



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 267 of 04th May 2015

To:	All Surveyors/Auditors
Applicable to flag:	All Flags
Subject:	STS transfers at sea
Reference:	USCG Sector Houston-Galveston

STS transfers at sea for vessels larger than 150 gross tons

USCG Sector Houston-Galveston issued a Marine Safety Information Bulletin reminding stakeholders that the new regulations applicable to ship-to-ship (STS) transfer of oil cargoes involving at least one vessel that is more than 150 gross tons entered into effect on **5 May 2015**.

The Coast Guard has added 33 CFR 156 Subpart D titled Prevention of Pollution during Transfers of Oil Cargo between Oil Tankers at Sea, which applies to STS involving at least one vessel of greater than 150 gross tons. Subpart B Special Requirements for Lightering of Oil and Hazardous Material Cargoes, will now only apply to oil and hazardous material cargo transfers when both oil tankers are less than 150 gross tons in the marine environment beyond the baseline. This Bulletin will discuss reporting requirements for transfers and incidents specifically. All affected owners, operators, and masters of U. S. and foreign flagged ships are reminded to read the notice in its entirety as not all changes are discussed herein.

In regards to pre-transfer notices, the new regulations align with existing MARPOL Annex I requirements to require that a vessel involved with STS operations give at least 48 hours advanced notice of transfer. This is a change from the current requirements to provide 24 hour notices to the nearest Coast Guard office. The Coast Guard recognizes that 48 hour notice may be unrealistic and the new regulations allow for an incomplete initial notification provided that the remaining information is submitted at the earliest opportunity. A 24-hour notice requirement remains for all vessels subject to 33 CFR 156 Subpart B.

For vessels conducting STS operations in Sector Houston-Galveston Captain of the Port Zone an initial notification on behalf of the ship to be lightered (STBL) must be received 48 hours prior to transfer with as much information as is known at the time. Vessel representatives or STS providers may then provide one complete update when all additional required information is known. Each service vessel is not required to submit notice provided that the names and requisite information for each service vessel is submitted.

Masters, vessel agents, and lightering service providers should be aware that the required reporting

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information is slightly different than the existing requirements, care should be taken to ensure all internal reporting procedures are updated to ensure compliance. The enclosed reporting form is provided as a template and is not a required reporting document. Electronic versions of this document can be acquired by contacting Marine Safety Unit Texas City.

REFERENCES:

USCG Sector Houston-Galveston- MARPOL Annex I

ATTACHMENTS: No.

Kindest Regards,
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