LP BULLETIN

Friday 16 May 2008

Bulletin 580 - 5/08 - Ballast Water Management - Worldwide

The UK Maritime & Coast Guard Agency (MCA) has issued a Marine Guidance Note on the control and management of ships' ballast water and sediments. MGN 363 draws attention to the developments at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) with respect to non-indigenous species being transported in ships' ballast water. The main points of the notice are outlined below.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) through its Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) has, over many years, been developing international legislation to prevent the harmful effects of transporting aquatic organisms in ships ballast water.

Over 9-13 February 2004 a Diplomatic Conference was held to adopt the "International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments". The Ballast Water Management (BWM) Convention puts in place international legislation for the first time and will enter into force 12 months (with a first application date of 2009) after it has been signed by 30 States, representing 35% of world merchant shipping tonnage.

To date, thirteen Member States have ratified the convention. Member States have been urged to ratify the instrument to facilitate its timely entry into force. The UK is intending to begin the process of ratifying the Convention as soon as it has been proved that technology is available to meet the water quality standards under Regulation D-2.

The Convention provides two ballast water discharge performance standards for the industry – the first providing a standard for ballast water exchange and the second based on ballast water treatment. These are set out below:

- **D1 Standard** - Ballast Water Exchange (at least 95% volumetric exchange) or if using the pump though method - pumping through three times the volume of each tank.
- **D2 Standard** - Ballast Water Treatment systems approved by the Administration which treat ballast water to an efficacy of:
    - Less than 10 viable organisms per m3 >50 micrometres (one millionth of a meter) in minimum dimension, and
    - Less than 10 viable organisms per millilitre < 50 micrometres in minimum dimension and >10 micrometers in minimum dimension.

Indicator Microbe concentrations shall not exceed: a) toxicogenic vibrio cholerae: 1 colony forming unit (cfu) per 100 millilitre or 1 cfu per gram of zooplankton samples; b) Escherichia coli: 250 cfu per 100 millilitre c) Intestinal Enterococci: 100 cfu per 100 millilitre.

These then apply to different vessels at different times as set out in the table below, depending on the ratification date of the Convention.

Ballast Capacity (m^3)	Construction Date	Application Dates of the D1 and D2 Standard								
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<1500	Before 2009*	D1 or D2							D2	
	In/After 2009	D2								
≥ 1500 ≤ 5000	Before 2009*	D1 or D2					D2			
	In/After 2009	D2								
> 5000	Before 2012*	D1 or D2							D2	
	In/After 2012	D2								

* Needs to be applied by the First Intermediate or Renewal Survey, which ever occurs first after anniversary date of delivery in the year indicated.

As it will be 2009 at the earliest before the Convention comes into force and the Guidelines are fully developed and in place, shipping agents, ship owners and masters of UK Flag vessels are strongly urged to comply with the operational guidance in the 1997 Guidelines and begin preparing and implementing for the requirements the new IMO Convention and its supporting Guidelines. Specifically the interim D-1 Standard and the requirement to exchange ballast water 200 nautical miles from the coastline in waters 200m deep where possible. The 1997 Guidelines are available from the IMO website at: http://globallast.imo.org/resolution.htm

Masters are advised to contact destination ports to ascertain any local requirements relating to ballast water discharge and to make themselves aware of different countries' ballast water management requirements.

The full text of the MCA Marine Guidance Note can be viewed on the MCA website using the following link http://www.mcga.gov.uk/c4mca/mcga-mnotice.htm?textobjid=A0834F4B022176A8

Source of information: UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)
www.mcga.gov.uk