

**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**



**Ballast Water Management
Marine Guideline**

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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Marine Guideline

No. 2-14-1

Rev. Jan/2024

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

SUBJECT: Ballast Water Management

Reference: (a) **RMI Marine Notice [2-014-1](#), *Ballast Water Management***

PURPOSE

This Marine Guideline (MG) provides guidance for complying with ballast water management (BWM) requirements. This MG supersedes that of Rev. Mar/2019. In addition to streamlined content, it has been amended as follows:

- Section 1.1.1 has been inserted to cite available guidance on Ballast Water Exchange (BWE) making reference to the recent IMO Resolution [MEPC.371\(80\)](#) and IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.80](#).
- Section 1.2 has been inserted, on Ballast Water Record-Keeping and Reporting, referring to relevant guidance in IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.80](#).
- Section 1.2.3 has been inserted, on the use of electronic record books, citing relevant requirements and available guidance.
- Section 1.3 has been inserted on the guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast Water Management Plans, referring to the latest amendments to the guidelines, IMO Resolution [MEPC.370\(80\)](#).

APPLICABILITY

This Marine Guideline is for all RMI-flagged ships that use ballast water.

DEFINITIONS

Major Conversion - See International Maritime Organization (IMO) Circular [BWM.2/Circ.45](#), *Clarification of a major conversion as defined in regulation A-1.5 of the BWM Convention*.

Administration - With respect to a ship entitled to fly a flag of any State, the Administration is the Government of that State. With respect to floating platforms engaged in exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and subsoil, thereof adjacent to the coast over which the coastal State exercises sovereign right for the purposes of exploration and exploitation of its natural resources, including Floating Storage Units (FSUs) and Floating Production Storage and Offloading Units (FPSO), the Administration is the Government of the coastal State concerned. See the BWM Convention, Article 1.

GUIDANCE

1.0 BWM Convention

1.1 Ballast Water Exchange

- .1 Resolution [MEPC.288\(71\)](#) provides general guidance on the development of ship specific procedures for conducting ballast water exchange. Its latest amendment (Resolution [MEPC.371\(80\)](#)) replaces only the ballast water reporting form (BWRP) with the one provided in appendix 2 of [BWM.2/Circ.80](#).
- .2 Ships that are not required to meet the ballast water performance standard prior to its implementation schedule in accordance with regulation B-3.2, but are operating in sea areas where ballast water exchange (BWE) is not possible:¹
 - a. should not be required to meet the D-2 standard;
 - b. should not be required to meet the D-2 standard even if the ship does not comply with BWM Convention regulations:
 - (1) B-3.6 (discharge to a reception facility);
 - (2) B-3.7 (Other methods); or
 - (3) A-4 (Exemptions).
 - c. should not be required to proceed under regulation B-3.6, B-3.7, or A-4 of the BWM Convention; and

¹ Refer to IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.63](#) *Application of the Convention to Ships Operating in Areas Where Ballast Water Exchange in Accordance with Regulations B-4.1 and D-1 is Not Possible*

d. should record the reasons why BWE was not conducted in accordance with regulation B-4.5.

.3 A port State may establish designated areas for BWE following the *Guidelines on Designation of Areas for Ballast Water Exchange* (G14), adopted by IMO Resolution [MEPC.151\(55\)](#). Ships should comply with the terms of use of those areas provided by the port State.

1.2 Ballast Water Record Book and Ballast Water Record-Keeping and Reporting

.1 IMO Resolution [MEPC.369\(80\)](#), *Amendments to the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ship's Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004*, amend Appendix II to the Convention (the form of the Ballast Water Record Book). In accordance with article 19(2)(e)(ii) of the BWM, the amendments shall be deemed to have been accepted on 1 August 2024 and thereafter expected to enter into force on 1 February 2025.

.2 **IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.80](#)**, *Guidance on ballast water record-keeping and reporting*. This guidance covers:

a. **Ballast Water Record Book (Section 2)**: This part explains how ballast water operations should be recorded by making mandatory entries in the Appendix II, as amended by Resolution MEPC.369(80). Amendments to Appendix II are expected to enter into force on 1 February 2025. This part is intended for ship's crew.

b. **Ballast Water Reporting Form (BWRF) (Section 3)**: This part contains an example BWRF together with instructions for completing it. A BWRF may be submitted prior to entry into a port State that requires specific information regarding the management of ballast water on ships bound for its ports, offshore terminals or anchorage areas. This part guidance is intended for ship's crew and port States and may be applied as soon as possible.

c. **Voluntary Tank-by-tank log (Section 4)**: This part explains how to maintain voluntary tank-by-tank records of ballast water operations that may facilitate completion of a BWRF by allowing the crew to efficiently track the contents of each tank and hold that carries ballast water. Maintaining these voluntary records may also assist the ship in documenting and demonstrating that the requirements of the Convention have been met. This part is intended for ship's crew and may be applied as soon as possible.

