

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 7/12

adopted 12 February 1986, having regard to Article 13, Paragraph b) of the Helsinki Convention

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE IMO GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING INCIDENTS INVOLVING HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

THE COMMISSION,

RECALLING Article 8 and Protocol I of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78), concerning reports on incidents involving harmful substances,

RECALLING ALSO Paragraph 3 of Regulation 5 and the Appendix of Annex VI to the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, 1974, (Helsinki Convention) concerning reports on incidents involving harmful substances,

RECALLING FURTHER that the provisions of Protocol I of MARPOL 73/78 are identical to those of the Appendix of Annex VI of the Helsinki Convention,

RECOGNIZING that the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) at its twentysecond session adopted Resolution MEPC.22(22) containing Guidelines for Reporting Incidents Involving Harmful Substances according to Protocol I of MARPOL 73/78,

RECOMMENDS that Governments of the Contracting Parties to the Helsinki Convention apply these Guidelines, as attached to this Recommendation, for reporting purposes according to Paragraph 3 of Regulation 5 and the Appendix of Annex VI to the Helsinki Convention.

HELCOM RECOMMENDATION 7/12 Attachment

GUIDELINES FOR REPORTING INCIDENTS INVOLVING HARMFUL SUBSTANCES

1 INTRODUCTION

The intent of these guidelines is to enable coastal States and other interested parties to be informed without delay of any incident giving rise to pollution, or threat of pollution, of the marine environment, as well as of assistance and salvage measures, so that appropriate action may be taken.

TO MAKE REPORTS

report should be transmitted in the following manner to the nearest coastal State through an appropriate coast station preceded by the safety signal (if the incident affects the safety of navigation) or by the urgency signal (if it affects the safety of ship or persons);
on appropriate frequencies (in the bands 405-525 kHz, 1605-2850 kHz or 156-174 MHz);
when the ship is not within reach of an MF or VHF coast station, to the most appropriate HF coast station or on the relevant maritime satellite communication system;
when the ship is within or near an area for which a ship reporting system has been established, to the designated shore establishment responsible for operation of that system.

2 HOW TO MAKE REPORTS

The report should be transmitted in the following manner

- .1 to the nearest coastal State through an appropriate coast station preceded by the safety signal (if the incident affects the safety of navigation) or by the urgency signal (if it affects the safety of ship persons);
- .2 on appropriate frequencies (in the bands 405-525 kHz, 1605-2850 kHz or 156-174 MHz);
- .3 when the ship is not within reach of an MF or VHF coast station, to the most appropriate HF coast station or on the relevant maritime satellite communication system;
- .4 when the ship is within or near an area for which a ship reporting system has been established, to the designated shore establishment responsible for operation of that system.

3 CONTENTS OF REPORTS

The report should contain the following specific information:

- .1 name of ship, call sign and flag;
- .2 frequency or radio channel guarded;
- .3 name, address, telex and telephone number of the ship's owner and representative (charterer, manager or operator of the ship or their agent);
- .4 type of ship, (e.g. oil tanker, chemical tanker, dry cargo ship) and gross tonnage;
- .5 date and time (UTC) of the occurrence of the incident;
- .6 brief description of incident (including damage sustained);
- .7 position, course and speed at time of incident, as appropriate;
- .8 the correct technical name (trade names should not be used, if possible), quantity, and concentration of the harmful substance discharged or likely to be discharged into the sea; and
- .9 type and quantity of cargo carried, harmful substances to be specified.

4 SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT

4.1 Immediately following or as soon as possible after the transmission of the information referred to in section 3, as much as possible of the following information essential for the protection of the marine environment as appropriate to the incident should be reported:

- .1 condition of the ship, as relevant;
- .2 ability to transfer cargo/ballast;
- .3 cause of the discharge;
- .4 whether the discharge is continuing, and the approximate quantity discharged;
- .5 weather on scene, sea and current conditions;
- .6 estimate of the spill movement, if possible include an estimate of the surface area of the spill;
- .7 actions being taken with regard to the discharge and the movement of the ship;
- .8 assistance which has been requested from or which has been provided by others;
 - .9 correct technical name, UN number, IMO Dangerous Goods Class and manufacturer of the harmful substance;
 - .10 type of packaging including identification marks and whether in packaged form, freight containers, portable tanks, road and rail vehicles or shipborne barges;
 - .11 whether the lost packaged harmful substance floated or sank;
 - .12 estimate of the quantity and likely condition of the packaged harmful substance.

4.2 In the case of a sinking or stranding, suitable arrangements should be made for these reports to be supplemented as soon as possible by the full dangerous goods list or manifest; stowage plan and details of damage to the ship and likely state of the cargo.

5 PROBABILITY OF DISCHARGE

5.1 The probability of a discharge resulting from damage to the ship or its equipment is a reason for making a report. In judging whether there is such a probability and whether the report should be made, the following factors, among others, should be taken into account:

- .1 the nature of the damage, failure or breakdown of the ship, machinery or equipment; and
- .2 sea and wind state and also traffic density in the area at the time and place of the incident.

5.2 It is recognized that it would be impracticable to lay down precise definitions of all types of incidents involving probable discharge which would warrant an obligation to report. Nevertheless as a general guideline, the master of the ship should make reports in cases of:

- .1 damage, failure or breakdown which affects the safety of ships. Examples of such incidents are collision, grounding, fire, explosion, structural failure, flooding, cargo shifting; and
- .2 failure or breakdown of machinery or equipment which results in the impairment of the safety of navigation. Examples of such incidents are failure or breakdown of steering gear, propulsion plant, electrical generating system, essential shipborne navigational aids.

6 REPORTS ON ASSISTANCE OR SALVAGE

6.1 Whenever a ship is engaged in or requested to engage in an operation to render assistance to or undertake salvage of a ship involved in an incident referred to in sub-paragraph 1(a) or 1(b) of Article II of Protocol I of MARPOL 73/78, as amended, the Master of the former ship should report without delay the particulars of the action undertaken or planned. In addition he should report, as far as practicable, on the items referred to in sections 3 and 4. Reports should be made in accordance with section 2 and the coastal State should be kept informed regarding developments.

7 ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS

7.1 Governments should issue appropriate instructions to coast stations, Coast Earth Stations (CES) and designated shore establishments responsible for operation of any ship reporting system to ensure that reports are relayed without delay to the officer or agency designated to

receive and process such reports, and to ensure that the officer or agency relays the report without delay to any coastal State which may be affected.

7.2 Affected States which may require information relevant to the incident should take into account the circumstances in which the Master is placed and should endeavour to limit their requests for additional information.