



# Technical Circular

No.: 075/2020

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020

## **Subject: IMO Circular on Guidelines for onboard sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the Fuel Oil used onboard ships**

1. The International Maritime Organization, in order to facilitate the need for taking 'in-use samples' has approved Circular – MEPC.1/Circ.864\Rev.1 providing guidelines for onboard sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used onboard ships.
2. The guidelines provides requirements for sampling locations and sample handling to enable effective control and enforcement of fuel oil being used on board ships under the provisions of MARPOL Annex VI.
3. Under these guidelines, the in-use representative sample or samples should be obtained from a designated sampling point or points. Fuel oil sampling points to be used should fulfil all of the following conditions:
  - a. be easily and safely accessible;
  - b. take into account different fuel oil grades being used for the fuel oil combustion machinery item;
  - c. be downstream of the in-use fuel oil service tank;
  - d. be as close to the fuel oil combustion machinery as safely feasible taking into account the type of fuel oil, flow-rate, temperature, and pressure behind the selected sampling point;
  - e. be clearly marked for easy identification and described in either the piping diagram or other relevant documents;
  - f. each sampling point should be located in a position shielded from any heated surface or electrical equipment and the shielding device or construction should be sturdy enough to endure leaks, splashes or spray under design pressure of the fuel oil supply line so as to preclude impingement of fuel oil onto such surface or equipment; and
  - g. the sampling arrangement should be provided with suitable drainage to the drain tank or other safe location.

4. The guidelines provides following in respect of the fuel oil sample handling;
  - a. Samples should be taken when a steady flow is established in the fuel oil circulating system.
  - b. The sampling connection should be thoroughly flushed through with the fuel oil in use prior to drawing the sample.
  - c. The sample or samples should be collected in a sampling container or containers and should be representative of the fuel oil being used.
  - d. The sample bottles should be sealed by the inspector with a unique means of identification installed in the presence of the ship's representative. The ship should be given the option of retaining a sample.
  - e. The label should include the following information:
    - sampling point location where the sample was drawn;
    - date and port of sampling;
    - name and IMO number of the ship;
    - details of seal identification; and
    - signatures and names of the inspector and the ship's representative.
5. Owners/ Operators and masters are advised to be guided by above and review their fuel oil sampling procedures to ensure that samples can be drawn safely from the ship's fuel service system. It is also imperative that the ship's crew are aware of the above-mentioned requirements and familiarized with the ship-specific system.

**Enclosure:** IMO Circular – MEPC.1/Circ.864/Rev.1, dated 21 May 2019.

---

Whilst the utmost care has been taken in the compilation of the Technical Information, neither Indian Register of Shipping, its affiliates and subsidiaries if any, nor any of its directors, officers, employees or agents assume any responsibility and shall not be liable to any person for any loss, damage or expense caused in any manner whatsoever by reliance on the information in this document.

---

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT  
LONDON SE1 7SR  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

MEPC.1/Circ.864/Rev.1  
21 May 2019

**2019 GUIDELINES FOR ON BOARD SAMPLING FOR THE VERIFICATION OF THE  
SULPHUR CONTENT OF THE FUEL OIL USED ON BOARD SHIPS**

- 1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its seventy-fourth session (13 to 17 May 2019), approved the *2019 Guidelines for on board sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used on board ships*.
- 2 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed Guidelines to the attention of Administrations, industry, relevant shipping organizations, shipping companies and other stakeholders concerned.
- 3 This circular revokes MEPC.1/Circ.864.

\*\*\*

## ANNEX

### 2019 GUIDELINES FOR ON BOARD SAMPLING FOR THE VERIFICATION OF THE SULPHUR CONTENT OF THE FUEL OIL USED ON BOARD SHIPS

#### 1 Preface

The objective of these Guidelines is to establish an agreed method for sampling to enable effective control and enforcement of liquid fuel oil being used on board ships under the provisions of MARPOL Annex VI.

#### 2 Sampling location

The in-use<sup>1</sup> representative sample or samples should be obtained from a designated sampling point or points. The number and location of designated fuel oil sampling points should be confirmed by the Administration following consideration of possible fuel oil cross-contamination and service tank arrangements. Fuel oil sampling points to be used should fulfil all of the following conditions:

- .1 be easily and safely accessible;
- .2 take into account different fuel oil grades being used for the fuel oil combustion machinery item;
- .3 be downstream of the in-use fuel oil service tank;
- .4 be as close to the fuel oil combustion machinery as safely feasible taking into account the type of fuel oil, flow-rate, temperature, and pressure behind the selected sampling point;
- .5 be clearly marked for easy identification and described in either the piping diagram or other relevant documents;
- .6 each sampling point should be located in a position shielded from any heated surface or electrical equipment and the shielding device or construction should be sturdy enough to endure leaks, splashes or spray under design pressure of the fuel oil supply line so as to preclude impingement of fuel oil onto such surface or equipment; and
- .7 the sampling arrangement should be provided with suitable drainage to the drain tank or other safe location.

---

<sup>1</sup> In-use sample means the sample of fuel oil in use on a ship.

### 3 Sample handling

The fuel oil sample should be taken when a steady flow is established in the fuel oil circulating system. The sampling connection<sup>2</sup> should be thoroughly flushed through with the fuel oil in use prior to drawing the sample. The sample or samples should be collected in a sampling container or containers and should be representative of the fuel oil being used. The sample bottles should be sealed by the inspector with a unique means of identification installed in the presence of the ship's representative. The ship should be given the option of retaining a sample. The label should include the following information:

- .1 sampling point location where the sample was drawn;
- .2 date and port of sampling;
- .3 name and IMO number of the ship;
- .4 details of seal identification; and
- .5 signatures and names of the inspector and the ship's representative.

---

---

<sup>2</sup> The sampling connection is the valve and associated pipework designated for sample collection which is connected to the fuel oil service system.