

04 November 2016

FOBAS Bulletin:           Decision by MEPC 70 on MARPOL Annex VI Reg. 14.1.3

Applicability:           All ship owners and operators

On Thursday 27 October 2016 the MEPC 70 plenary session made a historic decision to retain the MARPOL Annex VI Reg. 14.1.3 date of 01 January 2020. Consequently, from that date ships operating outside the ECA-SOx will have to use fuels not exceeding 0.50% m/m sulphur, as compared to the current 3.50% limit, except where there are approved equivalent means installed such as exhaust gas cleaning systems – SOx scrubbers. There were however, a number of concerns raised; which included the availability of 0.50% fuel on 01 January 2020 particularly at the regional and local levels, the likely complexity of the actual transition process at that specific date and the quality range of those fuels considering the expected wide variations in their compositions.

To address these concerns and others that may be raised in the time leading up to 2020, the Prevention Pollution and Response (PPR) sub-committee has been tasked to start work on an 'Implementation Plan'.

The confirmation of this date now provides certainty together with a three year preparatory window for ship operators to evaluate their fleet's future Annex VI SOx compliance strategy; whether that will remain solely fuel based or to fit, at least to some extent, SOx scrubbers. Additionally, it may be timely to now consider what modifications should be made to an individual ship's fuel loading, storage and handling systems in order to maximise flexibility and to deal with the likely unpredictability of these future fuels.

FOBAS will be closely monitoring the developments at PPR and the subsequent discussions at MEPC and will keep you informed accordingly. In the meantime if you have any specific questions please do not hesitate to contact us at [fobas@lr.org](mailto:fobas@lr.org).