

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.17
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**2019 GUIDELINES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF BLENDS OF
BIOFUELS AND MARPOL ANNEX I CARGOES**

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its sixty-second session (11 to 15 July 2011), recognizing the need to clarify how biofuels subject to MARPOL Annex II, when blended with MARPOL Annex I cargoes, can be shipped in bulk, approved the *2011 Guidelines for the carriage of blends of petroleum oil and bio-fuels* (MEPC.1/Circ.761).

2 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its sixty-fourth session (1 to 5 October 2012), approved amendments to the 2011 Guidelines, as set out in annex 3 to document BLG 16/16, relating to deck fire-fighting system requirements and the fire protection assignment (column I) given for the entry "Biofuel blends of Gasoline and Ethyl alcohol (>25% but <99% by volume)", and issued MEPC.1/Circ.761/Rev.1 accordingly.

3 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its seventy-fourth session (13 to 17 May 2019), recognizing the need to make consequential amendments to the 2011 Guidelines as a result of the inclusion of a new annex 12 on energy-rich fuels in the MEPC.2/Circular on *Provisional categorization of liquid substances in accordance with MARPOL Annex II and the IBC Code*, and the Maritime Safety Committee, at its 101st session (5 to 14 June 2019), recognizing the need to include reference to SOLAS regulation VI/5.2 regarding the prohibition of the blending of bulk liquid cargoes and production processes during sea voyages, approved the *2019 Guidelines for the carriage of blends of MARPOL Annex I cargoes and biofuels*, as set out in the annex.

4 Member Governments and international organizations are invited to bring the annexed Guidelines to the attention of Administrations, recognized organizations, port authorities, shipowners, ship operators and other parties concerned.

5 This circular revokes MEPC.1/Circ.761/Rev.1.

ANNEX

2019 GUIDELINES FOR THE CARRIAGE OF BLENDS OF BIOFUELS AND MARPOL ANNEX I CARGOES

1 APPLICATION

1.1 These Guidelines apply to ships carrying bulk blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes, subject to MARPOL Annexes I and II, respectively.

2 SCOPE

2.1 These Guidelines have been developed to clarify how biofuels subject to MARPOL Annex II, when blended with MARPOL Annex I cargoes, can be shipped in bulk.

3 DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of these Guidelines:

3.1 *Biofuels* are ethyl alcohol, fatty acid methyl esters (FAME) and vegetable oils (triglycerides), as identified in chapters 17 and 18 of the IBC Code or the MEPC.2/Circular. Following circulation of these Guidelines, further biofuels identified as falling under the scope of the Guidelines will be recorded in annex 11 of the MEPC.2/Circular.

3.2 *Biofuel blends* are mixtures resulting from the blending of those biofuels identified in paragraph 3.1 above with a MARPOL Annex I cargo.

4 CARRIAGE OF BIOFUEL BLENDS

The carriage requirements for biofuel blends are assigned based on their volumetric composition, as follows:

4.1 Biofuel blends containing $\geq 75\%$ of a MARPOL Annex I cargo

4.1.1 When the biofuel blend contains $\geq 75\%$ of a MARPOL Annex I cargo, it is subject to MARPOL Annex I.

4.1.2 When carrying biofuel blends as described in paragraph 4.1.1, Oil Discharge Monitoring Equipment (ODME – see resolution MEPC.108(49)) shall be in compliance with regulation 31 of MARPOL Annex I and approved for the mixture being transported.

4.1.3 When considering the deck fire-fighting system requirements of SOLAS chapter II-2, regulations 1.6.1 and 1.6.2, when carrying biofuel blends containing more than 5% ethyl alcohol, then alcohol resistant foams should be used.

4.2 Biofuel blends containing $>1\%$ but $<75\%$ of a MARPOL Annex I cargo

4.2.1 Biofuel blends containing $>1\%$ but $<75\%$ of a MARPOL Annex I cargo are subject to MARPOL Annex II, with the carriage requirements set out in chapter 17 of the IBC Code.

4.2.2 With respect to any new biofuels identified as falling under the scope of these guidelines, carriage requirements for specific blends of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes to be shipped in accordance with MARPOL Annex II will be incorporated into list 1 of the MEPC.2/Circular, as appropriate.

4.3 Biofuels blended with ≤1% of a MARPOL Annex I cargo

Biofuels blended with ≤1% of a MARPOL Annex I cargo are not considered as blends and are therefore to be shipped in accordance with MARPOL Annex II, under the appropriate product entry in the IBC Code.

5 BLENDING OF MARPOL ANNEX I CARGOES AND BIOFUELS ON BOARD

5.1 Blending on board describes the mixing of two products resulting in one single product (a blended mixture) and reflects only physical mixing as distinct from any chemical processing. Such mixing operations should only be undertaken whilst the ship is within port limits.

5.2 The physical blending on board of biofuels and MARPOL Annex I cargoes during a sea voyage to create new products is prohibited, in accordance with regulation 5.2 of SOLAS chapter VI.

6 CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The certification for the biofuel blend to be shipped should be in compliance with MARPOL Annex II, where appropriate. If the biofuel blend, based on its composition, is shipped in accordance with MARPOL Annex I, no certification is required.
