



**MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE  
SHIPPING CIRCULAR  
NO. 09 OF 2019**

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**Applicable to:** Shipowners, ship managers, operators, Masters of Singapore-registered ships, Recognised Organisations (ROs), ballast water management equipment manufacturers, testing labs and shipyards

**COMMISSIONING TESTING OF BALLAST WATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

1. This circular is to inform the industry on the application of BWM.2/Circ.70 on “**Guidance for the commissioning testing of ballast water management systems**” for Singapore-registered ships (SRS).
2. The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) approved the proposed amendments to regulation E-1.1 and E-1.5 of the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWM Convention) which are expected to enter into force at a later date<sup>1</sup>. The amendments require the installed ballast water management system (BWMS) to undergo a commissioning test during the initial or additional ballast water management survey.
3. The purpose of the commissioning test is to verify that the mechanical, physical, chemical and biological processes of the installed BWMS are working properly, taking into account guidelines developed by the IMO (i.e. the BWM.2/Circ.70, as may be amended). The commissioning test is not intended to validate the type approval of the BWMS.
4. The commissioning test shall be carried out for BWMS that is installed on board applicable SRS<sup>2</sup> of 400GT and above after **8 September 2019**. Applicable SRS of less than 400GT may undergo the commission test voluntarily.
5. The commissioning test shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the attending RO surveyor after a complete installation of the BWMS, and after all ballasting equipment (e.g. pumps and piping) has been fully tested as appropriate.

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<sup>1</sup> Amendments to the Prevention of Pollution of the Sea (Ballast Water Management) Regulations shall be made accordingly.

<sup>2</sup> Ships that are required to meet the D2 performance standards as per Ballast Water Management Convention Regulation B3, as amended.

6. The representative ballast water samples collected for the commissioning test should be analysed using at least an appropriate indicative analysis method<sup>3</sup>. The commissioning test is considered to be successful if the analysis indicates that the sample does not exceed the D2 standard and the self-monitoring equipment of the BWMS indicates correct operation of all sensors and related equipment.

7. A written report including methods and detailed results of the commissioning testing should be provided to the attending RO surveyor for verification before an International Ballast Water Management Certificate (IBWMC) can be issued.

8. The arrangement for conducting the test and any commercial dealings pertaining to the commissioning test shall be between the shipowners / manager / shipyard / contractor and the manufacturer. The Administration of Singapore MPA does not carry out approval of any specific testing facility. The testing facility engaged to conduct the commissioning test shall be independent of the manufacturer of the BWMS and accepted by the RO which issues the IBWMC.

9. If the commissioning test cannot be successfully carried out due to the equipment's system design limitation, a short term IBWMC may be issued for a period of not more than three (3) months. This is to allow time for the commissioning test to be carried out to the satisfaction of the attending RO surveyor. No authorisation from MPA is required for such cases provided that the attending RO surveyor ensures the following:

- reasons for the commissioning test not being completed successfully are recorded in the ballast water record book;
- the attending RO surveyor is provided with arrangements for the commission test (e.g. date, time, location);
- the ship's ballast water management plan (BWMP) has incorporated appropriate contingency measures in line with the "Amendments to the Guidelines for ballast water management and development of ballast water management plans (G4)" (*Resolution MEPC.306(73)*);
- the ship's Master and the designated ballast water management officer are aware of the "Guidance on contingency measures under the BWM Convention", BWM.2/Circ.62, as may be amended, in particular on the communication between the ship and the port State; and
- the ship's Master and the designated ballast water management officer are aware of the reporting requirements to the competent port Authority as per regulation E1.7 of the BWM Convention when the vessel is calling a foreign port and shall comply with any additional requirements that the port State may impose.

10. If the commissioning test is not completed within the three (3) months of the short term IBWMC, MPA's approval for an extension is to be sought.

11. Any queries to this circular should be directed to Mr Ranabir Chakravarty at 63756210 or email: [shipping@mpa.gov.sg](mailto:shipping@mpa.gov.sg)

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<sup>3</sup> List of indicative analysis methods are listed in table 3 of BWM.2/Circ.42/Rev.1, as may be amended

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Encl:

- a) [BWM.2/Circ.70](#) - Guidance for the commissioning testing of ballast water management systems
- b) [Resolution MEPC.306\(73\)](#) - Amendments to the Guidelines for ballast water management and development of ballast water management plans (G4)
- c) [BWM.2/Circ.62](#) - Guidance on contingency measures under the BWM Convention
- d) [Proposed amendments](#) to regulation E-1.1 and E-1.5 of the BWM Convention