



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Minister for Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development
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Leader of the House

Media Statement

AUSTRALIA CALLS FOR BETTER MARITIME POLLUTION COMPENSATION

The Australian Government has taken its campaign for greater compensation in the event of a merchant vessel spilling its fuel (bunker) oil and causing environmental damage to the peak international maritime organisation.

Today in my address to the International Maritime Organisation's General Assembly in London I took the opportunity to impress on the global shipping community the importance of lifting the existing compensation liability limits.

It is important that the polluter pay for the damage they cause.

The inadequacy of the existing compensation regime was exposed by the *Pacific Adventurer* accident off the Queensland coast earlier this year. In that incident the shipowner was not legally required to pay all the clean-up and compensation costs.

The IMO will consider the Australian proposal next year.

This Government is acting both domestically and internationally to protect Australia's world-renowned natural beauty and pristine coastlines.

The current bunker oil compensation regime, established in 1996, is set out in the IMO's *Convention on the Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims*.

The maximum amount of compensation available depends on the size of the ship involved. For example, for a typical container ship with a gross tonnage of 35,000, the maximum compensation payable is about \$24 million.

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