

Engineering Circular No. 69

NO:ENG/MISC-29(32)/2006

Dated:24th December, 2005

Sub: Prevention of Oil Pollution by small vessels operating in coastal waters of India.

It has come to the notice of this Directorate that a number of small seagoing vessels and vessels operating within harbour/ port limits are polluting the territorial waters of India by discharging oily bilges generated from engine rooms. Most of these vessels do not fall in the category, which need to carry Oil Pollution Prevention (IOPP) Certificate. However, these vessels are inspected either by Port Authorities or Mercantile Marine Department for issue of certificates for operation.

As known to the maritime industry, discharge of oil or oily mixture into any part of the sea is prohibited under provisions of MARPOL 73/78 as amended, Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 and the rules made thereunder. Under these provisions, an oil tanker of 150 gross tonnes and above or a ship of 400 gross tonnes and above requires to carry valid International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate and Oil Record Book, Part I/II duly filled on each occasion during the operation.

The small vessels, which do not fall under the above category and not fitted with equipments, are required to provide arrangements such as bilge holding tank for collecting the oily water generated in machinery spaces for disposal ashore in order to avoid discharge of oil or oily mixture into the sea. The ports are responsible to provide reception facilities ashore for receiving the oil and oily mixture from vessels calling at their ports. All major ports in India have already confirmed to this Directorate that they have adequate reception facilities for receiving oil and oily mixture delivered by vessels calling at their ports. All minor ports also need to cater to this requirement by providing such reception facilities. It is understood that most of the coastal states of India do have arrangements for receiving oil or oily mixture by parties approved by the respective State Pollution Boards.

For ensuring that small vessels do not discharge oil and oily mixture into sea, it is essential that the Port Authorities or Mercantile Marine Department must check the onboard arrangements and its adequacy for collecting the oil and oily mixture generated, during survey or inspection of these vessels. Records of such collection of the bilge water and its disposal ashore are to be maintained by the vessels and verified during the survey/ inspection.

The Port Authorities and State Governments registering vessels under Port Craft Rules or State Government Rules are advised to incorporate the necessary provisions in their existing rules in order to prevent oil pollution of sea/ harbour waters by these vessels. Such incorporation/ amendments should also include provisions to penalise the violators. The authorities shall also amend the existing rules made under Major Ports Act and Indian Port Act to incorporate such provisions.

This issues with the approval of Chief Surveyor with the Government of India.

Sd/-
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