



USCG releases new ballast water management reporting form

On 20 July 2020 the United States Coast Guard adopted revisions to its Ballast Water Management (BWM) Reporting Form. The new reporting form replaces all previous versions and the National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC) will no longer accept older versions of the form.

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Introduction

Under the US National Invasive Species Act of 1996 all ships arriving in United States must complete and submit a ballast water information report to the National Ballast Information Clearinghouse (NBIC). The aim is to quantify the amounts and origins of ballast water discharged and to determine the degree to which such ballast has undergone treatment or open ocean exchange. Vessels exempted from submitting NBIC reports can be found in [33 CFR 151.2015](#) .

NBIC is a joint programme of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center (SERC). The programme collects and analyzes data on the ballast water management practices of merchant ships operating in United States waters and has been receiving ballast water reporting forms from arriving vessels since 1 July 1999. During 2019, in excess of [97,000 reports](#) were submitted to the NBIC.

Summary of changes in the revised version

There are two important changes introduced in the [new ballast water management reporting form](#) . These are:

1. The yes/no question “Alternative BW management conducted, per instructions from COTP” has been removed.
2. All vessels are now required to report the date of their last dry dock, information that is critical to the Coast Guard for determining a vessel’s compliance date with the implementation schedule for approved ballast water management methods as set out in [33 CFR 151.1512 & 151.2035](#) . The implementation schedule is mentioned below.

Vessel's ballastwater capacity

Date constructed

Vessel's compliance date

New vessels

All

On or after 1 December 2013

On delivery

Existing vessels

Less than 1500 m3

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Before 1 December 2013

First scheduled drydocking after 1 January 2016

1500-5000 m3

Before 1 December 2013

First scheduled drydocking after 1 January 2014

Greater than 5000 m3

Before 1 December 2013

First scheduled drydocking after 1 January 2016

Implementation Schedule for Ballast Water Management Discharge Standards

The new Ballast Water Management Reporting Form (OMB number 1625-0069, expiration date: 31 July 2023) can be accessed through the [NBIC website](#) as a [PDF form](#) or through the [Web Application Form](#). Users should be aware that the standard form can report the ballast water history of up to 20 tanks while the [extended form](#) can report up to 36 tanks. Any report related questions, can be sent to the NBIC at nbic@ballastreport.org.

Recommendations

Members and clients should ensure that crew members on all vessels calling the United States are aware of the changes introduced by the latest revision to the NBIC BWM reporting form and that all reports are submitted using the updated version. The USCG has also provided a helpful [document](#) illustrating some of the common events reported in the ballast water history section of the reporting form and should be shared with crew members.

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