



# TUVALU SHIP REGISTRY

*Singapore Operations Office:*

10 Anson Road #25-16, International Plaza, Singapore 079903

Tel: (65) 6224 2345 Fax: (65) 6227 2345

Email: info@tvship.com Website: www.tvship.com

## MARINE CIRCULAR

### MC-11/2010/1

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**FOR:** Ship Owners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators and Classification Societies

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF SHIP TO SHIP TRANSFER (STS) OPERATIONS PLAN**

#### DEFINITIONS:

The following abbreviations stand for:

- "FPSO" – Floating production, storage and offloading facilities
- "FSU" – Floating storage units
- "GT" – Gross Tonnage in accordance to ITC 69
- "ICS" – International Chamber of Shipping
- "IMO" – International Maritime Organization
- "IOPP" – International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate
- "ISM Code" – International Management Code for the Safe Operation of Ships and for Pollution Prevention
- "MARPOL" – International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978
- "MEPC" – IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee
- "OCIMP" – Oil Companies International Marine Forum
- "RO" – Recognized Organization as defined by IMO Resolution A.789(19)
- "SMS" – Safety Management System as defined by the ISM Code
- "SOLAS" – International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended
- "STS" – Ship to Ship

The term "Administration" shall mean Tuvalu Ship Registry.

#### PURPOSE:

This Marine Circular serves to inform all owners / managers / operators on the amendments to MARPOL Annex I as adopted by MEPC.186 (59) adding a new Chapter 8 on the prevention of pollution during the transfer of oil cargo between oil tankers at sea.

#### REFERENCES:

- (a) MEPC.186 (59) – *Can be downloaded as Annex I of this Circular*

#### APPLICATION:

The new regulation requires all oil tankers 150 GT and above engaged in the transfer of oil cargo between oil tankers at sea (STS operations) to:

- (a) Carry on board an STS operations Plan, approved by the Administration, describing how STS operations are to be conducted, no later than the date of the first annual, intermediate or renewal survey of the ship to be carried out on or after 1 January 2011.

Note: Vessels with an approved STS Operations Plan shall have their IOPP Supplement amended accordingly.

- (b) Carry out STS operations in accordance with the vessel's approved STS operations Plan on or after 1 April 2012.

However, the new regulations of Chapter 8 do not apply for the following:

- (a) Bunker operations;
- (b) Oil transfer operations associated with fixed or floating platforms, including drilling rigs, FPSOs used for the offshore production and storage of oil, and FSUs used for the offshore storage of produced oil;
- (c) STS operations necessary for the purpose of securing the safety of a ship or saving life at sea, or for combating specific pollution incidents in order to minimize the damage from pollution; and
- (d) STS operations where either of the ships involved is a warship, naval auxiliary or other ship owned or operated by a State and used, for the time being, only on government non-commercial service. However, each State shall ensure, by the adoption of appropriate measures not impairing operations or operational capabilities of such ships that the STS operations are conducted in a manner consistent, so far as is reasonable and practicable, with these regulations.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

##### 1. Regulation 41 – STS Operations Plan

- 1.1. Applicable oil tankers involved in STS operations shall carry on board a Plan prescribing how STS operations are conducted and shall operate in compliance with its approved STS Operations Plan.
- 1.2. The STS Operations Plan shall be written in both the working language of the ship and in English.
- 1.3. The STS Operations Plan should be developed based on the guidelines and requirements found in IMO's "Manual on Oil Pollution, Section 1, Prevention" as amended, and the ICS and OCIMF "Ship to Ship Transfer Guide, Petroleum, fourth edition, 2005, as amended.
- 1.4. All STS Operations Plan shall be submitted to a RO for verification and subsequent approval. The list of ROs can be found at: [www.tvship.com/ro](http://www.tvship.com/ro)
- 1.5. For vessels which comply to ISM Code, the STS Operations Plan may be:
  - 1.5.1. incorporated into an existing SMS if the vessel is required to comply with the ISM Code, in which case, the STS Operations Plan cannot be approved under MARPOL, but must be approved and audited annually by the RO as part of the SMS; or
  - 1.5.2. kept as 2 independent documents which provide greater flexibility in amending the STS Operations Plan if required.
- 1.6. The person in overall advisory control of STS Operations Plan shall be qualified to perform all relevant duties, taking into account the qualifications contained in the best practice guidelines for STS operations identified by the IMO (please refer to section 1.3 above).
- 1.7. Records of STS operations as required by the STS Operations Plan, including requirements for recording of bunker and oil cargo transfer operations in the Oil Record Book as required by Revised Annex I of MARPOL Chapter 3 and 4 (resolution MEPC.117(52)), shall be

retained on board for three (3) years and be readily available for inspection by a Party to the present Convention.

## 2. Regulation 42 – Notification

2.1. All applicable oil tankers that plans STS operations within the territorial sea, or the exclusive economic zone of a Party to the present Convention shall notify that Party not less than 48 hours in advance of the scheduled STS operations. Such notification shall include at least the following:

2.1.1. name, flag, call sign, IMO Number and estimated time of arrival of the oil tankers involved in the STS operations;

2.1.2. date, time and geographical location at the commencement of the planned STS operations;

2.1.3. whether STS operations are to be conducted at anchor or underway;

2.1.4. oil type and quantity;

2.1.5. planned duration of the STS operations;

2.1.6. identification of STS operations service provider or person in overall advisory control and contact information; and

2.1.7. confirmation that the oil tanker has on board an STS operations Plan meeting the requirements of Regulation 41.

Note: Contact information of national operational contact points may be found in MSC-MEPC.6/Circ.4

2.2. In the event that all of the information specified in section 2.1 is not available within the required timeframe of “not less than 48 hours in advance,” the oil tanker discharging the oil cargo shall notify the Party to the present Convention that an STS operation will occur. This notification must take place not less than 48 hours in advance; and the information specified in paragraph 2.1 above shall be provided at the earliest opportunity.

2.3. If the estimated time of arrival of an oil tanker at the location or area for the STS operations changes by more than six (6) hours, the Master, owner or agent of that oil tanker shall provide a revised estimated time of arrival.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Registrar  
Tuvalu Ship Registry