



# Technical Circular

No.: 027/2018

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> April 2018

**To whomsoever it may concern**

**Subject: Limiting the maximum Sulphur content of the fuel oils.**

- The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has set a limit of 0.50% m/m (mass by mass) for sulphur in fuel oil used on board ships operating outside designated Emission Control Areas (Regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020.
- Below table provides the implementation schedule to limit Sulphur content in fuel oil used onboard ships.

<b>Outside an ECA established to limit Sox and particulate matter emissions</b>	<b>Inside an ECA established to limit Sox and particulate matter emissions</b>
4.50% m/m prior to 1 January 2012	1.50% m/m prior to 1 July 2010
3.50% m/m on and after 1 January 2012	1.00% m/m on and after 1 July 2010
0.50% m/m on or after 1 January 2020	0.10% m/m on and after 1 January 2015

- The effective date of the requirement (1<sup>st</sup> January 2020) was adopted at the 70<sup>th</sup> session of MEPC on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2016 vide Resolution MEPC.280 (70). Subsequently during the last session of the IMO's Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR) in February 2018, it was brought to the attention of all Member States that the set effective date when sulphur limit in fuel oil must not exceed 0.50% will remain unchanged and that there should be no "transitional period" that could postpone this implementation either.
- Under the new global limit, ships will have to use fuel oil on board with a sulphur content of no more than 0.50% m/m, against the current limit of 3.50%, which has been in effect since 1st January 2012. The interpretation of "fuel oil used on board" includes use in main and auxiliary engines and boilers. Exemptions are provided for situations involving the safety of the ship or saving life at sea, or if a ship or its equipment is damaged.
- Ships can meet the requirements by using low-sulphur "compliant" fuel oil. Also, to meet the sulphur emission requirements, ships may also use other approved methods, such as equipping of vessels with exhaust gas cleaning systems, so called scrubbers, or switching to LNG as a fuel or other alternatives (e.g. methanol). In case the equivalent

arrangement has been chosen as a method to comply with the requirements, an approval has to be obtained from the Flag Administration.

- The first level of control in respect of the compliance with the new regulation should be on the actual sulphur content of the fuel oil supplied on board. This value is to be stated by the fuel oil supplier on the bunker delivery note. Also samples of the fuel oil may be taken for verification.
- In order to facilitate the need for taking fuel samples “in-use” the IMO has issued guidance (MEPC.1/Circ.864 on Guidelines for on-board sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used on board ships) addressing the location of onboard fuel sampling points and the handling of samples for the testing of sulphur content for MARPOL Annex VI compliance. The guidelines describe requirements for sampling locations and sample handling.
- IMO is currently carrying work on development of new guidelines on *Consistent Implementation of Regulation 14.1.3 of MARPOL Annex VI* and amendments to the *Guidelines for on-board sampling for the verification of the sulphur content of the fuel oil used on board ships (MEPC.1/Circ.864)*.

Ship owners/ operators and masters are advised to be guided by above.

**Enclosure:**

- Nil

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