

## Summary of MEPC 74 May 2019



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## Introduction

From 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 74) met for its 74<sup>th</sup> session at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in London. Topics discussed included amendments to MARPOL (concerning carriage of fuel), the Ballast Water Management Convention (including amendments to guidelines), amendments to the NOx Technical Code, strengthening the energy efficiency design index (EEDI) of ships, reducing marine plastic litter, protecting the Arctic and the next steps in the IMO's strategy for greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction.

An overview of decisions is given here, but definitive information should be sought from the final report of the Committee.

### Amendments adopted

The Committee considered and adopted draft amendments to:

- MARPOL Annexes I, II and V – to allow for electronic record books (ERB) to be used. Entry into force 01/10/2020
- MARPOL Annex VI – on ERBs and EEDI Regulations for ice-strengthened ships. Entry into force 01/10/2020
- the NOx Technical Code 2008 – on ERBs and certification requirements for selective catalytic reduction (SCR) systems. Entry into force 01/10/2020
- MARPOL Annex II – on cargo residues and tank washings of persistent floating noxious liquid substances (NLS). These amendments strengthen, in specified sea areas, discharge requirements for cargo residues and tank washings containing persistent floating products with a high viscosity and/or a high melting point that can solidify under certain conditions (e.g. certain vegetable oils and paraffin-like cargoes). The amendments add new paragraphs to MARPOL Annex II, Regulation 13 on the Control of discharges of residues of noxious liquid substances, to require prewash and discharge of residue/water mixture generated during the prewash to a reception facility, for specific products, in specified areas (Northwest European waters, Baltic Sea area, Western European waters and Norwegian Sea). Entry into force 01/01/2021
- the IBC Code, specifically chapters 17 (summary of minimum requirements), 18 (list of products to which the Code does not apply), 19 (index of products carried in bulk) and 21 (criteria for assigning carriage requirements for products subject to the IBC Code). There are consequential amendments for the BCH Code. Entry into force 01/01/2021.

The corresponding draft MEPC resolutions were also adopted:

- MEPC.318(74) on Guidelines for the use of electronic record books under MARPOL
- MEPC.315(74) on Amendments to the 2017 Guidelines addressing additional aspects of the NOX Technical Code 2008 with regard to particular requirements related to marine diesel engines fitted with selective catalytic reduction (SCR) systems.

## Air Pollution, Energy Efficiency, GHG Emission Reductions

MEPC 74 discussed further measures aimed at reducing GHG emissions. These included approving amendments to MARPOL Annex VI to significantly strengthen the EEDI 'phase 3' requirements, specifically to table 1 of regulation 21, to regulation 20 on the method of EEDI calculation and to regulation 21 on reduction factors and determination of the reference line for bulk carriers. These are due to be adopted at MEPC 75. The draft amendments advance the entry into effect date of phase 3 to 2022, from 2025, for several ship types, including gas carriers, general cargo ships and LNG carriers. For container ships, the EEDI reduction rate is enhanced according to DWT, with a reduction rate of up to 50% for larger ship sizes.

The Committee agreed the terms of reference for a correspondence group to assess future 'phase 4' EEDI requirements and also adopted Resolution MEPC.322(74) on Amendments to the 2018 Guidelines on the method of calculation of the attained Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI) for new ships. This introduces a new factor for ice-classed ships.

The Committee adopted Resolution MEPC.323(74) on Invitation to Member States to encourage voluntary cooperation between the port and shipping sectors to contribute to reducing GHG emissions from ships. It was also noted that the final report of the 4<sup>th</sup> IMO GHG Study will be presented to MEPC 76 in autumn 2020.

