final port of clearance. If you intend to depart from a port of clearance other than the one you arrived at, it is a good idea to provide at least a week's notice.

### **Prohibited Goods**

Automatic and semi automatic weapons are not to be brought into the country at all as these are strictly prohibited and severe penalties are in place for any breach of these prohibitions.

You may not have onboard obscene publications, or videos, narcotics (other than genuine medical emergency drugs).

### **Customs Allowances**

Each crew member is allowed:

Personal baggage consisting of wearing apparel, toilet requisites, articles of personal adornment, and similar personal effects to be owned and used aboard by each crew member and which are not intended for gifts, sale or disposal to any other person.

Persons over 15 years of age are allowed 250 cigarettes or 100 cigarillos or 50 cigars or 250 grams of tobacco, 2 litres of wine and 1.5 litres of spirit, 1/4 litre of toilet water and 10 centilitres of perfume.

Other items up to a value of 50,000 Vatu per person aged over 15 years.

If the vessel has goods, especially tobacco or alcohol, in excess of these allowances, they must be secured under customs bond until departure.

### **Port Dues**

All visiting small craft must pay port dues of 7,000 Vatu for the first 30 days or any part thereof. After 30 days from the date of first arrival, the vessel is liable for an additional charge of 100 Vatu per day. Port Dues are paid at the customs office at the final port of departure.

### **Danger, overhead wire.**

An overhead electric cable extends from the eastern side of Iriki island and Vila. No vessel with a mast exceeding 25 meters height from the waterline may attempt to pass under the cable. The maximum clearance is 28 meters close to the Vila side of the channel. Violation of this restriction is subject to penalties plus costs of any damages.

### **Anchor Lights**

All vessels in movement or at anchor in the port of Port Vila shall carry the required navigation or anchor lights between the hours of sunset and sunrise. Reported infractions will make the master or owner of the vessel liable to penalties under the Harbour Light Act.

### **Quarantine**

No live animals, reptiles, birds of any description, fresh meat, fruit or vegetables imported by yachts may be taken ashore. Restrictions on what may or may not be left on board will be determined by the officers of the Department of Agriculture. No foreign garbage may be landed in Vanuatu without permission from the Quarantine Service.

### **Inter-Island Voyages**

On completion of Customs and Immigration formalities at the port of entry, masters of any

vessel wishing to visit other islands in the group must declare their intended movements to the Customs authorities and obtain an inter-island clearance.

### **Duty Free**

Duty-Free goods may be shipped on board any vessel which has cleared outwards, or which is about to clear outwards, for a foreign port. Quantities allowed to be shipped shall be commensurate with the length of the anticipated voyage. Apply at the Customs Office for appropriate forms and conditions at the time of departure.

### **Outwards Clearance**

All yachts leaving Vanuatu for a foreign port are required to obtain an outward clearance from Customs and Immigration authorities at the final port of clearance (Lenakel, Port Vila, Luganville, or Sola). No yacht is allowed to call at any island once it has been given an outward international clearance.

Yachts wishing to obtain an outward international clearance at locations other than Lenakel, Port Vila, Luganville or Sola should obtain permission from Customs and Immigration in advance and if such a request is granted, may be required to pay official attendance and travel fees.