

Safe carriage of fuel on board commercial/fishing ships

Purpose

The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify Maritime Safety Queensland's policy in respect to the carriage of fuel not contained within designated operational fuel tanks.

Background

Maritime Safety Queensland is concerned by ships carrying quantities of fuel on deck in plastic or non-approved containers. Some vessel operators have also been exceeding the limit of 250 litres.

Legislation requirements

The *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*, section 213 advises that a regulation may make a provision about goods mentioned in the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code by the International Maritime Organization, including:

- the marking and carriage of goods
- the loading of goods onto, or discharge of the goods from a ship in a pilotage area.

The *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004*, division 13 states the duties of persons sending dangerous cargo by ship and duties of the owner and master about dangerous cargo. It also spells out the reporting requirements for ships with dangerous goods.

Obligations

Owners and masters of all ships have obligations placed on them to ensure their ships are safe and operated safely. This obligation is imposed by the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*.

Commercial/fishing ships are required under the Uniform Shipping Laws Code section 9 clause 15 (Fuel systems), the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C section 5 subsection 5(a) (Machinery) and section 4 (Fire safety), the Australian Standard 2906 — 2001, Marine Orders part 41 (Carriage of dangerous goods, issue 9) and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code to comply regarding the safe carriage of fuel for operational purposes and carriage of dangerous goods.

Definitions

The following definitions are from the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C section 5 subsection 5(a) (Machinery).

- **Portable fuel tank**
Fuel tanks of 25 litre capacity or less and which are intended to be removed from the vessel for filling.
- **Non-portable fuel tank**
(a) Built in fuel tanks — fuel tanks that are integral to the vessel's hull structure.
(b) Non-portable, freestanding fuel tanks — fuel tanks that are not integral to the hull structure of the vessel, but which are nevertheless fitted to or permanently located on the vessel, and intended to be refilled insitu.
- **Minor quantity of dangerous goods**
Packaged dangerous goods of quantity less than the placarding quantity specified under schedule 1 of the National Standard for the Storage and Handling of Workplace Dangerous Goods (NOHSC:1015) example — for petrol and aviation fuel, the placarding quantity is 250 litres.
- **Classes of dangerous goods voyages**
Under the National Standard for Commercial Vessels there are two classes of dangerous goods voyages.
(a) **Dangerous goods voyage (DGV) 1**
A voyage where dangerous goods are carried not meeting the voyage criteria specified for Dangerous goods voyage (DGV) 2.
(b) **Dangerous goods voyage (DGV) 2**
A voyage that is:
 - made by a Class 2 or Class 3
 - within Class B geographical limits
 - carrying dangerous goods on the weather deck
 - where the total capacity of the dangerous goods does not exceed:
 - 5000 kilograms of packaged dangerous goods
 - 2000 kilograms of flammable liquids or gases.

Classification of fuels

International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code
Diesel UN1202 flashpoint >60⁰ C Class 3
Petrol UN1203 flashpoint <60⁰ C Class 3

Vessels relying on complying with standard practice instruction section F number 4 should comply in full with this bulletin as the requirements of the instruction are as per the Uniform Shipping Laws Code which states fuel tanks shall be no larger than necessary for the intended service of the vessel but shall be of sufficient capacity to prevent them having to be filled at sea. No loose cans shall be carried on board a vessel for this purpose.

Requirements

Commercial/fishing ships are to carry fuel for the operation of the vessel's voyage in purpose built non-portable tanks. The requirements for built-in fuel tanks are specified in the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C subsection 5(a) clauses 4.7.1 and 4.7.2, and further requirements for the fuel systems for such tanks are specified in clause 4.9. Built-in fuel tanks shall not be used to contain fuels with a flash point below 60⁰C. The requirements for non-portable, freestanding fuel tanks are specified in the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C subsection 5(a) clauses 4.7.1 and 4.7.3, and further requirements are in clauses 4.9 and 4.10. Further requirements are in the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C section 4 clauses 6.4.1.3 and 7.4.1.

Freestanding fuel tanks shall not be fitted in machinery spaces of high fire risk on vessels of fire risk category III or IV. Fuel tanks containing fuel of flash point less than 60⁰ C shall not be situated within machinery spaces of moderate fire risk. Non-portable fuel tanks in machinery spaces are also required to comply with the fire rating requirements of part C section 4 (Fire safety) of the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C section 4.

Any fuel in portable containers carried on deck for the operation of tenders/ lifeboats is to be contained in approved containers and located so as to prevent any fuel from draining to spaces below the deck in the event of a spillage. The tanks are to be securely fastened to the vessel.

Any quantities of fuel carried on board in excess of that carried in purpose built non-portable tanks and fuel in portable containers on deck for tenders/lifeboats, should be classed as dangerous goods. In these cases the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, the National Standard for Commercial Vessels part C section 4 requirements and the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Regulation 2004* reporting requirements should be complied with. Carriage of dangerous goods also requires placarding, signage, extra fire appliances and risk assessments and management by the vessel owner and operator.

Reference documents

- *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*
- Uniform Shipping Laws Code
- National Standard for Commercial Vessels
- International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code
- Marine Orders — part 41 (Carriage of Dangerous Goods)
- Standard Practice Instruction (section F Number 4)
- SOLAS chapter II-2 regulation 19

Information

For further information about this marine information bulletin, email msgmail@msg.qld.gov.au.

Other marine information bulletins covering various topics relating to the safe operation of ships may be obtained from Maritime Safety Queensland's website at www.msg.qld.gov.au and from the following Maritime Safety Queensland regional offices.

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