

FOBAS Bulletin

4 September 2023

Off-specification Sulphur fuels in UAE ports

In the last month FOBAS has tested a number of samples from UAE ports which have shown Sulphur results above the required limits. We have seen fuels bunkered as low sulphur 0.10%*m/m* fuels with results above this and outside the 95% confidence range with results ranging from 0.12 to 0.13%*m/m*. We have also seen fuels bunkered as 0.50%*m/m* sulphur VLSFOs with results above 0.53%*m/m* i.e. 95% confidence limit.

Fuels that fail to meet the 0.10%*m/m* sulphur limit applicable in sulphur ECAs and certain local waters may still be used outside these specific areas. Fuels that fail to meet the 0.50%*m/m* global sulphur limit (and specifically above the 0.53%*m/m* 95% confidence range) may only be used on ships with an Exhaust Gas Cleaning System in use.

In all cases with off-spec sulphur results there are certain steps that should be taken, these would involve testing storage tank samples to confirm the results and rule out any initial sampling error. Contacting the fuel supplier for their comment and potential resolution. Contacting the relevant port State and vessel flag state for further instructions. In all cases FOBAS can assist through the process.

This recent batch of off-spec samples is most likely a random occurrence as no one particular supplier or port are involved but for any bunkering taking place at any port there should always be an assumption that an off-spec sulphur result is possible as most suppliers blend as close to the limit as possible, and so it is important to ensure bunker samples are taken correctly and correctly labelled, MARPOL sample is clearly stated on the BDN and kept safe onboard along with the BDN in case of inspection and also from this year, that designated sampling points are in place in case of inspection and samples requested to be taken.

Please let us know if you have any concerns or would like any further information about any of the above.

If you require any further information about this Bulletin, please contact us at fobas@lr.org or speak to one of our consultants on +44 (0)330 414 1000 (Southampton UK), +44 (0)1642 440991 Redcar (UK), +65 3163 0888 (Singapore), +30 211 990 7732 (Greece). For anything urgent, please contact us via our out of office number, +44 (0)1642 425660.