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CIRCULAR 2020 Guidelines for Monitoring the Worldwide Average Sulphur Content of fuel oils

The Marine Environment Protection Committee at its 75th session approved the 2020 Guidelines for monitoring the worldwide average Sulphur content of fuel oils supplied for use on board ships

Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators | Surveyors/Auditors

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The 2020 Guidelines' primary objective is to establish an agreed method to monitor the average sulphur contents of fuels considering the sulphur limit as required by regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI. The IMO has agreed to monitor not only the residual fuel, but also the average Sulphur content of distillate fuel.

Following the entry into force of the 0.50% m/m sulphur content limit on 1 January 2020, MEPC 74 recognized that some of the compliant fuel oils may fall within the residual fuel category whereas other compliant fuel oils may fall within the distillate fuel category, thus agreed that the worldwide average sulphur content should be monitored as a consequence of the sulphur limits required by regulation 14 of MARPOL Annex VI.

In view of the above, the three following categories should be used for monitoring the worldwide average sulphur contents of fuel oil:

1. Fuel oil not exceeding 0.10%
2. Fuel oil not exceeding 0.50% but above 0.10%; and
3. Fuel oil not exceeding 0.50%

Monitoring and calculation of yearly and 3-year rolling averages

Monitoring should be based on calculation of average sulphur content of combined residual and distillate fuels on the basis of sampling and testing by independent testing services. Restarting for year 2020 the average sulphur content of the three categories should be calculated.

The basis of monitoring is the calculation, on an annual basis, of the average sulphur content of residual fuel and distillate fuel in each of the three categories.

The calculation of the average sulphur content is executed as follows: For a certain calendar year, the sulphur contents of the samples analysed 2 (one sample for each delivery of which the sulphur content is determined by fuel oil analysis) are recorded. The sulphur contents of the fuel oil samples analysed are multiplied by their corresponding mass, then summed, and then divided by the total mass of fuel oil analysed within each category.

The mathematical formula for the method of calculation described is given in the appendix to these Guidelines.

As a basis for well-informed decisions, a graphical representation of the distribution of the global sulphur content plotted against the quantity of fuel oils associated with each incremental sulphur content range should be made available each year:

1. residual and distillate fuels for sulphur content below or equal to 1.00%: in terms of the % sulphur in increments of 0.10%; and
2. residual and distillate fuels for sulphur content above 1.00%: in terms of the % sulphur in increments of 0.50%.

The 3-year rolling averages should be calculated as described in the Guidelines.

Each of the providers of sampling and testing services should, before 31 January of the following year, provide the necessary information for the calculation of the average sulphur content of the residual and distillate fuels to the Secretariat of IMO or another agreed third party on the basis of a mutually agreed format, approved by MEPC. This party will process the information and will provide the outcome in the agreed format to MEPC.

Dromon [Publication](#) on IMO 2020 Sulphur Limit has been updated to include the above requirements.

[Act now](#)

Ship Owners / Managers / Operators should take into consideration the above guidelines and ensure compliance for their fleet to avoid any issues raised with the Port State Control Authorities.