

June 23, 2003

## **FLEET / SAFETY LETTER 03061.GEN**

### **RE: REGULATORY UPDATE – MARPOL ANNEX IV**

Annex IV of the *International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships* (MARPOL), 1973, as Amended by the 1978 Protocol, enters into force on September 27, 2003. Compliance with the requirements of Annex IV is mandatory for all Vanuatu ships, including fishing vessels and non-self propelled vessels. Resolution MEPC.88(44) amended the original text of Annex IV. A copy of MEPC.88(44) and revised Annex IV are enclosed. This letter provides a brief overview of the Annex.

#### **Application**

The Annex will apply to the following ships engaged on international voyages:

- New ships of 400 gross tonnage and above;
- New ships of less than 400 gross tonnage which carry more than 15 persons;
- Existing ships of 400 gross tonnage and above by September 27, 2008;
- Existing ships of less than 400 gross tonnage which carry more than 15 persons by September 27, 2008.

A new ship is either a ship for which the building contract is placed, the keel is laid, or which is at a similar stage of construction, on or after September 27, 2003; or the delivery of which is September 27, 2006 or later.

#### **Sewage**

Sewage is:

- Drainage and other wastes from toilets and urinals;
- Drainage from medical premises via wash basins, tubs and scuppers;
- Drainage from spaces containing living animals; or,
- Other wastes when mixed with those above.

#### **Exceptions:**

These Regulations don't apply to:

- Discharge of sewage from a ship necessary for safety or saving lives; or,
- Discharge of sewage resulting from damage if all reasonable precautions have been taken to prevent or minimize the discharge.

### **Surveys**

- Initial survey before the ship is put in service or before the Certificate required under a later regulation is issued for the first time;
- Renewal survey at specified intervals not exceeding 5 years;
- A general or partial survey made after repairs to the system.

### **Certificate**

- An International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate shall be issued after an initial or renewal survey. For existing ships this requirement shall apply no later than September 27, 2008.
- The form of Certificate given in the Appendix to the Annex shall be used.
- The Certificate shall be issued for no more than 5 years.

### **Sewage Systems**

Every ship required to comply with the provisions of Annex IV shall be equipped with one of the following:

- A sewage treatment plant approved by the Administration and in compliance with the standards and test methods developed by IMO; or,
- A sewage comminuting and disinfecting system approved by the Administration for the temporary storage of sewage when a ship is less than 3 nautical miles from the nearest land; or,
- A holding tank for the retention of all sewage, constructed to the satisfaction of the Administration and having a capacity large enough for the operation of the vessel, the number of persons on board, and other relevant factors, with a means to indicate visually the amount of its contents.

### **Standard Discharge Connections**

The Annex prescribes the size and construction of these connections.

### **Discharge of Sewage**

The discharge of sewage into the sea is prohibited except when the ship is discharging:

- Comminuted and disinfected sewage using an approved system more than 3 nautical miles from the nearest land, or sewage which is not comminuted or disinfected more than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land, provided the sewage stored in holding tanks is not discharged instantaneously but at a moderate rate when the ship is en route and proceeding at not less than 4 knots; or,
- The ship has an approved sewage treatment plant which has been certified to meet operational requirements in Regulation 9, provided the test results are shown in the International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate and the effluent does not produce visible floating solids nor cause discoloration of the surrounding water.

The provisions above do not apply to ships operating in waters under the jurisdiction of a State and are discharging sewage in accordance with such less stringent requirements as may be imposed by such State.

When sewage is mixed with wastes or waste water covered by other Annexes, the requirements of those Annexes also apply.

**Reception Facilities**

A Government which requires ships operating in its waters to comply with the discharge requirements above shall provide sewage reception facilities which are adequate to the needs of the ships and do not cause delays to the ships. Governments shall also notify IMO of allegedly inadequate reception facilities.

Should you have any questions, please contact this office.

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Encl.

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