



Bundesrepublik Deutschland
Federal Republic of Germany

Berufsgenossenschaft Verkehrswirtschaft Post-Logistik
Telekommunikation
Dienststelle Schiffssicherheit



Circular 01/2017 (ISM)

Subject: **Entry into force of the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC) - Requirements for ships on national voyages and ships with less than 400 GT on international voyages as well as exceptions to the aforementioned**

Reference: ISM-Code 1.2.3, Ballast Water Management Convention

Attachments: IMO Circular BWM.2-Circ.56

Date: 16.05.2017

1. Ships on national voyages regardless of the size

For all ships solely engaged in national voyages the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWMC) is initially not applicable as the Convention applies to ships on international voyages. However, the Convention requires in Article 3, paragraph 2b, that the states have to ensure that ships under their jurisdiction engaged in national voyages may not endanger adjacent sea areas by transferring alien marine organisms, in the terms of the BWMC.

It is the Ship Safety Division's responsibility as the appropriate administration for ships under German flag to verify this. In addition, ships on national voyages do not receive an International Ballast Water Management Certificate (IBWM Certificate) and are exempted from survey obligations in accordance with Section E of the BWMC, except when the shipping company explicitly requests a certification or the provisions of the classification society require a survey e.g. because of the class notation. Furthermore, Section B requires that a class-approved Ballast Water Management Plan has to be on board and a Ballast Water Record Book must be kept. This presupposes, however, that a ballast water exchange in accordance with D1 criteria (a water depth of at least 200 m and at least 50 nm distance from the coast) is at all possible in the navigated sea area. For instance, this would not be possible for national voyages in the area of the Baltic Sea. For national voyages in the North Sea there are exchange areas, however, these have to be on the route of the ship. Information about these areas can be found in the IMO Circular BWM.2-Circ.56 "Ballast Water Exchange Areas in the North Sea". Documentation in the Ballast Water Record Book is only required when the ship is navigating in an exchange area.

Nevertheless, the Ship Safety Division recommends to develop a Ballast Water Management Plan for all ships and have it approved by a class to keep the option open to change trading areas at a later point in time. The provision of a Ballast Water Record Book is also recommended to use it when required.

2. Ships on international voyages with less than 400 GT

Ships with less than 400 GT are not required to have an IBWM Certificate and Section E of the BWMC does not apply. But they have to fulfil Section B of the BWMC. This requires an approved Ballast Water Management Plan on board the ship and the documentation of ballast water exchanges in accordance with the D1 standard in the Ballast Water Record Book. Upon application by the shipping company, the transitional period for these ships to fulfil the D2 standard can be approved by the Ship Safety Division to be initially up to 5 years after the BWMC has come into force following the decoupling of the IOPP certificates for ships above 400 GT.

3. Exceptions for ships on national and international voyages

In accordance with Article 3, paragraph 2, of the BWMC, ships which are, in accordance with paragraph 2(a), constructed not to carry ballast water or, in accordance with paragraph 2(f), have a closed system and do not have to exchange the ballast water during operation are exempted from the BWMC. This can be the case if, for example, ballast water tanks remain empty all the time or are filled with fresh water as ballast water. To issue such an exception the Ship Safety Division requires, in addition to the application by the shipping company, a confirmation by the class that the technical requirements are met (e.g. changes to the piping inside the ballast water system, use of blind flanges), or for ships without a class a survey has to be conducted by a surveyor of the Ship Safety Division or an authorized class surveyor.

For further information, we, as the Ship Safety Division, are at your disposal.

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