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**GUIDELINES FOR EXEMPTION OF UNMANNED  
NON-SELF-PROPELLED (UNSP) BARGES FROM CERTAIN SURVEY AND  
CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE MARPOL CONVENTION**

1 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its seventy-sixth session (10 to 17 June 2021), adopted amendments to MARPOL Annexes I and IV and amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, concerning the exemption of unmanned non-self-propelled (UNSP) barges from certain survey and certification requirements, by resolutions MEPC.330(76) and MEPC.328(76), respectively.

2 The Marine Environment Protection Committee, at its seventy-sixth session, with a view to providing more specific guidance for the application of the above-mentioned amendments, approved the *Guidelines for exemption of unmanned non-self-propelled (UNSP) barges from certain survey and certification requirements under the MARPOL Convention*, as set out in the annex.

3 Member Governments are invited to use the annexed Guidelines when exempting UNSP barges from the relevant provisions of the MARPOL Convention, and to bring them to the attention of all parties concerned.

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## ANNEX

### **GUIDELINES FOR EXEMPTION OF UNMANNED NON-SELF-PROPELLED (UNSP) BARGES FROM CERTAIN SURVEY AND CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE MARPOL CONVENTION**

#### **1 Introduction**

1.1 The Guidelines are intended to provide specific guidance for flag States, port States and relevant parties, including shipowners and operators, on the application of the relevant requirements of the MARPOL Convention concerning exemption of unmanned non-self-propelled (UNSP) barges from certain survey and certification requirements pursuant to the amendments to MARPOL Annexes I and IV, as adopted by resolution MEPC.330(76), and the amendments to MARPOL Annex VI, as adopted by resolution MEPC.328(76).

1.2 For the purpose of reducing the administrative burden of flag States, port States and relevant parties, an exemption of a UNSP barge from certain survey and certification requirements under MARPOL Annexes I, IV and VI may be granted. In this connection, the exemption certificate(s) for a UNSP barge should be issued by the Administration, in accordance with regulations 3.7 and 9.2 of MARPOL Annex I, regulations 3.2 and 7.2 of MARPOL Annex IV, regulations 3.4 and 8.4 of MARPOL Annex VI, using the forms set out in the appendices of MARPOL Annexes I, IV and VI.

1.3 Such certificates should be issued either by the Administration or by any person or organization duly authorized by it. In every case, the Administration assumes full responsibility for the certificates.

#### **2 Application**

The Guidelines are applicable to the exemption(s) of UNSP barges from certain requirements as regulated in regulation 3.7 of MARPOL Annex I, regulation 3.2 of MARPOL Annex IV and regulation 3.4 of MARPOL Annex VI.

##### **2.2 Technical and operational requirements**

2.2.1 Certain technical requirements of MARPOL Annex I, IV, and VI are not applicable to UNSP barges. The following regulations are not required to be complied with by UNSP barges if exempted:

- .1 MARPOL Annex I:  
regulations 12 (Tanks for oil residues (sludge)), 12A (Oil fuel tank protection), 13 (Standard discharge connection), 14 (Oil filtering equipment) and 16 (Segregation of oil and water ballast and carriage of oil in forepeak tanks);
- .2 MARPOL Annex IV:  
regulations 9 (Sewage systems) and 10 (Standard discharge connections);  
and

- .3 MARPOL Annex VI:  
regulations 12 (Ozone-depleting substances), 13 (Nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)), 14 (Sulphur oxides (SO<sub>x</sub>) and particulate matter) and 16 (Shipboard incineration).

2.2.2 As UNSP barges do not have onboard sources of relevant pollutants of the marine environment, as defined in MARPOL Annexes I, IV and VI, operational requirements in the following provisions of MARPOL are not applicable to UNSP barges:

- .1 MARPOL Annex I:  
regulations 15 (Control of discharge of oil), 17 (Oil Record Book Part I – Machinery space operations) and 37 (Shipboard oil pollution emergency plan); and
- .2 MARPOL Annex IV:  
regulation 11 (Discharge of sewage).

### **3 Procedures for granting exemptions**

3.1 The shipowner or operator should apply to the Administration, or the Recognized Organization (RO) acting on its behalf, for exemption(s) with relevant information on the exemption(s) conditions for UNSP barges and relevant drawings (General Arrangement Plan, Capacity Plan and any other plans or documents, as necessary).

3.2 The Administration, or the RO acting on its behalf, should review the General Arrangement Plan, Capacity Plan and other relevant information to confirm that the relevant conditions referred to in regulation 3.7 of MARPOL Annex I, regulation 3.2 of MARPOL Annex IV, or regulation 3.4 of MARPOL Annex VI, as appropriate, are met.

3.3 After a satisfactory review of the submitted plans and information, a survey of the UNSP barge should be carried out to confirm if the actual arrangements on board comply with the exemption conditions, as appropriate.

3.4 Exemption requirements may not be met where, whether temporarily or permanently, the barge has a means of generating oil residues, exhausts gas emissions, sewage, or other pollutants as defined in MARPOL Annexes I, IV or VI. In such cases, the exemption of survey and certification requirements for the applicable MARPOL Annexes should not be granted.

3.5 Based on satisfactory results of the survey, certificates for exemption of a UNSP barge from certain survey and certification requirements under MARPOL Annexes I, IV and/or VI, as per regulations 3.7 and 9.2 of MARPOL Annex I, regulations 3.2 and 7.2 of MARPOL Annex IV, regulations 3.4 and 8.4 of MARPOL Annex VI and forms set out in appendices of MARPOL Annexes I, IV and VI, respectively, should be issued by the Administration or, by the RO acting on its behalf.

### **4 Maintenance of conditions after survey**

After issuance of any of those exemption certificates, the UNSP barge should maintain its exemption conditions in accordance with the definitions specified in regulation 1.40 of MARPOL Annex I, regulation 1.16 of MARPOL Annex IV, and regulation 2.1.32 of MARPOL Annex VI. The exemption certificate(s) cease(s) to be valid if any of the approved exemption conditions are not met or any conversion or alteration has occurred affecting the conditions under which the exemption certificate(s) is(are) issued. The shipowner or operator should inform the Administration and port State of such non-compliance. In the event of such

a conversion or alteration, the Administration, or the RO acting on its behalf, may re-issue a corresponding exemption certificate(s) to the UNSP barge, based on a further review of the arrangements, in order to verify that the UNSP barge complies with the definitions as applicable.

## **5 Pushing and towing**

During towing or pushing operations, the exemption certificates for each UNSP barge should be available to the towing or pushing vessel.

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