

Evaluating a Vessel's Ballast Water Management Plan

The following guidance is provided to assist marine inspectors and port state control officers in evaluating a vessel's ballast water management (BWM) plan. This guidance is consistent with NVIC 07-04 CH-1, Encl. 2, which is still in effect, and includes details on the new fouling maintenance and sediment removal procedures.

BWM Plan

Under 33 CFR 151.2050 (g), each vessel equipped with ballast water tanks must develop and maintain on board the BWM plan and any associated documentation. The intent of the plan is to detail safe and effective shipboard procedures for BWM. The central elements of the plan should be the processes, equipment, and vessel safety measures used when implementing the vessel's BWM strategy and following the required BWM practices.

At a minimum, each BWM plan must be specific to the vessel; show that there is a BWM strategy for the vessel; and allow any master, or other vessel's officer, serving on that vessel to understand and implement the BWM strategy for the vessel.

Each BWM plan should include the following specific elements:

- Detailed safety procedures
- Actions for implementing the mandatory BWM requirements and practices
- Detailed fouling maintenance and sediment removal procedures
- Procedures for coordinating the shipboard BWM strategy with Coast Guard authorities
- Identification of the designated officer[s] in charge of ensuring that the plan is properly implemented
- Detailed reporting requirements and procedures for ports and places in the U.S. where the vessel may visit
- A translation of the plan into English, French or Spanish if the vessel's working language is another language

Fouling and Sediment Management

Fouling Maintenance Procedures

Many vessels employ fouling maintenance procedures to reduce drag and maintain fuel efficiency. The intent of requiring fouling (may be called the biofouling) maintenance procedures under 33 CFR 151.2050(g) is to provide effective measures for controlling the growth of organisms on submerged surfaces. These fouling maintenance procedures help to prevent the transport and introduction of aquatic nuisance species into waters of the United States via fouling on vessels.

The fouling maintenance procedures may be documented in standalone document or may be integrated as part of the vessel's operational procedures and referenced in the ballast

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water management plan. The procedures / plans should contain information on the following:

1. Details of the anti-fouling systems and operational practices or treatments used, including those for niche areas; where and when installed; areas of the vessel coated; its maintenance and, where applicable, its operation.
2. Hull locations susceptible to fouling and a schedule of planned inspections, repairs, maintenance, and renewal of anti-fouling systems.
3. Details of the recommended operating conditions suitable for the chosen anti-fouling systems and operational practices.
4. Details relevant for the safety of the crew, including details on the anti-fouling systems used.
5. Documentation of actions taken to implement the fouling maintenance procedures / plan (e.g., invoices for dry docking and in-water inspections; reports of such inspections regarding fouling; documentation of measures taken to renew or replace anti-fouling systems, including those used for seawater cooling systems; and documentation of when and where the vessel has been operating outside its normal operating profile, including any details of when the vessel was laid-up or inactive for extended periods of time, and measures taken to minimize fouling during or after such periods.).

NOTE: Examples of Fouling Management Plans are contained in [MEPC.207\(62\)](#). Plans prepared in accordance with these examples should, in general, be acceptable as fouling maintenance procedures. Other documentation of procedures or plans that include the above minimum information, but in different format, should also be acceptable.

Sediment Removal Procedures

Documentation of sediment removal procedures should provide information addressing the following issues:

1. Practical steps to be taken during ballast uptake to avoid sediment accumulation (recognizing that sediment will be taken on board and will settle on tank surfaces). Procedures for using tank flushing when sediment has accumulated, when in suitable areas, i.e. areas complying with the minimum depth and distance described by 33 CFR 151.1510(a)(1) and 151.2025(a)(3).
2. Procedures for monitoring the volume of sediment in a ballast tank on a regular basis.

3. Procedures for removing accumulated sediment on a timely basis and as necessary. The frequency and timing of removal will depend on factors such as sediment build up, vessel's trading pattern, availability of reception facilities, work load of the vessel's personnel, and safety considerations.
4. Procedures for disposing of sediment. Ideally, sediment will be disposed of at a reception facility. When sediment is removed from the vessel's ballast tanks and is to be disposed of by that vessel at sea, such disposal should only take place in areas outside 200 nm from land and in water depths of over 200 m.
5. Particulars of vessel design and construction intended to minimize the uptake and undesirable entrapment of sediments, facilitate removal of sediments, and provide safe access to allow for sediment removal and sampling.