

# An Overview of Maritime Regulations Entering into Force

## 1st May 2025 – MARPOL Annex VI

- MARPOL Annex VI amendment enters into effect – designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an emission control area (ECA) for sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter, under MARPOL Annex VI. In such an ECA, the limit for sulphur in fuel oil used on board ships is 0.10% mass by mass (m/m), while outside these areas the limit is 0.50% m/m.

## 6th June 2025 – Hong Kong Convention

- Entry into force of the Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009 (the Hong Kong Convention). The Convention was adopted at a diplomatic conference held in Hong Kong, China, from 11–15th May 2009.

## 1st August 2025 – MARPOL Annex VI

- MARPOL Annex VI amendment enters into effect – marine diesel engine replacing a steam system. This replacement is now considered an engine replacement and not a minor modification. It therefore requires compliance with Regulation 13 of MARPOL Annex VI.
- Ships starting service after this date will need to collect more data related to fuel consumption in their SEEMP.
- Amendments to Regulations 2, 14, 18 and Appendix I have updated the definitions of fuel oil and gas fuel. Bunker delivery notes need to be updated accordingly.

## 1st October 2025 – BWM Convention

- Any ship choosing to carry an electronic record book for ballast water must ensure that it complies with MEPC.372(80), and is approved by the Administration.

## 1st January 2026 – LSA Code, SOLAS, IGF Code, IGC Code, IMDG Code, STCW Code, HSC Code, International Grain Code, FSS Code

- The amendments to paragraphs 4.4.7.6.8 and 4.4.7.6.17 of the LSA Code concern lifeboats and rescue boats installed on or after 1st January 2026 on passenger ships and cargo ships of 500 GT and above using a single fall and hook system. Safety requirements have been updated to bring them in line with those of lifeboats and rescue boats using twin fall and hook systems.
- Another amendment to LSA Code 6.1.2.8 addresses the minimum and maximum lowering speed for survival craft and rescue boats, with new ships whose launching height might be 30 m and above in mind.
- An additional amendment to the LSA Code sets new standards for SOLAS adult lifejackets. Any such lifejacket delivered after 1st January 2026 should meet these standards.
- The SOLAS amendments introduce new mandatory requirements for all lifting appliances and anchor handling winches with a safe working load (SWL) of 1,000 kg and above. These apply to appliances and winches installed after and before 1st January 2026.
- Amendments to SOLAS Regulation II-2/20 and the FSS Code Chapters 7 and 9 set new requirements for fire protection devices and measures on board ships intended to carry vehicles constructed on or after 1st January 2026.
- Amendments to SOLAS Regulation II-2/7.5.5 set new requirements for the fire protection of accommodation and cargo control rooms on board cargo ships of 500 GT and over where a fixed fire detection system is already required. It applies to cargo ships with a keel laid on or after January 1st 2026.
- Amendments to SOLAS Regulation II-2/4.2.1 regarding safety requirements for oil fuel mean that oil fuel suppliers' bunker delivery notes will have to be updated accordingly.
- Additions have been made to SOLAS Regulation XI V/2 and the Polar Code to apply Chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships.
- Amendments to SOLAS Chapter V make electronic inclinometers mandatory for bulk carriers and container ship of 3,000 GT and above built on or after 1st January 2026.

- Amendments to the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code), relating to various design concerns, updates to processes and nomenclature.
- Amendments to the IGC and IGF Codes introduce high manganese austenitic steel as an acceptable material to be used on ships covered by the IGC and IGF Code, regardless of their size.
- Amendment 42-24 to the IMDG Code introduces new substances and revises requirements for existing ones.
- Preventing and responding to bullying, violence and sexual harassment becomes a mandatory seafarer competence as per amendments to the STCW Code.
- Firefighting foams containing perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) become prohibited, as per amendments to SOLAS Chapter II-2 and the 1994 and 2000 HSC Codes.
- Amendments to the International Grain Code introduce a fourth loading condition, known as "Specially suitable compartment, partly filled in way of the hatch opening, with ends untrimmed".

## 1st March 2026 – MARPOL Annex VI

- Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI establish an ECA for NO<sub>x</sub> and SO<sub>x</sub> in the Canadian Arctic and the Norwegian Sea.

## 1st July 2026 – IGC Code

- An amendment to the IGC Code Chapter 16.9 allows for toxic cargo to be used as fuel, provided that the ship's flag State allows it.

## 1st September 2026 – NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code

- Re-certification of a marine diesel engine with a power output above 130 kW, following modifications, to a different tier from when it was installed.

## 1st March 2027 – MARPOL Annex VI, NO<sub>x</sub> Technical Code

- These amendments address engine modifications to marine diesel engines with a power output above 130 kW to ensure that certification testing and therefore certification is accurate.

## 1st January 2028 – SOLAS, IGF Code, Torremolinos Convention

- Amendments to SOLAS Chapter II-1/3-4 mandate that emergency towing arrangements be fitted to ships (excluding tankers) of 20,000 GT and above built on or after 1st January 2028.
- Amendments to the IGF Code add new design considerations for fuel tanks on ships using natural gas as fuel.

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