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CIRCULAR Amendments to MARPOL Annex VI

C25066 | 16 December 2025

Notice to: Ship Owners / Managers / Operators / Surveyors / Auditors

This Circular is issued to remind all concerned parties that the amendments to MARPOL Annex VI (Designation of the Canadian Arctic and the Norwegian Sea as Emission Control Areas for Nitrogen Oxides, Sulphur Oxides and Particulate Matter, as appropriate) as adopted under [Resolution MEPC.392\(82\)](#) enter into force on **01 March 2026**.

Points to Note

MARPOL Annex VI Regulation 13 adds two new Emission Control Areas (ECAs):

- the Canadian Arctic Emission Control area, which means the area described by the coordinates provided in Appendix VII.
- the Norwegian Sea as defined in regulation 13.9.4 of Annex II of the Convention.

Compliance with the new, stricter emission standards in these areas will be mandatory, however as per Regulation 14 – Sulphur Oxides (SOx) and particulate matters - during the first 12 months immediately following entry into force of an amendment designating a specific emission control area, ships operating in that emission control area are exempt from the requirements regarding the sulphur content of fuel oil.

Emissions requirements summary

Area	Amendments enter into force (MARPOL Annex VI)	SOx and Particulate Matter requirements apply from:	NOx Tier III requirements apply from:
Canadian Arctic ECA	01 March 2026	01 March 2027	1 March 2026 (for ships constructed on or after 01 January 2025)
Norwegian Sea ECA	01 March 2026	01 March 2027	1 March 2026 (based on specific three-date construction criteria)

Sulphur Oxides (SOx) and Particulate Matter (PM)

- The maximum **sulphur content** of any fuel oil used on board ships operating within the Canadian Arctic and Norwegian Sea ECAs must not exceed **0.10% m/m**.
- This limit applies unless the ship uses an approved **equivalent method**, such as an Exhaust Gas Cleaning System (EGCS/Scrubber), which achieves equivalent SOx emission levels.

Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) - Tier III

- Marine diesel engines with a power output exceeding **130 kW** must comply with **NOx Tier III standards** when operating in the ECA, provided the ship meets the specified construction date criteria.
- **Canadian Arctic ECA:** Tier III applies to ships whose **keel is laid** or which are at a similar stage of construction **on or after 01 January 2025**.
- **Norwegian Sea ECA:** Tier III applies to ships for which the **building contract** is placed **on or after 01 March 2026**, or in the absence of a contract, whose **keel is laid on or after 01 September 2026**, or whose **delivery is on or after 01 March 2030**.

Act now

Ship Owners/Managers/Operators of vessels operating within these new ECAs should ensure the following:

- **Fuel Management:** Develop and implement documented **procedures for fuel changeover** to ensure compliant fuel (max 0.10% Sulphur) is used upon entry into the ECAs by the effective dates. Record this in the **logbook**.
- **Certification:** Verify that ships built under the respective dates for the **NOx Tier III** application criteria have the necessary engine certification (IAPP Certificate and NOx Technical File).
- **IAPP Certificate:** Ensure the International Air Pollution Prevention (IAPP) Certificate and Supplement are reviewed and updated to reflect the new ECA designations and associated compliance criteria.
- Surveyors/Auditors should verify compliance with the low-sulphur fuel and Tier III requirements during relevant surveys and audits for vessels trading in these regions on or after the effective dates.