



Marine Safety Information Bulletin

Ninth CG District Commander
U.S. Coast Guard
Inspections and Investigations Branch
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Compliance with International Convention on the Control of Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships

Notice:

On August 21, 2012, the United States ratified the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems (AFS) on Ships, 2001 (Anti-Fouling Convention). The instrument of ratification was deposited with the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and the Anti-Fouling Convention entered into force for the United States on November 21, 2012.

Background:

Anti-fouling systems are typically coatings or paints used to prevent sea life such as barnacles and algae from attaching themselves to ship hulls. If untreated, these organisms can significantly reduce a ship's hydrodynamic performance, decreasing speed and increasing fuel consumption and air pollution. Anti-fouling systems are thus critical to efficient ship operations.

Applicability:

The Anti-Fouling Convention is applicable to vessels over 400 ITC engaged in an international voyage(s), including voyages between the United States and Canada on the Great Lakes. These vessels must receive an International Anti-Fouling Certificate (IAFS) per (33 U.S.C. § 3821). Vessels 24 meters or more in length, but less than 400 tons engaged in international voyages must carry a Declaration signed by the owner or owner's authorized agent. Verification of anti-fouling systems will normally be conducted during inspection for certification, annual re-inspection, dry-docking, or an annual survey. The Coast Guard or Recognized Classifications Society (RCS) may conduct AFS Convention compliance surveys and issue IAFS Certificates upon request at anytime if an international voyage is anticipated and the certificate is required prior to voyage.

Procedures:

Vessel owner/operators are encouraged to contact their local CG prevention office (listed below) to discuss applicability and necessary steps required to obtain an Anti-Fouling Certificate.

Sector Buffalo: 716-843-9575
Sector Detroit: 313-568-9564
Sector Lake Michigan: 414-747-7100
Sector Sault Ste. Marie: 906-635-3220
Marine Safety Unit Duluth: 218-720-5286

For more information on the International Convention on Anti-Fouling Systems on ships please refer to CG Policy Letter 12-08 located at: <https://homeport.uscg.mil> (To access the policy type "Policy Letter 12-08" in the search box located in the top right hand corner.)