

SUB-COMMITTEE ON POLLUTION  
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE  
4th session  
Agenda item 15

PPR 4/15  
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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATION TO PROVISIONS OF IMO  
ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CONVENTIONS**

**Clarification on regulation 36 of MARPOL Annex I for categorizing offshore terminal  
(Single Point Moorings (SPMs) or Conventional Buoy Moorings (CBMs)) line flush with  
seawater as part of tanker cargo/ballast operations in the Oil Record Book**

**Submitted by OCIMF and INTERTANKO**

**SUMMARY**

*Executive summary:* This document suggests a solution to address the transfer of terminal flush water to tankers at some offshore terminals (Single Point Moorings (SPM) or Conventional Buoy Mooring (CBMs)) which brings clarifications that the operation is performed in full compliance with the environmental protection provisions of MARPOL Annex I

*Strategic direction:* 1.1

*High-level action:* 1.1.2

*Output:* 1.1.2.3

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 11

*Related document:* PPR 3/18/1

**Background**

1 At its last session, the Sub-Committee considered a proposal from OCIMF (PPR 3/18/1), seeking clarification with regard to the appropriate categorisation of the offshore terminal line flush with seawater, which may be transferred on board an oil tanker prior commencement or after completion of cargo operations.

2 While the Sub-Committee noted general support for the need to address the issue described in the document, a number of delegations expressed concerns about the proposal, as they were of the view that terminal line flushing is a terminal operation rather than a cargo/ballast operation and, before taking a decision, it would be necessary to consider any possible commercial consequences or any implication of different nature.

3 Following discussions, the Sub-Committee, having agreed that the issue should be clarified, invited interested Member Governments and international organizations to work together intersessionally and submit a revised proposal to PPR 4 or, in case a new output was needed, to submit a relevant proposal to the Committee in accordance with the Committee's Guidelines.

4 OCIMF and INTERTANKO have jointly revisited this issue and submit this document with a suggested unified interpretation. The document proposes to categorize terminal flush water as "disposal of residues" under regulation 36.2.10 of MARPOL Annex I and to record such operation in the Oil Record Book (Part II).

### **Clarifications**

5 Terminals may keep their idle cargo transfer hoses full of sea water as a measure for environmental protection, logistics and avoidance of contamination purposes, and other cargo transfer hoses may contain water following maintenance. Prior to the next cargo loading, some terminals (SPMs and CBMs) may transfer the seawater and any cargo residue left in the idle hose to the tanker's slop tanks. This is to avoid contamination of the main cargo transferred.

6 It is important to note that the operation being addressed in this document is not intended to be applicable to what might be considered as similar operations at Floating (Production) Storage Offtake units (F(P)SOs) involving production, commissioning or decommissioning water and which therefore, may include other products than just cargo residue and seawater.

7 The transfer operation of the terminal flush water to ships is always subject to acceptance by the master and resolution of the relevant commercial/liability issues by all parties involved. The process can be summarised as follows:

- .1 the transfer of terminal flush water is an operation taking place at the both ends: prior the loading and after the discharging of the oil cargo. Therefore, the operation involves a number of stakeholders such as the export terminal, the charterer, the ship/oil tanker, the cargo receiver and the import terminal;
- .2 the flush water is contained in the terminal's hoses, thus not generated on board tankers. Therefore, the transfer of terminal flush water is a terminal operational facilitation for environmental protection, logistics and avoidance of cargo contamination purposes. As such, it is subject to a separate commercial agreement, unless provided in the charter-party; and
- .3 consequently, terminals which wish to transfer this flush water to the tanker, request the tanker operator's agreement for carrying out such an operation. In agreeing to receive the terminal flush water in a clean slop tank, the tanker's master is provided – prior to the operation – with the necessary documentation that covers the relevant commercial/liability issues involved. After having accepted to load the flush water, the master should ensure that the relevant entries in the Oil Record Book (Part II) will be made.

8 OCIMF has recently identified a challenge when some discharge terminals/local authorities are reluctant to accept the terminal flush water due to the unspecified and undocumented composition of the content. However, the co-sponsors contend that the line flush consists principally of seawater and the possibility of a marginal oily mixture from cargo residue, thus the composition of the content is known and it should not present an issue. Additionally, the contents are handled and disposed of in accordance with relevant provisions of MARPOL based on a quality certificate presented by the terminal.

### **Proposed course of action**

9 Recognizing the need to categorize the terminal flush water and its recording, the co-sponsors suggest a unified interpretation as presented in the annex of this document. The proposed unified interpretation categorizes the terminal flush water as part of the provisions of regulation 36.2.10 of MARPOL Annex I but, at the same time, allows tanker operators to consider conditions under which terminal flush water could be accepted to be transferred on board their oil tanker. If accepted, a document mentioning the amount, composition and quality as well as the origin of the line flush shall be supplied by the terminal operator.

10 The unified interpretation clarifies how terminal flush water should be categorized and examples of how to record in the Oil Record Book (Part II).

### **Action requested of the Sub-Committee**

11 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the proposed solution and to take action as appropriate.

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## ANNEX

### UNIFIED INTERPRETATION TO REGULATION 36.2.10 OF ANNEX I OF MARPOL DISPOSAL OF RESIDUES, FOR TERMINAL HOSE FLUSH WATER FROM SINGLE POINT MOORINGS (SPMS) AND CONVENTIONAL BUOY MOORINGS (CBMS)

When the master of an oil tanker agrees to accept terminal hose flush water from a Single Point Mooring (SPM) or a Conventional Buoy Mooring (CBM), that flush water should be categorized as the disposal of residues under regulation 36.2.10. Appropriate entries should be made under Item J of Part II of the Oil Record Book. The following are examples of how these entries should be made:

1 At the load port where the flush water is received by the tanker, use the suggested wording for remarks:

(J) 55	At the request of (terminal xxxx), terminal line flush water (sea water) has been loaded into the ship's xxx tank
56	xxx m <sup>3</sup> flush water
57.4	Transferred from terminal xxxx line/hoses. Total quantity in xxx tank ..... m <sup>3</sup> ;

and

2 At the discharge port where the flush water is disposed of by the tanker:

(J) 55	xxx tank
56	xxx m <sup>3</sup> , quantity retained in tank: xxx m <sup>3</sup>
57.1	a quantity of xxx m <sup>3</sup> terminal line flush water received at the loading port terminal (xxx) was disposed/transferred to terminal xxx facility