



**IMMARBE**

International Merchant Marine Registry of Belize

**ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE AFS-CONVENTION**  
**INTL. CONVENTION ON THE CONTROL OF HARMFUL ANTI-FOULING SYSTEMS**

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 IMMARBEE of the position of the Administration in respect of the provisions contained in the *International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships* which will prohibit the use of harmful organotin compounds in anti-fouling paints used on ship hulls.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1. Organotin-based compounds, such as tributyltin (TBT), have been used in anti-fouling paints on vessel hulls and infrastructure since the 1970's. The toxicity of TBT prevented the growth of algae, mollusks and other marine organisms on the ship's hull for up to five years, meaning ships were able to travel faster through the water and consume less fuel. Later research found traces of these toxic compounds in many of the above species concluding that they harm the marine ecosystem and could in turn have an impact on humans through the consumption of seafood.
- 2.2. As a consequence, in November 1999, The International Maritime Organization (IMO) through the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) developed an Instrument, legally binding throughout the world, to address the harmful effects of anti-fouling systems used on ships. This Instrument called for a global prohibition on the application of organotin compounds which act as biocides in anti-fouling systems on ships by 1 January 2003, and a complete prohibition by 1 January 2008.
- 2.3. Similarly, the European Community issued regulation, **EC Regulation 782/2003**, under which ships flying the flag of a Member State and ships sailing to or from ports of the Member States are subjected to the requirements of the AFS-Convention as from 1 July 2003.

- 2.4. The resulting AFS-Convention was adopted on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2001 and will enter into force on the **17<sup>th</sup> September 2008** after having achieved the minimum number of ratifications.

## **2 CONTROLS ON ANI-FOULING SYSTEMS**

- 2.4 Based on Annex 1 to the Convention, since the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2008 (effective date), ships either:
- 2.4.1 Shall not bear such compounds on their hulls or external parts or surfaces; or.
  - 2.4.2 Shall bear a coating that forms a barrier to such compounds leaching from the underlying non-compliant anti-fouling systems.
- 2.5 The above requirements apply to all ships (except fixed and floating platforms, floating storage units (FSUs), and floating production storage and off-loading units (FPSOs) that have been constructed prior to 1 January 2003 and that have not been in dry-dock on or after 1 January 2003.

## **3 CERTIFICATES ISSUED UNDER THE CONVENTION**

- 3.4 Ships of 400 gross tonnage and above engaged on international voyages (excluding fixed or floating platforms, FSUs and FPSOs) will be required to undergo an initial survey before the ship is put into service or before an **International Anti-fouling System Certificate** can be issued for the first time; and a survey when the anti-fouling systems are changed or replaced.
- 3.5 Ships of 24 metres or more in length but less than 400 gross tonnage engaged on international voyages (excluding fixed or floating platforms, FSUs and FPSOs) will have to carry a **Declaration on Anti-fouling Systems** signed by the owner or authorized agent. The Declaration will have to be accompanied by appropriate documentation such as a paint receipt or contractor invoice.

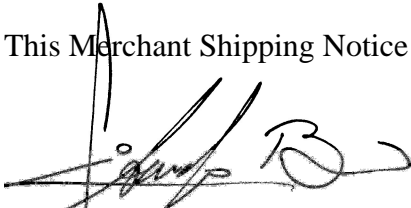
## **4 POSITION OF THE ADMINISTRATION**

- 4.1 The referred to AFS-Convention was adopted on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2001 and will enter into force on the **17<sup>th</sup> September 2008** after having achieved the minimum number of ratifications.
- 4.2 **Belize has not yet ratified the AFS-Convention**, therefore it will not be mandatory for vessels registered with IMMARBE to comply with the Convention, nevertheless companies may voluntary avoid the use of tin-based anti-fouling systems and be surveyed in accordance with Resolution MEPC.102(48) on Guidelines for survey and certification of anti-fouling systems on ships and be issued with a **Statement of Compliance**.

