



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: Implementation of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Prohibition on the use and carriage for use as fuel of heavy fuel oil (HFO) by ships in Canadian Arctic waters

This Ship Safety Bulletin (SSB) replaces [SSB 17/2024](#) issued on June 20, 2024.

Scope

This bulletin applies to all Canadian and foreign vessels, including pleasure crafts, operating within Canadian Arctic waters, except vessels engaged in:

- securing the safety of ships,
- preventing the immediate loss of another vessel,
- search and rescue operations, or
- preparing for, or responding to, oil spills.

Purpose

This bulletin explains:

- the requirements of the International Maritime Organization's prohibition on the use and carriage for use of heavy fuel oil by ships in Canadian Arctic waters, and
- how eligible vessels can apply for a temporary waiver.

These requirements are listed in the *Interim Order No. 2 Prohibiting the Carrying of Certain Oils on Board Vessels in Arctic Waters* which came into force June 30, 2025.

What you need to know

The International Maritime Organization has adopted the prohibition on the use and carriage for use as fuel of heavy fuel oil for vessels in Arctic waters. This includes Canadian Arctic waters, and was created to protect the Arctic from oil spills.

Depending on the characteristics of a vessel, the ban comes into effect on either:

- July 1, 2024 (for most vessels), or
- July 1, 2029 (for vessels where regulation 12A of MARPOL Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code apply).

Keywords:

- 1 Heavy fuel oil prohibition
2. Marine resupply voyages
3. Arctic waters
4. MARPOL Annex I

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AMSKG

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Vessels on certain operations may be able to ask for a temporary extension from these requirements.

Requirements for Vessels

Requirements for all vessels operating in Canadian Arctic waters

Before entering Arctic waters, you must report to the Canadian Coast Guard's Marine Communications and Traffic Services Centre the required vessel and voyage parameters under the *Northern Canada Vessel Traffic Services Zones Regulations* (NORDREG), including the type(s) of fuel(s) for use and carriage as cargo on board the vessel.

Requirements for vessels where regulation 12A of Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code does not apply

The requirements apply to:

- Canadian vessels and Canadian pleasure craft
- Foreign vessels and foreign pleasure craft

These vessels must comply with the prohibition by July 1, 2024.

Canadian vessels that are engaged in marine resupply voyages for at least 75% of their annual voyages can apply to Transport Canada's Marine Technical Review Board (MTRB) for a temporary exemption from the requirements.

If a Canadian vessel is granted a temporary exemption under the MTRB, they must ensure a copy of the decision is retained onboard the vessel for the duration of the decision's validity.

Requirements for vessels where regulation 12A of Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code does apply

On or after July 1, 2029, the requirements will apply to:

- Vessels covered under regulation 12A of MARPOL Annex I; or
- Vessels for which regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code does apply

These vessels must have a copy of their International Oil Pollution Prevention Certificate, Form A onboard at all times to prove that they meet the requirements of regulation 12A of MARPOL Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code. These are exempt from the prohibition until July 1, 2029.

Canadian vessels constructed before the effective dates of the requirements of regulation 12A of MARPOL Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code but which do meet the oil tank design standards of regulation 12A of Annex I or regulation 1.2.1 of chapter 1 of part II-A of the Polar Code have the option to comply as of July 1, 2029, provided they apply for a temporary exemption through Transport Canada's Marine Technical Review Board to prove they meet the equivalent level of tank protection.