



To: Member States of Abuja MoU on Port State Control

Date: 27 December 2019

Reference: Circular Letter – SG/A-MoU/19/037

SUBJECT: LIMITS ON SULPHUR CONTENT OF FUEL USED AND CARRIED ON BOARD FROM 1 JANUARY AND MARCH 2020 - ANNEX VI OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION FOR THE PREVENTION OF POLLUTION FROM SHIPS (MARPOL)

Dear Sir/Madam,

This circular letter is for Guidance for PSCOs on new IMO regulations on sulphur content of fuel oils used on board from **1 January 2020** and new regulations on sulphur content of fuel oils carried on board from 1 March 2020.

IMO regulations to reduce sulphur oxides (SO_x) emissions from ships first came into force in 2005, under Annex VI of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

Use of Non-Compliant Fuel

From 1 January 2020, the limit for sulphur in fuel oil used on board ships operating outside designated emission control areas is 0.50% m/m (mass by mass).

The new requirements prohibit the use of non-compliant fuel from **1 January 2020** and there are three options for ship owners and operators to comply:

1. Use compliant fuel with sulphur content not more than 0.50% m/m;
2. Use an alternative fuel, such as LNG, with a sulphur content of 0.50 % m/m or less; or
3. Fit an alternative means of compliance, such as an Exhaust Gas Cleaning System (EGCS) approved under regulation 4 of MARPOL Annex VI.

Carriage of Non- Compliant Fuel

From 1 March 2020, non-compliant fuel can only be carried on board, for use on the ship, where the vessel is fitted with an EGCS (Exhaust Gas Cleaning System). In instances where compliant fuel cannot be obtained a Fuel Oil Non-Availability Report



(FONAR) must be submitted and accepted by the flag State and the Competent Authority in the next port of call.

MARPOL regulations apply to all ship sizes. Only ships of 400 gross tonnage and above engaged in voyages to ports or offshore terminals under the jurisdiction of other Parties are required to have an International Air Pollution Prevention Certificate, issued by the ship's flag State. All sizes of ships will need to use fuel oil that meets the 0.50% limit from 1 January 2020.

Attached, for your reference, are the following documents:

- IMO Circular MEPC.1/Circ.881 on Guidance on contingency measures;
- IMO 2019 guidelines for PSC under MARPOL Annex VI chapter 3;
- Fuel Oil Non-Availability Report (FONAR) template.

Maritime Authorities are invited to distribute the information and materials provided in this circular letter to all PSC Officers for their preparation and familiarization. This circular letter, together with the attachments are available on the Abuja MoU website in PDF format.

Please accept the assurance of my highest consideration,

Mfon Ekong Usoro (Mrs)
Secretary General