

MARINE NOTICE

**Marine Notice 15/2008
Supersedes 12/2003**

Disposal of Dry Bulk Cargo Residues in Australian Waters

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to advise all ship owners, operators and service providers of the requirements for discharge of cargo associated waste under Annex V (garbage) of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL).

Annex V sets out regulations for the prevention of pollution by garbage from ships, and defines garbage as including a broad range of operational waste from ships, including cargo residues. These residues are defined as the remnants of any cargo material on board that cannot be placed in proper cargo holds (loading excess and spillage) or which remain in cargo holds and elsewhere after unloading procedures are completed. However cargo residues are expected to be in small quantities.

The discharge of cargo residues through deck and hold washings can take place when the ship is more than 12 nautical miles (nm) from the nearest land.

The safety of the ship, its crew and others involved in working the ship is also of vital importance. Accordingly, MARPOL provides exceptions from the discharge restrictions where there is a threat to the safety of the ship and to those on board.

The wash down of cargo residues from the deck of a vessel within the 12 nm limit is only permitted in the following circumstances:

- To ensure the safe operation of a helicopter within the landing area and its immediate vicinity to avoid dust being raised by the down-draft of the rotors;

- Where there is a need to avoid navigational hazards such as dust being blown onto the wheelhouse or bridge wings; and
- Where residues cause a serious safety hazard to personnel if spillages are not cleaned from deck areas, adjacent walkways and working areas.

An appropriate entry should be recorded in the Garbage Record Book in accordance with item 4.1(d) to provide verification of a discharge under these specific circumstances.

Cargo material contained in the cargo hold bilge water is not treated as cargo residues provided that the cargo material is not classified as a marine pollutant in the IMDG Code and the bilge water is discharged from a loaded hold through the vessel's fixed piping bilge drainage system.

Vessels that are at anchorage for a period of time with empty holds may discharge hold bilge water as long as the water is not directly related to a hold cleaning operation.

Minimisation of cargo residue wash down and discharge should form part of the ship's Garbage Management Plan. All cargo residue discharges should be recorded as garbage category 4 in the Garbage Record Book including the start and stop positions. Shipowners and operators should note that these records may be checked during Australian port State control inspections.

The Great Barrier Reef and part of the Torres Strait is defined by MARPOL as "nearest land" (see Regulation 1(2) of Annex V), and ships must



therefore be at least twelve nautical miles outside this area before undertaking any discharge. The MARPOL Convention should be consulted to determine the exact position of the coordinates that constitute the "nearest land" boundary in this area or see the following link for a detailed explanation: http://www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/Protection_of_Pollution_from_Ships/NearestLand.asp.

A detailed Fact Sheet is available on AMSA's website at: www.amsa.gov.au/Marine_Environment_Protection/Educational_resources_and_information/Disposal_of_dry_bulk_cargo_fact_sheet.asp.

Importantly, the Fact Sheet further details the limited circumstances in which exemptions from the disposal restrictions are allowable. Operators and ships' masters are therefore urged to take note of the information contained in the Fact Sheet.

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