



**IMMARBE**

International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize

**ENTRY INTO FORCE OF MARPOL 73/78 ANNEX IV  
PREVENTION OF POLLUTION BY SEWAGE FROM SHIPS**

TO ALL SHIPOWNERS AND OPERATORS, DEPUTY REGISTRARS, RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS AND GSI INSPECTORS

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**1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1. This Merchant Shipping Notice is intended to bring to the attention of all parties having vessels registered with IMMARBE of the position of the Administration in respect of the provisions contained in Annex IV of the MARPOL 73/78 Convention which prohibits the discharge of sewage into the sea.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Annex IV contains a set of regulations regarding the discharge of sewage into the sea, ships' equipment and systems for the control of sewage discharge, the provision of facilities at ports and terminals for the reception of sewage, and requirements for survey and certification. It also includes a model International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate to be issued by national shipping administrations to ships under their jurisdiction.
- 2.2. It is generally considered that on the high seas, the oceans are capable of assimilating and dealing with raw sewage through natural bacterial action and therefore the regulations in Annex IV of MARPOL 73/78 prohibit ships from discharging sewage within a specified distance of the nearest land, unless they have in operation an approved treatment plant.
- 2.3. This Annex was accepted by Belize in May 26, 1995 and entered into force for vessels registered at IMMARBE which are engaged on international voyages and built on or after the 27 September 2003.

### 3. APPLICATION

3.1. The revised Annex **will apply** to existing<sup>1</sup> ships registered at IMMARBE by the **27<sup>th</sup> September 2008** as follows:

3.1.1. Ships engaged on international voyages of 400 GT and above, and

3.1.2. Ships engaged on international voyages of less than 400 GT and certified to carry 15 persons or more.

### 4. MAIN PROVISIONS

4.1. Every ship to which Annex IV applies shall be equipped with either a sewage treatment plant or a sewage comminuting and disinfecting system or a sewage holding tank.

4.2. IMMARBE has entrusted to carry out the surveys required for the enforcement of the provisions of this Annex to Recognized Organizations who will, upon satisfactory completion, issue an **International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate**.

### 5. OPERATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1. The discharge of sewage into the sea is prohibited, except when the ship:

- has in operation an approved sewage treatment plant; or
- is discharging comminuted and disinfected sewage using an approved system at a distance of more than three nautical miles from the nearest land; or
- is discharging sewage which is not comminuted or disinfected at a distance of more than 12 nautical miles from the nearest land.

5.2. When sewage is mixed with wastes or water covered by other Annexes of MARPOL 73/78, the requirements of those Annexes shall be complied with as well.

### 4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF OWNERS/OPERATORS

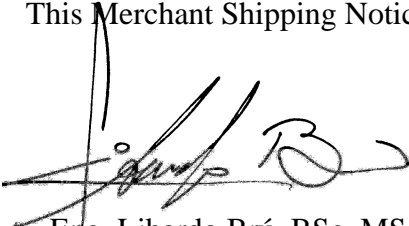
4.1 Owners/Operators having vessels registered at IMMARBE that will have to comply with the Annex IV, should as a matter of **urgency** contact one of our approved Recognized Organizations and coordinate the timely arrangement of the necessary surveys for the issuance of the International Sewage Pollution Prevention Certificate.

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<sup>1</sup> Ships built prior the entry into force of the Annex IV, i.e. 27<sup>th</sup> September 2003.

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS NOTICE

5.1 This Merchant Shipping Notice is to be implemented forthwith.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Libardo Brú', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Eng. Libardo Brú, BSc, MSc  
Technical Manager  
IMMARBE

Any queries related to this Notice should be directed to:

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