

Ballast water management information

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (BWM Convention) back in 2004 and reached the sufficient percentage (35%) of the world tonnage on 8 September 2016. This means that the BWM Convention will enter into force on 8 September 2017.

Acronyms:

BW - Ballast water

BWE - Ballast water exchange (D-1)

BWM - Ballast water management

BWMP - Ballast water management plan

BWMS - Ballast water management system (D-2 standard)

BWRB - Ballast water record book

IBWMC - International ballast water management certificate

USCG - United States Coast Guard

List of potential important issues to consider:

Timing

- Apply for IOPP renewal as soon as possible as the renewal must be in place before 8 September 2017 (many flag states are open for application for detachment from the Harmonised Certification and Survey Scheme (HCSS)).
- Apply for an USCG extension letter.
- Start preplanning and planning of both D-1 and D-2 compliance well in advance.
- The whole BWMS implementation and retrofitting process can take between 6-12 months (not allowing for any unforeseen delays).

Crew and officers given operational BWM tasks need to be familiar with the BWM Convention, as well as the safe and compliant operation of the onboard BWMS, including:

- safe BWE – bending moment, draft, stability, strength, stress, trim and methods
- safe voyage with minimum ballast water capacity on board
- BWM plan and procedures including emergencies
- BWM reporting requirements
- BWM record keeping requirements
- port state control issues
- sampling points
- how to handle claimed non-compliant sample results.

Sediments handling

- All ships shall remove and dispose of sediments from spaces designated to carry ballast water in accordance with the provisions of the ships' ballast water management plan.

- Each party must ensure that in ports and terminals designated by that party where cleaning or repair of ballast tanks occurs, adequate facilities are provided for the reception of sediments.

BWMS

- easy to operate for the crew (fool proof)
- safe in operation for the crew (health)
- safe in operation for the ship
- operational in all possible shipboard conditions
- ballasting/de-ballasting procedures might have to change due to an installed BWMS
- ballast and de-ballast by gravity might not be possible
- delay in case of limitations (system design limitation) stated on the IBWMC and/or copy of the BWMS type approval certificate
- delay in case of prevailing local water conditions
- BWM to be compared with T/C description in terms of operational capacities.

Ballast water management plan

- BWM record book keeping
- reporting
- training & familiarisation of relevant staff
- update of the safety management system.

BWMP development

- designate an officer in charge of the implementation of the BWM plan
- procedures for the D-1 standard (BWE) compliance
- procedures for D-2 standard (BWMS) compliance
- alternative compliance
- contingency plan
- reporting procedures
- record keeping
- BWMS maintenance
- obtain an IBWMC.

Keep it simple

- any plan being too complex and lengthy will not be used
- involve the ship's officers and crew - they know how the bw system functions
- use reference to; drawings, guidance, safety management system, maker's manual, etc. instead of inserting lengthy text
- include compliance monitoring (sampling points etc.)
- how to handle noncompliance situations
- consider contingency planning but on board and ashore
- make plan firm but flexible.

BWMP implementation

- approval process
- distribution of the BWM plan (certified copies)
- training and familiarisation of crew & officers
- implementation and operational execution
- BWM plan compliance monitoring
- BWM plan evaluation and updating*.

*BWM plan to be amended and/or updated accordingly if the D-2 standard not is covered in the initial plan.

Implications for non-compliance?

- Operations stop
- detention
- investigation
- fines
- delays and commercial impact
- inability to adhere to loading/unloading plan can lead to unsafe conditions
- breach of commercial contract
- port/terminal congestion.

On 8 September 2017, all ships subject to the BWM Convention must have on board compliant D-1 Ballast Water or be able to de-ballast in accordance with the D-2 standard!

The BIMCO Maritime Technology and Regulation Department (martech@bimco.org) is available to assist any BIMCO owner members needing help in understanding the regulations and obtaining necessary information.