

Kenya prepares to implement IMO sulphur limit

Kenya is geared to implement the IMO 2020 sulphur limit requirements after the International Maritime Organization (IMO) adopted an amendment to MARPOL Annex VI Regulation 14 on Sulphur Oxides (SO_x) and Particulate Matter which will enter into force on 1st January, 2020.

IMO has set a limit of 0.50% m/m (mass by mass) in fuel oil used or carried for use on board a ship for ships operating outside designated emission control areas. All sizes of ships will be required to use fuel oil that meets the 0.5% sulphur content requirement. The 0.50% Sulphur limit extends to carriage of bunker fuel with Sulphur content of more than 0.50% for vessels not fitted with Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems (EGCS). The carriage ban will come into effect on 1st March 2020. The amendment is aimed to reduce the amount of sulphur oxides emitted from the shipping industry and improve air quality, safeguard human health from harmful respiratory diseases and protect the environment. According to a study submitted to IMO, air pollution from ships would contribute to more than 570,000 additional premature deaths worldwide between 2020-2025 if the sulphur oxides limit is not reduced from 2020.

Ships taking on fuel oil for use on board will thus be required to obtain a bunker delivery note which states the sulphur content of the fuel oil supplied. Samples may be taken for verification. Ships must also be issued with an International Air Pollution Prevention (IAPP) Certificate by Kenya Maritime Authority. This certificate includes a section stating that the ship uses fuel oil with a sulphur content that does not exceed the applicable limit value as documented by bunker delivery notes or uses an approved equivalent arrangement.

KMA will be required to ensure consistent and effective implementation of the 0.5% sulphur limit. Port state control inspections will be used to verify whether the ship is compliant.

All the vessels operating within Kenyan waters are required to comply with Annex VI fuel oil sulphur limit. It is worth noting that, most of the vessels of less than 400 gross tonnage are already in compliance with the 0.5 % sulphur limit as majority of these vessels use distillate fuel oil that meet the sulphur standard.

Compliant fuel oil will be available from fuel oil suppliers that serve vessels that operate in Kenya. The IMO has developed guidance on best practice for fuel oil suppliers for assuring the quality of fuel oil delivered to ships can be obtained from the following link:-

<http://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/Environment/PollutionPrevention/Documents/MEPC.1-Circ.875-Add.1.pdf>

You can access more information on the following links:

International Maritime Organization website: www.imo.org

Kenya Maritime Authority website: www.kma.go