- 4.3 Ships capable of documenting full compliance with the Convention through such a Statement of Compliance may be issued, upon entry into force of the Convention for Belize, with the certificates as per Section 3 of this Notice.
- 4.4 In addition, under the terms of the Convention, vessels registered at IMMARBE will have no preferential treatment when entering ports, shipyards or offshore terminals of a Party to the AFS-Convention. In other words, during a Port State control (PSC) inspection, a Party to the Convention will request the **Statement of Compliance** to be carried on board. (See attachment 1 for the list of Contracting States to the Anti-Fouling Systems Convention).
- 4.5 For the purpose of complying with the AFS-Convention companies having vessels registered at IMMARBE should contact any of the Recognized Organizations (ROs) IMMARBE has authorized to provide the survey and certification services for anti-fouling systems in accordance with Resolutions. (See attachment 2 for a list of Recognized Organizations that are approved to provide survey and certification services under the AFS-Convention).

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS NOTICE

- 5.1 This Merchant Shipping Notice is to be implemented forthwith.



Eng. Libardo Brú, BSc, MSc  
Technical Manager  
IMMARBE

Any queries related to this Notice should be directed to:

INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT MARINE REGISTRY OF BELIZE  
Technical Department  
Tel. (501) 223-5026 / 5031 / 5047  
Fax. (501) 223-5048 / 5070  
e-mail. [Immarbe@btl.net](mailto:Immarbe@btl.net)

# ATTACHMENT 1

*List of Contracting States to the Anti-Fouling System Convention  
As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008*

NO.	COUNTRIES
1	ANTIGUA & BARBUDA
2	AUSTRALIA
3	BAHAMAS
4	BULGARIA
5	COOK ISLANDS
6	CROATIA
7	CYPRUS
8	DENMARK
9	FRANCE
10	GREECE
11	HUNGARY
12	JAPAN
13	KIRIBATI
14	LATVIA
15	LITHUANIA
16	LUXEMBOURG
17	MEXICO
18	NIGERIA
19	NORWAY
20	PANAMA
21	POLAND
22	ROMANIA
23	SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
24	SIERRA LEONE
25	SLOVENIA
26	SPAIN
27	SWEDEN
28	TUVALU

## ATTACHMENT 2

*List of approved Recognized Organizations to provide survey and certification services under the Anti-Fouling System Convention*

### MEMBERS OF IACS

1	AMERICAN BUREAU OF SHIPPING (ABS)
2	BUREAU VERITAS (BV)
3	CHINA CLASSIFICATION SOCIETY (CCS)
4	DET NORSKE VERITAS (DNV)
5	GERMANISCHER LLOYD (GL)
6	KOREAN REGISTER OF SHIPPING (KRS)
7	LLOYD'S REGISTER OF SHIPPING (LRS)
8	NIPPON KAIJI KYOKAI (CLASS NK)
9	REGISTRO ITALIANO NAVALE (RINA)
10	RUSSIAN MARITIME REGISTER OF SHIPPING (RS)
11	INDIAN REGISTER OF SHIPPING (IRS) - Associate member

### NON-IACS MEMBERS

1	CHINA CORPORATION REGISTER OF SHIPPING (CRS)
2	COSMOS MARINE BUREAU INC. (CMB)
3	HELLENIC REGISTER OF SHIPPING (HRS)
4	INPECTION Y CLASSIFICACION MARITIMA (INCL)
5	ISTHMUS BUREAU OF SHIPPING (IBS)
6	MARITIME TECHNICAL SYSTEM & SERVICES LIMITED (MTSS)
7	PANAMA BUREAU OF SHIPPING (PBS)
8	PANAMA MARITIME DOCUMENTATION SERVICES INC. (PMDS)
9	POLSKI REGISTER STATKOW (PRS)
10	REGISTRO CUBANO DE BUQUES (RCB)
11	SHIPPING REGISTER OF UKRAINE (SRU)