The Committee discussed the 0.50% sulphur limit due to enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, with regard to fuel oil content, safety and compliance with the regulations. The Committee approved the draft circulars on:

- Guidance for port State control on contingency measures for addressing non-compliant fuel oil
- 2019 Guidelines for on board sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used on board ships. Ships will be required to designate sampling points no later than the first IAPP renewal survey 12 months or more after the entry into force of the regulation

- Guidance on temporary indication of ongoing compliance in the case of the failure of a single monitoring instrument, and recommended actions to take if the EGCS fails to meet the provisions of the Guidelines. This guidance is aimed at ship operators, port States and flag States in the event of scrubber malfunctions and compliance issues in the case of sensor failure, including short-term emission exceedances
- Guidance for best practice for Member States/coastal States
- Delivery of compliant fuel oil by suppliers (subject to concurrent approval by MSC 101)
- Notification on early application of the verification procedures for a MARPOL Annex VI fuel oil sample (Regulation 18.8.2 or 14.8).

The Committee discussed and adopted:

- MEPC.320(74) on 2019 Guidelines for consistent implementation of the 0.50% sulphur limit under MARPOL Annex VI
- MEPC.321(74) on 2019 Guidelines for port State control under MARPOL Annex VI – Chapter 3
- draft amendments to regulations 1, 2, 14 and 18, appendix I and appendix VI of MARPOL Annex VI, with a view to adoption at MEPC 75. These include a new appendix, containing guidance for Port State Control in cases where non-availability of compliant fuel is claimed (FONAR).



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## Marine Plastic Litter

The Committee discussed further work towards the IMO Action Plan adopted at MEPC 73 to address marine plastic litter. The Committee approved the draft terms of reference for an IMO Study on marine plastic litter and invited further proposals and scientific presentations for future meetings. A correspondence group was established to finalise a draft strategy.

## Implementation of the Ballast Water Convention

The BWM Convention, which entered into force in September 2017, has been ratified by 81 States, representing 80.7% of world tonnage, and MEPC discussed its effective implementation. The Committee discussed and approved:

- BWM.2/Circ.67/Rev.1 on the revised Data gathering and analysis plan for the experience-building phase associated with the BWM Convention
- BWM.2/Circ.66/Rev.1 on the Updated unified interpretation of Appendix I (Form of the International Ballast Water Management Certificate) of the BWM Convention
- draft amendments to regulation E-1 of the BWM Convention, with a view to adoption at MEPC 75. The Committee endorsed the view that commissioning testing should begin as soon as possible, in accordance with the already approved Guidance for the commissioning testing of BWMS.

Five BWMS that make use of Active Substances were approved.



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## Other Approvals

The Committee also approved:

- The draft circular on Guidance on the implementation of provisional categorization of liquid substances in accordance with MARPOL Annex II and the IBC Code related to paraffin-like products
- the draft circular on 2019 Guidelines for the carriage of blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes, subject to concurrent approval by MSC 101
- the draft revised circular on Guidelines for the provisional assessment of liquid substances transported in bulk
- the methodology to analyse impacts of a ban on the use and carriage of heavy fuel oil as fuel in Arctic waters
- the Guide on practical implementation of the pollution prevention and response treaties (OPRC Convention and the OPRC-HNS Protocol).

## Future Outputs

The future work programme outputs of MEPC were discussed and agreed in the following areas:

- An expanded output on Amendments to the 2012 Guidelines on implementation of effluent standards and performance tests for sewage treatment plants
- a new output to amend MARPOL to allow the establishment of regional arrangements in the Arctic
- the development of an operational guide on the response to spills of HNS
- a new output to amend regulation 13.2.2 of MARPOL Annex VI so that the installation of a marine diesel engine replacing a boiler shall be considered a replacement engine
- a new output for a review of mandatory requirements regarding watertight doors on cargo ships (in coordination with the remit of the MSC)
- after discussion involving several documents, the committee approved, in principle, a new output on Evaluation and harmonization of rules and guidance on the discharge of liquid effluents from EGCS into waters, including conditions and areas. Target completion year 2021.

MEPC is expected to meet again as follows:

- MEPC 75 – 30<sup>th</sup> March to 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020
- MEPC 76 – 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020.

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