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BALLAST OPERATIONS

Comply with the "BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT" procedures contained in the Company's HSE MANUAL, Section 6.14. Also refer to Chapter 7 of "BULK CARRIER PRACTICE".

Your attention is drawn to the following sections of WSCMP:

1. IMPORTANCE OF BALLAST

Increasing environmental concerns regarding the import of alien organisms through contaminated ballast water has led to legislation regarding ballast water exchange being introduced in many countries across the world. The Ballast Water Treatment plant must be used, documented and maintained to ensure full compliance with international regulations[1]. Substantial delays and subsequent off-hires are likely to occur if the plant experiences break down or the plant has been incorrectly managed or not been used.[2]

Before commencing cargo or ballast operations the depth of water at the berth must be checked. Cargo operations must be conducted so that the ship remains safely afloat at all times and pumping over the tide is prohibited.

All ships are required to comply with the Ballast Water Management in accordance with regulation D-2 (using Ballast Water Treatment System) by 8 September 2024, refer International Ballast Water Management Certificate for the method applicable to your vessel.[3]

Any malfunctioning of Ballast Water Treatment System should be immediately reported to office.[4]

Ballast Exchange at sea should be carried out as a contingency in case of failure or malfunction of the Ballast water treatment system due to a technical problem or a ballasting/de-ballasting operation carried out outside of the system's performance results in the treated ballast water to not be compliant with the D-2 standard.[5]

1.1. Ballast Exchange

Where ballast exchange is required by local regulations or as a contingency measure in case of failure of Ballast Water Treatment System[6], the Company endorses the full exchange system, using the preferred "Sequential Method" in which ballast tanks are

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pumped out completely and then refilled with water. Exchange should be carefully planned in accordance with the pre-calculated method contained in the Stability Booklet and carried out as soon as possible with due consideration to existing and expected weather conditions. As stresses induced are normally close to the maximum allowable limits, it is advisable to carry out the exchange in the calmest conditions possible without any delay.

Records of ballast exchange are to be recorded in the appropriate logbooks in accordance with regulations and reported to the port authorities using Ballast Reporting Form as applicable[7].

The Chief Officer should be aware of the build-up of mud in the ballast tanks. If ballasting in a river port, ballast exchange should be considered as soon as possible after sailing. Further, in the case of serious mud build up, the use of an approved product that will take mud into suspension and allow it to be pumped out must be used.

2. MONITORING THE BALLAST

It is important that the OOW keep close control of all ballast operations. Any deviation from the laid down Ballast Plan must be reported to the Chief Officer as soon as they become apparent. If in any doubt, the OOW should stop all operations, including cargo operations, until it can be established that it is safe to continue.

3. HAND SOUNDINGS

Company policy dictates that at sea a full set of manual soundings is taken daily, even if the vessel is fitted with a radar or similar system. Draught surveys must incorporate manual soundings, no matter how accurate the automatic sounding system may be.

4. OVERFLOWING TANKS[8]

This is particularly important on double hulled vessels where undue pressure due to high-speed ballasting can damage tanktops and other structures. Care must be taken not to ballast too many tanks at once to control any listing which may occur due to restricted flow to certain tanks.

Ballast Tanks must NEVER be overflowed through vents. This not only unnecessarily over-pressurises the tank but will wash any oil or garbage on deck down the scuppers causing pollution.

5. BALLAST RECORD BOOK[9]

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The Chief Officer shall ensure that a permanent record of all ballast operations – whether in port or at sea – is kept. This should include times, rates, tanks etc, as well as details of any ballast exchange including positions of start and completion, as well as intermediate positions as required by Ballast Record Book[10]. This may be vital evidence in case of any enquiry or claim against the vessel and falls into the same class as the deck logbook in terms of being kept legibly and accurately.

6. LEAKING BALLAST LINES

Ballasting and deballasting rates for each tank should be known aboard. This will enable the Chief Officer to detect any variances which may indicate leaking lines, valves or defective pumps. It is important that these problems are brought to the Chief Engineer's notice as soon as possible.

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