



Biofouling and In-water Cleaning

The purpose of this Marine Notice is to advise ship owners, operators, ports and marinas of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) 2011 *Guidelines for the control and management of ships' biofouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species* (Biofouling Guidelines), and the new *Anti-fouling and in-water cleaning guidelines* for Australia and New Zealand.

International Biofouling Guidelines

The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the IMO adopted the Biofouling Guidelines by resolution MEPC.207(62) in 2011. The aim of the Biofouling Guidelines is to achieve a globally consistent approach to managing biofouling by providing information on general measures to minimize the risks associated with biofouling for all types of ships.

MEPC also agreed that the Biofouling Guidelines would be kept under review to incorporate the knowledge gained from their implementation. Such review would include an assessment of whether the Biofouling Guidelines are effective in influencing biofouling management practices.

Anti-fouling and in-water cleaning guidelines (Australia and New Zealand)

To reflect the approach of the international Biofouling Guidelines, the *Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council Code of Practice for Antifouling and In-water Hull Cleaning and Maintenance 1997* (the ANZECC Code), was reviewed. The new *Anti-fouling and in-water cleaning guidelines* (the guidelines) has been jointly developed by Australia and New Zealand, in conjunction with industry stakeholders.

On 26 June 2013, the guidelines were endorsed by Australian and New Zealand governments, and replaced the ANZECC Code.

Part 1 of the guidelines addresses application, maintenance, removal and disposal of anti-fouling coatings at shore-based maintenance facilities.

Part 2 of the guidelines addresses in-water cleaning. This section states that vessels and moveable structures should be removed from the water prior to cleaning. However, in cases where removal is not economically or practically viable, the guidelines accept in-water cleaning as a potential management option for removing biofouling, providing that risks are appropriately managed.

This is the main change from the ANZECC Code, which discouraged in-water cleaning in all circumstances.

A copy of the guidelines is at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) website: www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/pests-diseases-weeds/marine-pests/anti-fouling-and-inwater-cleaning-guidelines

Applicants who wish to in-water clean vessels in Commonwealth waters (generally between 3nm and 12nm from Australia's territorial sea baseline) should first visit the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) website for information about their obligations under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) at: www.environment.gov.au/heritage/management/referalls/index.html

If the activity does not need to be referred under the EPBC Act, then applicants should self-assess their activity using the Decision Support Tool in Appendix 1 of the guidelines.

Ongoing review

In 2013 MEPC issued circular MEPC.1/Circ.811 providing Guidance for evaluating the Biofouling Guidelines. The Australian Government will develop a process for evaluating the Guidelines in accordance with the performance measures in this circular. Once this process has been developed, the Australian Government intends to engage industry to determine how effectively the guidelines have been disseminated, consistent with Part 1 of the performance measures.

To access the circular mentioned in this Marine Notice please browse the list of MEPC.1 Circulars on the IMO website and register for a public account to open the relevant Circular www.imo.org/OurWork/Circulars/Pages/IMODOCS.aspx

Mick Kinley
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
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Australian Maritime Safety Authority
GPO Box 2181
CANBERRA ACT 2601
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