

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

MEPC.1/Circ.909
19 April 2024

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CARRIAGE OF PLASTIC PELLETS* BY SEA IN FREIGHT CONTAINERS

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its eighty-first session (18 to 22 March 2024), approved the following recommendations for the carriage of plastic pellets by sea in freight containers, as the first step in a two-stage approach aimed at reducing the environmental risks associated with the carriage of plastic pellets in packaged form by sea, pending the Committee's consideration of future mandatory measures for the carriage of plastic pellets in freight containers:

- .1 Plastic pellets should be packed in good quality packaging which should be strong enough to withstand the shocks and loadings normally encountered during transport. Packaging should be constructed and closed so as to prevent any loss of contents which may be caused under normal conditions of transport, by vibration or acceleration forces.
- .2 Transport information should clearly identify, as an addition in the cargo information required by SOLAS regulation VI/2, those freight containers containing plastic pellets. In addition, the shipper should supplement the cargo information with a special stowage request requiring stowage as outlined in paragraph 1.3 below.
- .3 Freight containers containing plastic pellets should be properly stowed and secured so as to minimize the hazards to the marine environment without impairing the safety of the ship and persons on board. Specifically, freight containers containing plastic pellets should be stowed:
 - .1 under deck wherever reasonably practicable; or
 - .2 inboard in sheltered areas of exposed decks.

2 Member States are invited to use these recommendations and bring them to the attention of shippers, manufacturers, terminal operators, shipowners, ship operators, charterers, shipmasters and all other parties concerned, requesting that additional care and appropriate action be taken during maritime transport of plastic pellets in packaged form.

* *Plastic pellets* means a mass of pre-formed moulding material, having relatively uniform dimensions, used as feedstock in plastic product manufacturing operations. Plastic pellets are transported in various forms, including flakes, granules and powders, and can be referred to as resin or nurdles.