

Circular 2017-12: New California Biofouling Regulations

Overview

Studies have shown that Biofouling can be an important mean for the transferring of invasive aquatic species (also called nonindigenous species - NIS). A nonindigenous species is an organism that has been transported by humans to locations beyond its natural range. Once a species becomes established in a new area, it can cause economic, ecological and public health consequences in its new habitat.

Member States of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) made a clear commitment to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species by shipping in adopting the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004.

California Biofouling Regulations

Vessel Biofouling, is believed to be responsible for up to sixty percent of the established invasive aquatic species along the California coast. Thus, California's Marine Invasive Species Act includes a provision to remove Biofouling from vessels on a regular basis and California State Lands Commission (CSLC) introduced additional Biofouling management practices, performance standards, recordkeeping and reporting requirements, that are necessary to minimize the transport of invasive aquatic species into the waters of the State of California.

Starting on 01 October 2017, new biofouling regulations and reporting requirements will be in effect for vessels of 300 gross tons (GT) or more, calling a California port.

The old version reporting form California State Hull Husbandry Report, has been replaced by **California State Marine Invasive Species Program Annual Vessel Reporting Form**, which should be used by operators for compliance in California waters.

Actions Required

Starting on 01 October 2017, all vessels will have to submit a completed "Marine Invasive Species Program Annual Vessel Reporting Form" at least twenty-four hours in advance of the first arrival of the calendar year at a California port.

Starting on 01 January 2018, additional requirements for newly constructed vessels delivered into service on or after 01 January 2018, and to existing vessels beginning with completion of the first regularly scheduled out-of-water maintenance on or after 01 January 2018, demand:

- Development of a Biofouling Management Plan specifically for the vessel, providing a description of the biofouling management strategy for the vessel in sufficient detail to allow a Master or other appropriate ship's officer or crew member serving on the vessel to understand and follow the biofouling management strategy.
- Creation and maintenance of a Biofouling Record Book, retained onboard the vessel, which must contain details of all inspections and biofouling management measures undertaken on the vessel since the beginning of the most recent scheduled out-of-water maintenance or since delivery into service as a newly constructed vessel if no out-of-water maintenance has yet occurred.
- Documentation of all biofouling management actions in the Biofouling Record Book, especially in niche areas such as sea chests and gratings, bow and stern thrusters and gratings, fin stabilizers and recesses, out-of-water support strips, propellers and shafts, and rudders. Biofouling management in these areas must be managed using biofouling management practices that are appropriate for the vessel and its service.
- For any vessel that has had an extended residency period since its most recent out-of-water maintenance, in-water treatment, or in-water cleaning, upon arrival to a California port, the vessel must be compliant with the management of biofouling in the niche areas described above, and any activities, including in-water inspection, in-water cleaning, in-water treatment, or out-of-water maintenance, to manage biofouling on the wetted surfaces of the vessel, except the niche areas, that accumulates as a result of the extended residency period shall be documented in the Biofouling Record Book.

Further information

SQEMARINE: [Ship Biofouling Management Plan](#)