



Mind the oil transfer procedures in Ghana

One of Gard's African correspondents, BUDD Group, warns ship operators of the consequences of not complying with Ghana's procedures for the transfer of oil and other substances.

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On 7 June 2021, Budd Group posted the following message on [their website](#) :

To promote safety and avoid maritime pollution, the Ghana Maritime Authority (GMA) has issued [this shipping notice](#) laying out the mandatory procedures for the transfer of oil and other substances.

As per [our circular of 20 September 2020](#) , any failure to meet GMA requirements may result in the levying of heavy, non-negotiable fines.

Clubs and their members should also be aware that both the violations and fine amounts included in the GMA lists of “Approved Fines for Marine Pollution Violations”, a sample of which is included in our September 2020 circular, may change.

For example, in a November 2020 incident, the fine levied for the “Transfer of petroleum products without GMA approval (48HRS)” had increased fourfold from USD 60,000.00 to USD 240,000.00.

GMA’s procedures for transfer of oil and other substances are outlined in Annex 1 of its [Shipping Notice No.:017](#) of 17 March 2021 and contains the following forms and checklists:

- SCHEDULE 1: Bunker Notification form
- SCHEDULE 2: Pre-fixture information
- SCHEDULE 3: Information before transfer operations commence
- SCHEDULE 4: Information before run-in and mooring

It is important to note that all transfer operations are subject to approval by the GMA and that the GMA must be notified of any bunker operations at least 48 hours prior to transfer activity. While the main responsibility for submitting the required information to the GMA within the specified time limit rests with the bunker supplier, the master or agent of the receiving ship is nevertheless responsible for verifying and confirming that the correct ship particulars are conveyed and that the onboard safety and pollution response measures required for the transfer operation are in place. Prior to commencement of the transfer operation, the master must also ensure that all crew members involved have received relevant training, been properly briefed, and provided with the necessary personal protective equipment.

Members and clients with vessels trading to Ghana should take note of the above and inform their masters accordingly.

We are grateful to BUDD Group for providing the above information.

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