



MEPC 69 on discharge of harmful cargo hold wash water

Continued application of the provisions of MEPC.1/Circ.810 is not approved by the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee.

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In January 2016, Gard's Members and clients expressed some concern about the availability of adequate port reception facilities for cargoes declared harmful to the marine environment (HME) and the expiry on 31 December 2015 of IMO circular [MEPC.1/Circ.810.pdf](#) . Up until its expiry, MEPC.1/Circ.810 permitted wash water from cargo holds having previously contained solid bulk cargoes declared HME to be discharged overboard outside special areas in certain circumstances, see Gard Alerts of [29 January 2016](#) and [MARPOL%20Annex%20V%20%20disposal%20of%20residues%20from%20solid.pdf](#) .

MEPC 69 decision

According to the draft report of the MEPC 69 a proposal to extend the application of MEPC.1/Circ.810 was *not* approved. The report states that delegations in support of an extension were of the view that shipowners and operators continue to experience problems in finding adequate reception facilities and that an extension is needed until ports and terminals had fulfilled their obligation under MARPOL Annex V and are able to provide adequate reception facilities. However, the majority of delegations was of the view that an increased number of port reception facilities for HME residues *is* in place and that an extension of the application of MEPC.1/Circ.810 would not only discourage ports and terminals to provide the needed reception facilities but could also be a disincentive.

Recommendations

Members and clients should note the above decision taken by the MEPC 69, that the application of MEPC.1/Circ.810 will not be extended and that, in accordance with MARPOL Annex V Reg. 4.1.3 and 6.1.2, no cargo residues or cargo hold wash water containing substances classified as HME are permitted to be discharged overboard.

It is important that the crew is familiar with the current garbage disposal requirements and have a clear understanding of the conditions permitting certain discharges. The “ *Consolidated Guidance for Port Reception Facility providers and users* ” ([MEPC.1/Circ.834](#)) is intended to be a practical users' guide for ships' crew who seek to deliver MARPOL residues/wastes ashore and provides a basis for establishing best practice procedures. 'Advanced planning' is a key term in the guidance, both with respect to minimising ship-generated residue/waste as well as considerations given to the logistical and commercial arrangements.

To support the establishment of adequate reception facilities world-wide, Members and clients should encourage their Masters to report any inadequacies for port reception facilities in accordance with the procedures set out in Appendix 1 of MEPC.1/Circ.834.

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