



**IMMARBE**

International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize

## **USE OF HALOGENATED HYDROCARBONS (HALONS) ON BELIZE FLAGGED VESSELS**

TO ALL SHIPOWNERS AND OPERATORS, DEPUTY REGISTRARS, RESIDENT AGENTS,  
CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS.

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This Merchant Shipping Notice is intended to remind all Belize flagged vessels of the international regulatory framework embracing the use of Halogenated Hydrocarbons (halons) and other Ozone-Depleting Substances (ODS) and of the position of the Administration regarding existing fixed fire-extinguishing installations using halon as extinguishing media and portable fire extinguishers.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The United Nations' Environment Program through its Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1987, to which Belize is a party operating under Article 5 paragraph 1; stipulates that owing to the high Ozone-Depleting Potential (ODP) of chlorofluorocarbons and halons, the production and consumption of chlorofluorocarbons and halon, including CFC-11, CFC 12, CFC-113, CFC-114, CFC-115, Halon-1211, 1301 and 2402 should be controlled, calculated and reported.
- 1.2. Accordingly, the International Maritime Organization in support of this initiative recommended and encouraged all sectors of the maritime industry to limit the use of halons and CFCs aboard ships and urged governments under IMO Resolution A.719(17) to implement measures for the prevention of air pollution from ships so that:
  - 1.2.1. The use of Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) of a high ozone-depleting potential, used in fixed refrigeration and air conditioning plants, be prohibited on ships constructed on or after 6 November 1992.
  - 1.2.2. Unless for "essential use", the use of halons to be prohibited on ships constructed on or after 1 July 1992 and full scale tests prohibited by 1 January 1992.
  - 1.2.3. The addition of chemical wastes to bunker fuel oil to be prohibited by 1 January 1992.
- 1.3. Under the 1992 amendments to the 1974 SOLAS, Reg. II-2/5 (Resolution MSC.27(61)), new installations of halon fire-extinguishing had been prohibited as from 1 October 1994.

- 1.4. Further amendments to the 1974 SOLAS, Reg. II-2/10.4.1.3 in 2000 (Resolution MSC.99(73)), prohibits new installations of fire extinguishing systems containing halons 1211, 1301 and 2402 and perfluorocarbons on ships constructed before 1 July 2002.
- 1.5. Under Regulation (EC) No. 2037/2000 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 June 2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer; fire protection systems and fire extinguishers containing halons where deemed to be decommissioned before 31 December 2003, unless used for critical uses as described therein and provided a report on quantities used for critical uses is submitted to the Commission, note that this report shall be produced by **member states and EU-flagged vessels only**.
- 1.6. With the entry into force of Annex VI of MARPOL 73/78, Reg. 12 on Air Pollution (19 May 2005) new installations of fixed systems and portable fire-extinguishing units using ODS are prohibited on all ships, note that **Belize is not a Party to Annex VI**.

## **2. SERVICING TO EXISTING SYSTEMS**

- 2.1. All precautionary measures practicable shall be taken to prevent and minimise leakages of controlled substances inadvertently produced in the course of testing, repairing, maintaining, servicing or disposal of halon-containing systems or equipment.
- 2.2. In addition to the mandatory **annual leakage check** of halon fire-extinguishing systems required under MSC/Circ. 600, a **leakage test** of an equipment or system containing halon needs to be conducted prior its repairing, maintaining, servicing or disposal.
- 2.3. Record of the tests mentioned under 2.2 should be kept onboard for inspection by IMMARBE and the Recognized Organization if so required.
- 2.4. It will be the owners/operators duty and responsibility to notify immediately to IMMARBE of emissions arising from leaks of an ozone depleting substance whether or not the leaks were deliberate.
- 2.5. Ships found to have less than fully charged fixed halon fire-extinguishing system for machinery spaces and other spaces, i.e. with a shortage of halon quantities required for the satisfactory operation of its system, while in a port where halon is not available, shall contact IMMARBE along the procedures described in MSC/Circ. 775.

## **3. DISPOSAL AND DECOMMISSIONING**

- 3.1. The disposal of halon shall be done through a recognized Halon Banking and Reception Facility licensed to provide such service. The latest list of such facilities is contained in circular FP.1/Circ.31 (periodically updated) from the Fire Protection Sub-Committee of the IMO.
- 3.2. Vessels currently registered with IMMARBE that are equipped with fixed fire protection systems and/or fire extinguishers containing halon, such systems shall be decommissioned not later than the **1<sup>st</sup> January 2010**.

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