- .3 The IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee is expected to adopt amendments to the BWM Convention requiring Administrations to approve the electronic record books, taking into account [MEPC.372\(80\)](#), *Guidelines for the Use of Electronic Record Books under the BWM Convention*. These amendments are expected to enter into force in 2025.

1.3 Ballast Water Management Guidelines and Development of BWM Plans

- .1 Resolution [MEPC.127\(53\)](#), *Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast Water Management Plans (G4)*² includes guidance on the procedures for the development of ballast water management plans, as required by Regulation B-1. It also contains a standard format for the ballast water management plan in the Appendix.
- .2 Amendments to the G4 Guidelines through Resolution [MEPC.306\(73\)](#) add in part B that the ballast water management plan may include contingency measures. The Administrator accepts Ballast Water Exchange (BWE) in lieu of using the BWMS when this method is included as a contingency measure in the ship's approved BWMP. Concurrence from the coastal State must be obtained before this option is used.
- .3 Amendments to the G4 Guidelines through Resolution [MEPC.370\(80\)](#) add in Part A, a reference to the Guidance on ballast water record-keeping and reporting ([BWM.2/Circ.80](#), as may be amended).
 - a. This Guidance should be taken into account whenever a record of each ballast water operation is to be kept in accordance with regulation B-2 of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments.
 - b. They further add a reference to the BWRP and to the example form for maintaining voluntary tank-by-tank records, as set out in [BWM.2/Circ.80](#).

1.4 Offshore Guidance

- .1 **IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.32](#)**, *Applicability of the Ballast Water Management Convention to Hopper Dredgers*: The rationale in this circular for hopper dredgers can also be applied to self-elevating units (SEU). Where the spudcan is an open structure (not sealed) such as on a jackup rig (SEU) and it allows water to flow through its grating, that is not considered ballast water.

2. IMO Resolution [MEPC.127\(53\)](#) *Guidelines for Ballast Water Management and Development of Ballast Water Management Plans (G4)*, as amended by [MEPC.306\(73\)](#), adopted 22 July 2005, as amended by [MEPC.127\(53\) Corr.](#), [MEPC.306\(73\)](#) and [MEPC.370\(80\)](#)

- .2 **IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.44](#)**, *Options for Ballast Water Management for Offshore Support Vessels in accordance with the BWM Convention.*
- .3 **IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.46](#)**, *Application of the BWM Convention to Mobile Offshore Units.*
- .4 **IMO Circular [BWM.2/Circ.52/Rev.1](#)**, *Guidance on entry or re-entry of ships into exclusive operation within waters under the jurisdiction of a single Party.*

1.5 Yacht Guidance

- .1 **IMO Resolution [MEPC.123\(53\)](#)**, *Guidelines for Ballast Water Management Equivalent Compliance (G3)*. See also RMI Yacht Code ([MI-103](#)) for the application of the BWM convention requirements to yachts.
- .2 Yachts with an operational limitation under the RMI Yacht Code (MI-103) that may affect BWE should refer to §1.2, above.

2.0 Coastal States

2.1 General

- .1 Some coastal States impose different or additional ballast water requirements to those of the BWM Convention. RMI Marine Notice [2-014-1](#) requires all RMI-flagged vessels entering the jurisdiction of these States to comply with their requirements, including any additional regional or local mandates.
- .2 A coastal or port State authority may request or require specific ballast water procedures or treatment options be undertaken. If the required action cannot be taken due to weather, sea conditions, or operational impracticability, the Master should report this fact to the coastal State authority as soon as possible. Where appropriate, this reporting should occur before entering that coastal State's waters.

2.2 US Ballast Water Requirements

- .1 The US has not ratified the BWM Convention but has in place a strict regime that is not completely aligned with international requirements.
- .2 All RMI ships trading into the US are required to comply with that port State's current requirements.
- .3 USCG BWM Program can be found at: <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/OES>.