



## Transportation of plastic pellets in freight containers

### Purpose

The purpose of this marine notice is to draw attention to the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) *Recommendations for the carriage of plastic pellets by sea in freight containers*, which were released on 19 April 2024.

### Background

The IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) has released recommendations aimed at reducing the risk of a plastic pellet spill during their carriage in freight containers by sea.

The recommendations contain guidance for the packaging, identification and stowage of plastic pellets when held in freight containers during maritime transport.

Shippers, manufacturers, terminal operators, shipowners, ship operators, charterers, shipmasters and all relevant parties are encouraged to take up these recommendations.

### Packaging recommendations

It is recommended that plastic pellets be packed in good quality packaging that is strong enough to withstand the shocks and loadings normally encountered during transport. Packaging should also be constructed and closed to prevent any loss of contents which may be caused under normal conditions of transport by vibration or acceleration forces.

### Identification recommendations

In addition to the cargo information required by SOLAS regulation VI/2, transport information should clearly identify freight containers that contain plastic pellets. The shipper should include a special stowage request consistent with the stowage recommendations.

### Stowage recommendations

Freight containers holding plastic pellets should be properly stowed and secured to

minimise the hazards to the marine environment without impairing the safety of the ship and persons on board.

Specifically, containers should be stowed:

- Under deck wherever reasonably practicable; or
- Inboard in sheltered areas of exposed decks.

### Future mandatory measures

These recommendations are the first step in a two-stage approach to address the environmental risks associated with the maritime transport of plastic pellets. The MEPC will consider appropriate mandatory measures as the second step.

These mandatory measures will be informed by the experience gained from the implementation of the recommendations. To assist in these discussions, feedback on the implementation of the recommendations would be welcome by email to: [Environment.Standards@amsa.gov.au](mailto:Environment.Standards@amsa.gov.au)

### Further information

A copy of MEPC.1/Circ.909 setting out these recommendations can be obtained from the [IMO Website](https://www.imo.org).